

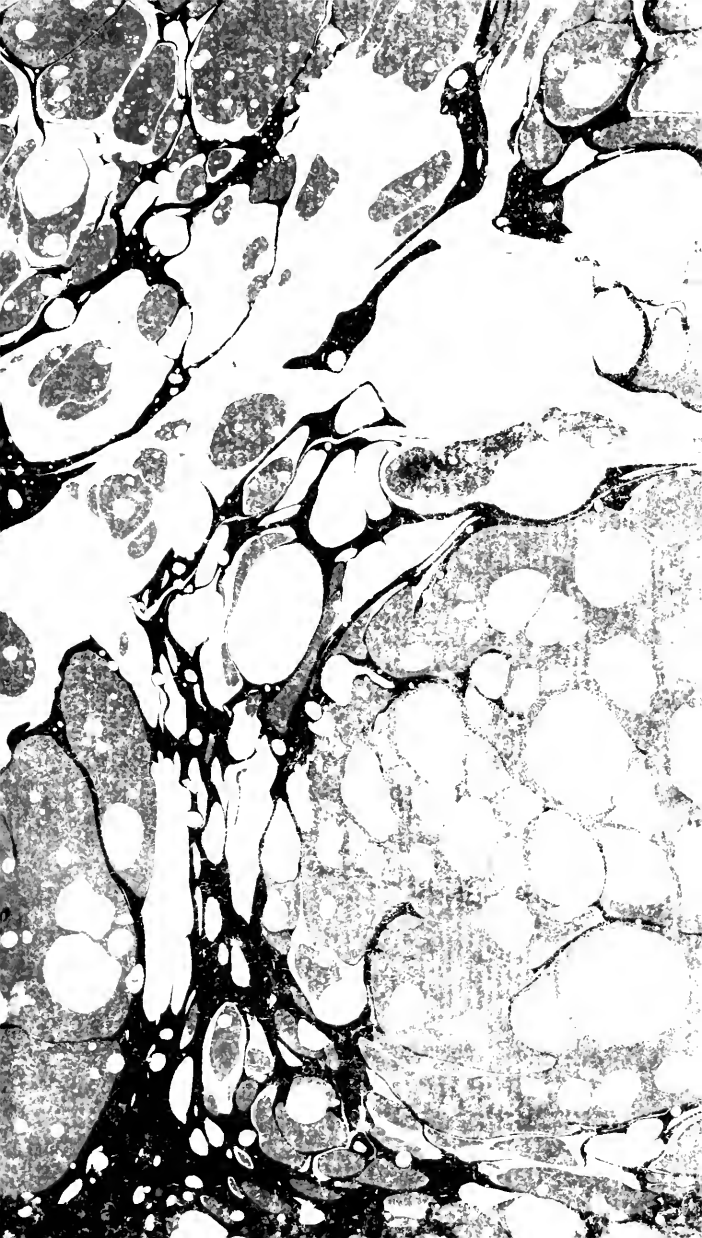


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See the Gentleman's Magazine  
VOL. I, VIII p. 272 abts  
Vol. IV p. p. 204, 245, 294, 367



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A N  
A P O L O G Y

F O R T H E

L I F E

O F

GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

---



BELLAMY'S APOLOGY, Vol. I.

*Contemplation at Brentwood.* L. 100 10

AN  
A P O L O G I  
FOR THE  
L I F E  
OF  
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

LATE OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

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WRITTEN BY HERSELF.

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To which is annexed her original Letter to JOHN CALCRAFT,  
Esq. advertised to be published in October 1767, but  
which was then violently suppressed.

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"The Web of your Life is of a mingled Yarn, good and ill together; our  
"Virtues would be proud, if our Faults whipt them not; and our Crimes  
"would Despair, if they were not cherish'd by our Virtues."  
All's Well That Ends Well, Act 4. Scene iii.

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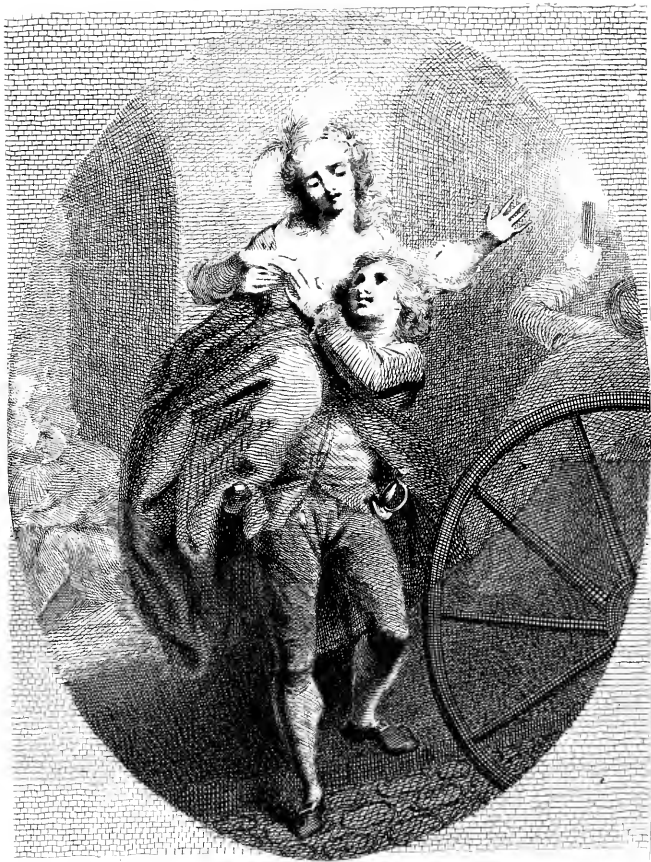
IN FIVE VOLUMES.

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V O L. I.

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BELLAMY'S APOLOGY. VOL. I.

*Excerpt from Covent Garden Theatre*

T O

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

GEORGE AUGUSTUS PRINCE OF WALES,

S I R,

**T**HE distinguished honour to be thought worthy the notice of royalty, transcends my most ambitious hopes; and adds, if possible, to my respect and duty.

HUMANITY is the characteristick of the Royal House of Brunswick. And as it was my happiness, it still is my boast, that I have been honoured with the favour of your Royal Grandfather and his illustrious Consort.—How then must my heart be elated at being likewise honoured by the patronage of the most distinguished of our gracious Sovereign's progeny.

I AM at a loss to express my sensibility at your Royal Highness's condescension in accepting of this address, after hearing that I was favoured with your noble preceptor's permission to lay my poor work at his feet.—But li-

beral feelings are implanted in your bosom; which shew that you inherit the virtues of your Royal Parents.

As words are too poor to express my gratitude for this high honour, I shall beg leave to add, that this distinguished mark of your Royal Highness's goodness has made me the happiest of women; and shall ever remain, with the profoundest respect,

YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS'S,

Most obedient,

and ever obliged

humble servant,

G. A. BELLAMY.



TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF MONTAGUE.

S I R,

**W**ITH a mind that overflows with gratitude, I solicited the honour of laying this Work at your feet—And the happiness of being thought worthy of his Grace of Montague's patronage, is too flattering not to excite in me a wish to make it known.—But in attempting to address you, I find myself, like Phæton, unequal to the task, and justly punished for my presumption.

To address your Grace in terms befitting the occasion, would require the masterly pen of a DRYDEN. And even that would prove inadequate, were it not actuated by a heart impressed with the gratitude, admiration, and respect, which mine glows with. You, my Lord, who are blest with the sentiments of a TITUS, and who were born to make the wretched happy, will, I flatter

ter

ter myself forgive the ambition which prompted me to request this honour.

WHEN I first had the happiness of being noticed by your noble consort, my youthful heart was elated with transport; as the being honoured with the approbation of a lady of the most refined taste, the most distinguished judgment, every mental accomplishment, together with every virtue, convinced me that I was not totally undeserving of it. From this epocha I date my theatrical advancement. The success I met with, I was greatly indebted to her Ladyship's patronage for. She stamped the effigy which made me appear sterling.

BUT it is not in my power to enumerate the favours I have received from your Grace's family. Particularly from Lord Brudenell, of whom I have often spoken with gratitude in the course of my "Apology." The numberless marks of approbation I have been honoured with by such distinguished characters, gives me a merit with myself; and I cannot esteem myself un-  
happy

happy, even in my distress, as it has procured me the honour of your Grace's notice.

THE many tokens I have received of your munificence were doubly inhan-  
ced by the worth of the elevated giver ;  
whose virtues enoble all titles. The  
Earl of Cardigan could receive no addi-  
tion to his honours from a ducal cor-  
onet.—Permit me, my Lord, to unite  
my prayers with the numerous indi-  
gents who are daily fed by your boun-  
ty, and who lift up their hearts to  
bless you.—Long, long may your Grace  
be happy in the esteem of your royal  
master—be revered by your illustrious  
pupil—be admired by the good—and  
adored by the unfortunate—and may  
your amiable progeny, for ages show  
themselves worthy of such a sire.

THE sensations of gratitude with  
which my bosom glows, are too great  
for language to express. And this last  
honour you have conferred upon me,  
in permitting me thus publicly to ad-  
dress you, expands my heart with plea-  
sure ;

sure; as it assures me of your Grace's continued patronage.

IF I am fortunate enough to afford some entertainment, by the perusal of the following pages, to the person I most respect on earth, it will give me inexpressible satisfaction. The unhappy life I lay before your Grace, has no other merit than the truth of the facts which are therein recited. I have not the presumption to impose myself as an authoreis: nor should I ever have attempted to appear in print, had I not been stimulated by repeated calumnies, which have been heaped upon me, and which would not suffer me to rest, even in indigence and obscurity.

COULD I have published the letter annexed to my "Apology," as I proposed, some years ago, I flatter myself I should have appeared in a more eligible point of view than I have done. My errors, whatever they have been, will I hope be viewed with lenity, and my misfortunes be pitied, by your Grace; who, *though spotless yourself,* possess a  
heart.

heart, which feels compassion for the faulty, and a soul to relieve their distresses.

FROM my earliest days have I been taught to look up to your Grace as a being of a superior nature to the most elevated race of mortals. Long before I could suppose I should be so eminently honoured with your bounty, have I held you in this distinguished estimation. And often have I heard the noble Lord that adopted me, declare, that his Grace of Montague was one of the *wittiest* men breathing, but his son-in-law the *best*.

I ACKNOWLEDGE that I can only boast of one claim to your Grace's favour, and that is founded on my *sincerity*; which has been an inmate in my bosom from my cradle. And with this assurance I flatter myself your Grace will do me the honour to believe, that I have neither aggravated my injuries, nor attempted to extenuate my faults.

HAD I the power to express my sensibility for the many favours bestowed  
upon

upon me, I would attempt to convey to your Grace my public acknowledgements; but I humbly trust you will accept the tribute of a *grateful* heart, which, whilst it beats, will be, with the profoundest respect,

YOUR GRACE'S,

Most humble,

most obliged,

and most obedient servant,

G. A. BELLAMY.

A N  
A P O L O G Y  
F O R T H E  
L I F E  
O F  
G E O R G E A N N E B E L L A M Y.

---

L E T T E R I.

MRS. BELLAMY TO THE HON. MISS \_\_\_\_\_.

London, Sept. 20, 17—.

M A D A M,

I N compliance with the sollicitations of yourself and many other friends; and at the same time to rescue my character from the numerous falshoods which have been industriously propagated against it; I sit down to begin an apology for my life. Censurable I know my conduct has been, in many respects; I cannot however suppress the wish (for a wish naturally will arise in the mind, even of the most faulty) to exculpate myself from those censures which have no foundation in truth.

A review of many of the scenes I have gone through, and of the imprudences I

have committed, cannot fail of giving me pain; but as you have frequently expressed a desire to be informed of the minutest circumstances of my life, I will endeavour to recall to my memory every transaction worth recording, and lay them before you in a Series of Letters, continued as time and opportunity shall serve. By your means the extenuations which occur may be diffused through that circle whose good opinion I am anxious to regain; and having thus collected them for your inspection, I at some future period intend to lay them before the public. Happy shall I be, if the recapitulation of my errors and misfortunes should prove a beacon to warn the young and thoughtless of my own sex from the syren shore of vanity, dissipation, and illicit pleasures, of which remorse and misery, as I too sensibly feel, are the sure attendants.

I will hope from your friendship, that the prolixity unavoidable in the relation of such a number of events will not prove tiresome and disgusting to you. At the same time I must intreat that you will not examine this production of my pen with too critical an eye. The lenient hand of time has not yet been able to restore to my bosom that sweet tranquillity, which the unfortunate events of my life, and the corroding reflections resulting from my misconduct, have banished from it. Trusting, however,  
to



to your goodness, I will now enter on my history.

Though I shall not, as a celebrated author has done, write volumes before I bring myself into being, yet as I have reason to believe the calamities of my life originated from events which happened long before I was born, it will be necessary to recapitulate many circumstances relative to my family, which had their existence prior to that period. The writer of a wretched production, published in the year 1761, having, among innumerable falsehoods concerning myself, presumed to mention my mother in terms of disrespect, I think it a duty incumbent on me to endeavour to rescue her memory from imputations she by no means deserves. This, consequently, renders it likewise needful to commence my narrative from the æra of her birth.

My mother was the daughter of an eminent farmer at Maidstone, in Kent, whose name was *Seal*. He was one of the people called Quakers; and from the produce of his hop-grounds, which were very extensive, arrived at length to such a degree of opulence, as to be enabled to purchase an estate near Tunbridge Wells, called *Mount Sion*. For some years he enjoyed in comfort the fruits of his industry; but happening, one evening during the autumn, to continue too late in his grounds, he caught a cold, which

bringing on a fever, in a few days put a period to his existence.

Though my grandfather, during his life, was remarkably active, and mindful of every concern necessary to the welfare of himself and family; yet, either from a mistaken notion, too common among persons of property, or from an unaccountable negligence upon this occasion, he could not be prevailed upon to make a will; so that the whole of his effects fell into the hands of his wife, without any provision being regularly made for my mother, who was now about four years old.

My grandmother, who was both young and beautiful, finding herself thus left a widow with only one child, and possessed of an independent fortune, thought there was no occasion for her to carry on the extensive concerns of her late husband, which would be attended with great care and fatigue. She therefore disposed of all the property at Maidstone, and removed to Tunbridge Wells; and having furnished her houses there in an elegant manner, let them, during the season, to persons of the first distinction.

She was no sooner settled in her new place of residence, than her beauty and fortune attracted the attention of all the unmarried young men in the neighbourhood, particularly of those who professed the same religious

religious principles. She, however, withstood all their attacks for upwards of two years. But at length, unfortunately for herself and her daughter, she gave her hand to a person of the name of *Busby*. Mr. Busby was a builder of some eminence, and considered by the world as a man in affluent circumstances; and so high an opinion had my grandmother formed of his honour and integrity, during his courtship, that she imprudently married him, without reserving to herself, or child, by any written agreement, the least part of her fortune. She received from him, indeed, the most solemn assurances, that they should both be liberally provided for; but she too soon had reason to repent of her want of prudence.

Among the persons of quality who occupied occasionally my grandmother's houses; was the Honourable Mrs. Godfrey, Mistress of the Jewel Office, and sister to the great Duke of Marlborough. With this lady a daughter of Mr. Busby's, by a former marriage, lived as her own attendant; and so great an esteem had she contracted, during her residence at Tunbridge, for my grandmother, and fondness for my mother, that she offered to bring up the latter, and have her educated in every respect the same as her own daughter, Miss Godfrey. My grandmother, however, having at this time no reason to doubt but that her child was amply

provided for, politely declined the offer, but agreed, that upon Mrs. Godfrey's return to town for the winter, she should accompany, and spend three or four months, with her.

That season being now come, Mrs. Godfrey set out for London; and, upon her arrival, heard that her noble brother was given over by his physicians. But having been for some time at variance with the Duchess, on account of her exposing, though reduced to a state of second childhood, the man who had rendered himself so famous; an imprudence which deservedly gave offence to Mrs. Godfrey; she had not the satisfaction of seeing him before he died. Here I must add, that the Duchess of Marlborough, much to her discredit, used to take the Duke with her in the coach, whenever she went abroad, even upon the most trivial occasions; exhibiting as a public spectacle, the hero who had lately kept nations in awe, and whose talents in the cabinet were equal to his valour and military knowledge in the field.---Good Heavens! such a *ruin* must surely have excited the most poignant grief in the most unfeeling breast

Mrs. Godfrey was prevented by this disagreement from paying a visit herself at Marlborough-house, to condole with her sister-in-law on the loss their family and the  
nation

nation had sustained. Having, however, an inclination to know how things were conducted there, she sent her woman, Mr. Busby's daughter, to make what inquiries she could: and the latter, overcome by the importunities of her little step-sister, who had attended Mrs. Godfrey to town as proposed, was accompanied by her to see the remains of the Duke lie in state.

When they arrived at the gate of Marlborough-house they found it open, but, to their infinite surprize, met not a living creature during their passage to the room in which the body was deposited. So totally was this incomparable man neglected in the last stage of his mortal exhibition, that not a single attendant, or one glimmering taper, remained about him as tokens of respectful attention. My mother and her companion were obliged to the day-light alone for the faint view they obtained of the funeral decorations.

The melancholy and disrespectful scene she had just been witness to, was no sooner described to Mrs. Godfrey by her woman, than it had such an effect upon her as to occasion a long and severe illness; which at length reduced her to such a state, that had she experienced the same neglectful treatment her brother had done, she must have been buried alive. For one Sunday, fancying herself better than she had been for

some time, and able to go to chapel; as she was dressing for that purpose, she suddenly fell down to all appearance dead.

The screams of her woman and my mother brought Colonel Godfrey into the room; who, having probably seen instances of persons remaining in a state of insensibility for a considerable time and afterwards recovering, directed that his lady should be immediately put into bed, and that two persons should constantly continue with her, till indubitable symptoms appeared of her decease. The consequences proved, with how much judgment the Colonel had acted. Notwithstanding the opinion of the physicians, who all declared that the breath of life was irrecoverably departed; and in opposition to the solicitations of his friends to have the body interred, he continued resolute in his determination till the Sunday following; when, exactly at the same hour on which the change had happened, signs appeared of returning sensibility. So punctual was nature in her operations upon this singular occasion, that Mrs. Godfrey awoke from her trance just as the chapel bell was once more ringing; which so perfectly eradicated from her memory every trace of her insensibility, that she blamed her attendants for not awaking her in time to go to church, as she had proposed to do. Colonel Godfrey, whose tenderness to his lady was unre-

mitted,

mitted, taking advantage of this incident, prudently gave orders that she should by no means be made acquainted with what had happened, lest it should make a melancholy impression on her mind. And I believe to the day of her death she remained ignorant of it.

Had I not heard the foregoing story frequently repeated by my mother, I own I should have had some doubt of the credibility of it, as it is of so extraordinary a nature; but as I could depend upon her veracity, I can take upon me to assure you of the truth of it. What a dreadful situation must the poor lady have been in, but for her husband's resolution! I shudder at the very thought of it; as I doubt not but you also do, whilst you are reading the account. I shall therefore take the opportunity of concluding my letter; and am, with assurances of the most perfect gratitude and respect,

Madam,

Your obliged and obedient Servant,

G. A. B.

L E T T E R II.

MRS. BELLAMY IN CONTINUATION.

September 24, 17—.

MADAM,

**I** SHALL now return to the concerns of my own family.—In a short time after the foregoing incident happened, my grandmother found, to her inexpressible concern,

B 5

that

that she had united herself to a person who had greatly deceived her with respect to his circumstances. Instead of Mr. Busby's being possessed of the property the world supposed he had, he was so greatly involved in debt, that all my grandmother's effects were seized by his creditors. So that not having taken the necessary precautions to secure a maintenance for herself and daughter, before her marriage, she was now left destitute of every means of support.

This reverse of fortune induced her to accept with thankfulness of the generous offer Mrs. Godfrey had lately made her; and she esteemed herself happy in finding so respectable an asylum for her child. But however flattering the prospect at that time appeared, from this period have I too much reason to date the commencement of my mother's misfortunes, and consequently of my own; for being now removed from under the parental eye of my grandmother, she became liable to all the arts and temptations youth and beauty are continually exposed to.

As soon as Mrs. Godfrey received my grandmother's permission, she placed my mother at a boarding-school in Queen's-Square, where her own daughter was educated; and here she remained till she arrived at the age of fourteen, when she unfortunately attracted the notice of Lord Trawley. This nobleman, who was in the bloom



bloom of life, and as celebrated for his gallantry as for his wit, courage, and other accomplishments, meeting accidentally with my mother, whilst she was upon a visit, was struck with her beauty, and was determined if possible to gain possession of it. And as my mother on her part was equally captivated with his assiduous addresses, and found her vanity gratified by receiving the devoirs of a person of his consequence; it is no wonder that, young and inexperienced as she was, his Lordship at length succeeded in his designs. Her heart soon yielding to the soft impulse, there needed not many intreaties to induce her to elope from school. She accordingly seized the first favourable opportunity, and leaving the protection of her kind patroness, sought for happiness in the arms of her lover.

Lord Tyrawley having been so far successful, he carried his fair prize to his own apartments in Somerset-house, where she was treated with the same respect as if she had really been Lady Tyrawley. This honour he had frequently promised before her elopement to confer upon her, and he still continued to assure her that he would fulfil his engagements. Lulled therefore into security by these promises, by her own affection, and by his increasing fondness, she assumed his Lordship's name, and vainly imagined herself to be as truly his wife as if the nuptial knot had been indissolubly tyed.

B 6

And

*See the Scots Magazine for 1763 vol. 25 page 301*

And in this pleasing delirium, enhanced by all the splendor of nobility, my mother lived for several months. But as the wheel of fortune is seldom at a stand, she was now to experience a disagreeable change in her affairs. Lord Tyrawley was ordered to join his regiment in Ireland. And it became the more necessary that he should obey the order, as his own private concerns in that kingdom required his inspection. I will not pretend to describe the pangs the lovers felt upon this occasion. I shall observe that his Lordship tore himself away with the utmost reluctance, and left my mother in a state little short of distraction.

On his arrival in Ireland, Lord Tyrawley found his affairs in a very different situation from what he expected. The steward, who had the management of his estates, had taken advantage of his Lordship's absence and inattention, and enriched himself at his master's expence. So that instead of finding a very considerable balance in his steward's hands, as he had always concluded there was, he had the mortification to learn that he was greatly involved in debt; and as he had lived in an expensive stile, the whole of his debts amounted to an enormous sum. How to extricate himself from these difficulties was the question. The only resource which presented itself to his Lordship, was that of marrying a lady with a fortune sufficient to disentangle him. But to this his  
attach-

attachment to my mother appeared an irremovable bar. He was convinced that she loved him too well to object to a step which could only preserve him from ruin; yet as he knew at the same time the violence of her temper, he dreaded to make the proposal to her; and it was a long while before he could resolve upon doing what would be attended with a probability of losing her for ever.

The urgency of his affairs, however, at length requiring a speedy remedy, he looked round among the single ladies of fortune within the circle of his acquaintance, and fixed on Lady Mary Stewart, daughter of the Earl of Blessington, as a proper object for his addresses; her fortune being, according to public report, thirty thousand pounds; and that Lady having been heard to declare a partiality for him. She could not, indeed, boast of her charms. Her person, however, was genteel, and what was infinitely more to be prized, she was endowed with as engaging a disposition as ever woman was blest with. Alas! how hard must be her lot, to be united to a man, whose attachment to another would render him insensible of her merit!

Whilst the courtship was carrying on, the father of the Lady, naturally anxious for his daughter's happiness, examined minutely into whatever concerned his intended son-in-law; and having heard much of his connection with my mother, his Lordship wrote her a polite letter, requesting to know from  
her

her the nature of it; giving her at the same time his reasons for such an enquiry.

When my mother, or Lady Tyrawley as she was then called, received Lord Blessington's letter, she was not quite recovered from the weakness attendant on a lying-in; so that she was the less able to cope with the heart-rending information it conveyed; and she resigned herself totally to the impulse of her rage. The violence of her passion got the better of her affection, and, without listening to the dictates of prudence, she inclosed Lord Blessington every letter she had received from her lover. Among these was one she had just received by the same post, and which, as she had not broken it open, she sent unopened. In this letter Lord Tyrawley had informed her of the distressed situation of his affairs, and consequently of the sad necessity there was for his marrying some lady of fortune, to extricate him from his difficulties. He added that he should stay no longer with his intended wife than was necessary to receive her fortune, when he would immediately fly on the wings of love to share it with her. That, though another had his hand, she alone possessed his heart, and was his real wife in the sight of heaven. That, in order to testify the truth of what he advanced, he had made choice of Lady Mary Stewart, who was both ugly and foolish, in preference to one with an equal fortune, who was both beautiful and sensible;

ble; left an union with a more agreeable person might be the means of decreasing his affection for her.

With what indignation must the Earl of Blessington receive such incontrovertible proofs of Lord Tyrawley's perfidy! He was so exasperated against him, that he immediately forbade his daughter, on pain of his severest displeasure, ever to see or write to her perfidious lover again. But his injunctions came too late; for they had been already united in connubial bonds, without the Earl's knowledge or consent.

Lord Tyrawley now found himself the victim of his own unwarrantable duplicity. Disappointed of receiving the fortune which had been the sole inducement for his marrying, and united to a woman he hated, he was truly miserable. Being, however, determined to get rid of his lady at all events, he insisted on a separation; and immediately solicited the Minister to be sent to the court of Lisbon in a public character. This was readily granted him; as no one was better qualified for such an important employment than his Lordship, not only on account of his being a perfect master of the Portuguese language, but from the brilliancy of his parts, and political knowledge, which were scarcely equalled by any of his competitors.

At the time of his separation from his Lady, Lord Tyrawley settled eight hundred pounds

pounds a year upon her, and she went to reside in the very apartments in Somerset-house my mother had lately occupied. That poor dear woman no sooner heard of the marriage of her beloved lord, than distracted at the thought, she immediately hastened from a place which must continually remind her of her lost happiness, and disappointed expectations; leaving behind her all the plate, and other presents, the fondness of the most generous of men had bestowed upon her; as she was determined to take nothing with her that should bring to her memory her faithless perjured paramour. Having brought my mother to this reversed period of her fortune, lest I tire you with too long an epistle, I will here put an end to it. Believe me to be,

Madam, &c. &c.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R III.

MRS. BELLAMY IN CONTINUATION.

Sept. 17, 17—

MADAM,

**I** Concluded my last letter with an account of my mother's leaving her apartments at Somerset-house, in all the agonies of despair and resentment. It happened fortunately for her, that a relation, in consideration of my

my

my grandmother's contracted circumstances, had some time before left her as a legacy a house, situated in great Queen-street, Lincoln's-inn-fields. In this house my grandmother now resided, and by letting out part of it, together with some assistance she received from her good friend Mrs. Godfrey, procured for her self a decent subsistence. Though she had not seen her daughter since her elopement, and was much displeas'd with her for her imprudent conduct, yet in such a trying moment she could not refuse her admittance beneath her roof. My mother accordingly now made this her abode.

Whilst she had resided at Somerset-house and lived in splendor, one of the principal actresses belonging to Drury-lane Theatre, whose name was Butler, had applied to her to solicit her interest on her benefit night. An intimacy thereupon commenced between them; and during Lord Tyrawley's absence in Ireland, Mrs. Butler had frequently spent many days with my mother at her apartments. As my mother had made this lady her confidante during her more prosperous state, she now imparted to her the situation of her finances, and expectations, and consulted her on the measures she should pursue for her future maintenance.

Mrs. Butler finding there was but little probability, from her friend's present irritated mind, that her connection with Lord Tyrawley

Tyrawley would ever be renewed, advised her to take to the profession she herself followed. Tho' my mother's person was tall, her figure striking, and she possessed no small share of beauty, yet from an unanimated formality which appeared about her, probably from her associating in the early part of her life with the Quakers, no very sanguine hopes were to be entertained of her succeeding on the stage. However, overcome by the earnest solicitations and flattering representations of Mrs. Butler, she fixed on that track to obtain a future provision.

The London Theatres at that time not seeming to promise an advantageous engagement, it was thought most adviseable that my mother should go over to Ireland; where there was great reason to expect that she would meet with support from Lord Tyrawley's friends, many of whom had been introduced to her whilst she resided at Somerset-house. This then she determined on; and leaving the son she had lately brought into the world to the care of her mother, undertook an expedition, which even when attended with every convenience is not over agreeable—alone, friendless, unprotected, and almost broken-hearted.

When she arrived in Dublin, she was received with considerable applause. But her success seems to have been more owing to the people of that kingdom not being *then* accustomed



accustomed to capital performers, than to the brilliancy of my mother's theatrical powers. She, however, continued there for several years, performing the first characters, with some degree of reputation; but a disagreement arising, at length, between the proprietors of the theatre and herself, she determined to leave that city.

After deliberating some time upon the course she should now steer, she on a sudden formed the strange and unaccountable resolution of embarking for Portugal, in order to renew her affectionate intimacy with Lord Tyrawley. His Lordship, during her residence in Ireland, had repeatedly wrote to her, inviting her in the warmest terms, and conjuring her by that tenderness which had once mutually subsisted between them, to come to him: but finding his solicitations ineffectual, he had long since forborne them. In this dilemma, however, they occurred to my mother in their full force, awakened that love which had only lain dormant in her bosom, and pointed out the course she should pursue.

Notwithstanding my mother's just refusal of Lord Tyrawley's repeated invitations, and notwithstanding her betraying him to the Earl of Blessington, had been the sole cause of his Lordship's long absence from his native country; yet she was received by him, on her arrival at Lisbon, with the warmest transports.

ports. But unluckily a circumstance had happened which made her presence much less agreeable now, than it would have been at the time he pressed her so fervently to come over to him. Disappointed in his hopes of renewing his connection with her, he had entered into one with a Portuguese lady, named *Donna Anna*; whom he had seduced from her patroness, the lady of the unfortunate Comte d'Olivarez. This being now his Lordship's situation, and of which, on account of the violence of my mother's temper, he did not care to inform her; he placed her in the family of an English merchant, where she was treated with the greatest civility and respect.

Here she remained for some time in a state of perfect tranquillity, nothing transpiring relative to his Lordship's new flame to disturb her peace of mind. But, as I have before observed, the wheel of fortune is continually revolving; and my mother's happiness was not to be permanent. An English gentleman, by name Bellamy, came one day to pay a visit to the merchant in whose house she was placed; when struck with her charms, and unacquainted with her situation, the Captain became so enamoured with her, that he solicited her to accept of his hand. This she repeatedly refused, without discovering her reasons for so doing.

As

As the offer was far from a disadvantageous one, Captain Bellamy concluded that some other attachment could alone prevent its being accepted; and, as jealousy is eagle-eyed, he fixed on Lord Tyrawley, whom he observed to come sometimes to his friend's house, as the obstacle to his success. Not, indeed, that he could suppose that any thing more than an allowable friendship subsisted between his Lordship and my mother, his visits being neither long nor frequent. Captain Bellamy could not, however, forbear hinting his apprehensions; which brought on a conversation, in which he discovered to her his Lordship's connection with *Donna Anna*, and, as an unpleasing appendix, informed her that the lady was then lying in with her second child by him.

Rage and resentment against Lord Tyrawley once more took possession of my mother's bosom; and effected what Captain Bellamy's most strenuous solicitations were not equal to. Without allowing herself a moment's reflection, she consented to give her hand to him; and as soon as the nuptial benediction was pronounced, set off with him for Ireland, to which kingdom the ship he commanded was bound, and then ready to sail. All this was executed with so much expedition and secrecy, that his Lordship, though in such a public capacity, was not  
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made acquainted with it till they had left Lisbon.

In a few months after the arrival of Captain Bellamy and his new married lady at the place of their destination, to the inexpressible astonishment and dissatisfaction of the former, I made my appearance on this habitable globe. My mother had so carefully concealed her pregnancy, and her connection with Lord Tyrawley, from her husband, that he had not entertained the least suspicion of her incontinence. My birth, however, discovered the whole; and so exasperated was the Captain at her duplicity, that he immediately left the kingdom, and never after either saw or corresponded with her.

Having now informed you with how little applause I made my first entrance on the stage of life, I shall defer any further account of my subsequent appearances till I write again, which I purpose doing in a few days. Till when I remain, Madam, &c.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R   I V .

October, 2, 1733.

**I** WAS born on St. George's day, 1733, some months too soon for Captain Bellamy to claim any degree of consanguinity with me. As soon as Lord Tyrawley had gained

gained intelligence, after my mother's departure from Lisbon, of the place of her destination; he wrote to his adjutant, Captain Pye, who resided near Fingal, the town where she had settled, to request, if she should prove pregnant in time to conclude it was the effect of her visit to his Lordship, that his Lady would take the infant under her care as soon as it was born, without suffering my mother, if possible, to see it. This severe injunction of his Lordship's proceeded from his entertaining a belief, that her sudden retreat from Lisbon was not in consequence of her having formed an honourable connection with Captain Bellamy, but through the natural depravity of her passions, and the fickleness of her disposition. I was, therefore, agreeable to his Lordship's directions, taken from my mother soon after my birth, and put under the care of a nurse, with whom I continued till I was two years old. At that time the regiment returning to barracks in Dublin, Mrs. Pye, whose kindness I shall never forget, and whose memory I shall ever revere, took me from the nurse, and carried me with her.

Here, madam, I must beg leave to entertain you with an anecdote of my nurse, which exhibits such a proof of the attachment and fidelity of the lower class of the Irish, as does them infinite honour. It  
never

never occurs to my mind, but it excites the tenderest sensations; and I should deem myself ungrateful in the extreme, were I not always to mention her name with respect.

It happened that the summer, in the midst of which I was taken from the care of my foster-mother, was uncommonly hot. Notwithstanding this, so excessive was the good woman's affection for me, that she walked *every day* from the village in which she lived, to the barracks, which were three miles distant, and with a child sucking at her breast. The intense heat, united with the affliction she felt at my being taken from her, had such an effect upon her constitution, that it brought on an inflammatory fever, which put an end to her life. It is a custom in many parts of Ireland, to convey the remains of the dead to those for whom, whilst living, they appeared to have the sincerest regard; and the custom was not neglected upon the decease of my worthy nurse. Captain Pye's servants having risen one morning, upon some occasion or other, earlier than usual, and left the street door open; as I lay in bed, I heard my foster-father's voice audibly uttering what is vulgarly called the Irish howl. *Ab! why did you die?* with all its plaintive eloquence, distinctly reached my ear. Alarmed at the well known sound, I hastily leaped out of bed, and ran almost naked into the street; where,

where, to my great grief even at that early age, I found the lamentation now become universal around the body of my poor nurse, whose affection for me had cost her her life—Why, O thou great disposer of events! why was I born to be the cause of unhappiness, and even death to those who really loved me; whilst thy inscrutable decrees have made me subservient to those, whose vows “were false as dicer’s oaths,” and whose views were only the promotion of their own pleasure or interest?

When I had nearly obtained the age of four years, Captain Pye received directions from Lord Tyrawley to send me to France for education. His Lordship had been intimate with the unfortunate Colonel Frazer in his youthful days. And though their political principals were diametrically opposite, humanity induced him to make some provision for the Colonel’s only daughter, who was now left an orphan and destitute of support. True philanthropy will not suffer a difference either in political or religious principles to restrain its dictates.

This young lady, who was somewhat older than myself, and very amiable both in person and disposition, was fixed on by Lord Tyrawley to be my companion to France; and Mrs. Pye attended us herself to London, in order to equip us with such necessaries as

we wanted, and to enquire out the most eligible convent in which to place us.

Whilst we were in London, the maid servant who had the care of me, seeing my mother's name in the play bills of Covent Garden Theatre, imagined she should not be an unacceptable visiter, if she took me to pay my respects to her. She accordingly enquired where my mother lodged; and, without asking her mistress's consent, led me to her. We were instantly ushered up stairs, where we found my mother in a genteel dress. Though I was too young to experience any attraction from her beauty, yet her fine cloaths pleased me much, and I ran towards her with great freedom. But what concern did my little heart feel, when she rudely pushed me from her, and I heard her exclaiming, after viewing me with attention for some moments, "My God! what have you brought me here? this goggle-eyed, splatter-faced, \* gabbart-mouthed wretch, is not my child! take her away!" I had been so accustomed to endearments, that I was the more sensibly affected at this unexpected salutation, and I went away as much disgusted with my mother as she could be with me.

Mrs. Pye having prevailed upon Mrs. Dunbar, an Irish lady who lived at Boulogne, to take Miss Frazer and myself under her

\* A coal boat is so called in Ireland.



her protection, we accompanied her to France. Strict orders were given that I should not be contradicted, and that if I disliked one convent, we should be removed to another. The money necessary for our support was to be remitted to Mr. Smith, a wine merchant in that town, to whom the same injunctions were given.

On our arrival at Boulogne we were placed in the convent of the *Nunciats*, situated in the lower town. We had not been there long, before a nun was immured between the walls, the punishment usually inflicted on those of the sisters who unfortunately break their vow of chastity. The infliction of this horrid punishment affected Miss Frazer so much, and the dirtiness of the convent was so intolerably offensive, even to me, though but a child, that we determined to get removed. We accordingly applied to Mrs. Smith for this purpose, who in a short time came and conducted us to the convent of the *Ursulines* in the upper town. On mentioning the name of the convent, even at this distant period, I cannot help exclaiming, “ dear, happy, “ much regretted mansion! thou sweet “ abode of tranquillity and delight! how “ supremely blessed should I have been, “ had I remained till this hour within thy “ sacred walls !”

Here we continued till I had attained the

eleventh year of my age; when the mandate, the dreadful mandate arrived, which bid us prepare for our return. With what heart-felt pangs did I receive it! Having no knowledge of the nobleman to whom I was indebted for my being and subsistence; and the contemptuous manner in which my mother had treated me still dwelling on my remembrance; I had not the least desire to see either of them. To stay in the convent, and still to be accompanied by my much-loved Maria, was the utmost of my wishes. The whole community, indeed, the sisters as well as the pensioners, treated me with great kindness. But one of the nuns perfectly idolized me. When I took my leave of her, my feelings were such as I am not able to describe. Their pungency was far beyond what a girl of my age could be supposed to experience. I have often thought they were a sure presage of the miseries which have attended me through life; not only such as have arisen from my own indiscretions, but those which owe their foundation to the complicated machinations of the worst of men. The former I shall recite in the following part of my narrative, without attempting to palliate, or excuse them, satisfied that nothing but the sincerest contrition will now avail. The latter I shall give an account of with the strictest regard to candour and truth; and whilst I forgive,  
which

which Christianity bids me do, I shall not spare.

Being now about to take my leave of France, and, at the same time, of the happy age of puerility, innocence, and peace, I shall at this regretted æra put an end to my letter, with only assuring you that I shall ever be, through every stage of my life,

Madam,

Your ever grateful,

G. A. B.

L E T T E R V.

October 15, 17—

**W**HEN we arrived at Dover we were met by a person named Du Vall, who had once been a domestic of Lord Tyrawley's. He now kept a peruke maker's shop in St. James's-street; and with him we were to reside, till his Lordship's return from Portugal, which was every day expected. Mrs. Du Vall, his wife, was a lively, agreeable French woman, much younger than her husband, and of a rather too gay a disposition for his tranquillity. Near Mr. Du Vall lived a person whose name was Jones. He had formerly been a cutler, but at the solicitation of his wife he had opened a china and bigout shop. From the vicinity of their residence,

an intimacy had commenced between Mrs. Du Vall and Mrs. Jones, and there was a perfect sociability between the families.

The latter was the daughter of an eminent apothecary in Westminster, who had given her what is generally termed a *gentle* education: that is, she was well versed in the fashions, and in the amusements, of the fashionable world; she spoke bad French, and could invent, with great facility, additions to the lye of the day. She had a good address, and abounded in what is usually denominated small talk. She understood the art of flattery so well as to be able to charm her female customers; and of coquetry, sufficient to captivate the men. With these advantages, it is not to be doubted but Mrs. Jones rendered her shop the resort of many respectable people. The variety of articles, engaging to a young mind, which were therein displayed, induced me to pay frequent visits to the mistress of it; who seemed much pleased with my vivacity.

During these visits, I became acquainted with most of the nobility that frequented the shop. In particular, I formed an intimacy with three ladies of quality, two of whom honoured me with their friendship to the latest periods of their lives. These were Lady Caroline Fitzroy, the Honourable Miss Conway, and Miss St. Leger,

Leger. The first, to whom I acknowledge I have lain under many obligations, has cancelled them all, by doing me the injustice to believe me capable of speaking something disrespectful of her ladyship. Her thus giving ear to the tongue of slander has prevented me from ever wishing to renew the intimacy with which she once favoured me. As I have made it an invariable rule never to hear any thing spoken in company to the disadvantage even of a common acquaintance, without endeavouring to vindicate them, (thinking it would greatly lessen me to be considered as the companion of any person of whom I entertained an unfavourable opinion,) is it to be supposed I should speak ill of one to whom I was greatly obliged, and had always highly esteemed? A conscientiousness of not having deserved her ladyship's displeasure has supported me under it. And were all those of my own sex who are prone to speak slightingly of others upon ill-grounded reports, to curb this propensity, I can assure them they would reap inexpressible satisfaction from doing so.—Pardon, my dear madam, this digression; as one of the company, you are excepted, you know, from any implied censure.

At length the long wished for hour of Lord Tyrawley's arrival in England was announced to Miss Frazer and myself. Upon our going to Stratton-street, where his

Lordship had taken up his residence, he received us both in the tenderest manner, but with regard to myself, he seemed to enjoy such heart-felt pleasure at the interview, that I was charmed with my reception. Donna Anna's satisfaction at seeing me was far, very far short of his Lordship's. Nor was this to be wondered at, as she had several children of her own, and consequently dreaded so formidable a rival in his Lordship's favour, as I was likely to prove. But her malevolent shafts were aimed at me through my beloved friend, to whom she was continually showing marks of her dislike. Her cunning dictating to her that his Lordship would not suffer any person to treat me ill, with impunity, she took this method to give me pain. And she could not have pursued a more effectual one.

As I was at that time, and have ever since been steady in my attachments, I could not bear to see my Maria treated thus unkindly. I therefore used my interest with his Lordship to remove us from a place that was become disagreeable to me on more accounts than one. For though my Lord lived in all the splendour a person of his rank is intitled to, and indeed much beyond his income; yet his house had much more the appearance of a Turkish seraglio than the mansion of an English nobleman. To this may be added that the gloom and hypocri-  
pocri-  
fify

pocrisy which were constantly visible on the countenance of his *taverny dulcinea*, rendered it far from agreeable to a young creature whose spirits were, probably, too volatile. For these reasons I prevailed upon his Lordship to place us at Mrs. Jones's in St. James's-street; where, as he spent much of his time at White's Chocolate-house, he called in upon us sometimes twice a day.

Here we found ourselves very comfortably situated. But that comfort was not to be of long duration. I now began to experience the vicissitudes of fortune. For we had resided but a short time at our new abode, before I lost my much-loved companion Miss Frazer. She was seized with the measles; and, notwithstanding every care, fell a victim to that disorder. Though this young lady was some years older than myself, and of a more serious disposition, yet the regard she had always shown me was so tender and affectionate, and so indulgent was she to my flights of fancy, as she used to term them, that whilst I loved her as a friend, I revered her as a parent.

There is, I believe, no impression that affects so strongly a young mind as the supposition of being dear to another. Though originating merely from self-love, it incites a reciprocation. The very idea that you are pleasing, stimulates you to render yourself really so, even though there be not that

similarity of manners and disposition on which an union of souls is usually founded.

My grief for the loss of this amiable young lady was so excessive, that it endangered my health; and for some time it was apprehended that I should go into a decline. Upon this account Lord Tyrawley took a little box in Bushy Park, to which in a few days we removed. The family now consisted of his Lordship, Donna Anna, three girls all by different mothers, and myself. The boys were previously sent to Mary-lebone school, and my own brother was at sea.

My Lord's fondness for me now knew no bounds. He not only thought he perceived in my features the perfect resemblance of his own, but he flattered himself that, with the aid of due cultivation, I should likewise inherit his wit, which was universally allowed to be really brilliant.

Not long after we were at Bushy Park, Donna Anna having had the impudence to assume the title of Lady Tyrawley, during a party of pleasure in which she and the three young ladies were engaged, his Lordship was so much offended thereat, that he ordered them all to return to town. So that I now had the happiness of his Lordship's company for six days in the week entirely to myself. On the remaining day, (Saturday) he was always of his late Majesty's private party



ty to Richmond. He usually returned to town the same evening, and came to Busby the next day.

The company his Lordship brought with him, which were chiefly the witty and the gay, soon perceived, that to make their court to him, they must be lavish in their praises of me. Accordingly, I became the object of their admiration, and was made to believe, that I was actually a phenomenon. Till encouraged by the flattery I daily received, I was weak enough to conceit that I was blessed with talents which dame Nature had never bestowed upon me. Oh, flattery! delusive charm! how great is thy power, and how pernicious are thy effects! Even the old cannot withstand thy influence; how then shall the young? Open, generous, free as air, incapable of deceit, and believing others as sincere as they appear to be; easily do such fall victims to thy bewitching arts. The vanity and conceit thou art the cause of, leave a lasting impression on the mind, and too often taint the whole future life. Most carefully then should our sex guard against the insinuating venom.

With this reflection, the justice of which I doubt not, Madam, but you will readily admit, I shall conclude my letter. And in my next propose to entertain you with a laughable instance of humbled vanity.

## LETTER VI.

October 28, 17—.

LORD Tyrawley having prohibited my reading *Cassandra*, the only romance in his library, and on which a girl of my age and lively disposition would naturally have first laid her hands, preferring poetry to history, I endeavoured to learn Pope's Homer by rote. In this I made such proficiency, that in a short time I could repeat the first three books. When I thought myself sufficiently perfect, I languished to be introduced to the incomparable author of them; not doubting but he would be as much charmed with my manner of repeating "*The wrath of Peleus' son*," as I myself was.

It was not till after I had frequently solicited Lord Tyrawley upon this head, that he would listen to my request. At length, however, he consented, and we set off together for Twickenham. As I rode along, the suggestions of vanity overpowered every apprehension; and I was not a little elated, when I reflected on the conspicuous figure I was about to make. The carriage stopped at the door. We were introduced to this little *great man*. But before I had time to collect *myself*, or examine *him*, Mr. Pope rang the bell for his housekeeper, and directed her to take *Miss*, and show her the gardens,

gardens, and give her as much fruit as she chose to eat.

How shall I find words to express the mortification I felt upon this occasion! It is not in the power of language to describe the true situation of my mind, on finding my vanity thus humbled. It is to be supposed I was not very complaisant to the old lady. But she did not long attend me; for we had scarcely got into the gardens, before she pretended business, and left me to admire them, and eat fruit by myself.

I was not in the least displeas'd at the house-keeper's abrupt departure, as it gave me leisure to meditate, and contrive some method of resenting so gross an affront offered to the *infant Dacier*. For no less a personage in the world of literature did I fancy that I should be, when my amazing powers had acquired perfection. At last I concluded to carry into execution the following plan of revenge: I determin'd never to read the cynic's translation of the *Illiad* again, but wholly to attach myself to Dryden's *Virgil*. My heart exulted in the thought; and I experienced those sweet sensations, which arise from the hopes of being amply revenged for insult. But whilst I was indulging myself in this pleasing reverie, I was inform'd that the carriage waited.

I hasten'd to it; and when I join'd Lord Tyrawley, found that he had prevail'd on  
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the Earl of Chesterfield, who had happened to come in just after my supposed disgrace, to accompany us to Bushy. That nobleman soon made me amends for the treatment I had just received, and removed the chagrin it had occasioned. The elegant praises of a Chesterfield transported my little heart, and atoned for the casual contempt of a Pope. They filled my bosom with inconceivable pleasure, and imprest upon my memory such a partiality for the bestower of them, as was never after eradicated. Indeed, the favourable opinion he honoured me with in my profession, was not a little flattering, and claimed my warmest gratitude.

In a short time after this, Lord Tyrawley was nominated ambassador to the court of Russia. Upon which occasion one of the ladies of quality before mentioned, desired Mrs. Jones, at whose shop I had first been honoured with her notice, to inform his Lordship, that she should be happy if he would permit me to reside with her during his absence. This was too great a favour to be declined. My Lord accordingly waited upon her Ladyship, to return her thanks for her condescending offer, and at the same time to mention to her, his prohibition against my seeing my mother.

That unhappy woman had lately married an officer, a son of Sir George Walter, quite a dissipated boy, young enough to be her  
own

own child. As this unnatural union had been dictated by passion, satiety and disgust soon followed; and her new husband left her to join his regiment, which was stationed at Gibraltar. But before he went off, he stripped her of every thing valuable she was possessed of, even to her apparel. This he took an opportunity of doing whilst my mother was at the theatre, and decorated with her cloaths, a woman that accompanied him abroad. Such generally are the consequences of an union founded solely on passion, especially where there is so great a disparity of years. By such an imprudent connection, the erring female draws on herself the contempt and ridicule of her own sex, and exposes herself to the licentious attacks of the other.

Whether the distressed situation my mother found herself in, from the depredations committed on her property by her faithless husband, induced her to wish to see me, that I might be the means of affording her some relief, or whether her maternal feelings received additional vigour from her present distresses, I will not pretend to determine; but she applied to the very servant who had formerly met with so rude a reception from her, and whom she accused of bringing to her a suppositious child, to intreat that I would come and reside with her. In doing this, she doubtless had a view to the hundred pounds which Lord Tyrawley annually allowed me  
for

for cloaths and other incidental expences, and for paying my maid-servant.

As humanity has ever been my ruling passion, I could not bear to think that my parent, although she had been unkind to me, was reduced to a state of poverty; afflicted with illness; and abandoned by the person who ought to have been her support and protector; without feeling an inclination to afford her all the assistance in my power. Listening, therefore, only to the duteous impulse, I took with me the small sum of money I happened to have by me, together with my watch, which was of considerable value, and a few other trinkets, and hastened to my mother's house, without even taking leave of the lady who had kindly protected me. I blush at the recollection; as her Ladyship certainly deserved a more grateful return. But tenderness for an afflicted parent suppressed, at that time, every other consideration.

My mother seemed to strive to make atonement for the slight she had formerly shown me, by every proof of indulgent fondness. This affectionate attention made me ample amends for the loss of that splendor and elegance I had just left; and I esteemed myself quite happy. The little money I had brought with me, was, however, but a temporary relief. When that was expended, my mother borrowed as much as she could upon

upon my watch and trinkets, in hopes that would supply our necessities till my quarter's salary was due. But when that wished for hour arrived, to our great mortification, we found that it would no longer be paid, on account of my removal. My mother now discovered, that instead of alleviating her own distresses, by enticing me to be with her, she had added two persons to her family, who were obliged to look up to her for support.

An opportunity presenting itself here, by my being about to enter on a new scene of life, for breaking off; lest I should tire you, as I have done myself, I shall lay down my pen, as soon as I have assured you that I am,

Madam, &c. &c.

G. A. B.

#### L E T T E R VII.

November 5, 17—

**H**OW blind are mortals to the future! and from what trivial and apparently accidental circumstances do the success or misfortunes of our lives originate! To intend for the best is all that lies in our power; the event depends on "that unseen hand which makes all our moves." Thus my imprudent removal from the protection of the noble patroness to whose care I had been

been committed by Lord Tyrawley, though the motive was in some measure allowable, as it proceeded from filial affection, laid the foundation of all those errors and subsequent misfortunes which have been my lot.—But to proceed with my narrative—

My mother had contracted an intimacy of the most friendly nature with a lady who was lately arrived from the East Indies, where her husband was then a Governor. This lady, whose name was Jackson, had come over to England for the education of her two daughters, and resided in Montpelier-row, Twickenham, on account of her ill state of health. She was generous to excess; a propensity which her husband enabled her to indulge, by allowing her a very considerable income. As illness prevented her from going out, or seeing much company, she invited my mother to pass the summer with her. My mother accepted the invitation, and at the conclusion of the season at the theatre, took me down with her. Upon our arrival I was introduced to the young ladies, who were about my own age, and who seemed to vie with each other to gain the first place in my affections.

As we were walking out one evening, we were overtaken by the late celebrated Mrs. Woffington. Having been at the same theatre in Dublin with my mother, she politely saluted.



saluted her, and seemed desirous of renewing the acquaintance which had once subsisted between them. My mother showing no reluctance on her part, Mrs. Woffington gave her a pressing invitation to spend some time with her sister at Teddington, to whose house she was then going; and desired her to bring me with her.

Some unexpected company coming down soon after, to visit Mrs. Jackson, we took that opportunity to accept the invitation Mrs. Woffington had given us. During our stay at her sister's, I became acquainted with Mr. Sheridan, a celebrated actor, and a competitor of the incomparable Garrick. This gentleman invited us to his apartments, which were generally crowded with Irish gentlemen from the College of Dublin. Roscius, at this time, languished to be reconciled to Mrs. Woffington, with whom he had formerly lived upon terms of intimacy. For this purpose he obtruded himself in the house of a gentleman at Kingston, of whose talents, which were great, he was jealous to a degree, though they lay *in a different line of acting*. Mr. Sheridan's hospitality was as well known as Garrick's parsimony; of which the latter condescended to avail himself. I flatter myself I shall be credited in this assertion, as I declare I have no reason to be partial to the former, as will appear in the course of the ensuing letters.

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The general topic of conversation among my present associates was confined to theatrical affairs; with which I was totally unacquainted till I was introduced into this circle. The charms of novelty, however, rendered it agreeable. Whilst we staid here, it was agreed onto perform the tragedy of the Distressed Mother, in order to make a trial of Miss Polly Woffington's abilities, who was intended by her sister for the stage. My mother and Mrs. Woffington played the attendants; Mr. Garrick, Orestes; Miss Woffington, Hermione; and Andromache fell to my lot.

In this performance, though my first, Mr. Garrick observed that I was much more in earnest than the young lady who had been accustomed to theatrical amusements. And though I was inferior in beauty to my fair rival, and without the advantages of dress, which she enjoyed, yet the laurel was bestowed upon me. All the people of fashion in the neighbourhood honoured our barn with their presence. Among these was the late Sir William Young, who gave it as his opinion that I should make a figure in a capital line, if ever I came upon the stage.

Upon our return to Twickenham, we found our good friend Mrs. Jackson so much indisposed that her life was despaired of. However, through my mother's care, and a favourable crisis in her disorder, she was in a  
short

short time out of danger. But the air of the country being judged by her physicians to be too keen for her, she took a house in Henrietta-street, Covent-Garden; where my mother, who had now declined a profession she had never been calculated for, was easily prevailed upon to become her guest.

About this time a letter was received by Du Vall from Lord Tyrawley in answer to one he had wrote him, in which his Lordship not only declared that he would not allow me any support, but renounced me for ever. So highly was he exasperated against me for disregarding his injunctions. As I loved his Lordship superior to the whole world, this letter harrowed up my very soul. Nor did it give much less anguish to my poor mother; who now became sensible of her indiscretion in having induced me to leave so eligible a situation as his Lordship had placed me in, and thereby forfeit his favour, merely to procure herself a temporary relief. We were, however, obliged to submit, and resign ourselves to that fate which could not now be averted.—I have often thought since, as I have pondered o'er my misfortunes, that we owe the greatest part of the miseries we experience to our *impatience*. Not patient enough to let the designs of Providence, even when they appear to be in a favourable train, regularly and gradually develop, we fancy  
we

we can get possession of the object we have in view by a shorter method; and having through our want of discernment broke one of the links of the chain, the wished-for happiness is gone for ever.

Forgive me, my dear madam, for interspersing here and there these moral reflections. They at once give ease to my mind, and when they shall reach the public eye, may prove serviceable to the weaker sex; which may probably be admitted as some attonement for the errors that have occasioned them.

My mother having a long account to settle with Mr. Rich, the salaries at that time not being very regularly paid, she had frequent occasions for calling at his house. And as I had contracted an intimacy with the young ladies, his daughters, to whom I had been introduced before we went into the country, I was happy to attend my mother whenever she went.

One evening as I was upon a visit there, we agreed among ourselves to act Othello. They lent me the play, that I might learn my part, which was to be that of Othello, and promised me, as it was soon to be performed at the theatre, a seat in their box to see it. When we were perfect in the words we began to rehearse. During the rehearsal, as we were only playing for our own amusement, and I concluded we were not overheard,

heard, I gave free scope to my fancy and my voice ; and I really believe our performance was more perfect, as it was truly natural, than if it had been aided with the studied graces of professors. As I was raving in all the extremity of jealous madness, Mr. Rich accidentally passed by the room in which we were rehearsing. Attracted, as he afterwards said, by the powerful sweetness of the Moor's voice, which he declared to be superior to any he had ever heard, he listened without interrupting our performance ; but as soon as it was concluded, he entered the room, and paid me a thousand compliments on my theatrical abilities. Among other things he said that in his opinion, I should make one of the first actresses in the world ; adding, that if I could turn my thoughts to the stage, he should be happy to engage me.

Not a little vain of receiving these encomiums from a person, who from his situation must be a competent judge, I went home and informed my mother of what had happened. At first she was averse to my accepting the proposal, having experienced herself all the disadvantages attendant on a theatrical life ; but Mrs. Jackson uniting her persuasions with those of Mr. Rich, she at length consented. She however complied only on condition that the manager would assure her of his supporting me in a capital line. This Mr. Rich agreed to

to do ; and that the more readily, as, in his opinion, the ladies belonging to his theatre were not altogether suited either for the characters of young heroines in tragedy, or of sprightly girls in genteel comedy. Mrs. Horton had nothing but a beautiful face to recommend her ; Mrs. Pritchard's forte lay in a different walk ; and Mrs. Clive's merit was always so unrivalled, that whatever I can say in praise of that darling daughter of Thalia, will not equal her desert.

Here, as I am now arrived at another principal æra in my life, that of my entrance into the theatrical world, permit me, Madam, to give a little respite to my aching fingers.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R   V I I I .

Nov. 21st, 17—

**I** Sit down once more, Madam, to continue my narrative. My entrance on my theatrical career is, if I recollect, to be the contents of this letter.

At the time I entered into an agreement with Mr. Rich, I was just fourteen ; of a figure not inelegant, a powerful voice, light as the gossamer, of inexhaustible spirits, and possessed of some humour. From these qualifications he formed the most sanguine hopes  
of

of my success, and determined that I should immediately make trial of them. I had perfected myself in the two characters of Monimia and Athenais, and according to my own judgment had made no inconsiderable proficiency in them. The former was fixed on for my first appearance.

Mr. Rich now thought it time to introduce me to Mr. Quin, then the most capital performer at Covent-Garden; and capital he was, indeed, in those characters which his figure suited. This gentleman, at that period, governed the theatre with a rod of iron. Mr. Rich, though the proprietor, was, through his indolence, a mere cypher. He was, however, when he had resolved on any thing, the most determined of men. After waiting some time at the door of the lion's den, as the people of the theatre had denominated Mr. Quin's dressing-room, we were at length admitted. It is necessary here to observe, that this gentleman never condescended to enter the Green-room, or to mix with the other performers, all of whom he was unacquainted with, except Mr. Ryan, for whom he entertained a particular friendship, which lasted till Mr. Ryan's death.

He had no sooner heard Mr. Rich propose my appearing in the character of Monimia, than, with the most sovereign contempt, he cried out, "It will not do, Sir." Upon which, the manager, to his infinite surprize,

replied, "It shall do, Sir." I was so frightened at Mr. Quin's austere deportment, that had he requested me to give him a specimen of my abilities, it would not have been in my power. But he held me too cheap to put me to the trial. After some further altercation had passed, which was not much in my favour; Mr. Quin at last deigned to look at me, saying, at the same time, "*Child*, I would advise you to play *Serina*, before you think of *Monimia*." This sarcasm roused my spirits, which before were much sunk, and I pertly replied, "If I did, Sir, I should never live to play the *Orphan*."

Still, however, he insisted on the *impropriety* of a child's attempting a character of such importance. But the real cause seemed to be, that he was conscious he himself could play the character of *young Chamont* with very little *propriety*, as neither his age nor figure by any means suited it, and as Mr. Garrick had gained so much reputation in the character. He concluded with saying, if Mr. Rich persisted in such an absurd resolution, he would publicly declare his sentiments upon the subject; and further, that he would not attend the rehearsals; being persuaded the manager would severely repent his having countenanced so improper an exhibition.

It may be supposed that this conversation was not very pleasing to me. As for Mr. Rich,



Rich, the opposition he met with, seemed to increase his resolution; and taking me by the hand he led me out of the Dressing-room, assuring me aloud, that, let who would oppose, he would protect me; and would let every one in the company know that he would be the *Master* of it, when he chose to be at the trouble. Before he quitted the scenes he ordered the prompter to call a rehearsal of the *Orphan* the next morning. When that hour arrived, the two gentlemen who were to play my lovers, Castalio and Polydore, in order to pay their court to Mr. Quin, did not think proper to appear. Mr. Rich, however, to convince them he would be obeyed, fined them more than the usual mulct. Even Serina, who was only an attendant upon tragedy *Queens*, smiled contemptuously on the poor *Orphan*.

Mr. Rich kindly endeavoured by every means in his power to support me under this mortifying opposition. And he took a very effectual method of doing it. The dresses of the theatrical ladies were at this period very indifferent. The *Empresses* and *Queens* were confined to black velvet, except on extraordinary occasions, when they put on an embroidered or tissue petticoat. The young ladies generally appeared in a *cast* gown of some person of quality; and as at this epoch the women of that denomination were not blest with the taste of the present

age, and had much more œconomy; the stage brides and virgins often made their appearance in altered habits, rather foiled. As the manager had in his juvenile days made the fair sex his principal study, and found the love of dress their darling foible, he concluded that, as a true daughter of Eve, I was not exempt from it. He therefore thought there could be no better method of putting me in good humour with myself, and compensating for the affronts I had lately received, than by taking me to his mercer's, and permitting me to choose the cloaths I was to appear in. A circumstance which evinced his partiality, as he had always been unwilling to indulge even his first performers in this point.

The following morning Castalio and Polydore attended the rehearsal, but my brother Chamont was inexorable. Mr. Hall *mumbled over* Castalio, and Mr. Ryan *whistled* Polydore. But having an opportunity of seeing the piece performed at Drury-lane Theatre the night before my appearance, it made me more acquainted with the *jeu de théâtre* than twenty rehearsals would have done. The public, who always incline to the humane side, and espouse the cause of the injured, as soon as the treatment I met with was known, took umbrage at what they termed illiberal proceeding towards a young actress, and I believe in the end, the opposition

sition that was formed against me was of advantage to me. I own I was somewhat alarmed when I reflected on my presumption in appearing in so capital a character after the inimitable Mrs. Cibber.

At length the dreadful evening arrived.—But as so interesting an event, the bare recollection of which I still tremble at, surely deserves to be recorded in a letter by itself, I shall here put an end to this.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R IX.

Nov. 27, 17—.

**T**HE dreaded evening at length arrived. Previous to it, Mr. Quin having in all companies declared it as his opinion, that I should not succeed; and Mr. Rich, on the contrary, having been as lavish in my praise; the public curiosity was much more excited, than if there had been no contention about me. The curtain drew up to a splendid audience, which seldom happened at Covent-Garden Theatre, except when a new or revived pantomime was represented.

It is impossible to describe my sensations on my first entrance. I was so much dazzled by the lights, and stunned by the repeated plaudits, that I was for some time deprived both of memory and voice. I stood like a statue. Till compassion for my

youth, and probably some prepossession for my figure, and *dress*, which was *simply elegant*, a circumstance not very customary, induced a gentleman, who was dictator to the pit, and therefore ludicrously denominated Mr. Town,\* to call out, and order the curtain to be dropped, till I could recover my confusion.

This caused Mr. Quin to exult so much, that Mr. Rich intreated me in the most earnest manner to exert my powers. But his intreaties were ineffectual. For when I made the next attempt, my apprehensions so totally overpowered me, that I could scarcely be heard in the side-boxes. The applause, indeed, was so universal, during the first act, for what did not reach the ears of the audience, that had I possessed my full powers of exertion, they could not have profited by them.

The manager having pledged himself for my success, he had planted all his friends in different parts of the house, to insure it. But when he found that I was unable to raise my spirits, he was as distracted as if his own fate, and that of his theatre, had depended upon it. He once more had recourse to persuasion and encouragement; but nothing could rouse me from my stupidity, till the fourth act. This was the critical period which was to determine my fate. By this criterion was I, as an actress, to

\*Mr. Chitty.

stand or fall. When, to the astonishment of the audience, the surprize of the performers, and the exultation of the manager, I felt myself suddenly inspired. I blazed out at once with meridian splendor; and I acquitted myself throughout the whole of this most arduous part of the character, in which even many veterans have failed, with the greatest eclat.

Mr. Quin was so *fascinated* (as he expressed himself) at this unexpected exertion, that he waited behind the scenes till the conclusion of the act, when lifting me up from the ground in a transport, he exclaimed aloud, "Thou art a divine creature, and the true spirit is in thee." The audience, likewise, honoured me with the highest marks of their approbation. As for Mr. Rich, he expressed as much triumph upon this occasion, as he usually did on the success of one of his darling pantomimes.

The performers, who, half an hour before, had looked upon me as an object of pity, now crowded around me to load me with compliments of gratulation. And Mr. Quin, in order to compensate for the contempt with which he had treated me, was warmer, if possible, in his eulogiums, than he had been in his sarcasms. This, I own, appears to be a bold assertion, as the pungent salt of his satire often got the better of the goodness of his heart; which I have reason

to think one of the best that ever inhabited mortal's bosom.

The novelty of such success attending a *child* (for from my appearance I could not be judged to be so old as I really was) against the united force of a Garrick and a Cibber, attracted the notice of the public so much, that the piece was performed three nights successively. This was a singular circumstance at that time, as the Orphan was an old play, much hackneyed, and supported by only one character. For though Mr. Quin was most justly celebrated, as I have already observed, in every character which his figure and time of life suited, yet as he was now near sixty, and rather corpulent, he certainly was a very unfit brother for a girl of my age. So flattering a reception, it may be naturally supposed, elated a heart rendered vain by praises surpassing my most sanguine expectations.

Mr. Quin being thus become my friend, he made enquiry relative to my mother's character and circumstances, with which he appeared to be totally unacquainted, notwithstanding she had performed at the same theatre with him for years. Being satisfied with the enquiries he made, he was determined not to oblige by halves. Finding I was the reputed daughter of his old friend Lord Tyrawley, in order not to alarm our fears, or mortify the dignity of our minds, he

he inclosed a bank bill in a blank cover, and sent it to my mother by the penny post. And not satisfied with having administered to our wants, he took every opportunity of showing us respect. In particular, he favoured me with a general invitation to the suppers he usually gave four times a week; enjoining me at the same time never to come alone; "because," as he jocularly said, "he was not too old to be censured."

All the literati of the age frequented these parties, where wit, repartees, bon-mots, conviviality, and good cheer, went hand in hand. The conversation at these repasts turned on the literary productions of the day. And as most of the gentlemen present were themselves authors, they either candidly acknowledged the merit of the works which were the subject of discussion, or with perfect good breeding, and true critical knowledge, pointed out their defects.

It is worthy of remark, that all characters have their bright and shaded parts. The more splendid the one, the deeper generally are the traits of the other. Thus it was with Mr. Quin; who, with the most liberal mind and benevolent heart, had his whims, his prepossessions, and his prejudices; many of which he frequently expressed in language somewhat too sarcastic, and not over delicate. But perfection is not to be expected in this transitory state.

From some passages in several of the foregoing letters, it may be observed, that learned conversations were not unacceptable to me. And I found my judgement more enlightened by the remarks made at Mr. Quin's *petits soupers*, than if I had read all the literary productions which made their appearance at that time. Mrs. Jackson usually did me the honour to accompany me there; where she one evening met with a relation she had not seen for some years; and who should this be, but Mr. Thomson, a gentleman not less celebrated for his goodness, than for his admirable poetical works, "The Seasons, &c."

Whilst Mr. Quin is the immediate subject of my pen, I will beg leave to relate an anecdote of him, which will be for ever imprinted on *my* memory, and does infinite honour to *his*. During the time he had the chief direction at Covent-Garden Theatre, he revived "The Maid's Tragedy," written by Beaumont and Fletcher. In it he played the character of Melanthus, Mrs. Pritchard Evandra, and myself Aspasia. One day, after the rehearsal was finished, he desired to speak with me in his dressing-room. As he had always carefully avoided seeing me alone, I was not a little surprized at so unexpected an invitation. My apprehensions even made me fear that I had, by some means or other, offended a man, whom  
I really



I really loved as a father. My fears, however, were not of long duration. For as soon as I had entered his dressing-room, he took me by the hand, with a smile of ineffable benignity, and thus addressed me: " My dear girl! you are vastly followed, I hear. Do not let the love of finery, or any other inducement, prevail upon you to commit an indiscretion. Men in general are rascals. You are young and engaging, and therefore ought to be doubly cautious. If you want any thing in my power, which money can purchase, come to me, and say, " James Quin, give me such a thing," and my purse shall be always at your service." The tear of gratitude stood in my eye, at this noble instance of generosity; and his own glistened with that of humanity and self-approbation.

With a story, so much to the honour of that worthy man, and so pleasing, even in recollection, to myself, will I conclude this letter.

G. A. B.

## LETTER X.

Dec. 7, 17—.

WHAT little merit I had, was soon after rendered more conspicuous by my undertaking the part of Eudofia, in “The Siege of Damascus,” at a night’s notice, on the sudden indisposition of Mrs. Pritchard. Upon these occasions, the audience are always peculiarly indulgent, and so I found them. The public thought they discovered from this promptitude, indelible marks of genius, much superior to those naturally to be expected from a girl so recently engaged in a profession, a perfect knowledge of which was only to be attained by a length of time, and the closest application.

I had likewise, about this period, the happiness to acquire the approbation and patronage of two ladies of the first distinction; the late Duchess of Montague, then Lady Cardigan, and her Grace of Queensberry. Both these ladies favoured me with their support, so far as to grace the theatre whenever I performed. An attention which was the more flattering, as the latter had not honoured a play-house with her presence since the death of her favourite Gay.

As Mr. Rich could not afford, from the receipts of the theatre, to allow me a salary equal

equal to the success I met with, and the capital parts I performed, he gave me a benefit, free of all expences, upon one of his *own* nights, in order to prevent discord in the company. Though the public appeared to be much interested in my favour, yet as I had but few friends, except those who out of civility to Mr. Quin espoused my interest, I had very little reason to expect that it would prove lucrative.

Some days before that fixed for my benefit, I received a message whilst I was at the theatre, to be at Queensberry-house the next day by twelve o'clock. As I thought it likewise incumbent on me to wait on the Countess of Cardigan, who had honoured me with equal marks of approbation, I dressed myself early, and taking a chair, went first to Privy-Garden. I had there every reason to be pleased with the reception her Ladyship gave me, who joined politeness to every virtue.

But at Queensberry-house, my reception was far otherwise. Her Grace was determined to mortify my vanity, before she promoted my interest. Quite elated with Lady Cardigan's flattering behaviour, I ordered the chairmen to proceed to Queensberry-house. Soon after the rat-tat had been given, and my name announced to the porter, the groom of the chambers appeared. I desired him to acquaint her Grace, that I  
was

was come to wait upon her. But how was I surprized, when he returned and informed me, that her Grace knew no such person! My astonishment at this message was greatly augmented, by the certainty I entertained of a ready admittance. I assured the domestic, that it was by the Duchess's own directions, I had taken the liberty to wait on her. To which he replied, that there must have been some mistake in the delivery of it. In this mortifying situation, I had nothing to do, but to return home. Ludicrous and humiliating as the foregoing scene must be, I cannot avoid relating it, as it may serve as a Lesson to many, who too readily give way to the impulses of vanity. Young minds are naturally prone to it. Mine consequently was. And this well-timed rebuke, however grating, was the greatest proof of regard her Grace could have given me.

I went home with no very pleasing sensations, as I expected to receive the taunts of a female relation upon the occasion, who had lately arrived from Ireland, and on whom my mother doated. As this person will be frequently mentioned in the course of my narrative, and was the cause of many of the inconveniences I afterwards suffered, it may not be amiss to acquaint you, that her deformed body was a fit receptacle for her depraved mind.

According

According to Hogarth's rules, indeed, her person may be said to abound in all the graces annexed to the idea of beauty, as she had not a straight line about her. And her mind was no less crooked than her body. She had taken a dislike to me on her first coming over; but for what reason I cannot account; and her aversion seemed to increase with my success on the stage. To such a height was it now risen, that it was the cause of much unhappiness to me. So that I was at length obliged to complain to Mrs. Jackson, who requested my mother to provide for her elsewhere, but without effect.

According to my expectations, I had no sooner returned from Queensberry-house, and informed my mother of the reception I had met with there, than this relation persuaded her that the invitation was merely a chimera of my own brain, generated by my insupportable vanity. So virulent was her behaviour, that in order to avoid her sarcasms, I pretended business at the theatre, in the evening, and went there.

Upon my entering the Green-room, I was accosted by Prince Lobkowitz, who was then here in a public character, requesting a box at my benefit, for the *corps diplomatique*. After thanking his Highness for the honour intended me, I informed him they might be accommodated with a stage box; and sending for the house-keeper, desired

fired he would make an entry in his book to this purpose. But how great was my surprize, when he acquainted me I had not a box to dispose of; every one, except those of the Countess of Cardigan, the Duchess Dowager of Leeds, and Lady Shaftesbury, being retained for her Grace the Duchess of Queensberry. I could not help thinking but the man was joking, as he himself had delivered me the message from her Grace the night before, and that I had found to be a deception. He however still persisted in what he said, and further added, that the Duchess had likewise sent for two hundred and fifty tickets. This made me more at a loss to account for the cavalier treatment I had received in the morning.

Here, lest you complain of the length of my letters, I will leave off.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R X I.

Dec. 23, 17—

**H**IS Highness Prince Lobkowitz descended to put up with a balcony for himself and friends; and I hastened home, at once to make known to my mother my good fortune, and to retaliate upon my inimical relation. To add to my satisfaction, when I got home, I found a note from her Grace, desiring I would wait upon her

her the next morning. This being such an evident proof of my veracity, which it had given me inexpressible uneasiness to have doubted, I experienced proportionable pleasure from it.

I was, notwithstanding, so apprehensive of meeting with a second mortification, that I determined to *walk* to Queensberry-house, to prevent any person's being a witness to it, should it happen. I accordingly set out on foot, and was not totally free from perturbation when I knocked at the gate. I was, however, immediately ushered to her Grace's apartment, where my reception was as singular as my treatment had been the day before; her Grace thus accosting me: "Well, young woman!—What business had you in a chair yesterday?—It was a fine morning, and you might have walked. You look as you ought to do now" (observing my linen gown). "Nothing is so vulgar as wearing silk in a morning.—Simplicity best becomes youth. And you do not stand in need of ornaments.—Therefore dress always plain, except when you are upon the stage."

Whilst her Grace was talking in this manner to me, she was cleaning a picture, which I officiously requesting her permission to do, she hastily replied, "Don't you think I have domestics enough if I did not chuse to do it myself?"—I apologized for my presumption

presumption, by informing her Grace that I had been for some time at Jones's, where I had been flattered that I had acquired a tolerable proficiency in that art. The Duchess upon this exclaimed, "Are you the girl I have heard Chesterfield speak of?" Upon my answering that I had the honour of being known to his Lordship, she ordered a canvas bag to be taken out of her cabinet, saying, "Queensberry can give no person less than gold. There are a hundred and fifty guineas, and twenty for the Duke's tickets and mine, but I must give you something for Tyrrawley's sake." She then took a bill from her pocket-book, which having put into my hands, she told me her coach was ordered to carry me home, lest any accident should happen to me, now I had such a charge about me.

Though the conclusion of her Grace's whim, as it might justly be termed, was more pleasing than the beginning of it, and her munificence much greater than that of the Countess of Cardigan, yet I must acknowledge I was much better pleased with the reception I met with from her Ladyship; who honoured me with her protection whilst I continued on the stage.

There is a manner in conferring obligations which renders them doubly valuable. The most beneficent actions lose their worth when accompanied with a disgusting sense of superiority;



superiority; whilst the smile of courtesy makes even trivial favours acceptable.

My benefit surpassed my most sanguine expectations. And as I had by this time many who professed themselves my admirers, they had, upon this occasion, an opportunity of shewing their generosity without offending my delicacy.

Among those who paid me the greatest degree of attention was Lord Byron, a nobleman who had little to boast of but a title, and an agreeable face; and Mr. Montgomery, now Sir George Metham. As I would not listen to any proposals but marriage and a coach, Mr. Montgomery honestly told me, early in his devoirs, that he could not comply with the first, as his only dependence was on his father, whose consent he could not hope to procure; and as for the latter, he could not afford it. Having come to this éclaircissement, he immediately retired into Yorkshire. The generous conduct of this gentleman (whose passion I was well convinced was sincere) in not attempting to deceive me, made an impression upon my mind greatly in his favour.

As my next epistle is to contain strange and surprizing adventures, and these not the produce of the writer's imagination, but as *true* as wonderful, I will beg your permission to break off here; and lest you accuse me of a want of variation in the conclusion of my

my letters, I shall end this in the good old-fashion way : So no more at present, from, Madam, your humble servant, to command,  
G. A. B.

## L E T T E R XII.

Jan. 1, 17—

**A** Gleam of chearfulness coming over me just as I was finishing my last letter, I concluded it in rather too humorous a manner. I now return to my history, and that gloom which the recollection of my misfortunes naturally brings with it.

Lord Byron still pursued me ; and as his vanity was hurt at my rejecting him, he formed a resolution to be revenged of me for my insensibility. His Lordship was very intimate with a person who was a disgrace to nobility ; and whose name I shall conceal through tenderness to his family. This nobleman was Lord Byron's confidential friend ; a word as often misused as that of lover, by such as are unacquainted with those delicate feelings which are essentially necessary to constitute either real friendship or love. To this friend Lord Byron committed the execution of his revenge. The Earl of ———, which was the title of this infamous pander, had believed himself to be in love with a young lady, between whom and myself there was the strictest intimacy. And he imagined it  
would

would promote his designs upon her, could he first accomplish my fall from the paths of prudence and virtue.

For this purpose his Lordship frequently called at Mrs. Jackson's, though much against my mother's inclinations. But as he had been constantly a dangler behind the scenes during her engagement at the theatre, and had occasionally given her franks, she admitted his visits. It was however with such visible reserve, as must have convinced him they were far from agreeable. But the confidence of nobility making him assured, his Lordship persisted in calling, in defiance of her coolness. My mother had strictly enjoined me to break off my intimacy with the young lady who was the object of the Earl's pursuit, on account of her levity; and because, though by birth a gentlewoman, she had degraded herself, by becoming the companion of a lady of quality who had frequently eloped from her Lord.

My mother at this period was become a confirmed devotee. Religion ingrossed so much of her time, that in the evening she was seldom visible. Upon this account, and from Mrs. Jackson's accompanying me so frequently to Mr. Quin's suppers, that lady conferred a great part of the friendly regard she had once borne my mother, to me. But, alas! I was not to profit long by this revolution. My happiness was to be as transient as the sun.

sunshine of an April day. This part of my mother's fortune, at least, I inherited; and like her was constantly experiencing the vicissitudes of life. The following anecdote will however shew that my misfortunes were not always the consequence of my own imprudent conduct, but sometimes of such deep-laid plans of villainy and deception, as it was impossible for an unexperienced girl, at my time of life, to guard against.

One Sunday evening, when this *ignoble Earl* well knew my mother would be engaged, he called to inform me that Miss B——, the young lady before-mentioned, was in a coach at the end of Southampton-street, and desired to speak with me. Without staying to put on my hat or gloves, I ran to the coach, when, to my unspeakable surprize, I found myself suddenly hoisted into it by his Lordship, and that the coachman drove off as fast as the horses could gallop.

My astonishment for some time deprived me of the power of utterance; but when I was a little recovered, I gave free vent to my reproaches. These his Lordship bore with a truly philosophic indifference, calmly telling me that no harm was intended me; and that I had better consent to make his friend Lord Byron happy, and be happy myself, than oppose my good fortune. To this he added that his friend was shortly to be married to Miss Shaw, a young lady possessed

essed of a very large fortune, which would enable him to provide handsomely for me. I was so struck with the insolence of this proposal, that I remained for some time quite silent.

At length the coach stopped in a lonely place at the top of North Audley-street, fronting the fields. At that time Oxford-street did not extend so far as it does at present. Here the Earl got out, and took me into his house. He then went away, as he said, to prepare a lodging for me, which he had already seen at a mantua-maker's in Broad-street, Carnaby-market, and to which he would come back and take me. He assured me the mistress of the house was a woman of character; and added, with the most dreadful imprecations, that no violence was intended.

His Lordship now left me. And as the fear of great evils banishes every lesser consideration, I determined to wait the result, with all the patience I was possessed of. The dread of being left alone in that solitary place, was nothing when compared with my apprehensions from the machinations of two noblemen so determined and so powerful. Terror however so totally overwhelmed my mind, that I remained in a state of stupefaction.

It was not long before his Lordship returned; and with him came the person I least desired to see—my own brother. Good  
hea-

heavens! what comfort, at so critical a juncture, did the sight of him afford me! I instantly flew into his arms; but was repulsed by him in so violent a manner, that I fell to the ground. The shock of this unexpected repulse, just as I hoped to have found a protector in him, was more than my spirits were able to bear. It deprived me of my senses. On my return to sensibility, the only object that presented itself to my view was an old female servant, who told me she had orders to convey me to the lodging which had been prepared for me.

The first thing I did was to make enquiry concerning my brother's coming so unexpectedly. I was informed by the old woman, that he had bestowed manual chastisement upon my ravisher. But as he seemed to suppose that I had consented to the elopement, he had declared that he would never see me more, but leave me to my fate. The woman added, that he had threatened the Earl and his associate with a prosecution, which had so intimidated her master, that he had given her orders to remove me out of his house as soon as possible; as my being found there might make against him.

When we arrived in Broad-street, I discovered, to my great satisfaction, that the mistress of the house, whose name was Mirvan, worked for me as a mantua-maker, though I was till now unacquainted with her place  
of

of residence. I told her my story simply as it had happened; and my appearance as well as my eyes, which were much swelled with crying, was an undeniable testimony of the truth of my assertions.

I afterwards learnt the following circumstances relative to my brother, about whom I was more anxious than for myself, as I had a great affection for him. We had long expected him to return from sea, he having been abroad for some years; and by one of those extraordinary freaks of fortune which are not to be accounted for, he got to the top of Southampton-street, just as the coach was driving off with me. I should have termed his coming providential, had he not suffered his suspicions to get the better of his affection, and thus counteracted the apparent designs of Providence in affording me relief.

He had reached Southampton-street, as I have just said, nearly about the time I was forced into the coach; and ran to rescue the person thus treated, little imagining it was his own sister; but the furious driving of the coachman rendered his design abortive. Upon this he proceeded to Mrs. Jackson's house, and had scarcely enquired for me, than that Lady cried out, "Oh fly, Sir, to her relief; " Lord —— has this moment run away with her." My brother hearing this, concluded I must have been the person he had

just seen carried off. But knowing it would be impossible to overtake the coach, he thought it more prudent to go directly to the Earl's house. Not finding him at home, he walked about within sight of the door, till his Lordship returned, when he accosted him in the manner before related. From the Earl of ———'s my brother went to Marlborough-street to Lord Byron's, and accusing him of being concerned with the Earl in seducing his sister, his Lordship denied having any knowledge of the affair, which he solemnly asserted *upon his honour*; declaring at the same time, as indeed he could do with a greater degree of truth, that he had not seen me that evening.

My brother placing an implicit confidence in the assertions of Lord Byron, grew enraged against me; and without making any enquiries, whether I was really culpable upon this occasion or not, concluded me to be depraved enough to enter into an illicit connection with an old unprincipled married man. Giving me over therefore as a lost abandoned girl, he immediately set out for Portsmouth, and left me unprotected. This I may justly consider as the most unfortunate event I had hitherto experienced; for being deprived of his protection at a time when it was so extremely requisite to my re-establishment in life, I was left open to the attacks of every insolent pretender, whose

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audacity, his very character, as he was distinguished for his bravery, would have repressed.

Being unwilling to break the thread of so interesting a part of my history, I have made this a very long letter; but as a breathing place here presents itself, I will, with your permission, avail myself of it, and conclude,

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L E T T E R   X I I I .

Jan. 18, 17—.

**I** Soon found that my elopement had been most grossly misrepresented in the news-papers. Every thing that ill-nature could suggest, was lavishly bestowed upon me, notwithstanding I was innocent of the least depravity of the kind imputed to me, even in thought. I wrote to my mother to endeavour to retrieve her favour, which I had so unmeritedly lost; but she returned my letters unopened. I had no apparel but what I had on, and the relation I have mentioned prevented any from being sent me. The vexation and fright which my disappearance had occasioned to Mrs. Jackson, affected that Lady so much, that she was confined to her bed; else I might have expected her kind interference in my behalf.

Mrs. Mirvan, the person where I lodged, very obligingly procured me necessaries, and did every thing in her power to comfort me. But her endeavours were ineffectual. I could not forbear viewing with horror my wretched situation, every hope being now extinguished, as my mother's misguided tenderness had exposed me, in the course of two days, to the censure of the whole town.

What was now to be done! I had no friend, no person to look up to for protection. Though every circumstance tended to exculpate me; and though Mrs. Mirvan could vouch for me, that I had not received a visit from a single person since I had been in her house; any declarations of my innocence would be now needless, for to whom could I make them? My mother was inexorable to every application; Mrs. Jackson was not within the reach of application; my inveterate kinswoman, like another Cerberus, guarding every avenue; my brother had left town; and I was too much depressed by the public scandal to attempt a reinstatement in the theatrical line.

The anguish of mind I felt from all these considerations so greatly affected my frame, that a slow fever was the consequence, which nearly brought me to the grave.

“ The sting of slander strikes her venom deep.”

CLEONE.

And

And never did poor creature suffer more shame and distress of mind from a *real* crime, than I did from a *supposed* one.

The fever at length yielding to my youth and the goodness of my constitution, I was ordered into the country, by my physician, for the re-establishment of my strength. As I needed some pecuniary assistance to do this, having no money with me, Mrs. Mirvan kindly offered to supply my wants, and I was necessitated to accept of her offer. After considering for some time of a proper place to resort to on this occasion, I fixed on paying a visit to a female relation of my mother's, who lived at Braintree in Essex. The family of this relation being Quakers, there was little probability of their having heard of my disgrace. A few months before, a sister of Mrs. Clarke's, which was my cousin's name, had bequeathed me three hundred pounds, on condition that I never went on the stage; but my engagement at Covent-Garden having disannulled her legacy, it had never been claimed.

As soon as I was enabled by my kind hostess to make proper preparation for my journey, I set out in the stage-coach; taking care to observe the lesson, with regard to my dress, which her Grace of Queensberry had given me; that is, I had adopted Horace's maxim of *simplex munditiis*. This attention to the simplicity and neatness of

my apparel answered a purpose I had not foreseen or designed; it so far deceived Mrs. Clarke, that she concluded I was one of her own sect, which procured me the more cordial reception. The whole family were so prejudiced in my favour by this unintended deception, that the best of every thing Clarke-hall afforded was bestowed upon me with the greatest cheerfulness. I had not indeed dressed myself with the studied formality of a rigid Quaker, but only so plain and neat as to entitle me to the denomination of a *wet* Quaker; a distinction that arises chiefly from the latter's wearing ribbands, gauzes, and laces. I admire many of the principles of this apparently honest, sincere, and cleanly people, but have not many instances fallen within your observation, Madam, where a broad-brimmed hat and sad coloured coat, or a green apron and plain linen, have covered a prouder heart than all the gay pomp of a birth-day suit? I think I have been able to make such a remark more than once.

My pallid countenance presenting a sure indication of my having been ill, and of the necessity there was for my coming into the country; this, added to the natural want of curiosity in my cousins, prevented me from being obliged to frame excuses for my visit. They luckily supposed I came to claim my legacy, and received me with great good will.

will. The day after my arrival, they paid me the interest due on it, which enabled me to remit the friendly Mrs. Mirvan a part of what I stood indebted to her; and in a few days, without enquiring whether I had not forfeited it, they paid me the whole sum. I acknowledge that I made no scruple of receiving what they did not stand in need of, as they were in very opulent circumstances, and had no children.

After the perturbations I had lately experienced, this sweet place appeared a paradise to me. Peace, plenty, content, and innocence, accompanied by cheerfulness, their sure attendant, seemed to have taken up their abode here; preferring this humble situation to the lofty domes and splendid cares of higher ranks. And here for some time I enjoyed perfect tranquillity.

Thus tranquil and happy, I will put an end to my letter, before any rude reverse breaks in to interrupt my felicity.

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L E T T E R    X I V .

Jan. 27, 17—

**I**N a few weeks I was so perfectly recovered that not the least vestige remained of my illness. The apothecary, who had attended me, was of the same persuasion as

my cousins ; and being deceived, as they had been, by the Quakerishness of my dress, (excuse the new coined word) seemed to show a partiality in my favour, which my relations did not discourage. At the annual fair, which in those country places is the season of festivity and enjoyment, my formal suitor gave my relations and myself an invitation to his house, which he had decorated with flowers, and stored with every good thing that was to be purchased, to show his regard for me. But that blind lady, dame Fortune, who dispenses both her favours and her frowns sometimes in a strange manner, was determined I should not enjoy my present tranquillity long. In an ill-natured fit, she brought about an event, which deprived me at once of my cousins' favour, and my admirer's attachment.

The well-known Zachary Moore, as distinguished for his misfortunes as his dissipation, happened accidentally to be, at this period, in the neighbourhood of the place to which we had been invited ; and, unluckily for me, to be introduced by a friend to the apothecary, to share in the feast of which we partook. This gentleman had once been possessed of an income of twenty-five thousand pounds per annum. But not being endowed with a proportionable share of prudence, he found himself at length reduced, through his own extravagance, and the chicanery

canery of his steward, to the most humiliating necessity. And what is very extraordinary, the wretch who had thus juggled him out of a princely fortune, had the audacity to propose to him to take his daughter to wife; on which condition he would agree to return him back the whole of the estate he had deprived him of. Mr. Moore nobly, in my opinion, rejected the disgraceful offer. The generality of his acquaintance, however, notwithstanding they could not but admire his magnanimity upon the occasion, blamed an imprudence, in consequence of which he was necessitated, at forty years of age, to accept of an ensigncy in a regiment that was ordered to Gibraltar.

How imbittered must be the reflections of a person capable of so much imprudence and inattention! The loss of an estate of such immense value could not have been completed without numberless instances of both. And though the chicanery of his steward may be considered as some palliation of Mr. Moore's want of attention; indolence in the extreme must have marked the progress of it. A proper attention to the prudential concerns of life, without meanness and avarice on the one hand, or indolence and profuseness on the other, is a duty which every person of property owes to himself, to his connections, and to the community at large.—But to return from this digression.

Nothing happened to interrupt the harmony of the company, or that could give me uneasiness, till the afternoon; when upon Mr. Moore's acquaintance whispering to him, that I was a wet Quaker, for whom his friend the apothecary had an inclination, that gentleman, without intending me any injury, gave way to his volatile disposition, and thus exclaimed loud enough to be heard by the whole company. "A wet Quaker, indeed! It is Miss Bellamy, the celebrated actress, who met with so much applause the last winter at Covent-Garden Theatre!" The confusion visible in my countenance, as soon as he had made this discovery, convinced him that he had committed some error; but like Marplot, he could not find out what it was.

As Mrs. Clarke took no notice, at the time, of the conversation that had just passed, I was in hopes she had not attended to what Mr. Moore had said. She, however, soon after ordered the carriage, and left her husband, who loved his bottle, to enjoy the conviviality of the gay Londoner. After we were gone, Mr. Clarke enquired more particularly concerning me; and learnt from Mr. Moore every thing relative to the unfortunate event which had lately befallen me. And upon that gentleman's adding that he believed all the world now concluded me innocent, my relation, who, though a Quaker,



ker, did not want pride, and whose courage was now roused by the juice of the grape, thought, as a branch of his wife's family, I was intitled to his protection. He accordingly returned home, fully determined to interpose in the affair, and avenge the ill-treatment I had received.

A lady of my cousin's acquaintance being in the chaise with us, her presence prevented any disagreeable altercation during our return. I own I was not without my apprehensions of having some displeasing interrogatories put to me by Mrs. Clarke; but as she always appeared to be of a *dove-like* disposition, I had no idea that she possessed the qualifications of a Xantippe, in the degree I afterwards found she did. I had been told that she was naturally of a jealous temper; but as she and Mr. Clarke were both arrived at an age, when the heighday of the blood is supposed to be over, I doubted not but that passion had long since been eradicated from her bosom.

As she stepped out of the chaise, she hurt her foot; observing this, I offered her my hand to assist her in getting into the parlour. But upon my presenting it to her, she rejected it with the dignity of a Tragedy Queen; uttering at the same time, with a haughty accent, the word "Avaunt." Supposing the latter might be intended for the dog, who ran to welcome his mistress home,

I took no notice of it. But I was soon undeceived in this conjecture. For we had no sooner got into the house, than looking stedfastly in my face, she addressed me in a manner, and in a language that I had not been accustomed to. “Avaunt!” said she; “Thou art a child of iniquity—Thou hast sold thyself to the impure One—Thou art an impostress.”——Here I stopped her short. Duplicity was a charge which I could not hear urged against me, without endeavouring to exonerate myself from the imputation. I therefore asked her in what I had *imposed* upon her? and challenged her to prove that in any of the conversations I had held with her, I had been guilty of a falsehood. As my cousin really regarded me next to her husband, she now appeared sorry for what she had uttered, and was about to make an apology; but unfortunately, at that crisis, Mr. Clarke came in.

He had no sooner informed her of the whole of what he had heard relative to me, and made known to her the resolution he had formed in consequence of it, than her rage in an instant rekindled; and instead of the Dove, she once more resembled a Medusa. “Avaunt!” she again cried, “avaunt! Perdition will follow thee. Thou comest with all thy frauds to seduce my best beloved. Satan hath got hold of thee, as well as thy parent. Therefore, I pray thee,

“ thee, leave my mansion.” Here her beloved interposed, declaring, “ That nothing should prevent his going to the great city, to make the *bad man* do me justice, by taking me for his spouse.” “ Didst thou not tell me, John,” interrupted Mrs. Clarke, “ didst thou not tell me, that the wicked man had an helpmate?” This was a part of the story that my cousin John, through his inebriety, had forgotten. The observation, therefore, made by his wife, at once put a stop to his intended Quixotism.

Finding here, from the silence which ensued, an opportunity to speak, I told my cousin, that after what had just passed, I could not think of spending another day under her roof. Not that I was offended at her accusing me of an intention to seduce the conjugal fidelity of her beloved spouse, the insinuation being too laughable to give me a moment’s uneasiness; but upon account of her reflection on my dear mother, whose name I would not hear mentioned with disrespect. That, conscious of my own innocence, I readily forgave her for every crime she had accused me of, except that of deception, which made too deep an impression on my heart to be forgiven. Then assuming a very solemn air, in order, if possible, to make her repent of her illiberality, I thus went on; “ Madam, I would have you to know, that I have a soul above all art.”

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The moment I had uttered those words, Mrs. Clarke, with a transition both of countenance and voice, that would have done honour to the most comic actresses, thus put a stop to my vindication. "Anne! Anne!" said she, with the utmost placidity, "perhaps thou dost hold the faith of the Turks; who believe that women have no souls!" The archness of her look, and her inexpressible manner, whilst she repeated this, made me drop the consequential air I had assumed, and put an end to my anger. And I could not refrain from bursting out into an immoderate fit of laughter. Thus terminated our conversation, and we now parted, to retire to rest. At our separation, Mrs. Clarke shook my hand three times, and took her leave for the night, *with wishing me every good thing*; the salutation usually made use of by Quakers to their very best friends. But, notwithstanding this proof of returning regard in the bosom of my lately exasperated cousin, I determined never to risk such another humiliating scene.

What a quantity I have written! My aching head and fingers have long since hinted to me, that it was time to finish this letter; but I was unwilling to do so, till I had ended the account of my sojourning with my Quaker relations. Having now done this, I shall conclude, with wishing thee, agreeable  
to

to my cousin's expressive and charitable benediction, *plenty of good things*.

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## L E T T E R   X V .

Feb. 8, 17—

**I** AROSE early the next morning, with an intention of going to *Ingatstone*, at which place lived a young lady, who, during a visit at my cousin's, had favoured me with a pressing invitation to spend some time with her. Both my relations made use of their utmost persuasions to prevail upon me to stay with them longer; but when they found me resolute, they permitted me to go. Mrs. Clarke, however, insisted upon my accepting some presents. Among these was "Barclay's Apology," which some years after proved of the most essential service to me. I left Clarke-Hall about nine o'clock in my cousin's chaise, and upon my arrival at Ingatstone, found, to my great disappointment, that Miss White, which was the young lady's name, and all her family, were gone to London, to be present at the yearly meeting of their sect. Upon this I ordered the servant to drive to the best inn; after which I discharged him, and sent him home.

Whilst my dinner was getting ready, I fauntered to the end of the town; and being struck

struck with the prospect that appeared before me, I ascended a hill at some distance, in order to have the more extensive view. It is not in the power of language to do justice to the picture which here presented itself, although but an inland country. At the bottom of the hill on which I stood, there was a farm house, surrounded with fields, that spoke the industry, as well as opulence of the owner; for I have observed that small farms, occupied by indigent people, are seldom kept in that order and neatness which large ones are.

After gratifying my sight with this rural scene for some time, I thought it proper to return. Before I had got far, I observed something gliding towards me which appeared to be shining; and what should it be but a serpent, which my fear magnified to an enormous size. I ran to avoid it, and in my fright leaped over a stile; which I had no sooner done, than a boy, who stood near it, desired I would not proceed, as there was a very vicious bull in the adjacent pasture. Thus situated between Scylla and Charybdis, I knew not which to run the risk of, the beast or the reptile. But the boy assuring me the serpent should not hurt me, as he had a good stick, and would defend me from it, I chose the lesser evil of the two, and was escorted by my rustic champion over the next field. My knight, however, had  
not

not so much of the true spirit of chivalry in him, as to refuse a gratification for his services; and he returned as well pleased with a sixpence I bestowed upon him, as ever knight-errant did with a scarf received from the hands of his fair mistress at a tournament, or the thanks of a distressed damsel whom he had released from the hands of her ravisher.

As I walked the remainder of the way towards the town, the thought being probably inspired by the sight of the serpent, I could not help imagining my situation similar to that of our first parent Eve, on her expulsion from paradise; wandering forlorn, without friends, or even a place of abode, and Providence alone my guide. Nay worse did I fancy my lot to be; as our great mother had a companion to cheer the tedious way, and partake of her future fortune; one who loved her so well, as voluntarily to forfeit his blissful state, to accompany her in her exile, and combat unknown evils. Whilst my side was left all unguarded.

My mind was so totally occupied with these gloomy thoughts, that I should have prolonged my walk till the declining sun had warned me to return, had I not been apprehensive of meeting more vicious bulls and venomous serpents. Urged, therefore, rather by fear than appetite, I re-entered the gate of the inn. And my landlady appearing  
to

to be a decent woman, and very communicative, as I wished to seek out an eligible residence in the town or neighbourhood, I requested the pleasure of her company to dine with me.

During our dinner, she informed me that Lord Petre had a noble house and estate adjoining that town; adding, that his Lordship's family was one of the worthiest in the world, *although they were Roman Catholics*. I could not help smiling at this reservation; which she observing, begged my pardon; saying, "I fear, Madam, you are one." I replied, "I am indeed an *unworthy* one." As I spoke, the starting tear glistened in my eye, at the recollection of my remissness in the duties of the religion I professed. I however smothered the upbraidings of my mind, and enquired who lived at the farmhouse which was so pleasantly situated at some distance from the town. She informed me that it belonged to a rich farmer, but they were *Papishes*. I then desired she would instruct me in the distinction between Roman Catholics and Papishes, as she termed them. "Lord, Miss," answered she, "sure you know the difference between a Hind and a Lord?" At any other time, the woman's curious explanation would have afforded me some diversion; but at present my mind was too much engrossed by the wish to obtain admission into the farm I had seen,



seen, to take that notice of her supposed wit she expected me to do.

I then informed her, that as I had come to *Ingatestone*, upon a visit to Miss White, and should be very much disappointed to return without having seen her, I should be greatly obliged to her, if she could prevail on the farmer to board and lodge me till that young lady came back from London. "That's impossible," returned my hostess, "for I find you are a Quaker instead of a Catholic." I assured her again that I was of that persuasion, and would soon convince the farmer's family that I was so. A messenger was now dispatched to make enquiry whether my proposal would be agreeable; with whom Mrs. Williams, the farmer's wife, returned; and the good woman being as much pleased with me as I was with her, we soon came to an agreement.

In the evening I went to my new place of abode; where the first person I saw was my little champion, who ran to salute me. I was then introduced to all the family, which consisted of the farmer, his wife, two sons, one of whom was a widower with two children, the other a bachelor, and several domestics. This was the state of the family I was now become a member of; a family of industry and true happiness. At night I was shown into a neat bed-chamber, which had been fitted up by the late Mrs. Williams, the widower's

widower's wife, in a superior stile to any other part of the house, for her own use, and which I found stored with books, I should not have expected to find in such a residence. This circumstance gave me infinite pleasure, as my passion for reading was rather increased than relaxed, by my being debarred that enjoyment at Clarke-Hall. Morning and evening, Mr. Williams read prayers to the whole family, not a cow-boy being excused from attending. At our meals a cheerfulness sat on every countenance, except that of the widower, who seemed to retain a decent sorrow for his late lost partner. Mrs. Williams appeared to pay greater attention to this son than to the other; not, as she said, from her having more affection for him, but because his situation had a claim which the other, who was unthinkingly happy, had not. My kind host gained admittance for me on Sundays and holidays, into Lord Petre's chapel. And in my present peaceful residence, partly owing to this circumstance, I felt a tranquillity which I had never enjoyed since my return from my ever regretted convent.

From many instances in my letters, particularly from the whole of this, you see that I have attended to your injunctions of relating the minutest circumstances of my life. The minutiae, you say, lead to the elucidation of greater events. I have, therefore,  
though

though they may be considered as frivolous by the public, when they are laid before them, and sometimes may prove tedious to you, obeyed your commands, at the expence, perhaps, of my literary fame. Having made this observation, I will bid you, for the present, adieu!

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## L E T T E R   X V I .

Feb. 13, 17—

**D**URING my stay at this retired abode, I often wrote to my mother, but never could obtain an answer. I was the more surprized at this, as Mr. Moore had informed my cousin Clarke, that it was generally believed that I was innocent of any acquiescence in my elopement. After having resided in this tranquil place for some weeks, I one evening took a walk to the field where the serpent had alarmed me, in order to enjoy once more the prospect that had then so delighted me. Upon this eminence there was a large tree, under the spreading boughs of which seats were placed for the accommodation of those who came to enjoy the view; and on one of these I placed myself. Having tired the eye, and satisfied the curiosity, I had recourse to a book which I had brought with me, to prolong my indulgence on this sweet spot. The book which I had put

put in my pocket, happened to be “*Mrs. Rowe’s Letters from the Dead to the Living* ;” in which I read, till the subject had thrown a gloom over my mind. I arose to return home. When presently I thought I saw my mother’s apparition making towards me. Her figure was so remarkable, and so strongly was the impress of her beloved form imprinted on my memory, that I could not be deceived. I immediately conjectured that her silence had been occasioned by her death ; and, heated as my imagination was, by the subject I had just been reading, concluded she was come to upbraid me with being the occasion of it. The supposition that I had been the fatal, though innocent, cause of her dissolution, so overwhelmed my spirits, that I fell senseless on the flowery carpet of nature. But what transports did I feel, to find myself, on my recovery, really clasped in her arms ! It was she herself. “ Happy, happy hour !” I cried, enraptured, “ do I once more receive the endearments of a parent !” The voice of forgiveness could not have been more acceptable to me, had I really been culpable.

As soon as my perturbations at this unexpected happiness were a little subsided, I enquired of my mother, what had occasioned the alteration in her sentiments that I now experienced. She informed me that her relation,

lation, who had proved such an inveterate enemy to me, was lately dead; and that after her decease, they discovered that she had secreted every one of my letters, the whole being found among her papers. My mother acknowledged that my silence had greatly exasperated Mrs. Jackson and herself against me, but still she could not help severely reproaching herself at times, for discarding a young creature like me, without having been well assured of my guilt. Had she but reflected a moment, she said, upon the circumstances attending my elopement, she must have been convinced of my innocence; for if I had been accessory to it, I should have taken my little wardrobe and other necessaries with me, as well as the profits arising from my benefits; which I had insisted on her keeping in her possession. Every circumstance now, she confessed, appeared in a different light, and pleaded as much in my behalf, as they had before, when viewed through a false medium, seemed to condemn me. “Being thus,” continued my mother, “from the discovery of my relation’s treacherous conduct, and the testimony of concurrent circumstances, perfectly convinced of your innocence, and having likewise now obtained your address, I hastened on the wings of maternal affection, to atone for my unkind and inconsiderate behaviour. Finding you from  
“ home

“ home on my arrival at the farm, and Mrs. Williams pointing out the way you had taken, my impatience would not suffer me to wait your return.”

After thanking my mother again and again, for this renewal of her tenderness, and having given her a just and true account of every thing which had befallen me since last I saw her, I could not help blaming her for suspecting me, even for a moment, of deceit. Sincerity, I told her, I valued myself upon. She had been an inmate of my bosom from the first hour that knowledge had darted her beams on my infant mind. That she had blessed me through life with her loved society; and notwithstanding her friendship had often cost me dear, yet I trusted she would attend me to the grave.

Having thus eased our labouring hearts of the burthen which had sat heavy on both for so long a time, we walked towards the farm. As we went along I thanked, in many a silent ejaculation, that Being who had brought about this pleasing revolution in my affairs; and that by such unexpected means. “The ways of Heaven indeed,” said I, in a mental exclamation, “are dark and intricate. Puzzled with mazes, and perplexed with errors, our understanding traces them in vain; nor sees with how much art the windings run, nor where the regular confusion ends.

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It was with concern I heard from my mother that my good friend *Mrs. Jackson*, who had been for some time a widow, had married again, very indiscretely, to an Irish gentleman of the law, by name *Kelly*; and that she was preparing to accompany him to Ireland. As my attachment to that lady was founded both on affection and gratitude, the intelligence I had just received imbittered in some degree my newly-revived happiness. But as my mother's tenderness was now as excessive, as her resentment had been vehement; this, joined to the natural vivacity of my disposition, soon restored my spirits to their usual hilarity.

My mother having brought me apparel suited to the season, vanity, which notwithstanding all my mortifications was still alive in my heart, impelled me to appear, the following Sunday, in a gayer dress than I had done since I had been here. It is true I had never lost sight of that plain neatness which I had adopted upon coming into the country; but the addition of some very fine laces given me by *Mrs. Jackson*, and the being accoutred, upon the whole, more fashionably, excited enquiries, which till now had never existed. Whilst I was the neat, simple, silent, inoffensive girl, I passed uncensured, and the good people with whom I resided shewed me every respect, and doated upon me. But when, encouraged by the stranger

who had come from London, I appeared the gay, sprightly, well-dressed fine lady, they viewed me with pity mixed with contempt. From the behaviour of these rustics may probably be acquired a surer criterion of the garb and demeanour that betokens simplicity of manners and innocence of heart, than from all the scientific rules of philosophy, or the moral precepts of divines.

Had I duly profited by this incident, which I ought to have considered as a well-meant reproof, I should have been content with a humble line of life. But the happiness attendant on simplicity and innocence, was not to be my lot. Pride prompted me to believe, that it was my indispensable duty to support my parent in a genteeler stile than her pension would admit of; and no other method presented itself for doing this, than returning to my theatrical profession. This consequently I concluded on.

I had no sooner formed the resolution of treading the stage once more, than the calm retreat I had lately been so fond of, grew irksome to me.—Rural walks, moss-grown seats, spreading trees, books, and contemplation, lost their charms.—The prospects I had so often viewed with rapture and delight, were no longer pleasing to my eye.—The stillness of a country life palled upon my imagination.—The wholesome viands, the nut-brown ale, the fresh gathered fruits,  
the



the hearty welcome, the chearful gibe, and all the pleasures of a rustic table, were now distasteful to me.—I welcomed in idea, all the gay scenes into which I was about to enter, together with their inseparable concomitants, noise, riot, dissipation, folly, and pain.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R X V I I .

Feb. 22, 17—

**T**O the great satisfaction of the farmer's honest family, who now viewed both my mother and me with suspicious eyes, she in a few days set off for London, whither I was soon to follow her. Upon her getting to town, she was to procure me a lodging somewhere in the environs, and then to wait on *Mr. Rich*, to know whether he chose to engage me again. As she was going towards Covent-Garden for this purpose, she accidentally met *Mr. Sheridan*, who having commenced manager of a theatre in Dublin, was come to England to raise recruits. That gentleman immediately enquired for me, expressing at the same time a desire to engage me. My mother replied, that she did not think it prudent to listen to any proposal,

till she had first obtained the consent of *Mr. Rich*, to whom her daughter lay under the greatest obligations. *Mr. Sheridan* acquiescing in this, my mother promised to acquaint him with the result of her interview with *Mr. Rich*.

My mother had no sooner mentioned her accidental meeting with *Mr. Sheridan*, and his wish to engage me, than *Mr. Rich* gave her, without the least hesitation, at once a proof of his regard and his disinterestedness. He advised her by all means to accept the proposal; as I should not only receive the instructions of so great a master, but have an opportunity of appearing in every principal character, an advantage I could not be indulged with on a London stage; the possession of parts at that time (except when permitted novices for a trial of their theatrical skill) being considered as much the *property* of performers, as their weekly salary.

Upon my arrival in town, a letter was delivered me at the inn from my mother, wherein she informed me that she had taken a lodging for me at Chelsea; to which I drove. I found *Mr. Sheridan* there, and my engagement with him was soon concluded. Having but a short time allowed me to make the necessary preparations, and being as much ashamed to appear before any person I knew, as if the scandal propagated against me had been well founded, I left  
London

London without taking leave of any one. My heart indeed upbraided me with want of politeness, and with the highest degree of ingratitude, in not paying my respects, before. I went, to *Mr. Rich* and to *Mr. Quin*, gentlemen to whom I lay under such great and numerous obligations; but I could not so far overcome my bashful timidity, as to do it.

In my agreement with *Mr. Sheridan*, I only stipulated for one character, which I was apprehensive my youth might be an objection to, and which it is here necessary to mention, as it was afterwards productive of disagreeable consequences. It was the part of *Constance* in *King John*. A character which, although it might be objected to my playing it, that I was not only incapacitated from my want of experience on the stage, but from my figure, which would have been more properly adapted to the lady's son, *Prince Arthur*, I had set my heart upon.

Besides myself and my mother, who had conditioned to attend me, there were several other persons whom the Irish manager had engaged, and agreed to frank, as well as us, to Dublin. We set off with that gentleman from his lodgings, and nothing worth relating happened till we arrived at Parkgate. When we got there, the wind being contrary, *Mr. Sheridan* took his leave of us, and committing the management of the

troop to my mother, set off directly for Holyhead

I have often thought there was a great similitude between the little troop we mustered here, and the company of itinerant players described with such infinite humour by Scarron. It consisted of *Mrs. Elmy*; a young adventurer named *Lacy*; an humble admirer of that lady, a *Mr. Morgan*, in the last stage of a consumption; my mother; myself; and (before he left us) the manager. After the latter had quitted us, my mother and *Mrs. Elmy*, who was a humorist, and possessed of great good sense, but by her want of powers, was prevented from making a conspicuous figure upon the stage, were ever disputing about something or other. The contrast between the deportment and disposition of the two, was equal to the extremes of light and shade. To an indifferent observer, the formality and reserve of my honoured parent, compared with the levity and assumed low humour of *Mrs. Elmy*, (both assumed sometimes through contradiction) afforded a truly laughable scene.

Having waited several days at Park-gate, without a probability of sailing, and the place being rendered more disagreeable than it is, by the houses being crowded with passengers; *Mrs. Elmy* prevailed upon me to endeavour to persuade my mother to go  
to

to the Head. I was to urge as a reason, that our stay at Park-gate would in all probability prove much more expensive than the journey. A wish to oblige *Mrs. Elmy*, together with curiosity to see this part of Wales, induced me to exert all my power over my mother upon the occasion. I at length, though not without great difficulty, succeeded; and she sent to hire horses and a guide to set off the next morning.

Shall I conclude this letter here, before we set off, Madam, or shall I entertain you first with the diverting history of our excursion over the Welsh mountains? As I have an hour to spare from any necessary avocation, as my head is tolerably clear, and as my fingers are untired, I will proceed; as methinks I hear you bid me.

Know then, that the next morning our little company set out on their intended journey for Holyhead, as I informed you it was agreed to do. As I had never been on horseback before, I was not sensible of the task I had undertaken. But the horses in this part of the world are so gentle, and so accustomed to the road, that there is little danger of any inconvenience arising, but that of fatigue.

After travelling that day without any accident, the next morning, at breakfast, we were joined by a party of Irish gentlemen, with whom we had dined when we were at

Chester, and who were pursuing the same route as ourselves. We were very happy in the encounter, as their party greatly enlivened ours. One of these gentlemen, whose name was *Crump*, and of whom I shall have occasion to make frequent mention in the course of my narrative, paid so much assiduous attention to my mother, that we all concluded she had made a conquest of him. It will be necessary to remark, that my mother being perfectly recovered from that dejection which her anxiety for me had occasioned, and possessing still some remains of that beauty which had once captivated one of the most conspicuous characters in this kingdom, the supposition was not an improbable one. Her Hibernian admirer was about fifty years of age, hard-favoured, but very lively, obliging, and intelligent. He was by profession a linen-merchant, and was upon his return from Chester fair, which he constantly attended twice a year.

We had exceeding fine weather till we came to Penmanmawr, when, just as we were ascending that stupendous rock, the horizon became of a sudden overcast; the big clouds, clad in their deepest sable, rolled over us, and spouted forth such cataracts of rain, as seemed to forebode a second deluge; the moon, which was not as yet hid, just served to give us a view, by its glimmering light, of the dreadful abyss that lay  
below;

below; the peals of thunder, which were almost without intermission, threatened to burst the heavens; whilst the forky flashes of lightning seemed to denounce our immediate dissolution.

In this awful and tremendous situation *Mrs. Elmy* fell from her horse; and as the road at this time was too narrow to admit two horses abreast, her fall impeded the progress of the whole company, except that of my mother, who with the guide led the van. Some of the gentlemen instantly dismounted, in order to place the disastrous heroine upon her palfrey; when, to their great surprize, as well as ours, she would not suffer herself to be moved from the ground, till she had repeated the following lines from *Jane Shore* :

- “ Fall then, ye mountains, on my guilty  
 “ head;  
 “ Hide me, you rocks, within your secret  
 “ caverns;  
 “ Cast your black veil upon my shame,  
 “ O night!  
 “ And shield me with your sable wings  
 “ for ever.”

This piece of presumptuous humour failed of its desired effect; not one of the company seeming to be pleased with it but herself. Indeed it was very ill-timed. So much so was it, that one of the gentlemen who had

joined us, and who professed himself a *free-thinker*, but was really, as his own words evince, an *atheist*, declared, with a great oath, that the lady was much to blame to *spout tragedy*, when the *spouts of heaven* were let loose upon us. To which he added, that such an awful scene, as now presented itself, almost persuaded him there was a *Deity*. The horror *Mrs. Elmy's* ludicrous behaviour in such an alarming situation had excited in my mind, was not lessened by this declaration of our fellow traveller. They both, united, seemed more dreadful than the tempest in which we were involved, as I was apprehensive, that divine vengeance would await us for being in such company.

When the lady condescended to rise, she found that she had cut her foot against a stone by the fall; and she complained much of the pain it occasioned; for which reason she stopped at a cottage at the foot of the Mawr, to bathe it with brandy. Though drenched with rain, I would have continued with her, had not my mother insisted on my going on. Indeed, this was not a time to stand on compliments. My mother was apprehensive, as I had only a fustian riding habit on, (the season of the year, and the general serenity of the weather having prevented me from providing myself with a great coat) that I should get cold, by which my voice might have been affected. This

confi-



consideration induced her to consent to *Mr. Crump's* solicitations of taking me behind him.

As soon as I was seated, that gentleman put spurs to his horse, which was a hunter, and away we flew till we arrived at Bangor Ferry. Here a figure presented itself, so exactly answering the description of Charon, that I imagined myself on the banks of the Styx. As the torrents which had fallen from the rocks, during the tempest, had swollen the river to an uncommon height, this had given the water a black tinge; and that being a quality, as we are told, of the river which leads to Tartarus and Elysium, it added to the imaginary deception.

Having crossed the ferry, *Mr. Crump* and myself arrived at Bangor some time before the rest of the company. Where the mistress of the inn accommodated me with even a shift and stockings. In all the countries through which I ever travelled, I never met with such civil people as at the Welch inns. There is a cordiality in their manners, which must give a susceptible mind the greatest pleasure. Uncontaminated with the self-interested attention of those who belong to more frequented inns, where every civility must be purchased, they cheerfully supply you with every accommodation in their power, and are happy in obliging.

As soon as I was apparelled in my linsley-

woolsey, which I assure you I found very comfortable, I joined my fellow traveller, *Mr. Crump*, to return him thanks for the care and civility he had shewn me. He had prepared a good fire in the parlour against my return, which was evidently done to have an opportunity of getting me alone. His anxiety to do this must have been apparent to every one but myself. Had I observed it, I should have thought him guilty of an unpardonable presumption. For a man of his years, and without one personal attraction, to presume to look to my *divinityship*, was a supposition that I could form no idea of. I could not, however, help remarking, that my companion, who had hitherto been very loquacious, was now altogether as silent. As I was much fatigued, and not very well able to keep up a conversation, I was not displeas'd at his taciturnity.

After prancing about the room for some time, he approached me, and with a deep-fetched sigh, which would have blown the boat we had lately entered over the river, without the assistance of the ferry-man, took hold of my hand. I perceived that he was much agitated, a circumstance which, though it might have been agreeable in a favoured lover, was very unbecoming in a person with whom I had been so newly acquainted. At length he summed up resolution enough thus to address me: "My dear Miss Bellamy,"  
said

said he, "answer me one question: Were you ever in love?" My surprize at having such an interrogation put to me, and that in so abrupt a manner, prevented me from making an immediate reply; but recollecting myself, I answered, "Oh! yes, violently." "Are you really attached?" said he. "For ever," returned I. "It would perhaps be deemed impertinent," continued the gentleman, "were I to presume to ask with whom?" I told him, I did not think it could be of any consequence to him; but if it was, I would gratify his curiosity, by informing him it was—*with myself*. That I was a female Narcissus, and should always continue so. He had just time to exclaim, "Then I am satisfied," when our company appeared.

Such objects were they all as surpassed description. My mother had prudently provided herself with a good furtout; and the guide having some linen and other necessaries of hers safely stowed in a *saque de nuit*, which I had brought with me from France, she was soon equipt. But as for poor *Mrs. Elmy*, she came badly off; as I had already secured every unemployed article belonging to the good hostess's wardrobe. And what was more unfortunate for her than this, was, that there was no bed for her in the whole house, but one which could only be termed a crib, and that was placed in a closet of the  
room

room where we were to repose our weary limbs. And it was with great reluctance, that my mother consented to her being stowed even in that confined space. The gentlemen were obliged to sit up. At five o'clock, when the post boy arrived, we were called, and pursued our journey.

When we came within sight of Evisee Bank, *Mrs. Elmy* seemed struck with the name, and wished herself a countess by that title. The gentlemen, to humour the joke, rode on before, and ordered every thing that was in the house for the countess and her suite. In consequence of this, her ladyship was accommodated with the best apartment, and had the best attendance; which so displeased my mother, that she declared, if any more such pleasantries took place, she would pursue her journey, attended only by her nonpareil of a daughter and the guide, behind whom she rode. Her resentment indeed was more on my account than her own, as she weakly imagined every body was to deify me, as she herself did.

We arrived at Holy-head just in time to save our passage; for the packet sailed in less than half an hour after we got in. For my own part, I was so much fatigued with the journey, that as soon as I got on board, I retired to my cabin, where Morpheus was so kind as to touch me with his leaden wand,  
which

which caused me to sleep, till I heard the cry of "The Hill of Howth!"

My arrival in another kingdom will surely claim a separate letter; I shall therefore here put an end to this.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R   X V I I I .

March 1, 17—.

UPON our arrival at Dublin, my mother and myself were very kindly received by an old intimate of hers, the lady of the well known *Doctor Walker*. This gentleman, at that time, was esteemed so eminent in his profession, that he was accumulating by his practice a capital fortune, notwithstanding he lived in a very genteel stile. The Doctor was then writing a treatise against the Irish custom of burying their dead within a few hours after their decease. He endeavoured therein to dissuade the Hibernians from pursuing so hazardous a mode, as by interring bodies before any symptoms of putrefaction appeared, it did not unfrequently happen, that those who might have recovered their vital powers were prevented from doing so. When my mother heard on what subject the Doctor was writing, she related to him the story of *Mrs. Godfrey*, which I recited in my first letter. As soon as she had concluded it, to shew the Doctor how consonant

nant her opinion on this point was to his own, she promised him, that if she was in the same kingdom with him when the king of terrors made his approach, she would carefully attend to the state of his corpse, and take care that it should not be intombed, whilst there was the least probability of its restoration to life.

I insert all the circumstances of the foregoing conversation in so particular a manner, as an admonition to others, never to make a promise they do not intend to perform. Punctuality in the performance of a promise is as obligatory to an honest mind as the payment of a debt. Yet how many do we see profuse in the former, lightly making promises which they never pay the least attention to afterwards, who would censure in the severest manner the non-payment of a pecuniary obligation ! Though I have been too often obliged, through inability, to defer the accomplishment of many engagements, the involuntary neglect has lain more heavily on my mind, than any necessities I may have experienced from the same cause.

We continued at *Doctor Walker's* house, till we could find one which suited us ; and this we soon after did, contiguous to the theatre. *Mrs. Walker* would gladly have detained us, but my mother objected to it

on many accounts ; particularly because their house was always crowded with company.

As soon as I was recovered from the fatigue of my journey, I went to pay my respects to *Mrs. O'Hara*, *Lord Tyravley's* sister, who had not seen me since I was an infant. To my great grief I found her blind. She was much pleased with my visit, but she did not greatly approve of the profession I had chosen. However, as I went by the name of my mother's husband, to which alone I had a right, being born after their marriage, my engagement in the theatrical line could not bring *public* disgrace on her family. She, notwithstanding, proposed herself to introduce me to all her acquaintance as *her niece* ; which she accordingly did, as the acknowledged daughter of lord Tyravley.

I received extreme pain from a piece of information *Mrs. O'Hara* gave me ; which was relative to the death of my good friend, the protectress of my early years, *Mrs. Pye*, for whom she was then in second mourning. I never regretted any thing so much as being absent from this lady during her illness. I fondly thought, that the unremitting care and affectionate attention of one she loved as her own child, and who looked upon her as a parent, would have prolonged her desirable life ; a life truly valuable to her husband, and all those who had the happiness to be of her acquaintance.

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. O'Hara* kindly enquired into the state of my finances, which gave me an opportunity of making her acquainted with the *Duchess of Queensberry's* liberality to me, and likewise with the mortification I had received from her Grace at the same time; with which she seemed much entertained. I even informed her of the event which had been the cause of so much unhappiness to me. It is an established maxim with me, never to rest satisfied with gaining the good opinion of any person by halves. In endeavouring to acquire a friend, it is necessary to let them into the whole of your situation; otherwise you conduct yourself with the same absurdity as if, while you consulted a physician, you concealed the symptoms or nature of your disorder from him. Where a disclosure of secrets becomes needful, an open implicit confidence is required; otherwise the chance of success is greatly against you.

In the afternoon the honourable *Mrs. Butler* and her daughter were announced. *Mrs. O'Hara* introduced me as her niece, and added an eulogium which I by no means merited; and as this lady was a leading woman in the fashionable world, had great interest, and her house was frequented by most of the nobility, *Mrs. O'Hara* solicited her protection for me. *Mrs. Butler* was elegant in her figure, and had been very pretty, of  
which



which there were still some remains; but the decay of her beauty appeared to be more the result of indisposition than age. Her daughter was handsome, spirited, sensible and good humoured. She was nearly of the same age with myself, and seemed, even at this first interview, to have contracted a partiality for me, which I reciprocally wished to cultivate. Before the ladies took their leave, they engaged my aunt and me to come the next day to Stephen's-Green to dine and spend the evening. I promised them with the greatest readiness to do myself that honour, and my dear aunt agreed to accompany me. As *Mrs. O'Hara* was an invalid, and as she knew she must trespass the next evening on her usual regularity, *Mrs. Butler* keeping late hours, I left her early to her repose.

When I returned home, I found our fellow traveller, *Mr. Crump*, tete-a-tete with my mother. She informed me that *Miss St. Leger*, one of the three ladies I had become acquainted with some years before at *Mrs. Jones's*, had called and requested to see me the next morning, at *Lady Doneville's*, in Dawson-street. Thus from having no female acquaintance in London, except my own family, I was now *en train* to be introduced into the first circle in Dublin. As I was not a little elated at the reception I had met with from *Mrs. O'Hara*,  
I told

I told my mother, laughing, that she must divest herself of her formality, which perhaps might induce *Mr. Crump*, as they seemed to have so good an opinion of each other, to bestow all his leisure hours upon her; for there appeared to be very little probability of her having much of my company; the time required by the duties of my profession, and the engagements I was likely to be honoured with, promising to engage the whole of it. At parting he promised to comply with the proposal I had made. But my mother was much displeas'd with me for having taken such an unallowable freedom with her. I have before observed that she retained all the formality of Quakerism, notwithstanding she had renounced the religious tenets of that people.

The next morning I went to breakfast with *Miss St. Leger*, by whom I was received with all that politeness she so eminently possessed, actuated by the cordial warmth usually felt by the susceptible, on embracing a loved intimate after a long absence. She enquired in the kindest manner after *Miss Conway*; and was much affected at hearing that her friend was in a declining state of health, occasioned by her constant attendance on the *Princess of Wales*, to whom she was a Maid of Honour, which prevented her from taking the necessary steps  
for

for her recovery. She pressed me to stay dinner, but when I informed her that I was pre-engaged, and told her by whom, she politely said she was then happy, even in being deprived of my company; as the acquaintance of *Mrs. Butler* was the most desirable of any in Dublin, and would prove most agreeable and beneficial to me. She at the same time much regretted that she was deprived of the pleasure of frequenting that lady's house, which was occasioned by some umbrage her aunt, *Lady Doneraile*, with whom she resided, had given her.

My reception at the Green, when I went to dinner, was of the most flattering kind. It exceeded even my warmest hopes; and *Mrs. Butler* avowed herself my patroness, notwithstanding she had not yet had an opportunity of acquiring a knowledge, whether I really deserved that honour. When I took leave, she obligingly requested, that I would pass every hour, not appropriated to the business of the theatre, at her house; which you may be assured I did not fail readily to promise.

As I fix, which you must already have observed, on the most remarkable periods of my life for the introduction of my letters, in imitation of the division of their chapters by chronologers! and as I am now about to enter on the beginning of my theatrical

atrical existence on the Dublin stage, I shall here conclude.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R   X I X .

March 12, 17—

**T**HE theatre opened with eclat—But hold, I must first give way to an impulse I cannot resist, and write an exordium to this letter, in which several *great men in their professional line* are to make their appearance. Though apparently digressive from my history, yet it may perhaps tend to further the purpose of it, which is to mingle instruction with amusement.—It is by industry and application alone a person can arrive at eminence in any profession. Though natural genius is the most essential quality towards the attainment of every art or science, yet genius unassisted by cultivation can never reach perfection. Intense study and close application are absolutely needful (save in a few instances) to form the *truly great*; and if the private life of all the great men who have rendered themselves famous in any branch of knowledge, were to pass in review before us, we should find that *these* have not been wanting towards the acquisition of their fame. The following beautiful lines of the inimitable Spenser convey this document

ment with irresistible force, and should be always imprinted on the mind of every son and daughter of genius.

- “ Abroad in arms, at home in studious  
kind,  
“ Who seeks with painful toil, shall *ho-*  
“ *nour* soonest find.  
“ In woods, in waves, in wars, she’s  
“ wont to dwell,  
“ And will be found with peril and with  
“ pain,  
“ Nor can the man that moulds in idle  
“ cell,  
“ Unto her happy mansion e’er attain.  
“ Before her gate High God did sweat  
“ ordain,  
“ And wakeful watches ever to abide :  
“ But easy is the way, and passage plain,  
“ To *pleasure’s* palace; it may soon be  
“ spy’d,  
“ And day and night her doors to all  
“ stand open wide.”

I shall only add (not that I meant to rate myself among the *great*) that what merit I acquired as an actress, although I found time to keep up an acquaintance in the genteel circle just mentioned, was not acquired without close application.

But to proceed—The theatre opened with éclat. And what was very fortunate for me,  
the

the *Earl of Chesterfield* was at that time Viceroy. *Mr. Barry* had made some figure on this stage the preceding winter, in the character of *Othello*; and upon my being engaged, the manager wrote to him to study that of *Castalio*, as he proposed that I should early appear in the *Orphan*. To add to our success, *Mr. Garrick* joined the company this season. Having some dispute with the proprietor of *Drury-Lane Theatre*, and *Mr. Rich* declining to give him the terms he required, he came to *Dublin*. Three such capital performers as *Garrick*, *Sheridan*, and *Barry*, in one company, was a circumstance that had scarcely ever happened.

The two first, *Mr. Garrick* and *Mr. Sheridan*, agreed to play *Shakespeare's* characters alternately, and to unite their strength in every performance. In the *Orphan*, *Garrick* performed *Chamont*, *Barry* *Castalio*, and *Sheridan* *Polydore*. In the *Fair Penitent*, *Sheridan* played *Horatio*, *Garrick* *Lothario*, and *Barry* *Altamont*. The latter character was played so capitally by *Mr. Barry*, that this part seemed as consequential as either of the others. I was obliged to appear almost every night; and sometimes in characters very unfit for me. The great applause that I received, however, spurred me on, and excited in me the strongest endeavours to deserve it. And that I might at once pay a proper attention to  
the

the duties of my profession, and have time to enjoy the society of my new friends, I scarcely allowed myself even that portion of rest which nature requires. A good constitution, however, and inexhaustible spirits, enabled me to go through the season.

After some time, the tragedy of king John was proposed, wherein Roscius and the manager were to appear together, and play alternately the King and the Bastard. Upon this occasion *Mr. Sheridan* insisted on my playing Constance; whilst *Mr. Garrick* objected to it as there would then be no person to play Prince Arthur, but the late *Mrs. Kennedy*, at that time *Miss Orpheur*, who was nearly of the same age as myself, and from being hard favoured, looked much older.

Upon *Mr. Garrick's* absolute rejection of my appearance in the character on which I had set my heart, and for the performance of which I had stipulated in my articles, I flew to my patroness *Mrs. Butler*, to complain of the breach of them. Notwithstanding her partiality for *Mr. Garrick*, so highly did I stand in her favour, that she immediately sent round to all her friends, to request they would not go to the play the evening it was performed. Besides the consequence of family and fortune, this lady possessed very great power in the genteel world. To this may be added, that as

she frequently gave balls, all the young ladies that were usually invited, were always ready to oblige her in any request of this nature, to insure themselves a place at those entertainments. And every one of these readily obeyed and spread abroad her injunctions. The house on the night King John was performed for the first time was, of course, very thin. The receipts did not amount to forty pounds.

This was the first theatrical humiliation the immortal Roscius ever met with; and he severely repented preferring *Mrs. Furnival*, who played the character of Constance, to my little self. But what completed my triumph was, that when the same play was again performed, and *Mr. Sheridan* played the King, *Garrick* the Bastard, and myself Constance, more people were turned away than could get places; and the dispute relative to the characters which had lately happened, made the audience receive me with the warmest marks of approbation.

But notwithstanding this success, I was determined to return the mortification *Mr. Garrick* had been the cause of to me, the very first opportunity that presented itself. And it was not long before one offered. This LITTLE *great man* was to have two benefits during the season; and that they might not come too near each other, it was agreed that he should have one of them early in it. He had



had fixed on Jane Shore, for his first benefit. And on application being made to me to perform that character, I absolutely refused it, alledging the objection he had made to my playing Constance, namely my youth. Finding that intreaties were ineffectual, he prevailed on *Mrs. Butler* to make use of her interest with me; sensible that I could not refuse the solicitations of a lady to whom I was bound not only by the ties of gratitude, but those of policy. And whilst he made this application, that he might leave no method of obtaining my consent untried, he wrote me a note at the same time, which occasioned the following laughable incident, and furnished conversation for the whole city of Dublin.

In his note he informed me, “that if I  
“would oblige him, he would write me a  
“*goody goody* epilogue; which, with the help  
“of my eyes, should do more mischief than  
“ever the flesh or the devil had done since  
“the world began.” This ridiculous epistle  
he directed “To my soul’s idol the beauti-  
“fied Ophelia;” and delivered it to his ser-  
vant, with orders to bring it to me. But the  
fellow having some more agreeable amusement  
to pursue than going on his master’s errands,  
he gave it to a porter in the street, without  
having attended to the curious direction that  
was on it. The porter upon reading the  
superscription, and not knowing throughout

the whole city of Dublin, any lady of quality, who bore the title either of “*My Soul’s Idol*,” or “*The beautified Ophelia*,” naturally concluded that it was intended to answer some jocular purpose. He accordingly carried it to his master, who happened to be a newsmen; and by his means it got the next day into the public prints. The inditer of this high-flown epistle, it must be supposed, was not a little mortified at its publication. Nor was my mother, who was always awake for my reputation, without her alarms, lest it should injure my character; but that, thank Heaven, was too well established, to be endangered by so ridiculous an accident.

“No man is wise at all hours,” says the proverb. And never was this adage more completely verified than in the foregoing anecdote. That such *silly goody goody* stuff, as his epistle contained, should ever fall from the *immortal* pen of the *immortal* Roscius, even in the most careless and relaxed moment, “was strange, was passing strange.” Fortune seems to have taken advantage of the writer’s momentary imbecillity, and at once to correct him for it, and to caution him against the indulgence of such trivial affected humour—such an apology for wit—in future, contrived matters so that it should be made public.

With

With such a company, it must reasonably be supposed, that the season turned out very lucrative to *Mr. Garrick* and to *Mr. Sheridan*. What the emoluments of *Roscius* were, I do not recollect, but it was reported that they were almost incredible.

After a reconciliation between *Mr. Garrick* and myself had been effected, he visited much oftener at *Colonel Butler's* than usual. The Colonel had a seat on the sea-coast, not many miles from Dublin. And my mother thinking that bathing in the sea would be of great benefit to my health, she took a furnished house at the sheds of *Clintarf*, for that purpose. She fixed on this spot, that I might at the same time be near my much loved companion, *Miss Butler*; between whom and myself, as inseparable a connection had taken place, as if it had been cemented by the ties of blood. To such an extravagant height was our regard for each other carried, that notwithstanding we usually met at dinner, and spent the remainder of the day together, I had generally an epistle or two before that hour arrived.—Sweet is the union which exists between two young persons of the same sex, and of delicate and susceptible minds at our time of life. Unim-bittered by the turbulent desires and anxious cares of love, all is joy, delight, and pleasing expectation. The way is strewn with

flowers, and not a thistle rears its head to wound the lightly-tripping foot.

At the conclusion of the season, *Mr. Garrick* prepared to return to England, with the rich harvest that had crowned his toils. *Mrs. Butler*, who had a taste for wit, was as fond of his company, as her amiable daughter was of mine. Indeed it was not without reason she was so; for I know very few whose company was to be courted in preference to *Mr. Garrick's*, when he endeavoured to please. The following whimsical manœuvre of *Mrs. Butler's*, will show that her fancy was sometimes as sportive, and her satire as keen, as that of her witty guest.

Some days before *Mr. Garrick's* departure for England, as *Mrs. Butler*, her daughter, myself, and some other company, were walking on the terrace, we had the satisfaction to see the much admired hero come galloping up to the house. He soon joined us; and to the great regret of us all, particularly of *Mrs. Butler*, announced his intention of leaving Dublin the next day. Whilst we were engaged in conversation, the lady of the house went away abruptly; but soon returned, bearing in her hand a sealed packet, which she delivered to Roscius, thus addressing him at the same time. “ I  
“ here present you, *Mr. Garrick*, with  
“ something more valuable than life. In it  
“ you

“ you will read my sentiments ; but I strictly  
“ enjoin you not to open it till you have  
“ passed the Hill of Howth.” We all looked  
surprised at this extraordinary presentation,  
especially *Colonel Butler’s* Chaplain, who was  
one of the party. As the lady inclined  
somewhat to prudery, and had always ap-  
peared to be governed by the most rigid  
rules of virtue, we could none of us guess  
the purport of the present, though her con-  
duct seemed to admit of a doubtful interpre-  
tation. But *Garrick*, who was as conscious of  
possessing the gifts of nature to as li-  
beral a degree as any man breathing,  
took the packet with a significant graceful  
air ; concluding without hesitation, that it  
contained, not only a valuable present, (the  
giver having the power, as well as the dis-  
position, to be generous) but a declaration  
of such tender sentiments, as her virtue  
would not permit her to make known to him  
whilst he remained in the kingdom.

After dinner *Mr. Garrick* took his leave ;  
and he was no sooner departed, than *Mrs.  
Butler* informed the company, that the con-  
tents of the valuable packet with which she  
had presented her visitor, were nothing more  
than “ *Westley’s Hymns,*” and “ *Dean Swift’s*  
“ *Discourse on the Trinity ;*” adding, that he  
would have leisure during his voyage, to  
study the one, and to digest the other. You  
may be assured that we all enjoyed the joke.

As for my own part, I could scarcely keep my risible faculties in any order, when my imagination presented to me *Garrick's* disappointment at finding the contents of the packet so very different from what he had concluded them to be. I must inform you, that at our next meeting, *Mr. Garrick* acquainted me, that upon opening the packet and seeing what it contained, he was so much chagrined, that instead of benefiting by the *christian* precepts to be found therein, he, in the most *heathenish* manner, offered them up a sacrifice to Neptune. In plain English, he threw both *Mr. Westley* and the Dean, cheek-by-jole, into the sea.—A more heterogeneous union certainly never took place.

Permit me just to add, that the happy manner in which I spent my time in this terrestrial paradise, and with such agreeable company, so much increased the pace of the old gentleman with the scythe and looking-glass, that he tripped along through days, weeks, and months, as nimble as a dryad; and the summer passed imperceptibly away.

G. A. B.

## L E T T E R   X X .

March 18, 17—.

**T**O show my readiness to obey your commands, Madam, (for the request of a friend is as obligatory as a command), I employ almost every hour on the continuation of my narrative; and shall esteem myself sufficiently repaid, if I can prevent it from proving tiresome. You must remember that it is the history of a weak woman, recited by the same weak woman. Be, therefore, to her faults, whether relative to her conduct, or her literary ones, *a little blind*. But a truce with apologies. Such as it is, I give it unto you.

The next winter, when our theatrical campaign commenced, we were very apprehensive that we should feel the desertion of so able a General as *Garrick*. But through the exertions of the manager, who was deservedly a great favourite with the gentlemen of the college, at which he was bred, as the Provost and Professors had been his fellow students, our success was not less than when we were aided by his powerful assistance—He who, *in himself alone*, was a tower of invincible strength.

Early in the season, the tragedy of “*All for Love, or the World well Lost*,” was revived; in which *Barry* and *Sheridan*

stood unrivalled in the characters of Antony and Ventidius. The getting it up produced the following extraordinary incidents. The manager, in an excursion he had made during the summer to London, had purchased a superb suit of cloaths that had belonged to the Princess of Wales, and had been only worn by her on the birth-day. This was made into a dress for me to play the character of Cleopatra; and as the ground of it was silver tiffue, my mother thought that by turning the body of it in, it would be a no unbecoming addition to my waist, which was remarkably small. My maid-servant was accordingly sent to the theatre to assist the dresser and mantua-maker in preparing it; and also in sewing on a number of diamonds; my patroness not only having furnished me with her own, but borrowed several others of her acquaintance for me. When the women had finished the work, they all went out of the room, and left the door of it indiscreetly open.

*Mrs. Furnival*, who owed me a grudge, on account of my eclipsing her, as the more favourable reception I met with from the public, gave her room to conclude I did; and likewise for the stir which had been made last season about the character of Constance; accidentally passed by the door of my dressing-room in the way to her own, as it stood open. Seeing my rich dress thus  
lying



lying exposed, and observing no person by to prevent her, she stepped in, and carried off the Queen of Egypt's paraphernalia, to adorn herself in the character of Octavia, the Roman matron, which she was to perform. By remarking from time to time my dress, which was very different from the generality of heroines, *Mrs. Furnival* had just acquired taste enough to despise the black velvet in which those ladies were usually habited. And without considering the impropriety of enrobing a Roman matron in the habiliments of the Egyptian queen; or perhaps not knowing that there was any impropriety in it, she determined, for once in her lifetime, to be as fine as myself, and that at my expence. She accordingly set to work to let out the cloaths, which, through my mother's economical advice, had been taken in.

When my servant returned to the room, and found the valuable dress, that had been committed to her charge, missing; her fright and agitation were beyond expression. She ran like a mad creature about the theatre, enquiring of every one whether they had seen any thing of it. At length she was informed that *Mrs. Furnival* had got possession of it. When running to that lady's dressing-room, she was nearly petrified at beholding the work, which had cost her so much pains, undone. My damsel's veins, unfortunately for *Mrs. Furnival*, were rich

with the blood of the O'Bryens. And though she had not been blest with so polished an education as such a name was entitled to, she inherited at least the *spirit* of the Kings of Ulster. Thus qualified for carrying on an attack even of a more important nature, she at first demanded the dress with tolerable civility ; but meeting with a peremptory refusal, the blood of her great fore-fathers boiled within her veins, and without any more ado, she fell tooth and nail upon poor *Mrs. Furnival*. So violent was the assault, that had not assistance arrived in time to rescue her from the fangs of the enraged Hibernian nymph, my theatrical rival would probably have never had an opportunity of appearing once in her life adorned with *real* jewels.

When I came to the theatre, I found my servant dissolved in tears at the sad disaster ; for notwithstanding her heroic exertions, she had not been able to bring off the cause of the contest. But so far was I from partaking of her grief, that I could not help being highly diverted at the absurdity of the incident. Nothing concerning a theatre could at that time affect my temper. And I acknowledge I enjoyed a secret pleasure in the expectation of what the result would be. I sent indeed for the jewels ; but the lady, rendered courageous by Nantz, and the presence of her paramour, *Morgan*, who was  
not

not yet dead, she condescended to send me word, that I should have them after the play.

In this situation I had no other resource than to reverse the dresses, and appear as plain in the character of the luxurious Queen of Egypt, as Antony's good wife, although the sister of Cæsar, ought to have been. In the room of precious stones, with which my head should have been decorated, I substituted pearls; and of all my finery I retained only my diadem, that indispensable mark of royalty.

Every transaction that takes place in the theatre, and every circumstance relative to it, - are as well known in Dublin as they would be in a country town. The report of the richness and elegance of my dress had been universally the subject of conversation, for some time before the night of performance; when, to the surprize of the audience, I appeared in white sattin. My kind patroness, who sat in the stage-box, seemed not to be able to account for such an unexpected circumstance. And not seeing me adorned with the jewels she had lent me, she naturally supposed I had reserved my regalia till the scene in which I was to meet my Antony.

When I had first entered the green-room, the manager, who expected to see me splendidly dressed, as it was natural to suppose the in-  
chanting

chanting Cleopatra would have been upon such an occasion, expressed with some warmth his surprize at a disappointment, which he could only impute to caprice. Without being in the least discomposed by his warmth, I coolly told him, “ that I had  
“ taken the advice Ventidius had sent me by  
“ Alexis, and had parted with both my  
“ cloaths and jewels to Antony’s wife.” *Mr. Sheridan* could not conceive my meaning; but as it was now too late to make any alteration, he said no more upon the subject. He was not however long at a loss for an explanation; for going to introduce Octavia to the Emperor, he discovered the jay in all her borrowed plumes. An apparition could not have more astonished him. He was so confounded, that it was some time before he could go on with his part. At the same instant *Mrs. Butler* exclaimed aloud, “ Good  
“ Heaven, the woman has got on my diamonds!” The gentlemen in the pit concluded that *Mrs. Butler* had been robbed of them by *Mrs. Furnival*; and the general consternation, occasioned by so extraordinary a scene, is not to be described. But the house observing *Mr. Sheridan* to smile, they supposed there was some mystery in the affair, which induced them to wait with patience till the conclusion of the act. As soon as it was finished, they bestowed their applause upon Antony and his faithful veteran; but as if  
they

they had all been animated by the same mind, they cried out, “No more *Furnival!*” “No more *Furnival!*” The fine dressed lady, disappointed of the acclamations she expected to receive on account of the grandeur of her habiliments, and thus hooted for the impropriety of her conduct, very prudently called fits to her aid, which incapacitated her from appearing again. And the audience had the good nature to wait patiently till *Mrs. Elmy*, whom curiosity had led to the theatre, had dressed to finish the part. Had the character of Octavia been originally cast according to merit, *Mrs. Elmy* would certainly have had the preference; as the softness of her manner, and the propriety with which she spoke, justly entitled her to it.

The impropriety of *Mrs. Furnival's* conduct in the affair, just related, warrants my troubling you with an observation I have frequently made; which is, that every attempt to obtain a desirable end, if the means are not consistent with honour and rectitude, marr instead of promoting it. If I recollect aright, I have made a remark somewhat similar to this in a former letter, but it cannot be too often repeated, “Honesty will be  
 “always found to be the best policy.”—  
 “More proverbs, and preaching again?” methinks I hear you say; “Pray go on  
 “with your narrative!”—I will, my dear  
 Madam,

Madam, when I have reminded you that it was by your permission I now and then preach, as you are pleased to term it.

With these interruptions the piece could not appear to so much advantage, on its first representation, as there was reason to hope it would. But the next night, either inspired with the brilliancy of my ornaments, or animated by the sight of his Excellency *Lord Chesterfield*, who together with his Lady graced the theatre, it was the general opinion that I never played with so much spirit, or did greater justice to a part. The applause I received was universal.

A gentleman, who stood near the stage door, took a very unallowable method of shewing his approbation. Being a little flushed with liquor, or otherwise I am persuaded he would not have been capable of the rudeness, he put his lips to the back of my neck as I passed him. Justly enraged at so great an insult, and not considering that the Lord Lieutenant was present, or that it was committed before such a number of spectators, I instantly turned about, and gave the gentleman a slap in the face. Violent and unbecoming as this sudden token of resentment appeared, it received the approbation of *Lord Chesterfield*, who rose from his seat and applauded me for some time with his hands; the whole audience, as you may suppose, following his example. At the conclusion  
of

of the act, *Major Macartney* came, by order of his Excellency, to *Mr. St. Leger* (that was the gentleman's name) requesting that he would make a public apology for this forgetfulness of decorum; which he accordingly did. I have reason to believe that this incident contributed, in a great measure, to a reform that *Mr. Sheridan*, with great propriety, soon after made. Agreeable to this regulation no gentlemen, in future, were to be admitted behind the scenes.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R X X I.

March 25, 17—

“ **P**ROCEED, and indulge yourself in  
 “ any manner you please, whenever  
 “ fancy prompts you to wander from the  
 “ road of your history; for I read with in-  
 “ expressible pleasure every part of your  
 “ letters.”—Do you really write thus, my  
 dear Madam? And does my humble attempt  
 to afford you entertainment answer the in-  
 tended purpose? It does, it does. You tell  
 me so; and I know you are too sincere to  
 flatter me. Thus encouraged, I *will* proceed.  
 Nor shall one reluctant sigh at the length of  
 the way which still lies before me, or a fur-  
 ther fear of proving tiresome to you, escape  
 me.

Not-

Notwithstanding the applause bestowed upon my theatrical talents by the people of Dublin was an indubitable proof of my possessing no mean degree of merit, yet I was apprehensive (though naturally vain) that this was rather exaggerated by their partiality, and the support I received on account of my family from the higher ranks. I endeavoured therefore, by *intense application*, as I have already told you, to render them more justly deserving of the public approbation.

*Mr. Garrick* having about this time purchased a half share of the patent of Drury-Lane theatre, and my success in Dublin having reached his ears, he wished to engage me for the ensuing season. And *Mr. Delany* an actor then of the first rate, being obliged to visit Ireland to take possession of an estate left him by his mother, *Mr. Garrick* deputed him to make me an offer of ten pounds a week. This offer however I refused; and I acknowledge my indiscretion in so doing, I must here just observe, that the applause I met with in comedy was equal, if not superior, to that which was bestowed upon me when I played in tragedy. And by playing the character of Biddy in "Miss in her Teens," I convinced the town, that I was no less qualified to perform in *low* than in *genteel* comedy.

I was about this time informed that *Mr. Quin* had been so displeas'd with me for my apparent ingratitude, that he had consented to



be reconciled to *Mrs. Cibber*; and now bestowed that generous attention on her that I should otherwise have shared in. He had been greatly offended with that lady also, on account of her desertion from Covent-Garden theatre to Drury-Lane. She lay under as many obligations to him for *real* favours as I did for intentional ones; for she had not only been necessitated to accept of those of a pecuniary nature, but had been obliged to him for her re-establishment on the *English* stage, from which she had been precluded, for some time, by the machinations of her husband. Her ingratitude was, notwithstanding, now obliterated from *Mr. Quin's* mind, and he took her once more under his protection.

My refusal of *Mr. Garrick's* offer offended him so highly, that, it was said, he formed a resolution never to engage me upon any terms whatever. But the resolutions of managers are seldom considered as binding, when opposed by their interest. Self interest, with them, as with the greatest part of mankind, is the grand moving principle. Pique, resentment, prejudice, in an instant dissolve before it. Even pride and arrogance bend submissive to it. It may therefore be truly said, however degrading the thought, to be the *ruling passion* of the human mind.

Just at this period an event happened, which, if it had been attended with the expected

pected consequences, would have broken *Mrs. O'Hara's* heart, have greatly affected the mind of my patroness, and have ruined my reputation for ever. One night, as I was performing the part of Lady Townley in "The Provoked Husband," I received a card from *Mrs. Butler*, wrote in a servant's hand, requesting me to come to her house as soon as I should be at liberty. As the note was delivered to me during the performance of the play, I had only leisure just to send verbally, with my compliments, that the fatigue of the evening would prevent me from being able to do myself that honour.

Had I attended to the circumstance of the card's being written by a servant, I must have been convinced that something was wrong; as my dear friend *Miss Butler* was always happy in seizing every occasion to write to me. It, however, passed unnoticed. Not long after, I received another note, informing me, that I must absolutely come the moment I had finished, and even without waiting to change my dress. So very pressing an invitation, I own, excited my curiosity, and made me impatient for the conclusion of my business. I was to have played *Miss Bidly* in the entertainment; but the gentleman who was to have performed *Fribble* being suddenly taken ill, the after-piece was obliged to be changed; which

enabled

enabled me to make my curtsy much sooner than I had reason to expect.

My task being done, I got into my chair in the same dress in which I had played the character of Lady Townley, and hastened away to Stephen's-Green. As the dress I wore was a modern one, there was no great impropriety in my appearing in it off the stage. Just as I entered one door of the parlour in which *Mrs. Butler* and her female visitors were, the Colonel, and several gentlemen, who had just risen from their bottle, were ushered in at the opposite one. The company was numerous; and the elegance of my dress attracted the attention of all the gentlemen; but not one of the ladies condescended to speak to me. Even the lady whose guest I was only deigned to welcome me, on my entrance, with a formal declination of her head.

A reception so different from what I had been accustomed to in that hospitable mansion, not only surprized, but greatly shocked me. In this agitation of mind, I made up to *Mrs. O'Hara*, who was present, and requested she would inform me what was the occasion of it. The answer I received from her was, that a few minutes would determine whether she should ever notice me again. The coolness of her manner, whilst she uttered this, as I was conscious of my innocence, and my aunt must have been well

well assured of the sincerity of my heart, piqued my pride for a moment; but this emotion soon went off, and I assumed, at least in appearance, my usual tranquillity.

A gentleman now made his *entrée*, whose figure, shape, dress and address, exceeded every thing I had ever beheld before. The ladies, notwithstanding, continued to look as serious and demure as a convocation of old maids met on purpose to dissect the reputation of a giddy thoughtless young one. Nor did this beautiful stranger, with all his attractions, seem to be less neglected than myself. From being in such company, and in such a splendid dress, for my head was adorned with the jewels of my patroness, the gentleman might naturally conclude, that I was a person of quality. And as a young lady of distinction had lately taken an airing, on a moonlight night, with a noble lord, he imagined, in all probability, from the reserve with which he saw me received by the ladies, that I was the very identical girl who had made that *faux pas*, and who had now *obtruded* herself into the first circle in the kingdom. What other opinion could he form of me from the present appearance of things!

From this motive, or some other, his attention appeared to be fixed upon me, in preference to any of the other ladies; and he introduced himself to me with an air so easy

easy and confident, that I knew immediately that he had travelled. He acquainted me, that he was just returned from making the *grand tour*, and was come to take possession of his estate, and settle for the remainder of his days in Ireland. We then entered into conversation on different subjects, in which I acquitted myself with more ease than I expected I could have done in a state of such suspense. My affected cheerfulness was so well counterfeited, that it appeared to be real; and I kept up the ball with so much spirit, that my companion seemed to entertain a better opinion of me than he had done at first.

The test intended for the discovery of some dubious points, which will presently be known, having now been carried on as long as necessary, *Miss Butler* was sent to put a stop to our *tête à tête*. When my *Gany-mede*, whose curiosity had been on tiptoe to find out who I was, went to the upper end of the room, to make the needful enquiries of the lady of the house. Having in a whisper asked the question, *Mrs. Butler* answered aloud, "Surely, you must know her. I am  
" certain you know her; nay, that you are  
" well acquainted with her." The gentleman, not a little disconcerted at this want, in a lady of fashion, of what is usually termed *du monde*, that is, among other things, replying to a whisper in an audible voice; assured her,

her, still in a low tone, that he had never seen me before, and now felt himself greatly interested in the enquiry. “ Fye, fye, Mr. *Medlicote*,” returned my patroness, “ what can you say for yourself, when I inform you, that this is the dear girl whose character you so cruelly aspersed at dinner ?”

I now plainly perceived, that this accomplished gentleman, vain of his attractive graces, had boasted, like too many others, of favours he had never received ; not knowing that he did so in the presence of my best friends, and that there was a certainty of his false assertions being detected. The pencil of Hogarth alone could justly depicture the confusion of the gentleman at this discovery of his treachery; or of my petrefaction at finding myself the subject of his slander. It for some time totally deprived me of the use of every faculty. Till at length my patroness kindly relieved me from the situation in which I was absorbed. Coming up to me, she took me by the hand, and with a smile on her countenance thus addressed me : “ My dear child, you have gone through a fiery trial ; but it was a very necessary one. This gentleman has vilely traduced your character. We were all perfectly convinced that you did not merit what he said of you ; but had he seen you first at the theatre, instead of here, he would, doubtlessly, have maintained his assertions

“ tions with oaths, and there would then  
“ have been no possibility of contradicting  
“ them, however favourably we may have  
“ thought of you, notwithstanding. By the  
“ method we have pursued, though it has  
“ been somewhat irksome to you, his false-  
“ hoods have been so palpably disproved,  
“ as not to admit of the least palliation.”  
Having said this, she embraced me in the  
most cordial manner. And as soon as I got  
from her embrace, I ran and threw myself  
into the arms of my dear aunt, who seemed  
to feel the utmost satisfaction at my tri-  
umph.

As for my traducer, it may be supposed  
he did not long disgust us with his company.  
Charming and accomplished as he was,  
there did not appear to be a wish among us  
all to detain him.—How much more charm-  
ing and accomplished would he have been,  
had truth spread her refulgent beams over  
those perfections with which nature in so  
bounteous a manner had favoured him!—Of  
all human failings that of *detraction* is cer-  
tainly one of the worst. The venom of the  
tongue is more fatal in its consequences  
than the deadly poison of the asp. It not  
only proves destructive to individuals, but  
to the peace and happiness of whole families.  
—But its fatal effects are so pointedly and  
beautifully described by that great master of

nature, Shakespear\*, in the following well known passage, that were I to fill up a whole letter with the severest censures reason and experience could dictate, I should not be able to say the twentieth part the title of what he has said in these *few* immortal lines.

“ *Good name* in man and woman  
 “ Is the immediate jewel of their souls ;  
 “ Who steals my purse steals trash, ’tis  
 “ something, nothing ;  
 “ ’Twas mine, ’tis his, and has been slave  
 “ to thousands ;  
 “ But he that filches from me my good  
 “ name,  
 “ Robs me of that which not enriches  
 “ him,  
 “ And makes me poor indeed.”

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XXII.

March 31, 17—

WHEN *Mr. Medleycote* was gone, one of the gentlemen present acquainted us, that during his travels, he became enamoured with a beautiful Italian lady ; who, listening to his pro-

\* *Othello*, Act 3d, Scene 5th.

fections



essions of love, left her family, and became the partner of his flight. Her brother, being informed of the seduction, pursued the fair fugitive and her paramour, and overtaking them, gave the gentleman his choice either to marry his sister, or settle the affair in the field of honour. *Mr. Medlicote*, finding there was no alternative, prudently chose the former, and they were accordingly united in indissoluble bonds.

All the company at *Colonel Butler's* seemed to agree in opinion, that had my family and fortune equalled his expectations, he would have considered his union with the Italian lady invalid, from its being an act of compulsion on his part, and without the least scruple have made me an offer of his hand, in defiance of honour, humanity, and every tender feeling. *Mrs. Butler* observed, that nothing could equal her pleasure at this public testimony of the falsity of *Medlicote's* accusation; for notwithstanding she was convinced of my innocence, and had found it fully confirmed by the propriety of my conduct since I had resided in that kingdom, she could not have permitted her daughter to live in terms of strict intimacy with one whose reputation was not perfectly *unfollied*.

The last word *unfollied* struck me, at the time *Mrs. Butler* made use of it, with inexpressible force; and as there is no crime, as

I have frequently said, that I hold in equal detestation with deceit, I determined, let what would be the consequence, to inform that lady the first opportunity that offered, that I was, unhappily, an unfit person for an intimate with her daughter, my character having been *sullied*, though very undeservedly, by the rude breath of scandal, through the wicked machinations of the noblemen formerly mentioned. For the present I contented myself with entering into a vindication of those of the profession in which I was engaged.

I told the company, that though many young men, through levity, were so inhuman as to blast the character of most of those females who were in the theatrical line, merely because they supposed their reputation was of so little consequence, that they were fit subjects for their sportive fancy; yet there were many, I was persuaded, who trod the stage, and were truly virtuous. I brought as examples a Pritchard and a Clive; to whom I said, I doubted not, but many others might be added. I observed, that were actresses as chaste as vestals, such a tongue as a *Medlicote's* may by infamous insinuations blast their fame for ever, notwithstanding there was as little foundation for them, as those with regard to myself, had just been discovered to have. I concluded

cluded with declaring that I thought a woman who preserved an unblemished reputation on the stage, to be infinitely more praiseworthy, than those who retained a good name, merely because they were secured by rank or fortune from the temptations actresses are exposed to; or than such as, through their mediocrity in life, do not fall in the way of the gay and dissolute. Here *Colonel Butler* interrupted my declamation by singing, "And she may be chaste that never was tried." This sally of his, which came in so *a-propos*, and tended to confirm the propositions I had just been striving to establish, restored cheerfulness; who, though she returned so late, was a very welcome visitor.

When I returned home, though it was very late, I could not sleep for the reflections which arose in my mind, on a review of the incidents of the day. "How much," cried I, "are the world mistaken in their ideas of *virtue*, as well as of *happiness!*" "The generality of mankind seem to prize every virtue in that of *chastity*." "Without doubt, chastity is one of the first and most justly admired virtues that adorns the female mind; yet when we consider, that punishment certainly attends a breach of that virtue; that the great monitor conscience is perpetually preying on the heart of every frail fair one capable of reflection; and that disgrace is their conse-

“quent portion; surely the *truly* virtuous  
“ought rather to pity, and pour balm into  
“the bosom of those who are thus unfor-  
“tunately condemned to an earthly purga-  
“tory, and may have many extenuations  
“to plead, than add to their afflictions by  
“reproaches or contempt.”—Such were  
my sentiments at that period, young as I  
was, and such are they at this hour. But  
though I thus plead the cause of the unfor-  
tunate, it is not because I have unhappily a  
claim to the same lenity myself, or that I  
wish to extenuate a deviation from the path  
of rectitude in this point; I have as high a  
veneration for chastity and her *true* votaries,  
and I as much regret the loss of innocence,  
(my mind still retaining its native purity)  
as the most unerring of my sex can do.—  
But as Hamlet says, “Somewhat too much  
of this.”

In the morning, after a restless night, I  
found myself in a fever. The different pas-  
sions with which my mind had been agitated  
during the preceding evening, had been more  
than my body could bear, and a fever en-  
sued. I was not in the least concerned at my  
indisposition, as it gave me an opportunity  
of staying at home without offending any  
one. My friends however were greatly  
alarmed. *Mrs. Butler* and her beloved daugh-  
ter did me the honour to pay me a visit,  
and my absence from the theatre was confi-  
dered.

sidered as a general calamity. During my confinement I could not help indulging my reflections on the subject which had lately taken possession of my mind; and I never before viewed the profession I had embraced, in so humiliating a light as I now did through *Medlicote's* aspersions. That every fool who happened to be possessed of a fortune, should think himself licenced to take liberties with me; or even that my own footman, upon any dislike, should be able to go for a shilling into the theatre, and insult me; was what I could not bear to think of. The very idea affected me so much, that I never could regain, from this time, the self-sufficiency I possessed before. My indisposition increased from these corroding thoughts; and it was several days before I was able to attend at the theatre. When I did so, a disagreeable event happened, which retarded my perfect recovery, and, with some other consequent circumstances, was the cause of my leaving Ireland.

*Mr. Sheridan*, in consequence of the insult I had received from *Mr. St. Leger*, as before related, and on account of the inconveniences arising from the custom, had given a general order at the doors of the theatre, and notice in all the public papers, that no gentleman was, on any account, to be admitted behind the scenes. It happened one night, just as I was so far recovered as to venture to

the house, but not to perform; that an officer, who had more wine in his head, than humanity in his heart, insisted on passing the centry placed at the stage-door. The poor fellow persisting in his refusal of admittance, the officer drew his sword and stabbed him in the thigh, with so much violence, that the weapon broke, and left a piece in the most dangerous part. Hearing a riot on the stage, I ran from the box in which I sat, and flew in my fright to the next centinel for protection. This happening to be the man who had been wounded, I found myself in a moment encompassed by numbers, and was obliged to be a witness to the broken steel being taken out. The unexpectedness of this scene, and the terrors I was thrown into by it, as I was not perfectly restored to health, were productive of a relapse. The man however happily recovered through the placidness of his disposition; but having lost the use of his leg, the offender, who was a man of quality, provided for him for life.

G. A. B.

## L E T T E R   X X I I I .

April 5, 17—

**A**BOUT the time that I was so well recovered of my disorder as to be able to play again, *Mr. Barry*, wishing to try his fortune in England, went off without giving the manager any previous notice, or paying any respect to his articles. I have already observed that *Mr. Sheridan* was held in high estimation by the people of Dublin. The young gentlemen belonging to the college looked upon him as a divinity. The ladies of his acquaintance flattered him; and his own vanity misguided him. Thus situated, he thought himself equal to any undertaking the stage required. So that, upon *Mr. Barry's* departure, he left the characters in which he could have no competitor, to enter into the walk of lovers and genteel comedy. It is true his figure was tolerable, and might have suited this line; but his voice and manner totally precluded him from making any comparative stand in them.

It was not long before he was convinced of his mistake; and seemed by his revival of *Æsop* to wish to find out plays that were more suited to his scientific talents. In casting a part for me in this piece, that of the Young Lady was considered as too insignificant. The Categorical Lady required too

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much

much volubility, and I was obliged to put up with that of Doris, which was the character of an old nurse; and a part of such immense length, that this and *Æsop's* made two thirds of the performance.

There was no doubt but *Mr. Sheridan*, who must be allowed to be the best declaimer that ever trod our stage, would have made a very capital figure in a character which was so conspicuously marked out for his talents, had not the performance been interrupted on the first night of its representation. The house was so much crowded, that a *person*, I will not so far degrade the title of *gentleman*, as to bestow on him that appellation, finding himself inconveniently situated in the pit, got over the spikes which divide that part from the stage. This removal received marks of approbation from many of the audience, who by no means approved of the new regulation which debarred them from coming behind the scenes. *Mr. Kelly* (that was the person's name) was not a little pleased that he had escaped from his confined situation, and at the same time shown by this manœuvre an appearance of courage, which he was conscious he did not really possess.

Elevated with his success, he made his way to the green-room. Having heard much of the liberties taken by the gentlemen with the performers, during the time that they were admitted behind



behind the scenes, I had adopted *Mr. Quin's* mode of confining myself to my dressing-room. But being apprehensive that I was not perfect in a scene which was mostly lines, and which I was to repeat in the next act, I went into the green-room to request *Mrs. Dyer* to run it over with me.

When I entered the room, I observed that lady to be greatly confused, and that she could not move out of an arm-chair in which she sat, from a man's impeding her. She whispered me as I drew near, that *Kelly* had most grossly insulted her. Upon which, not considering the brutality of a drunken man, particularly of an illiterate Irishman when drunk, I asked her why she staid to hear him? I had no sooner said this, than I observed I had offended the brute, and accordingly ran out of the green-room into my dressing-room, which adjoined to it. When I got in, I prudently locked the door, judging that a wretch who could dare to insult a woman with an indelicate conversation, would dastardly strike or misuse any of the sex, on a supposed offence. It was a very providential circumstance that I had pursued this step; for I had scarcely done so, when *Kelly* pursued me, and attempted to force the door; at the same time swearing vengeance against me.—What outrages against decency, decorum, and humanity, are drunken men guilty of, even if ignorance

and brutality are not united with intoxication ! It was no bad custom of the ancient Romans, to make their slaves drunk once a year, that their children might be witnesses to the detestable consequences of inebriation, and early learn to abhor it.

The noise which *Kelly* made at my dressing-room door alarmed the audience, and drew the manager to enquire into the cause of it. Finding *Kelly* thus riotously disposed, he desired him to quit the scenes. The other refusing, *Mr. Sheridan* ordered him to be turned out by force. He now found room in the pit, as several of the manager's friends, on hearing the disturbance, had left their places, and gone into his room to learn the occasion of it. The play proceeded till we were come to the first scene of the last act, when an orange or apple was thrown at *Mr. Sheridan*, who played the character of *Æsop*, and so well directed, that it dented the iron of the false nose which he wore, into his forehead.

*Mr. Sheridan* was not only born and bred a gentleman, but possessed as much personal courage as any man breathing. It may therefore be supposed, that he would not put up with such an indignity. He went forward, and addressed the audience, or the person that was supposed to throw it; but what he said, my fright prevented me from hearing. The curtain was then dropped,  
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and the piece left unfinished. The foolish being who had occasioned this confusion, *Kelly*, now went to the manager's room to demand satisfaction. And this he immediately gave him in the most ample manner, with an oak stick, which, as *Æsop*, he had carried in his hand during the performance; whilst *Kelly*, to the great entertainment of such of *Mr. Sheridan's* friends as were present, fell upon the ground in tears, crying out at the same time, "that he should severely  
"repent this usage to a gentleman." To the disgrace of the military (for he wore a cockade) during this humiliating scene, *Mr. Kelly* had a sword by his side.

When the manager had given *Kelly* this severe correction for his insolence and brutality, he suffered him to crawl away, for walk he could not, to *Lucas's* coffee-house. As soon as he got there, he claimed the compassion of the company; and having informed them how ill he had been used, to interest them the more in his favour, falsely added, that *Mr. Sheridan* had had the audacity to declare, that he was a better gentleman than any one who had been that night at the theatre. It is necessary here to acquaint you, that *Lucas's* coffee-house is the place to which the Irish gentlemen usually resort to decide, in an honourable way, their quarrels. Whilst the combatants retire into the yard to acquire glory, the rest of the  
company

company flock to the windows, to see that no unfair advantages are taken, and to make bets on which of them falls first. And of these combats, I can assure you, there are not a few; the Hibernians being extremely captious; and very often ready to take offence where none is intended. You must “speak by the card” amongst them, or a quarrel will ensue. They are possessed of many good qualifications, but this seems to be one of the foibles of the country.

It is not to be wondered at, that persons of this cast should be easily excited to enter into any proposal which seemed likely to be productive of a riot. More especially, as most of the frequenters of Lucas's, at that time, had a natural antipathy to all learning, except that kind of knowledge which enabled them to distinguish good claret from bad. They therefore one and all agreed to fall forth to lay siege to Smock-alley theatre, and sacrifice the presumptuous manager of it, for having forfeited the name of gentleman, by appearing upon the stage. They likewise had another excitement, which was no less powerful with persons of their liberal way of thinking; and that was his having had the misfortune to have had a classical education, which he had greatly improved by application and intense study.

*Mr. Sheridan*, not supposing any persons could be found weak enough to abet such a  
c owardly

cowardly being, imagined the affair was over, at least for that night; and he had retired, to enjoy himself with some of his friends. The theatre was also shut up. The heroes, however, made a brave assault against it, and strove to force the doors. But finding them too strongly barricadoed, to hope for success, they retired for that night.

The next evening, the *Fair Penitent* was to be performed for the benefit of a public charity. Notwithstanding which, upon the appearance of *Mr. Sheridan*, in the character of *Horatio, the Bucks*, as they termed themselves, immediately arose, and cried, "Out with the ladies, and down with the house." It is impossible to describe to you the horrors of a riot at a Dublin theatre. The consternation and fright which it occasioned among the ladies, with whom the stage was exceedingly crowded, is beyond conception. Husbands and brothers were busily employed in taking care of their wives and sisters; and all was a scene of confusion.

*Mr. Sheridan* was early advised by his friends to quit the house; but he would not hear of it. However, when the rioters leaped upon the stage, and threatened his life, he found a retreat absolutely necessary for the preservation of it. Had he not prudently taken this step, these sons of Bacchus would certainly have put their threats into execution; for they broke open every door  
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in the house, to find the *offender*, as they called him. In their researches, they did me the honour of a visit. Two gentlemen of quality having joined the rioters, out of curiosity, one of them *Mr. Edward Hussey*, now *Lord Beaulieu*, the other *Mr. Mirvan*, they came to the door of my dressing-room, and very politely told me, they were come to protect me from insult. But apprehending them, in my fright, to be leaders of the mob, and finding that the rioters were determined to leave no part of the theatre unsearched, instead of returning thanks for their politeness, as I should have done, I answered, with some acrimony, “ that my  
“ room was an improbable place to find the  
“ person they wanted, as I certainly should  
“ not undreis, was there a gentleman in  
“ it.”

Upon this *Kelly* advanced, and mistaking me, as I imagined, for *Mrs. Dyer*, said I was the ——— who had occasioned all the disturbance. And I don't know whether I should have escaped further insult, had I not, in a resolute tone of voice, ordered them to quit the room. To this at length they consented, upon being permitted to lift up the covering of my toilette, to see whether the manager was there. As soon as they were departed I hurried to my chair, and *Mr. Hussey* had the humanity to walk by the side of it, to see me safe home. And I was  
never

never more rejoiced in my life, than when I found myself secure within the doors.

The magistrates having reason to apprehend that greater mischief would ensue, if the theatre continued open, ordered it to be shut up till the benefits commenced. The affair, however, did not end here; for the College Boys, as they are usually termed, in order to revenge the cause of their fellow student, as well as to shew their resentment at being deprived of their favourite amusement, took it into their heads to pay *Mr. Fitzgerald*, *Mr. Kelly*, and several other ring-leaders of the rioters, a morning visit, and obligingly invited them to partake of a breakfast at their college; where they bestowed as much cold water upon them from their pump, as served to keep their heads perfectly cool to defend their cause against the manager, who had the same day commenced a prosecution against them.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R    X X I V .

April 10, 17—

**A**FTER the account I gave you in my last, can you wonder, Madam, at my being less pleased with the profession I was engaged in, than I was when youth and inexperience presented to my view only the  
pleasing

pleasing side of it; or that I grew tired of a country, where I was subject to such continual alarms? A learned friend of mine frequently made use of the Latin phrase, *Experientia docet*. Experience teaches, I think, he told me, was the English of it. And I am sure it has taught me, that there is no state of life but what has its inconveniencies as well as its conveniencies; and the odds are, that the latter are more abundant than the former. But let me no longer detain you from my story.

Being always expected at *Colonel Butler's*, when I was not at the theatre, and that family having just heard of the riot, they were much alarmed for my safety. I, consequently, received a very pressing letter, the next morning, requesting that I would immediately come to them at their country-house, where they at that time were. But I was so much indisposed, from the terrors I had lately experienced, that I begged to be excused till the day following.

As my mother had usually so little of my company, she was pleased with my refusal to go to *Colonel Butler's*, and proposed great satisfaction from my spending the day with her. In the afternoon I sent my servant, *Mrs. O'Bryen*, of whom I have made honourable mention before, to enquire after our good friend *Doctor Walker*, who was ill of a fever. About seven o'clock she returned,  
with



with a countenance full as expressive of horror as his could be “ who drew Priam’s curtains in the dead of night, and told him half his Troy was burnt.” She had no sooner entered the room, than she began to exclaim, in a most doleful tone, “ Oh Madam, Oh Madam !” which was all she was able to utter ; and it was some time before we could get an explanation from her. At length she informed us, that the poor doctor had died during the last night, and that they were already going to bury him. She added, that as they were about to shroud the body, the orifices which had been made in his arms on bleeding him before his decease, had bled afresh.

As it was now so late in the evening ; as the house we had lately removed to was full two miles from the doctor’s residence ; as my mother had been confined some months by the rheumatism ; and as I was so much indisposed ; it was impossible for either my mother or myself to reach the place of his abode time enough to prevent his premature interment ; which, but for these reasons, we certainly should have done. We likewise found that *Mrs. Walker* had been prevailed on, by the earnest entreaties of her sister, to leave the house, and retire with her to Dunleary. My mother, therefore, ordered the servant to take a coach, and if the corpse

was

was interred, to have it taken up at all events, cost what it would.

You can give the common people of Ireland no greater treat than a wake. Our maid, consequently, had many companions before she reached the house; especially as she made no secret of her errand. When they arrived, they learned that the body had been interred immediately after her departure, lest the disorder he died of, which was thought to be epidemic, should prove contagious. They were further informed, that as *Mrs. Walker* was of the sect of Anabaptists, it had been deposited, by her order, in their burying-ground, which was situated at the extremity of the city.

The people who accompanied our servant having come out with an intention of spending the night in their favourite amusement, they now resolved to go to seek the sexton, and carry my mother's commands into execution. But as it was so late, they could not find his house. They, however, as no obstructions can retard the Irish in any favourite pursuit, clambered over the gate, men, women and children, and thus entered the receptacle of the dead. Whilst they sat round the grave, *O'Bryen* heard, or *thought* she heard, a groan; which made them expect with great impatience the return of day-light.

As soon as Aurora made her appearance,  
some

Some labourers, who were just come to their work, acquainted them where the sexton lived; and he was prevailed on, though not without some difficulty, to comply with their request. Accordingly, the canonized bones of the doctor, which had, a few hours before, "been heard in death, revisited the glimpses of the morn." Upon opening the coffin (I shudder whilst I relate the horrid scene) they found the body now totally deprived of life, but observed that the late inhabitant of it had endeavoured to "burst his cearments," and leave the dreadful mansion in which he was confined. He had actually turned upon his side; and, as my servant had reported, his arms had bled afresh. The coffin was carried to the house of the sexton, where multitudes, excited by curiosity, flocked from all parts to see this memorable instance of *fruitless precaution*. The family, however, hearing of the circumstances, the body was ordered to be re-interred, and the affair was hushed up.

Are you casuist enough, to tell me how it happens, that we are generally disappointed in the grand expectations of our lives; and find our favourite wishes crossed? Never was there a more singular confirmation of this fact, than in the case of the doctor. The fear of being buried alive seems to have engrossed *all* his thoughts. The apprehensions which arose in his mind, both

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on his own account and that of others, furnished him with an inexhaustible fund for conversation, and gave frequent employment to his pen. The presentiment which had taken possession of him was not to be suppressed. But alas! how unavailing, from a combination of preventive circumstances, did it prove!—Let it serve as a document to us, not to fix our hearts, with too much anxiety, on any object that lies within the reach of the accidents of life, or to indulge too great apprehensions of any dreaded evil.

I was greatly affected at the melancholy accident which had just happened, but my mother was almost distracted at being obliged to break a promise she had so solemnly made, and which would have proved so consonant to the wishes of her old friend. Having, at the time I first mentioned this promise, given you my sentiments on the observance of it, I shall only add here, that a breach of a solemn engagement is always attended with regret, as my mother now found to her cost.

I have often wondered that humanity, exclusive of affection, does not prevent those who have had a regard for persons during their lives, from leaving them in their last moments, through a *false tenderness*, to the care of nurses and servants, who are usually insensible to every claim but those of their own ease or interest. Too susceptible of pain, from beholding the expiring pangs of  
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a beloved object, they hasten from it. Whereas that ought to be the strongest motive for their stay, as these would stimulate them to unremitting assiduity in administering every needful assistance whilst life remains, and to a due attention to the body till its interment. The most pleasurable reflection I now am sensible of, is, that the three persons I loved and esteemed most, expired in my arms. These were, my dear *Miss Conway*, my mother, and a worthy and much regretted friend, many of the incidents of whose life you will find hereafter interwoven with my own.

A tear that obtrudes itself on the recollection of scenes, which have already caused me so many, dims my sight;—others follow, and trickle in quick succession down my cheek. The subject awakens all my sensibility. And, surely, a heart more susceptible of all the tender feelings never throbbed in a female bosom. The soft effusion overwhelms me. I must lay down my pen.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R    XXV.

April 17, 17—.

**F**ORGIVE the abrupt conclusion of my last. Every tender sensation was aroused, when the loss of such dear and valued

lued friends became, even by anticipation, the subject of my pen. The trickling tear would not be repelled. I will however now endeavour to proceed with more composure.

It being impossible for me to leave my mother in the situation she was reduced to by the late melancholy incident, I sent an apology to my respected patroness, informing her, at the same time, of the cause. From the many disagreeable circumstances which had lately occurred, one upon another, my mind took as serious a turn as when I lived in retirement at the Farmer's at Ingatestone. I lost my vivacity, and delighted more in being alone than in company. To this, the frequent visits of *Mr. Crump*, who I now found courted me by proxy, made no little addition. His being always a constant attendant at my mother's parties rendered home disagreeable to me.

My mother endeavoured to find out the cause of a change so totally contrary to my natural disposition, but in vain. Having heard me speak warmly in praise of the outward attractions of *Medlicote*, she was apprehensive that the superficial qualifications of that empty man had captivated me. But when she reflected that she had as frequently heard me declare that I would not marry him, were he disengaged, and offered me his hand; placing a confidence in that sincerity which had ever been my boast, her fears  
vanished

vanished relative to him. What then could be the cause? for a cause there must be. This perplexed her. And as she was very desirous of seeing me married to *Mr. Crump*, preferring easy circumstances to happiness, she was anxious to find out and remove it.

Whilst I appeared in public, she was neither surprized nor displeas'd at seeing verses address'd to me from one dying swain or other; but my praise having been frequently resounded by an unknown Strephon, since the theatre had been shut up, and I lived a more recluse life, her fears were excited by it. And laying aside the sorrow she had lately suffered for her deceased friend, substituted in its room anxiety for her living daughter. So suspicious now was she become of my having entered into some tender engagement without her consent, that even the strongest testimony of affection that I could give her, that of almost constantly staying at home with her, could not remove her apprehensions. It even added to them, as she considered such novel behaviour only as a contrivance to hear the oftener from this favoured admirer.

Upon my mother's intrusting *Mr. Crump* with her suspicions, he also took the alarm, and never rested till he had discovered the author of the verses which had been the cause of their fears, and, as they supposed, of the alteration in my temper.

In the neighbourhood of our residence lived a gentlewoman who was related to most of the catholics of distinction in the kingdom of Ireland. She had married a *Mr. Kendall*, belonging to the Custom-house, by whom she had several children. Finding, however, her husband's income inadequate to the support of so large a family, she had, agreeable to the advice of her friends, set up a subscription card assembly. Her daughters likewise employed themselves in making the linen of their relations, for which they were generally well paid.

As this assembly was kept in Britain-street, which joined to Summer-Hill, where we resided; having been often invited to go to it, I one day sent my name down, and went the same evening. I had the honour of being personally known to most of the company. There was a young gentleman, however, whom I could not recollect that I had ever seen before, though, as I was afterwards informed, he had been my constant attendant and admirer at the theatre. His name was *Jebson*, and he was of Trinity College. Whilst I sat at cards, this *youth* was riveted to the back of my chair; and upon my getting up to go home, he requested leave to escort me.

When we reached my mother's, without having the least idea of giving her umbrage or room for censure, I asked him in, that I  
might



might have an opportunity of introducing him to her. I could not help observing, that she received him with unusual formality and reserve. As soon as he was gone, my mother asked me how long I had been acquainted with *Mr. Jebson*? I told her, with a composure that staggered her, that to the best of my knowledge I had not seen him till that night. Not satisfied with this declaration, she desired that I would *give her my honour* to what I had said. To which I replied, with an insolence that stabs me to the heart as I repeat it, “I will never give my honour, Madam, to any one who *dares* to dispute my word.”

I had no sooner uttered the word *dares*, than the impropriety of it immediately struck me. And every time the conversation occurs to my memory, I feel an inexpressible pang at my having presumed to make use of it to a parent.—Remorse and [disquietude *ought* to be the portion of all those who lose sight of the duty they owe to their parents.—*Honour* thy father and thy mother—how strong the injunction!—and how pleasing the reward—that thy days may be long, &c. Next to the reverence due from us to the universal Parent of mankind, stands the duty we owe our earthly parents; one is equally as obligatory as the other. Thank Heaven! it was only in this instance, and this was not from the heart, that I ever knowingly offended

the author of my birth. It was my misfortune to be tenacious to a degree, relative to the attribute I so much valued myself on, sincerity. And whatever seemed to reflect on that, gave me offence. I was conscious of my petulance (to call it by no harsher name) the moment it escaped me; yet, reluctant to acknowledge my error, or to submit, as I ought to have done, I ordered the horses to be put to, before my mother was up, and set off to join my beloved friends.

Alarmed at my perseverance, and knowing my temper was to be moulded to her own wishes by gentle means, but, if controuled, that it would run retrograde, even to the extreme of obstinacy, she sent a messenger to me with a letter the next day. In it she requested that I would excuse what she had said the day before, it being the result of her apprehensions for my welfare, as she had been informed that *Mr. Jebson*, the young gentleman who had seen me home, was the enamorado who had sung my praise so frequently of late. To which she added, that the unusual reserve and gloom which had for some time clouded my brow, seemed to confirm her suspicions; which, if well founded, as she hoped they were not, must prove destructive to my happiness, he being entirely dependent on his relations, and had it not in his power to provide for me as she could wish.

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My mother's condescension affected me the more, as I was by this time, from the reflections which I had leisure to indulge, truly sensible that I had been to blame; and the more so, from her dependent situation on me, which ought to have made me more circumspect in my duty towards her, and the more careful of giving her offence. There is a delicacy in this point, of which unthinking and vulgar minds are not susceptible; but it weighs much with every well bred person, and all such as have a just idea of propriety of conduct. I wrote her consequently a submissive answer, and informed her that I would return the next day. But an express arriving with an account that *Lord Lansborough*, a near relation of *Colonel Butler's*, was dangerously ill, we all returned to Dublin the same evening.

I was not displeas'd at being oblig'd to return so soon, as I was miserable till I made an atonement to my mother for my undutiful behaviour. She received me with that pleasure which is ever united with real affection, and I never spent an evening with more satisfaction. Being thus reconcil'd to each other, and that confidence which had hitherto subsist'd between us being restored, she desired me to inform her, without any reserve, of the cause of my late thoughtfulness. I acquainted her, with truth, that it solely arose from the precariousness of my present

situation, which every day became more and more disagreeable to me. I then recapitulated the following circumstances :

In the first place I was apprehensive that as soon as the theatre was opened again *Mr. Sheridan* would appear in the characters of *Antony*, *Romeo*, &c. and from playing with a person so disqualified by nature for such parts, I too much feared I should lose in some measure the reputation I had gained.—In the next place, the declining health of my worthy and much loved *Mrs. Butler* gave me great uneasiness. And as she proposed going to Spa for her recovery, and after that to the south of France, it would be a very *very* long time before I had the happiness to see her again, if ever I did.—To these causes of sorrow may be added the loss of *Miss St. Leger's* company. A friend for whom I had the tenderest regard, and who had staid but a short month in Dublin. *Mrs. O'Hara* was likewise confined to her room, by which I was deprived of being with her so much as duty and affection prompted.—The last but not the least reason of my disquiet, was my apparent ingratitude to *Mr. Quin*. My leaving England without consulting him on the engagement I was about to enter into, or even without taking leave of him, often struck me forcibly, and gave me many a pang. A false modesty, I now perceived, had made me avoid that dear man.

man. Instead of considering him as my Mentor, and unbofoming myself to him upon every occasion that required the counsel of experience and probity, I left the country in which he refided. From him fhould I have always been fure of meeting with relief, compaffion and comfort. My regard for him was truly filial. Whilft I loved him, I dreaded his frowns more than any misfortune which could befall me. But bashfulnefs conquered affection.—With fincerity and truth thus did I unfold to my mother the caufes of that alteration in my demeanour, which ſhe could not account for. As there is a confidence attending innate rectitude that commands belief, ſhe readily gave credit to my assertions, and was convinced of the propriety of my feelings.

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L E T T E R XXVI.

April 24, 17—

**A**S the conclufion of my laſt letter was rather prolix, I ſhall enter on my ſtory again, without any preamble to this.—It will ſoon be ſeen that the apprehenſions I entertained relative to my ſituation at the theatre were realized; and that the greateſt error I had ever committed was the rejecting *Mr. Garrick's* offer. The next day I was inform-

ed that the *Lord Mayor* had permitted *Mr. Sheridan* to open the theatre ; but he was not allowed to perform till his trial with the persons who caused the riot was decided.

I am now about to mention an incident in my life, which relates to persons who have made a very conspicuous figure in the great world. As I was returning one day from rehearsal, at the bottom of Britain-street, I heard the voice of distress. Yielding to an impulse of humanity, I overleaped the bounds of good breeding, and entered the house from whence it proceeded. When I had done this, led by an irresistible attraction, I entered without ceremony the parlour, the door of which appeared to be guarded by persons not at all suited to those within. I here found a woman of a most elegant figure, surrounded by four beautiful girls, and a sweet boy of about three years of age. After making the necessary apologies for my abrupt intrusion, I informed the lady, that as the lamentations of her little family had reached my ears as I passed by, I had taken the liberty of a neighbour to enquire if I could render her any service.

*Mrs. Gunning*, for that was the lady's name, arose immediately from her seat, and calling me by my name, thanked me, for the offer of my assistance, complimenting me at the same time, upon possessing such humane sensations. She then informed me, that  
having

having lived beyond their income, her husband had been obliged to retire into the country, to avoid the disagreeable consequences that must ensue. That she had been in hopes that her brother, *Lord Mayo*, listening to the dictates of fraternal affection, would not suffer a sister and her family to be reduced to distress; but that his Lordship remained inflexible to her repeated solicitations. The ill-looking men, I now found, had entered the house by virtue of an execution, and were preparing to turn her and her children out of doors.

Upon this, *Mrs. Gunning* and myself went up stairs to consult what was best to be done in so disagreeable a predicament. We there determined that I should return home, and send my man-servant, who was to wait under the window of the drawing-room, in the evening, and bring to my house every thing that could be thrown to him. It was further agreed, that as my mother and I had more room than we could conveniently occupy, the children and their servant should remain with us, whilst she went to her husband to assist him in settling his affairs. The whole of our plan being carried into execution *Miss Burke*, *Mrs. Gunning's* sister, a lady of exemplary piety, who had passed her probation in the community of Channel-Row, sent shortly after for the two youngest girls, and the two eldest were permitted, to my great  
I 5 pleasure,

pleasure, to remain at our house. Notwithstanding my mother was a great œconomist, ever since we resided at Summer-Hill, she had hired a job coach. And of this we now found the convenience; as it enabled us to take our two lovely guests about with us. As the beauty of these ladies has since made so much noise in the world, and has been so recently imprinted on the memory of every rank, it will be unnecessary here to give a description of them. I shall, therefore, only observe, that the eldest, *Maria*, the late *Countess of Coventry*, was all life and spirits; and that *Miss Betty*, the younger, now *Duchess of Argyll*, &c. &c. with a longer train of noble titles than perhaps ever woman enjoyed before her, was more reserved and solid.

Here let me stop, to bestow a remark once more on the strange vicissitudes of this sublunary state! Innumerable are the instances to be found in history, and many happen within our own observation, of the rise and fall of families. Some we see, whose honours and affluence appear to be founded on so broad and permanent a basis, that neither time nor accident can affect them; and yet in a few short years, undermined by unforeseen and unavoidable events, they dissolve away, and, like "the baseless fabrick of a vision, leave not a rack behind." Whilst others, from being environed with  
distress;



distress; apprehensive of the approach of penury; and nearly a prey to despair, through incidents equally unaccountable and sudden, the darksome clouds all cleared away, find themselves exalted to a state of splendor, with the hopes of which the most luxuriant fallies of their imagination could not have flattered them. Permit me to detain you a moment longer, whilst I just add, by way of illustration, that the *very first page* of history presents us with a memorable instance of the instability of human happiness, in the fate of the first created pair. From the never-ceasing and inexpressible joys of Paradise, where every wish was anticipated, and pleasures, real and lasting, grew spontaneously, did our great progenitors find themselves driven into a world of care, affliction and uncertainty, there to earn, by a life of labour and toil, a precarious subsistence. What a heart-rending reverse to this once happy pair!

This season *Mr. Woodward*, an actor of the first merit in comedy, came to Dublin, and joined our company. About the same time *Mr. Foote* arrived to give tea, as he termed his exhibition; which consisted of mimickry, wherein he imitated or *took off* the voice and manner of most of the performers in England and Ireland. I never could find out what analogy there was between *tea* and the talent of *mimickry*. But as our modern Aristopha-

nes was, undoubtedly, a man of learning, as well as of wit and humour, there must be a *propriety* in his adopting the appellation, though it lies beyond the reach of my weak intellects.

*Mr. Sheridan* being now permitted again to tread the stage, some of the apprehensions which had been the cause of my uneasiness began to be realized. He played, as I had apprehended, the character of *Antony*. But, oh! what a falling off was here! Instead of the silver-toned voice and bewitching figure of a *Barry*, which used to enchant the audience, formality and monotonous declamation presented itself. The difference was too conspicuous to escape the observation of the public. And every one regretted the loss of his great powers in the part of *Ventidius*, wherein, as I have before observed, he was truly capital; as indeed he was in all *sententious* characters. To render, however, the piece as pleasing as possible, a dance of gladiators was introduced, as an entertainment to the enamoured queen.

As there was soon an essential difference in the receipts of the house from what they had been during the last season, I was desired by the manager to give orders to all the young ladies of my acquaintance that would condescend to accept of them. In consequence of this desire, scarcely a night passed on which I did not grant an introduction

tion to several with whom I had formed an intimacy at *Mrs. Kendall's* assembly, as well as my two lovely visitants.

*Mr. Woodward* being attacked by *Foote* in his humorous exhibition, got up, in his defence, a piece, which he termed "Tit for Tat, or a Dish of Chocolate." This was attended with such success, that his rival, being defeated at his own weapons, left the field to his opponent, and precipitately retired to the Haymarket theatre. When the benefits commenced, *Mr. Woodward*, exclusive of his agreement with the manager, received ten guineas a night from each performer, at whose benefit the piece just mentioned was acted.

When I first made my appearance at Covent-Garden theatre, this gentleman had solicited my hand. A refusal being given, we were not, from that time, on the best terms. Resentment, however, giving way to interest, he was very happy to have a tolerable actress perform with him. The *Careless Husband* was revived. His Lord Foppington was, as usual, justly admired. Nor did I fail of applause in *Lady Betty Modish*. I wish I could say as much of the manager. He played the character of Sir Charles Easy; but it would, I think, have been more *a-propos*, if the syllable *un* had been prefixed to the last word, and the baronet's name had been Sir Charles *Uneasy*; so awkwardly

wardly did the part fit on the performer of it. The characters of this play were dressed, by direction of *Mr. Sheridan*, in the manufactory of Ireland, which, he judiciously thought, would increase at once his popularity and receipts.

The season drawing to a conclusion, my mother, at my request, determined to return to England. And this resolution was accelerated by the treasurer of the theatre bringing in my account, with a charge of *seventy-five pounds for orders*. As it was at the express desire of the manager, that these orders were issued, I could by no means admit of such an imposition. A dispute consequently ensued between *Mr. Sheridan* and myself, when I absolutely refused to play any more. *Mr. Victor* the treasurer, however, came to me the next day, with the balance of my account, offering to pay me the whole sum, if I would enter into a fresh engagement. But the illiberal treatment I received upon this occasion from the manager would have induced me to withhold my consent, had not the reasons alledged added their weight to fix me in the performance of my resolution.

Before my departure, I took leave of all my acquaintance. A painful task to a susceptible mind! *Mrs. O'Hara* pressed me to her bosom with the most affectionate warmth; and we did not part without many tears.

My

My dear and honoured patroness, together with her much loved daughter, shewed the tenderest concern at losing me; and the pain I felt upon the occasion was equal to their own. They, as well as my aunt, made me some considerable presents. The separation from such invaluable friends, for such they were in the strictest sense of the word, would not have been so pungent, had there been a probability of my seeing either my aunt or *Mrs. Butler* again. From the age and infirmities of the former it was not to be expected. And the illness of the latter, though lingering, was pronounced to be fatal.

One inducement for hastening our departure was, that *Lord Tyravoley* was returned from his embassy at Russia, and was coming to Dublin to pay the last duties to his sister, *Mrs. O'Hara*. My mother seemed to regret nothing so much as leaving *Mr. Crump*; for whom, from the intimacy that had subsisted between them, she entertained great respect. Upon our return, that gentleman advised her to lay out what money she had saved, which was no inconsiderable sum, in Irish linens. This she did, and found it turn out to advantage.

The friendship I had entertained for my two lovely visitors was now increased to the tenderest affection. If there was any difference, it was in favour of the elder, whose disposition more nearly resembled my own; and

and from whom I felt it the most painful to part. This partiality created no little jealousy in the bosom of *Miss Butler*, who claimed the first place in my heart, from the priority of our acquaintance. And, to an indifferent person, the letters I received from her, upon that occasion, would appear to have been dictated by the green-eyed monster himself. But that young lady was soon convinced of the permanency of my attachment to her. And though I have not had the pleasure of seeing her for many years, it still continues unabated.

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LETTER XXVII.

April 29, 17—.

**I** COULD not leave a kingdom where I had met with so favourable a reception in public; where I had received so many civilities from persons of the highest rank; and where I was honoured with the friendship of some of the most amiable of my own sex; without yielding to the whispers of gratitude, and returning back one tributary sigh. But such a variety of circumstances having rendered a longer abode in Ireland disagreeable, I own it was not without great satisfaction, that I found myself once more in England.

Upon our arrival in London my mother wrote

wrote to *Mr. Garrick*, informing him of it. Happening to be in town, he immediately sent to us, requesting we would dine with him that day. He had at that time apartments in King-street, Covent-garden, and we had hired lodgings in Southampton-street. He received us with that cheerfulness and civility which constituted a part of his character. During our visit we laughed over many incidents which had happened whilst we were together in Ireland; particularly, the consequential present he had received from my dear friend *Mrs. Butler*. And he much regretted, that it was not in his power, from the present situation of his company, to admit me into it; *Mrs. Cibber*, *Mrs. Clive* and *Mrs. Pritchard* engrossing all the principal characters. At parting he requested, that nothing might interrupt the harmony which then subsisted between us. As I had not then heard of the declaration he had made, relative to his never engaging me upon any terms, as before mentioned, I promised to continue on a friendly footing with him.

I enquired after my valued friend *Mr. Quin*, and was informed that he was at Bath, to which place he usually retired during the recesses. As soon as *Mr. Rich* heard of our return, he sent *Mr. Bencraft*, a performer for whom he had a particular friendship, and who therefore resided with him, to give us an

an invitation to pay him a visit at Cowley, where he then was. As I was very desirous to see that sweet spot, of the beauties of which I had heard so much talk, I did not hesitate, for my own part, to become his guest; but was prevented, for the present, by an engagement of my mother's.

This place, which was now the summer residence of *Mr. Rich*, and to which he was making very considerable improvements, formerly belonged to the celebrated *Mrs. Montford*, wife to the promising actor of that name, who was unfortunately murdered as he was escorting the celebrated *Mrs. Bracegirdle* home from the theatre. On *Mrs. Montford* was the justly celebrated and well-known ballad of *Black-eyed Susan* written by *Mr. Gay*. *Lord Berkeley's* partiality for this lady induced him to leave her at his decease three hundred pounds a year, on condition that she never married. His Lordship likewise purchased Cowley for her, and she besides received from him, at times, very considerable sums. After this she fell in love with that very capital actor *Mr. Booth*, but the desire of retaining her annuity prevented her from being joined in the bands of wedlock with the lover whom she preferred to numbers that were candidates for her favour. This consideration obstructing, the union could not take place, and *Mr. Booth* soon found another mate.

*Mrs.*



*Mrs. Montford* had contracted an intimacy with *Miss Santlow*, a lady celebrated as a dancer, and esteemed a tolerable actress. She was the declared favourite of *Secretary Craggs*, through whose liberality she became possessed of a fortune sufficient to enable her to live independent of the stage. What *Mrs. Montford* could not effect, *Miss Santlow* did. *Mr. Booth*, transferring his attention from the former to the latter, soon obtained possession both of her person and fortune. *Mrs. Montford* no sooner heard of the perfidy of her lover, and the ingratitude of her friend, than she gave way to a desperation that deprived her of her senses. In this situation she was brought from Cowley to London, that the best advice might be procured for her.

As during the most violent paroxysms of her disorder she was not outrageous, and now and then a ray of reason beamed through the cloud that overshadowed her intellects, she was not placed under any rigorous confinement, but suffered to go about the house. One day, during a lucid interval, she asked her attendant what play was to be performed that evening? and was told, that it was *Hamlet*. In this piece, whilst she had been on the stage, she had always met with great applause in the character of *Ophelia*. The recollection struck her; and with that cunning which is usually allied to insanity, she  
found

found means to elude the care of her servants, and got to the theatre; where concealing herself till the scene in which *Ophelia* was to make her appearance in her insane state, she pushed on the stage before her rival, who played the character that night, and exhibited a far more perfect representation of madness than the utmost exertions of mimic art could do. She was, *in truth, Ophelia herself*, to the amazement of the performers, as well as of the audience. Nature having made this *last* effort, her vital powers failed her. On her going off, she prophetically exclaimed, "It is all over!"—And, indeed, that was soon the case, for as she was conveying home, (to make use of the concluding lines of another sweet ballad of *Gay's*, wherein her fate is so truly described) "She, like  
 " a lily drooping, then bowed her head,  
 " and died."

I heard the foregoing incident related by *Colley Cibber*, at *Lord Tyraswley's*, during our residence at *Bushy*, to which residence he frequently came. But I have not repeated it in a manner that pleases me. My language will not reach my conceptions, nor my conceptions my sensibility.—Oh for the pen of *Sterne* to retouch it!—But it cannot be—I must therefore be content to jog on in the humble line I have hitherto done.

I need not add, that such a moving catastrophe must naturally affect a mind so susceptible

susceptible of the tender passions as mine, and make me wish to see the residence of the *fair Unfortunate*, whenever an opportunity offered. My mother, however, having another engagement upon her hands, I was obliged to suppress my curiosity till the latter end of the summer.

A nephew of hers, a *Mr. Crawford*, an attorney, had lately married the widow *Silvester*, who was possessed of a very large fortune. From him she received a pressing invitation to pass some time with them at Watford, in Hertfordshire. As this was near the abode of my dear *Miss St. Leger*, who resided with her uncle, *Lord Doneraile*, at the Grove, near Cashioberry Park, the seat of the *Earl of Essex*, I more readily agreed to attend my mother, and postpone the acceptance of *Mr. Rich's* invitation.

It will here be necessary to give a description of my cousin *Crawford*, as I shall too often have occasion to introduce him in the subsequent pages. He was a short fat man, as to his stature, with a tolerable good face. So much for his person. As to his mind, it was not more correspondent to the rules of beauty. He was endowed with great cunning, vainly fond of being esteemed a wit, and profuse to a degree. His mother was that step-sister of my mother, who, as I have before related, lived with *Mrs. Godfrey*, and through the munificence of that lady had

accu-

accumulated a considerable fortune. This induced *Mr. Crawford*, an eminent attorney in partnership with *Mr. Greenbill*, of the Temple, to solicit her hand in marriage, which she gave him. It was not long, however, before she was left a widow with this son, about three years of age, and a very considerable addition to her fortune.

All her happiness now centered in her son. She carried her fondness for him to the greatest extreme. He was never contradicted in the most unreasonable of his demands, and consequently was spoiled. When he arrived at a proper age, he was indentured to his late father's partner, *Mr. Greenbill*, on condition that at the expiration of his clerkship he was to transact, on his own account, all the common law business. To this he of course succeeded, and whether from the wretches he associated with during his practice, or from the principles instilled into him by nature, I will not pretend to say; but, under a specious appearance of good nature and honesty, he possessed all the chicanery of *Jonathan Wild*. His *cara sposa*, whom he had married, notwithstanding he had a very considerable one of his own, for her fortune, was old enough to be his mother. Nature had not been very liberal to her, either in the charms of her person or mind. And even what little understanding she was blessed with was totally clouded by  
a stu-

a stupefaction, arising from I will not say what. Whatever it was, her husband took care that it should not fail of a supply, to prevent certain remonstrances, usually termed curtain lectures, which were the consequence of his own frailties.

With persons of this cast, to be obliged to associate for six weeks or two months, agreeable to a promise made by my mother, you may be assured was not a little mortifying to your humble servant. And it would have been much more so, had it not been for the frequent visits I made to the Grove, and the walks I took in the delightful park belonging to the *Earl of Essex*, which lay contiguous to my cousin's house. To *Miss St. Leger* was I likewise indebted for another source of comfort and amusement, who lent me books from *Lord Doneraile's* library.

*Mr. Crawford's* table was well served; to which, as he kept a pack of fox-hounds, and a good stud of hunters for the use of himself and friends, there was usually no want of country gentlemen who delighted in that sport. From things being thus situated, it is not to be supposed that, with my taste for reading, and other kind of company, I staid much at home; especially as it was soon rendered more disagreeable by the addition of a son and heir to this *worthy* family, who came to inherit his father's *virtues*, and his mother's *great qualifications*. The attention of my good  
parent

parent being totally engaged by her amiable niece, and the new relation she had just presented her with; her nephew took this opportunity to set out for London, to regale himself with his friends the sheriffs officers, and ladies of easy virtue.

One day, as I sat reading *Dryden's Virgil*, on a bench in *Lord Essex's* park, an old gentleman came and seated himself by me. After sitting a little while, he asked me the subject of my studies? Upon my telling him, he seemed to be surprized that a girl of my age should have either taste or erudition enough to understand works of that kind. Piqued at this supposition, I undertook to vindicate my sex from the want of knowledge in literature generally imputed to them. I told him there would not be the least room for such a reflection, did not the lords of the creation take care that we should not eclipse them in this respect. The old gentleman then said, "As that is your opinion, I suppose you would have a *female* parliament." To which I replied, "I do not know that the present is much better, for I do not hear of any thing that is done among them, but scolding like *old women*."

This threw my new companion into a violent fit of laughter, from which when he was recovered, he was pleased to say, "that if ever he should have a daughter, he  
" hoped

“ hoped it was just such a one as me.’ Then pulling out his watch, he continued, “ I am sorry to leave you, Miss, but I must go to dinner, which I do not think I shall like, as the relation I am come to see is gone to London, and the good woman in the straw.” Concluding from these circumstances that the old gentleman was come to see my cousin, I informed him that I was upon a visit at the same house ; and as it was near three o’clock, I got up, when he did, to return home.

As we walked along together, he asked me some questions relative to the character and circumstances of *Mr. Crawford*. I candidly imparted to him my sentiments on the subject ; and though I was then unacquainted with my relation’s want of principle, I could observe that the character I gave him did not seem to make a very favourable impression on my companion. Just as we arrived at the door, he desired I would inform *Mrs. Crawford*, that *Mr. Sykes* would be glad to wish her joy of her son. On hearing the name of *Sykes*, I could not have been more terrified had his brother-in-law, *Captain Bellamy*, my mother’s husband, unshrouded himself, and stood before me. I was just composed enough to stammer out, “ I will, Sir ;” and then I hastily entered the house.

Having informed *Mrs. Crawford* of the name of her visitor, as he had requested, I

ran to acquaint my mother with it also; who was as much alarmed as myself. But as it had dropped in the course of conversation that he was to return to London, upon some very particular business, the next morning, we thought it most prudent for her not to appear during that day. And this was no injudicious determination; as I found the old gentleman did not seem to have the most favourable opinion of our sex, and if provoked, as he probably might have been with her, would not have stopped short of brutality. Had therefore my mother fallen in his way, he might have revenged, in too rough a manner, her imposition on his brother-in-law *Captain Bellamy*.

As it was now too late to expect the master of the family home that day, I endeavoured to entertain my companion as well as I could during the evening. I could not help thinking that he seemed to eye me at times with a glance of pity and suspicion. The sequel will verify the observation of *Shakspeare*, "That the thief  
"suspects each bush an officer." He however, upon the whole, appeared to be pleased with my company, and when we separated paid me many compliments; and that with a plain sincerity which greatly flattered me. He set off early in the morning. But in the evening, when he made his bow, (to use a theatrical expression) he left me a token of his generosity, opulence and liberality, for the little  
gen-



gentleman who had just entered upon the stage of life, with a desire that I would stand godmother.

I fear this narrative part of my history will not prove very entertaining to you; but as many other circumstances, yet to be related, are dependent upon it, I find it necessary to insert these. I will, however, cut it as short as possible.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R    X X V I I I .

May 4, 17—

**W**HEN my fat cousin returned, he brought with him a train of jolly companions to hunt the next day. As soon as I fell in his way, he accosted me with saying, “Well, Miss! I have blown you. “The old codger was very inquisitive, when “I met him; yet, notwithstanding, he likes “you. But”—Here I stopped him, as I was apprehensive of a stroke of what he termed wit, at the expence of my mother. She luckily was not present, or most certainly she would not have kept within the bounds of good manners, had her nephew popped out what was upon his tongue. In a short time he resumed the conversation; telling me he was sorry that old Square-toes was obliged, by the failure of a house at Antwerp, to go out of town immediately;

“ otherwise, who knows,” said he, “ but  
“ that by the help of your tongue and my  
“ cellar, we may have taken him in !”

A blush threw its crimson veil over my face as he said this. Upon observing which, he recollected himself and thus continued :  
“ Nay don't blush, I only meant that we  
“ would have tried to get him *to make a will*  
“ *in your favour.*” I dwell the longer on this conversation, which I give *verbatim*, as it will furnish you with some insight into the character of my *upright* cousin, and prepare your mind for an event which happened some years after. Though I had taken a dislike to my relation as a man, yet he might be, for aught I know, what is usually denominated a *good* attorney. The meaning of which I take to be, that he kept within the limits of the law, and was as *honest* as his profession would allow him to be. As this does not require any great delicacy of sentiment, and I consider people as accountable for no more than they know, I contented myself with despising him in silence.

I never wish to cast *undue* reflections on any profession, but it seems to be the *general* opinion, that there are, comparatively, very few men of *real integrity* in that branch of the law. The axiom “ That what every one  
“ says must be true,” is founded on reason and experience. I have been convinced of the truth of it, in this point, to my cost.

Whether

Whether this propensity to dishonesty arises from the opportunities which so frequently present themselves in the practice of the law, and *tempt* the professors to avail themselves of them; or whether a turn of mind to take advantage both of friend and foe, of client as well as opponent, be imbibed by the very study of it, I will not pretend to determine. But so it is; to the sorrow and cost of millions.

As I much wished to be at *Mr. Rich's*, where I should have the pleasure of the company of my former intimates, his daughters; company far more agreeable to me than what I now enjoyed; I prevailed on my mother to shorten her visit. At length the wished-for day arrived. *Mr. Rich* sent his carriage, and we soon found ourselves at Cowley. Here we were received with the greatest cordiality by the master of the family, and with unfeigned joy by the younger part of it; but with formality and reserve by the mistress of the house. This lady having been converted to methodism, now thought of nothing but praying and accumulating wealth for herself and her spouse. For those good people seldom neglect that grand concern, however they may censure such worldly wisdom in the unconverted.

Upon the death of his first wife *Mr. Rich* had married this lady. Her name before that event took place was *Mrs. Stevens*. She

had been an actress, but had been several years his housekeeper. She was at that time in a very mediocre situation in the theatre. She had been the intimate friend of *Miss Nassau*, who succeeded *Miss Fenton*, afterwards *Duchess of Bolton*, in *Gay's Polly Peachum*. By her advice, as I have been informed, *Miss Nassau* put herself under the protection of the late *Earl of Orford*, son of the famed *Sir Robert Walpole*. By the further management of *Mrs. Rich*, a match was brought about between a brother of her's, whose name was *Wilford*, and a sister of that lady's. This was insuring *Mr. Wilford* a fortune, as *Lord Orford* was at that time Auditor of the Exchequer, and had numberless places in his gift. *Mr. Wilford* was accordingly provided for; and was upon a visit with his wife, at *Cowley*, when we arrived there.

We likewise found there *Mrs. Ward* from the theatre at *Edinburgh*, whom *Mr. Rich* had engaged for the ensuing season. She was accompanied by a frightful being, to whom she gave the title of husband. This lady had one of the most beautiful faces I ever beheld. But her figure was vulgar to a degree. By the stoop and magnitude of her shoulders, it might be imagined that she had formerly carried milk-pails. Her beauty would have been much more conspicuous in that line, or with a chain and knife fastened

to

to her apron-string, than in the character of a queen or young princess. Yet, notwithstanding this dissimilitude of appearance, and being pregnant into the bargain, it was determined that she should debute in Cordelia, the youngest daughter of King Lear.

In conversation with *Mr. Rich* upon an engagement with me, my mother informed him of the terms offered me by *Mr. Garrick*, through *Mr. Delany*, the season before last; and as he made no objection to the salary, she concluded that his intention was to give me the same sum. When we returned to town the manager informed me that he intended *Mrs. Ward* should make her appearance as soon as possible, her pregnancy rendering such a step necessary; and that he considered me as a happy *corps de reserve*. *Mrs. Woffington*, highly offended at her quondam admirer, *Mr. Garrick's* chusing rather to appear with *Mrs. Pritchard* than with her, had engaged herself with *Mr. Rich*; and was to open the campaign with her capital part, that of Sir Harry Wildair.—Theatrical revolutions are as frequent, and owe their rise to the same principles, as those in the political world. Pique, resentment, ambition or interest, whichever motive happens to preponderate, brings them about. And the arrangement lasts in both as long as convenience suits.

G. A. B.

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L E T-

## LETTER XXIX.

May 16, 17—.

THE moment I was informed of *Mr. Quin's* return to town, I waited on him to apologize for the unpardonable neglect I had been guilty of in leaving England without paying my respects to him. I found at his apartments *Sir George* (since *Lord*) *Lyttelton*, *Thomson*, *Mallet*, and *Smollet*. As I had been already introduced to those gentlemen, and was upon a footing of intimacy with them, I was not sorry at their being present upon the occasion. Having saluted him, I assured him that I was happy in the opportunity of clearing myself of the error I had committed, before his friends, who had honoured me with their notice upon his account. I acknowledged that appearances were against me; yet, though they were but appearances, I dreaded his censure for them, more than that of the whole world. I conjured him at the same time, to acquit me of the sin of ingratitude, which, though he may have judged me guilty of it, my heart was utterly incapable of.

Whether sincerity spoke in my eyes, and pleaded my cause for me, I cannot say; but he immediately gave me a kiss of reconciliation; saying, after he had done so, “My  
“ dear girl, I was hurt at your contempt  
“ and

“ and inattention, as I sincerely *had* your  
“ welfare at heart.” Notwithstanding this  
seeming cordiality gave me pleasure, the  
word *had*, on which he laid an emphasis,  
alarmed my fears, and prevented my being  
so happy as I should otherwise have been.  
The gentlemen in company were all glad to  
see me, especially *Thomson*, who enquired  
for his relation and my friend, *Mrs. Jackson*.  
But I could give him no information, as she  
had retired into the country, and all my at-  
tempts to find her out had been ineffectual.  
*Mr. Quin* advised me to make my appearance  
in *Belvidera*. And as I had not a doubt of  
succeeding in any character I undertook, it  
was equal to me what was fixed on.

Upon our settling in lodgings, *Miss O'Hara*,  
*Lord Tyravley's* eldest daughter, who by some  
means or other had disoblinded his Lordship,  
came to live with us. This circumstance  
was very agreeable to me, as well as to my mo-  
ther. She in particular was pleased with it.  
For as she was now entirely engrossed by her  
meditations, which were usually employed  
on two different subjects, namely her fa-  
vourite *Mr. Crump*, and the approach of a  
less agreeable figure called *death*, she was  
glad I had a companion in whose friendship  
she could rely, and who would forward her  
wish; that of uniting me to *Mr. Crump*. One  
day my mother being more than usually  
importunate on this subject, I was so dis-

pleased at the odious topic, that I answered with great warmth, "I wish, Madam, you would marry him yourself. I can have no objection to him for a *father-in-law*; but have a most insuperable one to him for a *husband*." My asperity seemed to grieve my mother much more than it had ever done before. A few months, however, declared her motives, and made her unhappy the rest of her days.

*Mrs. Woffington* played the first night with her usual *eclat*, in the character proposed. *Mrs. Ward* soon followed. Her beautiful face and novelty insured her applause at her first appearance. But her situation, as well as her figure, being against her, she did not conclude the part of Cordelia with any degree of credit. *Mr. Garrick* stood unrivalled in *Lear*, but as *Mrs. Ward's* acting did not tend much to the support of the piece, it was not repeated. The great veteran *Quin* had not made any of Shakspeare's characters his study, except that of Falstaff, in which he was inimitable, and that of Henry the Eighth, in which he likewise excelled.

Though *Mr. Quin* appeared to be reconciled to me, I found, to my sorrow, that he did not treat me with that conspicuous tenderness and regard he had formerly shewn me. His behaviour to me then, as I have already observed, was more like that of a  
fond



fond father towards his darling child, than of a meer well-wisher. I was now invited but seldom to those envied parties, which at once flattered my vanity, and enlightened my understanding. And although I had at this time many more admirers, he discontinued to favour me with his advice and cordial regard.

Notwithstanding a timid apprehensive modesty is commendable in the younger part of the fair sex, yet this amiable virtue might be carried to a detrimental extreme. A consciousness of rectitude, even where appearances are greatly against them, will support the innocent under the most discouraging censures; and not only support under them, but stimulate to a due exertion of every means in their power, towards their vindication.—Bold in the purity of my intentions, and conscious that I had not offended, even in thought, against the sacred laws of chastity, though carried off by the contrivance of an avowed admirer, I should have contemned the sneers of the prude, the exultations of the coquette, the piety of the seeming *virtuous*, and the censures of the whole world. By so doing I should, probably, have soon been able to vindicate my conduct to my friends, and have recovered the character I had so undeservedly lost. As the noxious dews of the night are exhaled by the earliest rays of the sun, so would the scandal with

which I was loaded have been quickly dispersed by the discriminating beams of truth. But, unhappily, a false delicacy prompted me to fly from, instead of repelling, the casual attack; and by it, among other inconveniences and misfortunes, I lost the favour and affection of this worthiest of men.

At length I was soon announced to bring up the rear of our theatrical forces in the character of Belvidera. When, to my great surprize, instead of the crowded house I had flattered myself with playing to, it was far from full. This was the more mortifying, as it was unexpected. My own reception, indeed, was as warm as it had ever been; but still I was dissatisfied. At the conclusion of the piece, however, *Mr. Town*, whom I have already taken notice of, hearing another piece given out for the following evening, cried out, "The same! the same!" The audience joined, as usual, in the cry; and by this eventual stroke, the same play, "Venice Preserved," was performed, for four successive nights, to crowded houses; and continued one of our most drawing performances to the conclusion of the season.

At this period it was customary to play "Tamerlane" on the fourth of November. That day drew near; and neither *Mrs. Woffington* nor myself had been spoken to, relative to it. We were the more surprized at this silence, as *Mr. Quin* was reputed to be  
the

the best Bajazet that ever trod the stage. One evening, before the piece then performing was concluded, he sent to the green-room, desiring to speak to me in his dressing-room. I immediately arose from my seat, and went to the door; but hearing voices within, I stopped for some time, lest I should interrupt business, or be one too many. As I stood, I distinctly heard The Fox say (for Volpone was then exhibiting) “Why, my Lord, we have *Woffington* at the receipt of custom, and who bids more!—*Ward*, flatter than a half-baked pancake—and little *Bellamy* as cold as ice, and as conceited as the devil.”

Having heard this fine eulogium, I waited till the laugh, which was partly at my expence, had subsided, and then made my appearance. I found, on my entrance, *Lord Orford*, and *Thomson*, who constantly attended his friend *Quin*, and who had brought *Shenstone*, so much admired for his pastorals, to make his bow. As soon as *Mr. Quin* saw me, he thus accosted me: “My dear girl, I have a favour to beg of you, and desire you will not deny me.” I instantly replied, “You can make but *one* request, *Mr. Quin*, relative to the theatre, which I can refuse you; and I beg you will not give me so sensible a pain, as that of not being able to acquiesce in *every* request of yours.” He returned, with a frown,

frown, “ It is what you point at, and you  
 “ had better comply with a good grace,  
 “ for you *shall* and *must* do it.”

This threat, as my disposition is not framed to bear compulsion, nettled me so much, that, with the air of queen Catherine, I said, “ I revere you, sir, as a father, and  
 “ esteem you as a friend ; but if your request  
 “ relates to Tamerlane, I must tell you,  
 “ *that little Bellamy has too much conceit to play*  
 “ *Selima to such a half-baked pancake as Ward.*” My assumed consequence so highly diverted the company, that good humour was immediately restored ; and they joined in telling *Quin*, that, in order to have so amiable and spirited a *daughter*, he must comply with my wishes, and take the beautiful *Woffington* to wife. *Mr. Quin* was so pleased at this well-timed retort, wherein I retaliated with such promptitude his severe description ; and he was at the same time so charmed with my spirit, having hitherto thought me too placid ; that he restored me, from that moment, to his favour, and I presided the same night at supper, as usual.

When I found myself perfectly re-established in *Mr. Quin*’s favour, I enquired of him the reason he had treated me with so much coolness, after he had assured me of his being reconciled to me, and was well convinced of my innocence and sincerity. He informed me, that my indiscretion in  
 leaving

leaving a London theatre, after I had received so many marks of peculiar distinction from the public, deserved the severest reprobation. He added, that whoever had been my adviser upon the occasion was not my friend. As I had every reason to conclude myself the favourite child of the public, he said, they would certainly have cherished me; and it was treating them, as well as myself and him, ill, to desert them. That I could not avoid observing the difference of my present situation, and it would be a considerable time before I recovered the height from which I had fallen. That he felt the disappointment far more than I did, as he had set his heart upon my rivalling the women at the other house.

All the company present appeared to be of the same opinion. And as *Mr. Quin's* observations seemed to carry conviction with them, I perceived that I had been very imprudent in taking such a step without his assent. I went home, more oppressed by his friendship than I had been unhappy through his displeasure. And I from that moment formed a resolution to atone for my past indiscretion, by applying, with unremitting ardour, to the duties of my profession, and to consult my newly-recovered monitor, upon every concern of the least importance.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XXX.

May 22, 17—

THE next character I appeared in was that of *Athenais*, in *Theodosius*. I had no sooner come upon the stage, on the night of its performance, than the first object that presented itself to view was *Lord Byron*, who had placed himself in the stage-box. The tremor I was thrown into, by seeing a person so near who had been the cause of so much disquietude to me, entirely deprived me of all my powers, and I stood for some time motionless. *Mr. Rich* and his family, observing from their box that I suddenly turned pale, which was easily discernible from my complexion being usually too florid, he came immediately behind the scenes to enquire the reason of it. His Lordship had by this time quitted his seat, and placed himself against one of the side scenes, in sight of the audience. *Mr. Rich*, having let himself in by a private door from the box passage, of which he always had a key, found his Lordship in this situation, and was no longer at a loss to account for my trepidation.

As *Lord Byron* knew that our proprietor had in his youthful days been a man of gallantry, he accosted him with an assured look, and said, “ Well, *Rich* ; I am come to take  
“ away

“away your *Athenais!*” Such a salutation could not fail to give offence to a person who had always treated me as a daughter, and who possessed no little share of personal courage, united with an humane disposition. He accordingly reprov'd his Lordship, for avowing a design of so unjustifiable a nature, so inconsistent with humanity and the laws of society, and consequently so much beneath the dignity of a peer. He at the same time remonstrated with his Lordship on the cruelty of coming to alarm a young person, who had never given him any room to suppose she approved of his passion, and who could not but be apprehensive from his Lordship's present conduct. *Mr. Rich* then said, in a resolute tone, “I desire, my Lord, that you will quit the scenes, for I cannot stand tamely by, and see my performers insulted.”

His Lordship, not chusing to resent this opposition from the manager, so as to make a serious affair of it, very prudently retired to his seat in the stage-box, meditating revenge. But he was no sooner seated there, than the audience, who generally engage on the side that humanity points out, took the alarm, and oblig'd his Lordship to retire from thence to the front boxes, in the back part of which he conceal'd himself from further insult.

*Mr.*

*Mr. Quin* not playing that night, he was not at the theatre; but the next evening he was informed of the terror I had undergone. *Mr. Thomson*, who had heard of it likewise, came to the house. As this gentleman passed near the back of the stage, he heard two persons in conversation, one of whom said to the other, "I will speak to her to-night, or I will shoot my——." The remainder of the sentence *Mr. Thomson* could not catch, but from the former part of it he concluded, that it could be no other than *Lord Byron*, thus uttering his designs in confidence to a friend; and who, in revenge for the disgrace he had undergone the preceding night, had determined to carry me off.

*Mr. Thomson* immediately acquainted *Mr. Quin* with the discourse he had been witness to, who adopted the same opinion. Accordingly the latter sent to me during the performance, and desired to speak with me as soon as my part was finished. His character having concluded in the fourth act, I found him undrest. The moment he saw me, he addressed me in a precipitate manner, to the following purpose: "Madam, we must have no chairing it to-night. You must go home under my arm." You may be assured I was not a little frightened. But, upon his further assuring me that I should be safely escorted, and that he would send for his supper to my lodgings, where *Mr. Thomson*

WAS



was to make one of the party, my fears subsided.

When I was undressed, *Mr. Quin* ordered my chair to be brought from the stage-door in Bow-street, with all the curtains drawn, into the passage, that it might be supposed I was actually in it; whilst we went through the house, and by way of the piazzas, into Tavistock-street, where my mother and myself then lodged. We consequently got home before the chair could reach our house. When the fellows arrived, they informed us that they had been stopped on the way by a man muffled up in a great coat. That at first they affected to be unwilling to set down their fare; but upon the person's being peremptory, they obeyed his orders. He then lifted up the top of the chair, and threw something into it, swearing at the same time, that if the answer was not favourable, he was determined to destroy himself. Having said this, he put the lid down, and ordered them to carry the lady home.

Our curiosity being excited by this account, *Mr. Quin* ordered the letter, which had been thrown into the chair, to be taken out. Whilst this was doing, one of the fellows said, he was sure the poor gentleman meant no harm to Miss, as he was one of the best men in the world. He added, that he had delivered me a letter from him some time ago; but I was so angry that he  
never

never durst venture to give me another. "And pray who is that gentleman?" said *Mr. Quin*. "Why, Sir," replied the chairman, "it is his honour *Mr. Bullock*." The letter being by this time brought, *Mr. Quin* desired he might be permitted to read it. It was much against my inclination that it should be opened, as I had already received so many from the same person, that I had formed a resolution to send back his epistles in future as they came. The letter, however, was read, and the contents found to breathe nothing but love and madness. The inditer of it was a young gentleman of good expectations, being heir to a considerable estate. He was educated at Cambridge, and had not yet left college. His person was remarkably handsome, but the violence of his behaviour terrified instead of engaging me. *Mr. Quin*, who was well acquainted with his father, put the letter into his pocket, and promised to bring the young man to reason.

We had just sat down to supper, when a waiter came from the Bedford with a letter directed for me. Here I cannot avoid stopping a minute, to trouble you with another *soliloquy*. I think that word is full as applicable to a moral reflection when written alone, as when spoken alone; at least I shall use it upon this occasion, as I cannot just now find another more expressive; and beg  
a truce

a truce with your criticism.—But to come to this same soliloquy.—To what continual sollicitations are females in the *theatrical line*, whose persons or abilities render them conspicuous, exposed! They go through an ordeal almost equally hazardous to that used of old as a test of chastity. The maturest judgement and firmest resolution is required, to enable them to steer aright. And is this to be expected from frail fair ones, hoodwinked by youth, inexperience, vanity, and all the softer passions? Instead of wondering that *so many* of those who tread the stage yield to the temptations by which they are surrounded, it is rather a matter of amazement that *all* do not. Continually besieged by persons of the highest rank, who are *practised* in the arts of seduction, and empowered by their affluence to carry the most expensive and alluring of these into execution, it is next to impossible that the fortress should be impregnable.—Fortunate is it for many who pride themselves in their *untried* virtue, that their lot is cast in a less hazardous state.

We had just sat down to supper, as I said before, when a waiter came from the Bedford Head, with a letter directed for me. The servant indiscreetly took it in; which so shocked my mother's delicacy, that I had almost said, she made herself ridiculous. I could not refrain from telling her, that it  
was

was not possible for me to be contaminated by the impertinence of a man that must be inebriated, or he would not have taken such an unwarrantable liberty. Nor could the house from whence it came give her just cause for offence; as Woodifield's, though situated in Covent-Garden, was honoured with parties of the best character, ladies as well as gentlemen.

Upon opening the scrawl, we found it came from *Lord Byron*, who, though he was lately married to one of the best and loveliest of her sex, made me therein an offer of a settlement. His Lordship concluded with swearing that if I did not consent to his proposal, he would pursue me till I took shelter in another's arms. As soon as *Mr. Quin* had read the letter, he called for pen and ink, and sent the following answer to it. "Lieutenant O'Hara's compliments to Lord Byron, and if he ever dares to insult his sister again, it shall not be either his title or cowardice that shall preserve him from chastisement." This fortunate impromptu of *Mr. Quin's* so frightened his Lordship, that the waiter came soon after to let us know he was gone. And we found that this valiant nobleman actually set off the next morning for Nottinghamshire. Nor have I ever since been troubled with his attacks. Lady Byron, some time after, came to my benefit, and honoured me with marks of her

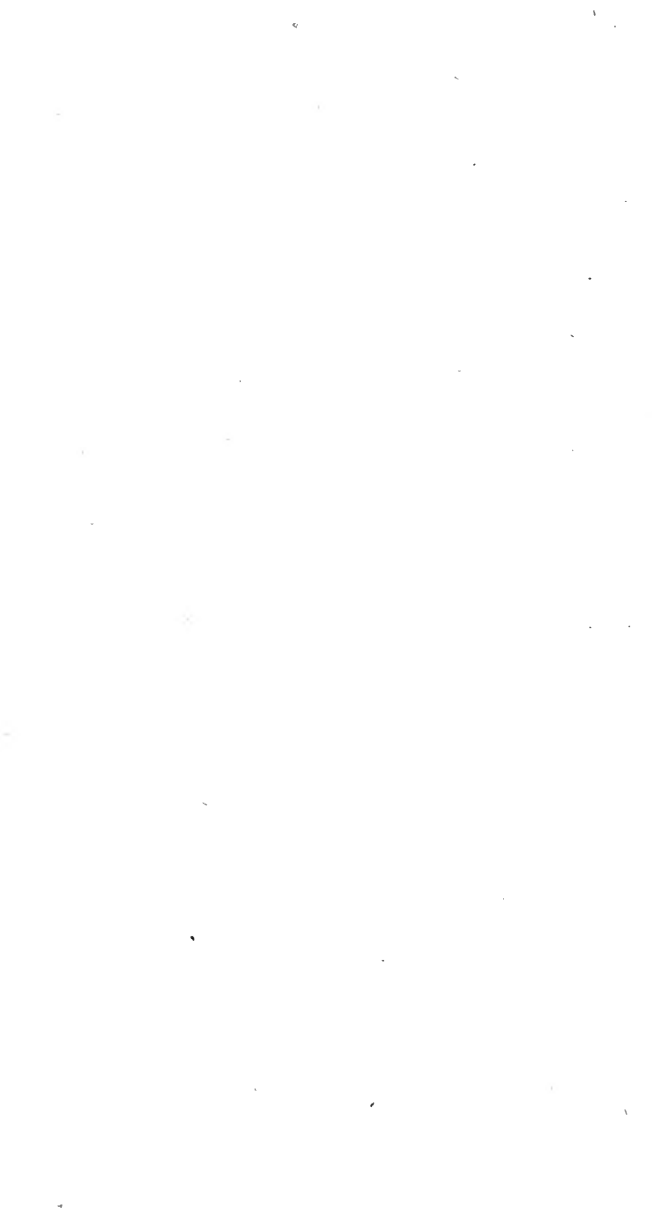
her

her generosity ; which were the more pleasing to me, as it likewise was a proof of the liberality of her sentiments.

Could you have formed any conception that there had been men of his Lordship's cast ? of those who break their marriage vows *so soon* after they have been made ; 'ere they had well reached Heaven's portals ? Yet such you see there are. But from such false ones may Hymen preserve you and every other worthy woman.

G. A. B.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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A N  
A P O L O G Y

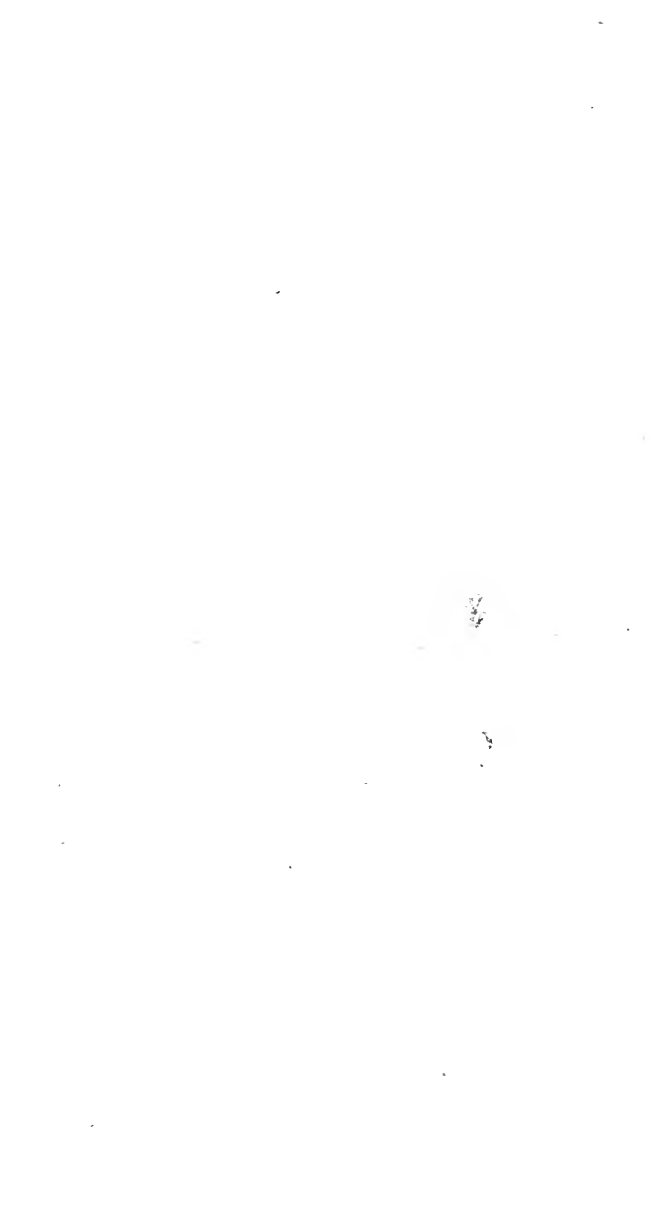
F O R T H E

L I F E

O F

GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

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A N  
A P O L O G Y  
F O R T H E  
L I F E  
O F  
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY:

LATE OF COVENT GARDEN THEATRE.

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W R I T T E N B Y H E R S E L F .

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To which is annexed her original Letter to JOHN CALCRAET,  
Esq; advertised to be published in October 1767, but  
which was then violently suppressed.

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“The Webb of your Life is of a mingled Yarn, good and ill together, our Virtues  
“ would be proud, if our Faults whipt them not; and our crimes would Despair  
“ if they were not cherished by our Virtues”  
All's Well That Ends Well. Act IV. Scene III.

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IN FIVE VOLUMES,

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V O L . II.

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L O N D O N :

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AN  
A P O L O G Y  
FOR THE  
L I F E  
O F  
GEORGE ANNE BELLAMY.

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L E T T E R XXXI.

June 5th, 17—

AFTER being delivered from the apprehensions *Lord Byron* had occasioned, I thought myself perfectly happy. I was, however, doomed to sustain fresh unhappiness from another quarter; and that was from my mother's Irish friend *Mr. Crump*, in whose favour she was constantly teizing me. They had carried on a correspondence together ever since we came from Ireland. But that I did not wonder at; as my mother had met with great success in the profession he had advised her to engage in, and she had occasion frequently to send him over commissions for linens.

As I always made it a point never to read a letter belonging to another, *even if open*, esteeming it a breach of the most sacred of

trusts, many of his epistles to her lay carelessly scattered about, without my ever looking into one of them. An accident, however, soon happened, which obliged me, contrary to my resolutions, to inspect the last she received from him.

*Mr. Quin* thinking that the force of the company lay in comedy, he introduced me into every piece which contained a character suited to my figure and age. As he was excellent in the *Double Dealer*, and *Mrs. Woffington* was well received in *Lady Touchwood*, I had an opportunity of appearing in *Lady Froth*; a character which would afford ample room for the exertion of my fancy and humour. I accordingly performed it, and met with better success than I had reason to hope, as it was a part the inimitable *Clive* had been long in possession of.

Whether the applause I had received, or the brilliancy of my dress, or some other cause, occasioned it, I know not; but I was elevated by an uncommon flow of spirits on the first night of its performance. Thus cheerful, as I sat in the green-room, who should enter it but *Mr. Montgomery*, now *Sir George Metham*, whom I have already mentioned as an admirer of mine. The unexpected sight of that gentleman greatly surprized me; and without considering how preposterous such a step might appear to the rest of the performers, I found myself involuntarily

luntarily led, by some impulse, to which I had till now been a stranger, to get up to receive him as he approached me. Such a mark of distinction could not pass unnoticed by him, and he seemed to receive it with inexpressible transport.

Nor did it pass unobserved by *Mrs. Woffington*. The tender respect he shewed me seemed to hurt her pride. As to the other female performers present, they were all, except *Mrs. Ward*, persons of more respectable characters. They loved their husbands, minded their business, and found too much employment in their own families, to trouble themselves with the concerns of others.

*Mr. Metham* found means to inform me, during the short conversation we had together (for as I was looked upon as a prude by the company, a longer one would have been imprudent) that his mother was dead, by which he was come into possession of a good estate, together with the name of *Metham*. As the attention of a person, whose dress, deportment, and appearance, proclaimed him a man of fashion, seemed to excite the jealousy of *Mrs. Woffington*, who expected to have the tribute of admiration from every one first paid to her, I put an end, as soon as possible, to our *tête-à-tête*. But at the conclusion of the play, *Mr. Metham* accosted me again, and desired permission to wait on me the next morning. This I told him I could

not grant ; at the same time frankly informing him, that my reason for doing so, was because my mother would not consent to my admitting any male visitor in the quality of a lover. He then begged to be allowed to write to me ; which I did not refuse. Upon this we parted.

The entering into this correspondence, obliged me to request *O'Bryen*, who had attended us to England, to pay a particular attention to taking in my letters, so that they might not fall into my mother's hands. I have already informed you that this lady, notwithstanding her *royal descent*, had not had the education she had consequently a right to expect. In truth, she could neither read nor write. Which sometimes led her into errors, when those crooked things called letters, were the only guides she had to direct her. Thus it happened, that one day finding a letter in the parlour, she concluded it was one that I had dropped, and accordingly brought it to me.

Without examining whether it belonged to me or not, I put it hastily into my pocket. And it was not till I had occasion to search for another, wherein mention was made of a masquerade, that I discovered it. Pulling it out with three others which I had received in the course of the day, I then perceived that it was an epistle from my Hibernian admirer to my mother. At the same time a  
dash

dash annexed to the word daughter, exciting my curiosity, I was tempted to break through the rule I had hitherto so inviolably observed. The line ran thus : “ Dear Madam, I believe your loved daughter cannot withstand the power of ——.” As I could not understand the meaning of this sentence, and indeed was very indifferent about it, I threw the letter aside, without perusing the remainder of it.

The next evening I appeared in the character of Alicia. As soon as my part was concluded, *Mr. Quin*, with a pleasure sparkling in his fine eyes, that I had never seen them express before off the stage, bid me stop and kneel to the first person I met in the scene-room ; a place I was obliged to pass as I went to undress. As I could not comprehend at first what *Mr. Quin* meant, alternate hope and fear rendered me motionless for some time. At length my heart presaged who it was. When mustering all my courage, and judging from the pleasantness of my patron’s countenance, that I had not much to fear, I entered the room. I need not, I suppose, inform you, that I found there *Lord Tyrawley*. As soon as I saw him I threw myself at his feet, crying out at the same time, with an emotion that is not to be expressed, “ My dear Lord, forgive me !”

His Lordship having raised me, he embraced me with the utmost tenderness; and if I could judge from his voice, was no less affected than myself. He then desired me to hasten home, as *Quin* and he intended supping at my apartments. His Lordship informed me, that he had received from *Mr. Quin* such an account of me, as had given him the highest satisfaction; and which corroborated what he had heard in Ireland, from a person, who, *when alive*, loved me as well as that gentleman did. Concluding from this, that my dear *Mrs. O'Hara* had paid the last debt of nature, I burst afresh into tears.—Though gratitude impelled me to bestow this tender tribute on her loved memory, yet I checked it as soon as possible, and blamed myself for giving way to so improper, though customary, a sensation. As she was one of the best of women, I could not doubt her happiness; and sorrow, as that was the case, according to my ideas, is only self-love. The living, who are left in this vale of tears, are *rather* to be wept for; the dead, where, from a well spent life, they have the assurance of happiness that my dear aunt had, are objects of envy, not of grief.

*Mr. Quin* allowed his Lordship and myself an hour for private conversation before he came. And as the next day happened to be a holiday, we were not obliged to separate

rate



rate at an early hour. Indeed, *Mr. Quin* seldom kept early hours, unless he was obliged to do so by indisposition. My mother was not permitted to join us; and his Lordship gave me a severe injunction never to request that he would see either of the ladies of my family, as he was determined never to speak to or know them. He delivered me two rings; one of which, being a large pink diamond, was very valuable; the other a fancy ring; both of which had been left me by *Mrs. O'Hara*. I apprehend this was not the whole of my legacy; but as his Lordship took no notice of any thing else, I could not with propriety ask him.

I now thought myself the happiest of human beings. Restored to the affections of the two people I most valued, and loved almost to adoration by the man I preferred to all others, my satisfaction was unbounded. Nor do I believe that any three people in the world were happier than my company and myself; each enjoying an equal place in my affections, though the claims of each were of a different nature.—Great are the pleasures arising from susceptibility!—Many indeed, and exquisite, are likewise the pains attendant on it.—The inexpressible pleasure of making happy, by a mutual reciprocation of beneficent acts and tender communications, greatly overpays, however, the disadvantages

advantages of possessing a susceptible heart.—The enlarged mind alone is capable of these mental enjoyments.—By the liberal-minded, therefore, are the delicate sensations I speak of, only to be comprehended.—To the million they are caviare.—As they are the only source of *real* happiness in this life, they doubtless, when rendered more pure and perfect, will constitute our felicity in “that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns.”

I am now about to enter upon a topic of a different nature from any that has hitherto found a place in my epistles; but although it appears not to make a part of my own concerns, I flatter myself that a story so interesting, and flowing immediately from the fountain-head, from which its authenticity is undoubted, will not make you consider the time required in the perusal of it misemployed.

G A. B.

LETTER XXXII.

June 18, 17—

**Y**OU must have heard of the intended rebellion in Russia during the reign of the great *Czarina Elizabeth*. It is indeed generally known that such a revolution was planned and nearly taking place. But the means by which it was discovered and prevented, are

are known but to a very few. I will therefore relate them to you in the same circumstantial manner *Lord Tyrarley* repeated them to *Mr. Quin* and myself that evening.

From his Lordship's residing so many years at the court of Spain and Portugal, he had acquired a strong attachment to the natives of both those kingdoms. And as he was happy in every opportunity that offered for shewing this regard for them, they entertained the highest respect for his Lordship. During my Lord's residence at the court of Russia, he observed a Spaniard to walk frequently, for several days together, before the court-yard of his hotel. Excited by the national attachment just mentioned, his Lordship ordered one of his domestics to invite the Don to dine at the second table. The Spaniard accepted the invitation with the greatest readiness, and seemed glad to have an opportunity of laying by his long spado for some hours every day. This continued for several months, so that the stranger was at length considered as one of the family.

At the expiration of that time, he came late one evening, and requested the domestic in waiting to inform his Excellency, that he wished to have the honour to speak to him. The servant supposing his business was not of a nature to require his seeing his Lordship that night, desired he would call in the morning. But on the man's saying, "The  
" morning

“ morning will not do, it must be immediate-  
“ diately,” his Lordship was informed of his request, and the Spaniard ordered to be admitted. Upon his being introduced, he thus accosted his Lordship in Spanish, the moment they were alone. “ I am come, my Lord, to  
“ repay all your civilities—But before I explain myself, order your berlin to be got  
“ ready.”

The mysterious air which the Spaniard assumed upon this occasion soon convinced his Lordship of what he had suspected for some time, that his new dependant belonged to that fraternity, so necessary to every power, termed spies. He therefore ordered his carriage to be got ready. When this was done, the stranger thus continued:  
“ I have for some time, my Lord, formed a  
“ very strict intimacy with a Russ in the  
“ suite of the *Marquis de Chattardy*. After  
“ leaving your Excellency’s hotel I generally  
“ go to spend some hours with him. Staying  
“ at the Marquis’s hotel a few evenings  
“ ago, later than usual, I saw a person come  
“ in who endeavoured to hide himself from  
“ observation, as if desirous to remain unknown. This, your Lordship may be assured,  
“ awoke my suspicions; and as from  
“ the glimpse I had of him, I could only  
“ guess who it was, I resolved if possible to  
“ arrive at some certainty about it. For  
“ this purpose, when my friend returned, I  
“ asked

“ asked him, with a careless air, whether  
 “ the *Compte* —— (I have forgot the  
 name of this nobleman, but he was the fa-  
 vourite confidential servant of the Em-  
 press) “ usually *walked* at that inclement  
 “ season of the year. I took no further no-  
 “ tice at that time; but went as usual to vi-  
 “ sit my friend the following evening. I  
 “ did not, however, ring at the gate of the  
 “ hotel, till I saw the *Compte* go in, who I  
 “ guessed would be there about the same time.

“ Having gained admittance soon after  
 “ him, instead of going to my friend’s apart-  
 “ ment, being well acquainted with every  
 “ part of the hotel, I gained, unobserved, the  
 “ back stairs, and placed myself near the clo-  
 “ set in which his Excellency the Marquis  
 “ and the *Compte* were in conversation.  
 “ There I overheard the latter say, among  
 “ other things, to the Marquis in Italian, “ I  
 “ think the sooner you go the better. The cre-  
 “ dentials will be ready by eleven o’clock.”  
 “ As soon as I had heard this, I stole from  
 “ my hiding-place, and went immediately  
 “ to my friend, who chid me for being so  
 “ late, as he could not now profit by my  
 “ company, from having so much to do.

“ I asked him what he had to do at this  
 “ time more than another. To which he re-  
 “ plied that he would not betray his master’s  
 “ secrets, though indeed he merited it, as  
 “ he had broke his promise in not taking  
 “ him

“ him with him.” I did not make any further enquiry, lest what he imparted to me should have been under the seal of secrecy ; and a Spaniard, your Excellency knows, is too tenacious of his honour to betray any thing that is divulged to him in confidence.”

“ And what do you suppose,” said his Lordship, “ are the motives, and will be the consequences, of the Marquis’s stealing away ?—“ A revolution ;” replied the Spaniard ; “ and if your Lordship does not make haste to the Empress, and acquaint her with what I tell you, it will be too late to prevent it. I am acquainted with the whole circumstances, but am not at liberty to mention more. Your Lordship, however, may take my life, if the intelligence I give you proves false.”

His Lordship having been already convinced from his own observations, and the information he had received from other quarters, that there was something portentous to the welfare of the Russian empire in agitation ; after having tried the Spaniard to the utmost, he gave credit to what he said ; and was now satisfied that his informant had received some intelligence under the seal of secrecy, as he termed it, the particulars of which he made a point of honour not to disclose, although he thought it no breach of honour to repeat the substance of it.

The

The carriage being by this time ready, *Lord Tyravelly* and the Spaniard set out together for the Empress's palace, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour and the inclemency of the weather. The English Ambassador procured admittance to her majesty immediately. But the Empress seemed to doubt the possibility of his information, till the Spaniard was called in; who gave her such convincing proofs of what was intended, that she could no longer doubt the truth of his assertions. Her majesty then proposed sending such a particular troop to prevent the designs, she had just been informed of, from being carried into execution. But the Spaniard exclaimed, "No, you must secure them, as they are now actually under arms against you." The light at this time shone full upon them, as they were part of her body guard, and her favourite, Wall, Colonel of them. Some troops were sent to prevent the escape of the *Marquis de Chattardy*, but he was already fled; and, though pursued, found means to make his escape. He had not however time to destroy his papers. These were secured and brought to the palace. The regiment suspected were found under arms, which created a certainty of their intended treason. The treachery of her favourite, the Comte, was fully proved. But through some remains of that regard which she once entertained for him, his life was spared, and

he was banished to Siberia. Whilst all those whom he had prevailed upon to join in his treacherous views, were immediately executed. Her majesty took the Spaniard into her service, and rewarded him nobly. And the presents she made *Lord Tyrawley* for the services he rendered her on this occasion, though of immense value, were not, in his estimation, of so much worth as the friendship with which she honoured him to the day of her death.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXIII.

June 29, 17—

**L**ORD TYRAWLEY gave us the foregoing story, the first evening we passed together, among many other entertaining anecdotes. The night passed away in a sweet delirium, as you may suppose, with two such bright geniuses as his Lordship and *Mr. Quin*.—Every word conveyed extatic delight to a mind fond of learning and the belles lettres; to a person tremblingly alive to every rational enjoyment, as well as every delicate sensation.—Like Circe “They would take the “prisoned soul, and lap it in Elysium.”—Whilst the brilliant jest, and smart repartee, afforded food for laughter, their observations



ons on men and books supplied me with a lasting fund of instruction.

Before we broke up, his Lordship promised to sup with me three or four times a week, and begged *Mr. Quin* to be of the party as often as possible. But as he loved his good fat capon; his ale and orange; and *ungartering*, as he called it; which he esteemed the three great blessings of life; and as *Lord Tyravley* was not fond of the bottle; he did not often favour me with his company at my apartments. I had however the *entrée* at his house, where I spent every evening I could spare from other engagements.

Late as it was before his Lordship and *Mr. Quin* left me, I sat down, before I slept, to inform *Mr. Metham* of the happiness I enjoyed in being restored to his Lordship's favour. But much as it delighted *me*, it gave no satisfaction to *him*. He however affected to be pleased with the intelligence I sent him, in compliment to me, as he seemed to partake in every thing that afforded me pleasure. Indeed we carried our ideas of love to so romantic a height, that the correspondence, which by this time had commenced between us, partook more of the sentiments of *Cassandra* and *Oroonates*, than of persons on a level with the rest of mankind.

There was so much sentiment and respect both in his letters and behaviour, that I never gave myself time to reflect on the im-

prudence I was guilty of in entering into a private intimacy with a man, who had formerly declared that it was not in his power to pay his addressees to me on honourable terms. Nay, that very declaration, as it appeared to give me a proof of his openness and candour, lulled me into a false security. And from that circumstance I placed so much dependance upon his honour, which I supposed equal to his sincerity, that I never harboured a fear of his entertaining the least dishonourable thought.—More females owe their ruin to this false security, than to the incitements of vanity or passion.—Thrown off their guard by placing an implicit confidence in the man they love, they find too late, in their own dishonour, that the expected honour of their betrayers has been but an empty bubble.

About this time having an opportunity to go to a masquerade, I readily embraced the offer, that I might meet my lover there, and be more at liberty to enjoy his conversation than I had been able to do. Having never been at such an entertainment before, I expressed my surprize to *Mr. Metham* how people were able to find one another out, with their faces so covered that the features were not distinguishable. He replied, “That my eyes would light him; and that intuition would prevent any mistake.”

I cer-

I certainly preferred *Mr. Metham* to any man living. My regard for him, however, was not so violent but what it was to give way to my humour. Accordingly, when the night arrived, I wrapped myself in a black domino, with a large capot over it, and in this unexpected dress, accompanied by the *Miss Merediths* in the habits of Savoyard girls, entered the room. In a very short time I was as well acquainted with the nature of the entertainment as Heidegger\* himself. And as my companions were too much noticed to mind me, I soon gave them the slip, and sought out my Strephon. I found him employed in examining every well dressed female that passed him, not doubting, I suppose, but that I should make use of so favourable an opportunity to show my taste, and appear what is usually termed an elegant mask. When I espied him, I made up to him and asked him, what fair one kept him in waiting. Impatient to behold her he loved, he desired me to go about my business; for it was not me he wanted. I told him he had better accept the offer of my company, which I assured him I had the vanity to presume would prove full as agreeable to him as the person he was in expectation of. Upon this he turned away quite enraged.

\* The person who first introduced masked balls into England.

Seeing that vanity and folly here went hand-in-hand, of both of which I seemed to have a tolerable share, I let him *croquer le marmot*; and I acknowledge that I did not enjoy a little pleasure in the disquietude he appeared to experience.

I now joined *General Wall*, the Spanish Ambassador; who had frequented the scenes, and with whom I had the honour of chatting now and then. *Compte Haslang*, the Imperial and Bavarian Ambassador, had pointed me out to his Excellency. The *Compte* often visited at *Lord Tyrzewley's*, who paid him particular attention, not so much for the brilliancy of his parts, which were but *lá lá*, as for his noble descent, his extreme politeness, and his appearing to be pleased with the wit of others, without ever making pretence to any himself. Though his Excellency the *Compte* was not rendered sharp-sighted by the hood-winked boy called Love, yet he discovered me immediately through my deep disguise, and made me known to the General.

Notwithstanding *General Wall's* knowledge was universal, and his fame for wit established, he loved mischief as well as any school-boy could. And having no doubt, from the observations he had made at the theatre, that *Mr. Metham* was a professed admirer of mine, he begged to join me in the persecution he saw I was carrying on. We accordingly

ingly made up to *Metham*, whom I rallied in the same manner I had done before. But what made my raillery the more irksome to him, was, that from the General's being unmasked, he could not leave abruptly a person of his Excellency's consequence, and was of course obliged to hear the whole of it. Not doubting, I suppose, at the same time, that though I appeared from my habit to be an old fright, I was a person of no little consequence myself.

*Lord Tyravley* supped with a private party; so that I was at liberty to follow the bent of my humour without any restraint, during the greatest part of the night. About four o'clock his Lordship returned to the great room; and having found out my companions and myself, begged leave to see us to our chairs, as he could not think of leaving three girls in such a place, unless we had brought with us a *chaperon*. The young ladies having exhausted their spirits with dancing, were not sorry to hear his Lordship make the offer. I own that to have staid a little longer would have been full as agreeable to me. That, however, was not now to be done, and it was agreed that we should go.

This sudden determination only permitted me just to say to *Mr. Metham*, as I passed him, "What is become of the brilliancy of those eyes, which, with your blessed *intuition*, were to render every other in-

" formation

“formation unnecessary?” Thunder-struck at these words, he appeared to be instantly aroused from the stupidity with regard to the knowledge of me that had overwhelmed him the whole night. He spontaneously followed us to the door, endeavouring to speak to me. But that was now impossible. He was consequently obliged to lament in silence his hard fate, and regret having lost an opportunity, which might not happen again for a long time.

This disappointment of *Metham's* confirmed what I have before observed, that where our hopes of happiness are the most sanguine, the surer seems their frustration.—Poor fellow! with what rapture did he receive the first intelligence of my going to the masquerade!—How did he count the tedious minutes till the wished-for hour arrived!—How did he anticipate the pleasures he expected would result from a conversation carried on without restraint; and in which he may freely declare the fervency of his affection!—And what was the result of those pleasing expectations?—Alas!—Disappointment, anxiety and vexation.—The teazings of an old woman, instead of the reluctantly acknowledged tenderness of a young one.—And to add to all, a torturing discovery of the frolicksome deception.

I own this treatment favoured somewhat of cruelty.—But women, throughout every  
age,

age, have not scrupled to indulge themselves in these little playfome tests of their lovers' truth and constancy.—At that time, to make use of a homespun expression, “The black ox had not trodden on my foot.”—Innocent humour was my delight.—Euphrosyne herself was not more blithe and debonair.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R   XXXIV.

July 12, 17—.

**A**BOUT this period, that much admired poet, *Thomson*, was called by the great disposer of events, to enjoy that felicity in a happier region, he had in vain strove to deserve in this bustling world. His death seemed to throw an universal gloom over every susceptible mind. Whilst some lamented the loss of his great poetical talents, all wept for the removal of so good a man. The softness of his manners, his unbounded philanthropy, and indeed the possession of every valuable quality that can adorn a human being, endeared him to every one who had the happiness to be acquainted with him. That it was my fortunate lot to be upon terms of intimacy with him, is one of the most pleasing circumstances of my life that recollection can revive.—Accept, departed shade, this tender tear! a votive tribute to that friendship with which I was honoured by thee.

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*Lord Lyttelton* and *Mr. Quin*, from the intimacy which had subsisted between *Thomson* and them, were the most affected by this sad event. After the first effusions of their sorrow were abated, they consulted in what manner to pay the most efficacious respect to the memory of their deceased friend. As his liberal disposition had prevented him from making any provision for his two sisters, they thought they could do nothing more consonant to his last wishes, than provide a decent support for them. A token of affection far more acceptable, I dare say, to their lost friend, if departed spirits be sensible of what passes here, than the most pompous obsequies, or richly sculptured monument.

*Thomson*, during the latter part of his life, had altered *Shakespeare's* tragedy of *Coriolanus*; the copy of which *Mr. Quin* had then in his possession. And the representation of this they thought would not a little conduce to the benevolent purpose. It was accordingly ordered to be got up at the theatre, and put immediately into rehearsal. *Mrs. Woffington* and myself were to play the parts of the mother and daughter. The death of *Thomson* put a stop for some time to our parties at *Mr. Quin's*, in *Henrietta-street*, which gave us more time to expedite the performance. *Lord Lyttelton* wrote the following prologue to it.

PROLOGUE



## P R O L O G U E

T O

T H O M S O N ' S C O R I O L A N U S .

*SPOKEN BY MR. QUIN.*

**I** COME not here your candour to implore  
 For scenes whose author is, alas! no more;  
 He wants no advocate his cause to plead;  
 You will yourselves be patrons of the dead.  
 No party his benevolence confin'd,  
 No sect—alike it flow'd to all mankind.  
 He lov'd his friends, (forgive this gushing tear;  
 Alas! I feel I am no actor here;)  
 He lov'd his friends with such a warmth of heart,  
 So clear of int'rest, so devoid of art,  
 Such gen'rous friendship, such unshaken zeal,  
 No words can speak it, but our tears may tell.—  
 O candid truth! O faith without a stain!  
 O manners gently firm and nobly plain!  
 O sympathizing love of others bliss!  
 Where will you find another breast like his?  
 Such was the man—The poet well you know;  
 Oft has he touch'd your hearts with tender woe;  
 Oft in this crowded house with just applause  
 You heard him teach fair virtue's purest laws;  
 For his chaste muse employ'd her heav'n-taught lyre  
 None but the noblest passions to inspire;  
 Not one immoral, one corrupted thought,  
 One line which dying he could wish to blot.

Oh! may to-night your favourable doom  
 Another laurel add to grace his tomb.  
 Whilst he, superior now to praise or blame,  
 Hears not the feeble voice of human fame.  
 Yet if to those whom most on earth he lov'd,  
 From whom his pious care is now remov'd,  
 With whom his lib'ral hand and bounteous heart  
 Shar'd all his little fortune could impart,  
 If to those friends your kind regard shall give  
 What they no longer can from him receive,  
 That, that ev'n now, above yon starry pole,  
 May touch with pleasure his immortal soul.

As soon as the piece was perfect, an evening rehearsal was called, upon a night when there happened to be no performance. *Mr. Quin's* pronunciation was of the old school. In this *Mr. Garrick* had made an alteration. The one pronounced the letter *a* open; the other sounded it like an *e*; which occasioned the following laughable mistake. In the piece, when the Roman ladies come in procession to solicit *Coriolanus* to return to Rome, they are attended by the tribunes. And the centurions of the *Volscian* army bearing *fascēs*, their ensigns of authority, they are ordered by the hero (the part of which was played by *Mr. Quin*) to lower them as a token of respect. But the men who personated the centurions, imagining, through *Mr. Quin's* mode of pronunciation, that he said their *faces*, instead of their *fascēs*, all bowed their heads together.

Not being able to withstand so ridiculous a mistake, I could not restrain my risible faculties; and though tragedians ought to have an entire command of the countenance, I burst into a fit of laughter. This, for a moment, offended *Mr. Quin*, and drew the attention of the literati that were present, who, with many others, followed my example. The men, however, were at length set right, and thus the affair ended.

Had such a ludicrous mistake happened on the night of its representation, it would probably

probably have excited the same emotions in the audience we had experienced, and might have proved fatal to the piece, or at least have interrupted the capital scene. The play, however, was at length represented with success, and *Mr. Quin* really shed tears. From the cynical manner that gentleman had adopted, and the sternness of his countenance, he was not supposed to possess so much of the milk of human kindness as he actually did. The circumstance was therefore considered as doubly forcible, and did not fail to operate on the sensibility of the whole house; who likewise testified, by their sympathetic tears, the respect they bore his friend.

The season of Lent now coming on, I had more leisure time on my hands than usual, and consequently had more frequent opportunities of seeing and hearing from *Mr. Metham*. He attended at *Compte Haslang's* chapel every Wednesday and Friday evening, where I generally met him. And so confident was I of his honour and affection, that if he happened to be indisposed, I made no scruple to go to his lodgings. Nor had I ever any reason to repent my condescension; as he never attempted even to salute me. So much respect, mingled with tenderness, confirmed the partiality I before entertained for him; and what may be called at first only a preference, was now mellowed into esteem,

esteem, friendship, and affection. This, perhaps, is the happiest æra of the human life.—An innocent familiarity takes place, unim-bittered by those apprehensions that experience gives birth to; and unalloyed by that satiety which too surely attends the enjoyment of our wishes.—Youth, cheerfulness, and pleasing expectations, unite to brighten the scene, and afford the happy pair an unclouded prospect.

*Lord Tyrawley* continued his visits; and the better to enable me to entertain him in the stile which duty and respect dictated, he generally divided the contents of his purse with me whenever he came. Being, therefore, through his Lordship's generosity, and the advantages she reaped from the disposal of her linen, in no want of money, my mother had not as yet sent to the theatre for any part of my salary; which she had concluded to have been settled at ten pounds a week. But having now an occasion to make a remittance to Ireland, she wrote to the treasurer to desire he would let her have what was due. Instead, however, of sending the sum she had calculated to be owing to me, she received only half as much.

Enraged at this duplicity, she laid her commands upon me not to play any more. Indeed, she was not displeas'd at the excuse that now presented itself of breaking off my theatrical engagements. On the contrary, she  
she

she was glad of the opportunity that offered of effecting her darling scheme, that of uniting me to *Mr. Crump*. She accordingly sent back the money; and my pride assisting her views, she now made sure of bringing her long-wished-for project to bear. *Miss O'Hara*, who was perfectly well acquainted with my sentiments on the subject, endeavoured, by every argument in her power, to dissuade her from pursuing a plan to which I was so inflexibly averse. But her endeavours were ineffectual. My mother continued as resolute as her daughter; though I unfortunately found means to frustrate her intentions.

As the regard *Mr. Metham* and myself entertained for each other, had now attained such a pitch, that I considered him as my future husband, I made no scruple to accept the presents he was continually offering me. These past unobserved by my mother, who concluded that what money I had, was the consequence of my Lord's affection, which seemed daily to increase. The eye of envy, however, would not suffer so suspicious a circumstance to pass unnoticed; nor was so favourable a construction put upon my apparent affluence, by my two theatrical companions, *Mrs. Woffington* and *Mrs. Ward*. Being unwilling to account for the elegance of my dress, by imputing it, as my mother had done, to an allowable source, they thought it could only proceed from my

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having

having formed an unallowable connection with *Mr. Metham*. Taking this for granted, they did not hesitate to mention it as an affair that was absolutely settled. I did not, indeed, hear of this scandal, at the time it was propagated by these censorious ladies, at the theatre, having no intimacy with any person belonging to it, except *Mr. Quin*, *Mr. Rich's* family, and *Mrs. Ridout*. This amiable woman, I must stop to tell you, fell a victim to her fondness for her husband, whose loss she could not outlive; and I never reflect on her untimely death, without bestowing a sigh on her virtues.

Had I heard of these aspersions, conscious of my innocence, I should have treated them with the contempt they deserved; but, as I have just said, from my having so little communication with the people belonging to the theatre, I was not at that time made acquainted with them. *Mrs. Woffington*, however, notwithstanding she had propagated this scandalous report, reflecting that my quitting the theatre, particularly as the benefits were coming on, would prove an essential detriment to the whole company, she sent *Mr. Swyny* to me, in order to prevail on me to relinquish my intention. This gentleman had attached himself to her as a warm friend. And he gave her a substantial proof of his regard, by leaving her the bulk of his fortune at his decease. But though  
this

this lady's ambaffador urged her fuit with all his rhetoric, I would not come to any determination relative to it, till I had confulted *Mr. Quin* on the fubject, agreeable to the refolution I had lately formed.

As foon as I fent to this beft of friends, he came to me; and upon talking over the affair, he judged it moft prudent for me to continue my attendance at the theatre during the prefent feafon, as it was now drawing near a conclufion. Among other reafons he obferved, that as I was in all the pieces commanded, on every Thursday night, by the *Prince* and *Princess* of *Wales*, and had been honoured with diftinguifhed marks of approbation from their Royal Highneffes, as well as the public, he thought no pecuniary motive fhould induce me to decline playing during the remainder of the feafon. Giving up my refentment, therefore, to the opinion of fo good a judge, and fo fincere a friend, I continued to perform as ufual, without coming to an open rupture with the proprietor on account of his duplicity.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XXXV.

July 21, 17—.

THE same evening, when *Lord Tyrawley* came to sup with me as usual, I informed him of the ill treatment I had received. His Lordship seemed displeas'd that I did not carry my first resolution of quitting the theatre into execution. Notwithstanding his Lordship was reconcil'd to me, and he still continued to live at such an expence as to involve himself annually, although in receipt of immense sums from his employments and commission, I could not help observing that he made no offer of furnishing me with a provision adequate to the emoluments I reaped from my profession. As I consider'd the affront I had received from the proprietor, of the highest magnitude to my theatrical consequence, I own I was much surpriz'd at his being so lukewarm upon the occasion.

A few minutes, however, explain'd the mystery. For looking kindly at me, his Lordship said, "Pop! you do not love me so well as you did even some few weeks ago." Struck at the truth of the accusation, a conscious blush spread itself over my face, and I remained silent. "Why do you not speak?" continued he. "If your heart is engag'd to a proper object, I will give



“ give him your hand. I flattered myself  
“ indeed, that your affection for me was so  
“ unbounded, that you would have left the  
“ choice to me.”

This alone could have restored to me the power of speech. *Mr. Crump's* letter seemed now to be fully explained ; and the dash appeared to have been substituted in the room of *Lord Tyraswley's* name. I told his Lordship, that as nothing should tempt me to lose sight of sincerity, I would freely acknowledge to him, that though I loved and revered him much, I felt a strong presentiment in favour of another. But unless his Lordship would give me time to examine into the real state of my heart, I must beg to be excused from making him acquainted with the name of the person.

His Lordship having heard of the adventure of the chair and the note, already related, and having been likewise informed that *Mr. Bullock's* father had sworn that he never would see or speak to his son again, if he married me ; and considering, likewise, that he himself could not offer a fortune with me sufficient to mollify the old gentleman ; his Lordship (for the first time I ever heard him swear, although a soldier) told me with an oath, that he already knew the person, and that I might rest assured he never would consent to an union with him.

The addressees I had some time back received from *Mr. Bullock*, who had been ordered by his father, immediately on their discovery, to return to college, not recurring to my mind, I concluded it was *Mr. Metham* his Lordship was thus exasperated against. I was consequently thunderstruck. His Lordship continued in an ill humour during the remainder of his stay; and it was the first time I ever felt a pleasure at our separation.

The next morning, I acquainted *Mr. Metham*, by letter, that I was very unhappy at something which had happened, but did not explain myself. This opposition of his Lordship to the person I esteemed, (for to him I supposed it, by mistake, to be intended) endeared him to me a thousand times, if possible, more than he had already been. And what was before only a transient quiet partiality, now became a violent impetuous affection. A heart engaged in such a sweet, such a bewitching entanglement as mine was, could not bear controul. Opposition, I now perceived, but added fuel to the flame. And however great my respect for *Lord Tyraveley* might have been, it was not to be set in competition with claims of a tenderer nature.

My benefit was now to take place in a few days; and the three preceding nights I was to perform for those of *Mr. Quin*, *Mrs. Woffington*, and *Mr. Ryan*. The former chose  
for

for his benefit, the very play in which I had been deprived, during my emigration to Ireland, as already mentioned, of my regalia. Here *Mrs. Woffington* was, as her right, adorned with it, and appeared *most characteristically* as the enchantress of all hearts. Her beauty (for I must give every one their due) beggared all description. I appeared again in white fatten; not indeed, as I had then *improperly* done, as Antony's favourite mistress, but as his rejected wife.

The *Duchess of Queensberry* being at *Mr. Quin's* benefit, her partiality for me shewed itself in a more flattering light than it had done on a former occasion. At the conclusion of the piece, she desired me to secure her boxes for my own benefit. As I could not suppose that her Grace intended to interest herself so strenuously in my behalf, as she had before; and as I was now, by experience, become acquainted with the whimsicalness of her Grace's disposition; I was at a loss what number to set down for her. I thought it, therefore, better to leave it to chance, than to run the risk of offending her.

Her Grace having expressed a desire of being admitted into the green-room, which she had been informed was superior to a drawing-room, for the wit and politeness to be met with there, I begged leave to have the honour to attend her Grace to it, after the performance was over. This offer she  
was

was pleased to accept. Accordingly, as soon as my part of Octavia was concluded, which was in the fourth act, without staying to undress, to shew my readiness to obey her Grace's commands, I threw a cloak around me, and went into the stage-box where her Grace was, and placed myself, as she directed, behind her.

My being seated in so conspicuous a point of view, behind a lady who was looked up to as one of the first characters in the kingdom, as well for her extraordinary qualities, as for her title, attracted the attention of the whole house. *Mr. Quin*, as he afterwards informed me, notwithstanding he well knew her Grace's partiality for me, never experienced a more agreeable surprize than when he saw me thus situated. It is necessary you should know that her Grace was at this time disgusted with the court, upon account of her favourite, *Gay*.

Upon her Grace's quitting the box, there was an universal applause; which would have sent her home in great good humour (for she was still fond of these tokens of public approbation) had not the ensuing scene, to which her curiosity led her, justly given her Grace offence. Having ushered the Duchesse behind the scenes, upon my opening the green-room door, such a scene presented itself as I had never been witness to before. As it was usual for many persons of the first  
rank

rank to meet in the green-room after the play, and amuse themselves with playing at *Woman or Head*, against the chimney-piece, at which thousands were sometimes won and lost in an evening, I expected to find that the performers had retired, and that none but quality were there. Instead of which the first thing that struck our view was the *Fair Egyptian Queen*, with a pot of porter in her hand, crying out, "Confusion to all order. Let liberty thrive." The table was furrounded by suitable company, and covered with mutton pies.

The Duchefs had entered with the greatest good humour impressed on her countenance, and all the dignity annexed to her high station.—Judge then what her Grace's feelings must be at beholding such a contrast to what she had been taught to expect; such a specimen of green-room wit and politeness. She stood for some moments in a state of amazement. Nor was her introducers in a less unpleasant situation. At length recovering herself a little, she exclaimed, "Is hell broke loose?" Then turning about, she hurried to her chair, to appearance more dead than alive. As her Grace left me, she gave me a strict injunction not to return back to that room, and to be with her the next morning. Could any thing have happened more mal-a-propos; or have given her Grace so

so disgusting an idea of the inside of a theatre?

The following day, the Duchefs received me with civility, but at the same time there was a something in her manner that was by no means pleasing.—Softness and delicacy ought to be the distinguishing characteristics of the female sex.—And these qualities have been sometimes happily blended in minds, with Roman fortitude and Amazonian courage.—Without them, the most brilliant qualifications lose their most attractive graces.—Her Grace enquired whether I lived with the actors? A question which seemed to imply, that she considered actors and actresses in no better light than gypsies; and that we were only separated from each other in our most retired hours, by a blanket. I however endeavoured to convince her Grace, that those who trod the stage held the mirror of virtue, and whilst they entertained, furnished the mind with instructions; being in every respect very different from those impostors who played upon the weaker part of mankind.

Her Grace smiled at these distinctions, and thus retorted on me: “Why really  
“ by what I saw last night, I should ima-  
“ gine that if there is any difference, it lies  
“ in favour of the Norwood Diviners.” From this decision against us, I found that my as-  
sertion

fections had made but very little impression on her Grace's mind; and I was obliged to give up the cause I had undertaken. Indeed I could not pretend to excuse the *levity* which had given her Grace too much reason to establish such a conjecture. I cannot however miss the opportunity this incident offers to observe, how cautious every woman ought to be, not to give the least appearance of offence to decency. And could wish to recommend the following lines to my own sex, requesting, at the same time, that they would impress them strongly on their memory, and join them with their daily oraisons.

Come *Decency*, celestial maid,

Descend from heaven to beauty's aid.

My friend and adviser, *Mr. Quin*, fixed upon "The Double Dealer," for my benefit. A play replete with wit, and not *unexceptionable* for its levity, to call it by no harsher name. The same patronesses; however, who had honoured me with their presence at my first benefit, and who were esteemed the brightest patterns of virtue in the whole kingdom, graced the boxes that night. So flattering a proof of distinction gave me the greatest pleasure. And the more so, as *Lord Tyravley* seemed for the *first time* to enjoy so singular a mark of public approbation.

The emoluments which accrued from my benefit were not so considerable as those of my preceding night. For this there appeared two evident reasons. The first was, that those who encouraged me whilst I was considered as a young performer, did not think their assistance so necessary now I was established, especially as I had since found a protector in *Lord Tyravley*. The second was, that the gentlemen were kept at a distance by a belief that *Mr. Metham* was a favoured lover. It is true his Lordship afforded me some pecuniary assistance; but as for any other, he wore a short sword very quietly by his side, except when called upon to draw it in defence of his King and country. And as to the latter, appearances are not always to be trusted to.

I am now about to recall to my memory, the first step I have reason to look back upon with real regret. For although some of the past scenes of my life may be deemed imprudent, and led me into many inconveniencies, yet no lasting bad effects flowed from them, and the scandal which attended them was unmerited and transient.—Would I could say the same of that which is to furnish a subject for my next letter.—But I will not anticipate.—The corrosive reflections due to my errors will arise fast enough as I proceed.

G. A. B.

LETTER



## L E T T E R    X X X V I .

Aug. 2, 17—.

A FEW nights after my benefit, *Lord Tyrasley* came into the room smiling, and said, with pleasure sparkling in his eyes, “Pop, I have got you a husband!” I replied, “I hope then my Lord you have “found out my choice.” I had no sooner said this, than his Lordship’s countenance was in an instant clouded. And after a pause (not like a pause in musick, when art can reach to no higher a pitch of harmony; it was rather a pause productive of a crash of discord) his Lordship assumed just such a look as I suppose he should have done if he had been about to face an enemy. He then threw a letter upon the table with the air of a Bajazet; saying at the same time, “There, “read that.—I have given my word, which “I will not break for you nor the whole “world; therefore no trifling; *for I will “be obeyed.*” Having pronounced this dreadful sentence, he hopped off as fast as he could to his chair, leaving me to read the letter at my leisure.

Had his Lordship insisted in the same authoritative manner upon my taking the man of my choice, I believe in my heart I should have refused him. My temper could never brook compulsion. And though no-

person can more approve of obedience and subordination, in all cases where it is due, than myself; yet were not the orders for the observance of these to be issued *in gentle terms*, I should certainly act retrograde to them.

The letter his Lordship threw on the table was from *Crump*. By the tenor of which I found that every thing was settled relative to my marriage with him, before his Lordship left Dublin. He therein further informs my Lord, that he was to be in town the next evening, and intended himself the honour of meeting his Lordship at my apartments in Tavistock-street. He adds, that he had delivered his Lordship's letter to *Captain Johnson*, who said he was much concerned to lose his Lordship's agency, but the occasion was a sufficient excuse.

At first I was going to wish my mother joy of the success of her scheme; but on consideration, I thought it better to say nothing about it till I had acquainted *Mr. Metham* with it. I accordingly sat down with a mind agitated with indignation, instead of its being depressed with grief; and wrote him a letter from which he could have no room to doubt his being the entire master of my affections. 'Tis true I had already given him reason to believe this, by admitting his addresses as I had done; but I never before acknowledged to him the real state of my heart.

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The alternate joy and grief which my letter occasioned in his mind, robbed him for a time, as he has since informed me, of recollection. Till at length his anger was aroused at the thoughts of my being treated with so much indignity. For my own part, the resentment I felt prevented tears from flowing, as they otherwise would have done. My face was therefore properly enlightened with that spirit of disdain which was suited to the character of Lady Fanciful in "The Provoked Wife," which I was to play the same evening. And the presence of *Mr. Crump* in the front row of the pit, who was the first object that struck my eyes, proved an additional incitement towards keeping my anger alive.

Poor *Metham* stood behind the scenes, though naturally too florid for a fine gentleman, as pale and dejected as if he had been the disappointed lover instead of the favoured one. The person who performed the part of Lady Brute, and who had before made observations on our conduct, attributed this dejection to some love quarrel, especially as he did not follow me as usual into the green-room.

We are now arrived at the most important crisis of my fate: The moment which was to determine the tenor of my future life. The die was to be thrown, and my happiness to be the stake.—My heart flutters at

the recollection.—But I will endeavour to still it, and proceed.—At the beginning of the fifth act, as I was crossing the back of the scenes, in order to go on the stage from the opposite side, *Mr. Metham* met me, and conjured me to let him speak one word with me *in the hall*. As the prompter never rings the bell for the musick to cease till he sees all those who are to begin the act ready to go on, I complied for a moment with his request. But I was no sooner got without the door, than he caught me up in his arms, and hurrying through the passage, placed me in a coach that his valet had ready to receive me.

At first I was so surpris'd at the unexpected *enlevement*, that I could not recollect myself. And when my scattered senses resumed their powers, I candidly acknowledge, that my love for the dear youth was so well established, that I was neither sorry nor offended at the step he had taken. But the mind of my enamour'd *Strephon* was agitated by other sensations. He was so apprehensive of incurring my displeasure by such a desperate mode of proceeding, that the florid colour which usually glowed on his cheeks now entirely forsook them. Finding me, however, not so displeas'd as he expected, the apprehensions that had chilled his blood, gave way to warmer ideas, and more agreeable agitations.

The

The coach soon set us down at a ready furnished house in Leicester-street, Leicester-fields; where I was immediately supplied with necessary apparel by *Mrs. Studwick*, the mistress of it.—The audience at the theatre, as I afterwards learnt, being out of all patience at so unusual a continuation of the musick, made the noise they generally do upon such occasions. This called *Mr. Quin* from his dressing-room, which lay contiguous to the stage, to enquire the reason of it. Lady Fanciful was repeatedly called, but no Lady Fanciful answered.—It was now found that a real rape (if a running away with, where there is no resistance, might be so termed) had interrupted the progress of the play. Nothing remained to be done, but to acquaint the house with what had unexpectedly happened. *Mr. Quin* accordingly, in the character of Sir John Brute which he was performing, made an apology to the audience, by informing them, that he was come to beg their excuse for the fantastical girl of quality, whose company they would unfortunately be disappointed of at the conclusion of the piece, as she had left Heart-free, upon finding an admirer\* *that was made on purpose for her.*

\* Alluding to what Lady Fanciful says in the 1st scene.

Terror, love, and resentment, which ruled by turns in my heart, banished reflection for some time. But it soon returned with accumulated force. One moment I blamed myself for yielding to the ardour of my lover, and the impulse of my affection; the next I was angry with myself for suffering the least doubt of his honour to interrupt my present delirium. I now was become a topic for numberless paragraphs in the public prints. But *Mrs. Woffington*, as I have already informed you, through her good wishes to me, had anticipated that surprise which the event would otherwise have occasioned.

An attempt to gain the forgiveness of *Lord Tyrawley*, would have been attended with as great a prospect of success, as to remove the Colossus from Rhodes to a distant country, at the time it was standing. His Lordship, who had still an eye for beauty, had enlisted under the banner of the lady just mentioned. A circumstance that seemed likely to render a reconciliation the less attainable.

Some doubts being now cleared away, which *Mr. Metham* had harboured with respect to my regard for him, his fondness for me was carried to the most extravagant pitch. He introduced me to his sister, *Mrs. Dives*, and to all his friends; and from the tender respect he shewed me, joined to the most unremitted attention, every one seemed convinced

convinced that he intended to make me his wife.

My mother, from being one of the *pure ones*, had changed her religion to that of a *methodist*; and being regenerated, was become too immaculate for me to hope that my error would meet with pardon from her. I wrote to *Miss O'Hara*, who immediately brought me my cloaths and ornaments. But my mother thinking I should have no occasion for money, now I had chosen a protector for myself, very prudently kept that to console herself with, during my absence. I was in hopes that gaining me a father-in-law, would have been a consequence of my elopement; but *Mr. Crump*, I found, returned to Ireland without a wife; and *Captain Johnson* still continued to act as agent to *Lord Tyrrawley*.

*Mr. Quin* had always been averse to the proposal made me by my Lord of marrying *Crump*; but his Lordship, judging from his own disposition and conduct, of his motive, had told him, that he supposed his opposition proceeded from his being interested; which silenced this best of friends, and prevented his ever after renewing the topic. He wrote to me, indeed, and informed me, that though he could not at present wait on me, in compliment to his Lordship, he would pay me a visit in the summer, when he supposed we should go into Yorkshire.

My beloved acquaintance, *Miss St. Leger*,

*Leger*, was now oftener with me than ever; she being privately courted by *Major Burton*, *Mr. Metham's* most intimate friend. This lady favoured me with her company and countenance the more readily, as the Major had assured her that his friend fully intended to marry me. An assurance which quieted my apprehensions relative to that wished for event, for the present. And the high opinion I had of *Mr. Metham's* honour, confirmed my hopes. But unfortunately for us both, I was not acquainted with his caprice.—The woman who trusts her fame to the honour of a man, has not only the chances arising from satiety against her, but she has likewise much to fear from his *fickleness of disposition*; a foible natural to nine tenths of the sex. And when to these is added the fear of that ridicule and contempt which custom has annexed to a *post-marriage* (if I may so term it) the probability is much against her ever finding the honour she trusted to, genuine. “At lovers perjuries, they say, Jove laughs,” says the great dramatic developer of human nature, supposing the belief of the axiom to be universally established. And if the vows of lovers are not, at the time, made with this reservation; satiety, caprice, or shame, whisper the unfettered swain to take advantage of it.—Exceptions, I believe, there are; but these, I fear, will be found to be but few.

G. A. B.

L. E. T. T. E. R.



## L E T T E R   X X X V I I .

August 15, 17—.

I N a short time we went to York. Here *Mr. Metham* took an elegant house of *Mr. Strickland*. The reason of this gentleman's leaving it was on account of his having just lost his lady, and with her a good estate. His affection not suffering her to be waked during her illness, to sign some deed which was necessary, an estate that belonged to her went away at her decease. This determined him to go abroad, to lament the loss he had sustained.

The garden wall of our new house joined to a monastery; and the ground on which the house and garden stood, had formerly belonged to it. This was a great object to me, and I soon found it a source of great comfort. For though my lover's fondness was unabated, his numberless friends, and likewise his father, who lived forty miles from the city in which we resided, claimed so much of his company, that I had very little of it. Being a keen sportsman, he was also very intimate with *Lord Downe*. So that, except during the race week, I scarcely saw any human being but the servants.

I therefore esteemed myself exceedingly fortunate, in commencing an acquaintance with the chaplain of the adjacent seminary.

This

This gentleman I found to be an honour to the sacerdotal function. For learning and good sense, there were very few who exceeded him. And he preferred the quiet of the retirement he was now situated in, to any preferment he could attain in the busy world. To his kind instructions was I indebted for a return of those sentiments I had early imbibed in my loved cloister at Boulogne.—Sentiments replete with peace and satisfaction.—*Religion* is the only rock on which the wearied restless mind can safely anchor, amidst the impetuous billows of this fluctuating life.—If, now and then, the gentle breath of Zephyrus wafts us towards the wished-for shore, the prosperous gale is but short-lived, and soon dies away. The ruder and more lasting blasts of Boreas succeed, and drive the unmanageable bark into all the dangers of the tempestuous deep.

The ladies belonging to the seminary, at first objected to my visits, as my character was doubtful ; but when I informed *Mr. Blunt*, which was the name of the chaplain, that I had not the least doubt but that *Mr. Metham's* honour, which had never been questioned, and his affection for me, would induce him to make me honourable amends for the disgraceful cloud in which he had for the present shrouded me, I readily procured admittance among them. I could have added, that a more forcible inducement for the  
performance

performance of his promise, was about to take place, than even either of these; and that was the probability of my presenting him with his *picture in miniature*; an event that he expressed the most earnest desire of seeing accomplished.

The acquaintance I thus formed with this society, soon increased to a cordial intimacy. The ladies joined to an exemplary piety, a cheerfulness which is always a sure attendant on innocence and virtue; and their company soon became a source of happiness to me, which compensated, in some degree, for the long absence of the man I loved. *In some degree*, I say; for though prudery and affectation may wish to throw a veil over our passions, I must candidly acknowledge, that to a soul dissolved by that sweet, and as yet, unalloyed intercourse, that fervent love, which subsisted between *Metham* and myself, every other enjoyment afforded but a substituted satisfaction, and would not stand in competition with it.

Upon the terrace of our garden, there remained a door which led into that of the convent. This door, with the consent of the community, I ordered to be opened; which procured me the happiness of two or three of the ladies company, attended by the old gentleman, (who, with the wisdom of age, still retained the good humour and sprightliness of youth) as often as a due attendance

to the concerns of my family would admit; and whenever *Mr. Metham's* absence rendered some companions needful.

These absences now became more frequent than usual; the *Marquis of Rockingham*, the *Earls of Burlington* and *Scarborough*, and *Lord Downe*, sharing his visits by turns. *Growse* shooting claimed his attention in Autumn, and hunting in winter. So that during the seven months we resided in *Trinity-lane, York*, I may with safety affirm, that he was not at home for seven weeks, put his returns all together. It is true, he wrote me constantly during his absences, and his letters glowed with affection and sincerity; but I could not help at last remarking, that they bordered too much on adulation.

I must here, by way of relief to the rapid continuation of my tale, entertain you with a droll circumstance, which happened in the race week, and into which I was led by the remains of my natural vanity. A nobleman, who had a horse to run for the plate at *York* races, was at our house for some days. As his Lordship was intitled by his rank to the seat of honour, he of course, during dinner, sat at my right hand. But I could not help observing, that his eye was constantly and steadily fixed upon me. I took little notice of it at first, thinking it was occasioned by the attractive power of my charms, and that good manners would in time induce his  
Lordship

Lordship to behave with more decorum. Seeing, however, that my face was still the chief object to which his eye was directed, I grew much disconcerted and abashed. But having, at length, recovered from the little prudery I had contracted in Ireland, I complained to *Mr. Metham* of the rudeness of his friend. He could not avoid smiling whilst I made my complaint; and, as a perfect acquittal of his Lordship from any design to offend me, he informed me, that the eye which had been always so steadily fixed upon me, and excited my alarms, was only an innocent *glass* eye, and therefore could not convey any improper information; as it was immoveable all day, and rested at night very quietly upon the table. My vanity received a check by the incident, and I joined in the laugh which it had occasioned.

On the sixth of December I was taken so ill, that the nurse, who had been some time with me, declared it to be my labour. *Mr. Metham* was then at Ferry-bridge, but was immediately sent for. On his return, he insisted upon sending for a man-midwife; but this I would by no means agree to. My false modesty here visited me a second time. And, as at first, it had prevented me from clearing up my reputation after being carried off by the *Earl of ——*, so now it had like to have cost me my life. For the apprehensions arising from my delicacy,

prompted me to smother my pains, till my life was in danger; which in the end brought on a forced labour, and obliged me to have recourse to that assistance I had strove to avoid.

It is a matter of great surprize to me, that as female practitioners in midwifery are in general inexpert, women defer having an *accoucheur*, till necessity obliges him to be called in. Those who, out of a mistaken modesty, do this, not only risk the lives of themselves and infants, but, if difficulties render it necessary that a doctor should be called in, are informed by it of their danger, at a time when no addition ought to be made to their terror. And if, through their continued obstinacy, their lives should be lost, they are, in my opinion, guilty of self-murder.

The eleventh day of my illness, my ever regretted *George Metham* first saw the light; and, I may truly say, *blest* me, in making me the mother of a man child; as his loss afterwards not only deprived me of a good child, but of a sincere and affectionate friend; and had death spared him, he would now, I doubt not, have made my old age comfortable.

*Mr. Metham* was like a distracted man till I was pronounced to be out of danger. He had wrote to my mother to intreat her to come to York on account of my illness; which,

which, to our mutual surprize, she consented to. And to her presence I attribute, in a great measure, my recovering so soon as I did. After her arrival, she never let my lover have a moment's peace, whenever they were together, till he promised to make me his wife. And as he was a man of unblemished honour, she rested perfectly satisfied with this declaration, and was reconciled to me.

She now transferred all her attention and tenderness to my little boy. Of this she gave a most striking proof, by suffering him to sleep in the same bed with her, when he had taken the small-pox, notwithstanding she had never had that dreadful disorder, and was very apprehensive of it. As the nurse that suckled her little grandson was young, and consequently inclined to heaviness, she took this affectionate step to prevent any disagreeable consequences that might arise from her negligence.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

August 24, 17—.

**A**BOUT this time I received a letter from *Mr. Quin*, apologizing for not having kept his promise in paying me a visit during  
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the summer. He at the same time informed me, that although it was so late in the season, he desired I would make all possible haste to London, as he had obtained an engagement for me, which would compensate for *Mr. Rick's* behaviour the preceding winter. He told me that the proprietor had agreed to give me eight guineas a week, with a free benefit; and that my salary was to commence from the opening of the house.

*Mr. Metham*, who had stayed at home from the beginning of my illness, began now to find York very dull. He therefore languished to be in London; and wished me to accept of the offer. I made use of all the arguments in my power, to prevail on him to suffer me to remain in a retirement where I was so happy; and where we could live genteely upon the most reasonable terms. Though till our settling at York, I had never been accustomed to the management of a family, I had applied with so much industry to acquire a knowledge of it, and was become such an œconomist, that our weekly expences did not exceed three guineas.

But neither the reasons I could urge, nor even that power I once flattered myself I had acquired over his heart, could now avail. Fortunate would it have been for us both had I succeeded. But fate decreed it otherwise. And I was reserved to suffer calamities, of which had it been possible for  
me



me to have acquired a foreknowledge, the very apprehension would have broken my heart; and prevented the completion of them.—Happy is it for mortals that they are not endowed with a prescience of their future destiny.—The prospect in general would prove so gloomy, that it would make them wish for their dissolution, and too often tempt them to precipitate it.—Small evils would be magnified, by being viewed through the alarming perspective, to insurmountable ones; and every pleasure lost in the succeeding pain.—We are therefore truly blest in this ignorance.

We did not set off for town till the beginning of February, having been prevented by my weakness from undertaking the journey before. And the waters happening to be out as we proceeded, this gave me some further time to recover strength. On our arrival we went to a ready-furnished house in Lisle-street, Leicester-fields, which had been taken for us; where I found two or three notes from *Mr. Quin*, who had expected me for several days. Soon after we were set down, I sent to inform him that I was arrived, and he immediately answered my message in person.

When congratulations were over, he said, it was with the most singular pleasure he could inform me, that since my return to the stage had been publickly announced,  
there

there had been continual enquiries about me, and the boxes taken for many nights. He added, that he was concerned he had made the agreement for me, though he thought it a good one *at the time*. But the eager desire of the public to see me, gave him reason to think that had he not engaged his word, I might have made my own terms. He further acquainted me that *Lord Tyravley* was gone to Ireland.

This intelligence relative to his Lordship gave me pleasure, as I was sensible that there was but little probability of my obtaining his forgiveness. Especially as he had lately declared to *Mr. Quin*, that if *Metham* married me, he would never be reconciled to *him*, though he would not say he could totally forget *me*. As I was no stranger to his Lordship's inflexibility, I was the less anxious about him.

Steadiness of disposition is certainly a commendable virtue.—And on the contrary, instability is the greatest weakness of human nature.—Having maturely weighed the tendency and propriety of any determination, if it be agreeable to that rectitude we ought never to lose sight of, no inducement whatever, when it is once made, should prevail on us to deviate from it.

By adhering to this exalted magnanimity, the heroes of Sparta and Rome immortalized their names; whilst the great men of Egypt  
and

and Asia acquired but little glory through their slothful instability.—That these are the real sentiments of my mind, I have evinced upon many occasions. This firmness has been even productive of all the wants I have experienced. I, however, can most solemnly affirm, that I never regretted my perseverance in a resolution which some years after deprived me at once of all the elegances of life; of respect; of envy upon account of my supposed happy situation; and, likewise, of something more than common praise from those who honoured me with their intimacy.—Judging of my veracity from the frankness with which I acknowledge my errors, I flatter myself you will favour me with your belief of this assertion.

This topic of *perseverance* brings to my memory a conversation which once passed between the *Honourable Charles Townsend* and myself on the subject. And which for the sake of the singular anecdote it contains, I shall beg leave to repeat here: That gentleman regretting *his* want of stability, he told me it was happy for the country I lived in, that my mind was not inclined to mischief; for if it was, I might prove as dangerous a member of society as the once admired *Comtesse de ———*, who was put to the torture on the Grieve at Lyons, for poisoning her *eldest* son, that the *younger*, for whom she had a greater

a greater affection, may inherit the family title and estates.

Being seated in a chair at the place of execution, whilst her son was put to the rack, to extort a confession from him, she bore the torments of her darling child with such amazing fortitude and composure, that the spectators not only thought her guiltless, but in all probability would have canonized her; had not the son at last pleaded guilty. Having done this, he was taken from the rack and placed close by his mother, till he should be so far recovered as to be able to relate the particulars of their crime. When, to the astonishment and terror of the surrounding multitude, the Comtesse drew a knife which she had secreted, and stuck it into the heart of her child; saying at the same time, with an audible voice and unaltered countenance, “\**Meurs, fils! indigne d'une telle mere!*” So great was the general consternation at this sudden and resolute act, that the executioner had not presence of mind sufficient to prevent her from plunging the same weapon, which was reeking with the blood of her favourite boy, into her own bosom.—The relation of this story filled my mind with horror. Nor was I very well pleased with the application of it; as I was conscious, that however de-

\* Die, son, unworthy of such a mother.

terminated I usually was in a good cause, my disposition was so humane, that I would not willingly hurt a fly.

When I made my appearance at the theatre, my success was greater than even my most sanguine hopes, or *Mr. Quin's* conversation, gave me reason to expect. This caused the beautiful *Mrs. Woffington* to burst with envy, as she had now left the sock for the buskin.

My being obliged to play so often, before I was perfectly recovered from my late indisposition, so much affected my health, that I was pronounced to be in what is usually termed a galloping consumption. *Mr. Quin* having a great partiality for *Doctor Thompson*, to him I had recourse for advice. This son of *Æsculapius* obtained a knowledge of the science of physic by intuition; and though he had not received the assistance of a regular education, his practice was attended with very great success. This was the more mortifying to the regular bred professors.

*Doctor Thompson's* was an eccentric character, but a pleasing one. His oddities rendered him somewhat similar to that of *Sterne's* uncle Toby, only their hobby-horses were of a different nature. The singularity of his disposition, joined to the opinion he entertained of his skill, induced the great *Mr. Winnington* to give him an invitation to live in the house with him; which added

not

not a little to the illiberal abuse, and scurrilous denominations, that were bestowed upon him. *Doctor Thompson*, however, in a short time restored me to health, and *Mr. Metham* to his senses, who had been almost distracted, and continually reproaching himself as the cause of my indisposition, by persuading me, against my inclination, to come to town.

*Mr. Quin* had for some time entertained a dislike to *Mrs. Woffington*, which now increased, as I no longer fought her battles with him. And upon his refusing to grant a request at her benefit, which he thought unreasonable, she was illiberal enough to say something disrespectful of his mother; who had been many years in the grave. The old gentleman, irritated by so unwarrantable an attack, told her in the public green-room, that it would be wronging the ashes of the dead to call her *Sarah Malcomb*. All the gentlemen present, even her own admirers, laughed at the appellation bestowed upon her; for, from a person so famed for wit as *Mr. Quin*, every trifle passes as such, and is supposed deserving of a laugh. Stamp but the effigy of a prince upon *lead*, and it passes current.

*Mrs. Woffington*, besides her allowed beauty and figure, had certainly a strong natural unedrstanding; but it was uncultivated. She seemed to build her fame for wit upon what

is vulgarly called *Blackguardism*. Having given offence to *Mr. Quin*, she was led to believe that he would prove an inveterate enemy to her. A superficial knowledge of that great and good man might lead a person into such an error; but a more intimate acquaintance with his disposition would convince them that he was incapable of rancour. His sentiments, though hid under the rough manner he had assumed, would have done honour to his own *Cato*; for, by all accounts, he exceeded the original\*.

By an attention to the *actions* of a man can we alone judge of his real character.—Under a stern countenance and morose manners, is often found, as in the instance before us, a benevolent, humane, and honest heart.—Whilst the smile, the bow, the squeeze by the hand, the ready promise, and all the grimace of affected courtesy, too frequently conceal the dark, designing, avaricious, unfeeling villain.—But however pleasing the more specious demeanour of the latter may be, one ounce of the plain sincerity of the former (to make use of a proverbial phrase) is worth a pound of it.

The situation of *Mrs. Woffington* being rendered uneasy, by the jealousy of her lover at home, and the anxiety of the one abroad;

\* Mr. Booth, to whom each party, wishing to have him of their side, made uncommon presents.

and at the theatre by the envy of her own mean mind, and her disappointment from Melpomene's refusal to admit her as a favourite; she took dudgeon, and set off for Dublin; where her beauty alone would insure her success.

G. A. B.

LETTER XXXIX.

Aug. 31, 17—

**A**T the approach of my benefit, I received a card from *Miss Conway* desiring me to attend at Leicester-house the next day, as their Royal Highnesses the *Prince* and *Princess of Wales* intended me the honour of a command upon my night. So flattering a distinction, you may be assured, was highly pleasing to me; and I was happy in obeying the mandate.

Whilst I was there, I was witness to a mark of the most distinguished *innate* good breeding I ever saw. Her Grace the *Duchess of Chandos* had been lately introduced at court. This lady was beautiful to a degree; but as the Duke had elevated her from the lowest obscurity to his bed and title, no great expectations were to be formed of her politeness or accomplishments. But natural endowments sometimes atone for the want of these; of which this instance is  
a proof.



a proof. The sun happened to shine full upon her Royal Highness, and appeared to be rather troublesome. Upon which, the Duchess, with a grace which would have done honour to a lady born and bred in a court, crossed the drawing-room, with the greatest ease let down the lattice, and returned to her place.----The considerateness of the thought, and the elegance of her Grace's manner as she carried it into execution, made an impression at the time on my mind, and established in it a favourable opinion of her deportment ever after.

The play chose by their Royal Highnesses, was "The Siege of Damascus;" in which *Mr. Quin* was uncommonly capital in the character of Caled. So much so, indeed, was he, that he seemed actually to enjoy his *prophet's paradise* whilst on earth. Unfortunately for myself, as well as the public, his Royal Highness was taken ill before the night of my benefit arrived, and in a few days expired. The theatre of course was shut up for some time, and the benefits protracted. This occasioned the house to continue open longer than usual.

*Mr. Metham's* love of play grew more violent every day; and my being so much at the theatre, gave him the more frequent opportunities to indulge this propensity, as it prevented him from staying at home. At the conclusion of the season, I retired to a

small house at Knightsbridge, and he went into Yorkshire, where my mother had continued with my little *George*. The *Honourable Mr. Brudenell*, who was an intimate friend of *Mr. Metham's*, was kind enough to supply me with what money I had occasion for during his absence. This was not a very large sum, as I saw but little company, having no acquaintances in town.

But *Mr. Metham* having met with more success at play, during his excursion into the country, than he expected, he came to town sooner than he intended, and took a large house in King-street, St. James's. He then set up an equipage, and lived in a style, that twice his fortune was not adequate to. Our house soon became the resort of all the young people of fashion in town; and as *Mrs. Dives's* family visited me, the ladies with whom I had been acquainted before my connection with *Mr. Metham*, made no objection to renew their visits.

At this period, the famous contested election between *Lord Trentham* and *Sir George Vandeput* was carried on with the greatest party zeal ever known. And a company of French players having come over to exhibit at the little theatre in the Hay market, his Lordship's patronizing them raised a popular clamour against him; and it was made a motive for keeping up the opposition longer than it otherwise would have been. I,

as well as most of my acquaintance, was as anxious for the success of his Lordship, as if the fate of the nation depended upon it. I sent a servant every half hour to the hustings, to enquire how the poll went on; to which an answer was returned me by *Captain Shaftoe*, or some of the gentlemen on the same side of the question. I gave public breakfasts on the occasion. And though, to the best of my knowledge, I had never seen his Lordship, yet I was as warmly interested for him, as if I had been honoured with his friendship.

I must here stop a few minutes, as I usually do when any incident excites reflections in my mind, just to make a few remarks on the party zeal I have been giving an account of.—During a contested election, how many are there whose principles are built upon no wiser a foundation than my own; merely upon accident!—Biassed by interested friends, influenced by popular clamour, or perhaps excited by less substantial reasons, people rush headlong into the contest; and then farewell to reason and moderation. Prejudices are now entertained; intimacies dissolved; and the dearest friends, if they happen to differ in sentiment, know one another no longer.—The colour of a ribbon can give birth to the most uncharitable ideas. The wearer of it, though a perfect stranger, is supposed to possess every bad quality,

quality, and deserving of Bridewell, if not of the flames.—Drunkenness, riot, noise, confusion, maims, wounds, and murder, are too often the consequences of these party feuds.—And all for what? The choice of a person for a representative, who, perhaps, the moment his election is gained, does not care a straw for you or your whole generation; and who, as soon as he enters the doors of St. Stephen's chapel, deserts the very cause you had been so zealous to support.—Zeal, tempered by moderation, is undoubtedly allowable on these occasions; but when carried to extremes, is deserving of censure. ---The foregoing observations, I own, do not well become the pen of a woman; but as my own conduct has given rise to them, and truth cannot come amiss from any pen, I will e'en hazard them.

During the election, the following ludicrous event happened, which I doubt, not, will afford you the same entertainment it did me. *Mr. St. Leger*, the gentleman I mentioned in a former letter, who behaved with such impropriety to me at the theatre, being just returned from his travels, came to pay me a morning visit. With a good understanding, a fine figure, and a handsome face, he had in his manner a good deal of the *coxcomb*, which had received no little addition from his having made the grand tour.

tour. Indeed he was as highly finished as the fine gentleman in Lethe.

As I never enter into any concern that I interest myself in by halves, but pursue it with my whole attention, my impatience one morning carried me to the window, to see if the Mercury I had dispatched to the hustings, was upon his return; when, who should I see at the extremity of the street, but *Mr. St. Leger*, accoutred as the complete fine gentleman. He had on a white furtout, with a crimson cape, a French waistcoat, his hair *en papillote*, a feather in his hat, a couteau de chasse by his side, with a small cane hanging to his button, and attended by two Italian greyhounds.

As he came nearly opposite the house, espying me at the window, he called out to me, "*Bonne nouvelle! Bonne nouvelle!*" A scavenger's cart being close by, the fellows left their employment to look at this phenomenon. When viewing him with great earnestness, one of them cried to the other, "Tom! smoke Mr. Red-heels." *Mr. St. Leger*, who possessed as much personal courage, with proportionable strength, as any man in England, no sooner heard this insult, than stepping to the fellow, he caught him up, and fairly chucked him into his own cart. Having done this, he walked in with a *sang-froid*, that was not to be expected in the coolest mind after such an adventure.

He

He then joined my company, who had been highly entertained by the incident, with the same composure.

After enquiries relative to the election, which possessed the first place in our thoughts, and of our success in which he brought the joyful tidings, *Mr. St. Leger* told us, among other laughable stories, the following adventure, which had befallen him the night before. Being in the front boxes at Drury-lane theatre, he remarked that *Woodward* (having seen him in the Park, as he afterwards found) had dressed a character he appeared in, exactly in the same suit he then had on. Just under him, in the pit, sat a lion,\* (as he expressed himself) with a cauliflower wig on; who being amazed at the similitude, with all the honest simplicity of a citizen, looked first at the actor and then at him, with an expression of astonishment in his countenance, that displeased the travelled gentleman. *St. Leger*, therefore, without any hesitation, told him, that if he turned his head round once more, he would resent it in a manner that should not be very pleasing to him.

The gaping citizen, however, persisting, *St. Leger*, with the same *nonchalance* he had just given us a specimen of in the affair with the dustman, snatched off his pompous wig,

\* A term at that time in vogue for a cit.

and flung it on the stage; saying aloud at the same time, "I give that fellow you see *there*," (pointing to *Woodward*) "leave to take me off; but let me tell you, friend, that no tallow-chandler or soap-boiler shall divert himself at my expence, with impunity." Honest John Bull was much grieved to see his church-going wig treated with so much indignity; and would have resented the affront; but being informed that he had mistaken his man, and that instead of the puppy he had supposed him, from his dress, to be, his antagonist was the *fighting St. Leger*, he very quickly covered his pate with his pocket handkerchief, to the inexpressible entertainment of those around him. And sitting down, waited very patiently till the conclusion of the piece, for the recovery of his wig, which had thus suffered for its master's impertinence.—As soon as the play was over, *Mr. St. Leger* went behind the scenes, with the same unconcern, and taking the actor, who had personated him, kindly by the hand, only said, "Ah *Woodward!* you have been very quick upon me!"

The gaining our election, joined to this gentleman's sallies, which had the appearance of wit, put the whole company into great good humour. To the foregoing story he added a very pleasant account of his travels, and recounted numberless instances  
in

in which he had met with hair-breadth escapes.

From him I learnt that his sister's ill-state of health made it necessary for her to go to the south of France, to which *Lord* and *Lady Doneraile* had accompanied her. This was a great mortification to me, as I really loved her, and had been long honoured with her confidence. I recollected with pleasure our little parties in the attic story of *Lord Doneraile's* house in Soho-square. They were much talked of at the time, and very great interest was made by many men of fashion to *Miss Conway* and myself, to get them admitted to those festive parties.

I had prevailed upon *Miss St. Leger* before she went abroad, to consult *Doctor Thompson*, who had proved successful in restoring me to health, when I was afflicted with the same complaint. But the unfortunate event of *Mr. Winnington's* death, prevented it from being practicable. This great man, during his illness, obstinately persisted in not having any other advice than that of his favourite *Thompson*, lest the regular physicians should refuse to act with him. He at length died: And his death made a very great noise; as from his being a *real patriot*, his loss was a public concern. The physicians made no scruple of charging his death to the ignorance of *Thompson*. This accusation, united with the chagrin occasioned by the decease



of his friend, was too much for his sensibility to bear. They turned his brain. And I had the unhappiness to hear that my restorer had left this envious world to join his patron. An event which gave great joy to the legitimate sons of *Æsculapius*; who had every reason to fear, from his extensive knowledge and unexampled success, (it scarcely having ever failed but in the melancholy instance just mentioned) a considerable decrease in their practice.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R XL.

Sept. 8, 17—.

**T**HE expences which *Mr. Metham* had injudiciously fallen into, involved him not a little, and rendered it necessary for him to revisit York. He had introduced to me an amiable French nobleman, the *Marquis de Vernieul*; and likewise *Madam Brilliant*, one of the performers that came over in the French troop, conducted by *Monsieur Mourat*, which had been treated with so little urbanity by the mobility.

I had now contracted a taste for expence; and without considering that I was not intitled to gratify it equally with the persons  
of

of fashion with whom I was intimate, could not think of curbing the propensity.—So do habits of this nature creep and creep upon us by degrees, till they become too strong for reason and prudence to master. And nothing but the fatal consequences which naturally result from them, can restore the mind to its wonted tone. When the stroke comes, the world takes the alarm; and censures are bestowed upon us from every quarter; without its being considered, that the infatuation has stolen upon us by imperceptible advances, clouded our perception, hoodwinked our judgement, and brought on a total blindness to the common evils.

Without having regard to the expence, I now took a house at Richmond. One inducement was, that *Lord Tyravley* had lately returned to England, and resided at that delightful village. Notwithstanding I well knew his Lordship's inflexibility, as I have already observed; some glimmering hopes would now and then arise in my mind, that the regard he once had for me, would rekindle, and induce him to restore me to his favour. I had the more reason to hope this, as *Mr. Metham* was now absent; and his permitting his two nephews and his niece to live with me, gave the world assurance, that if I was not already his wife, he meant to make me so.

The French players were so reduced from the little encouragement they met with, that they had nothing to subsist on. I therefore set on foot a subscription, and raised a considerable sum for them. But by a chain of disagreeable circumstances, the *Brilliant* was left in the greatest distress. I therefore complimented her with an apartment in my house in town, which she gladly accepted, till she could procure an engagement in some company in her own country.

Soon after my arrival at Richmond, I had the happiness to effect a reconciliation with *Lord Tyrasoley*. And it was fortunate for me that I did so, as his bounty was very needful to me at this time. For notwithstanding my salary, which was a handsome one; the emoluments of my benefit, which were great; and the generosity of *Mr. Metham*, which was unlimited; I frequently found myself without a guinea.

A circumstance far from pleasing to a disposition like mine; to a heart susceptible of no gratification equal to that of relieving the necessities of others.—Of all the pleasures this world can bestow, that of *giving* is certainly the most exquisite and satisfactory. More real happiness results from it, than can enter into the imagination of the selfish. Like Mercy, “it is twice blessed; it blesseth him that gives, and him that takes.”

And if the advantage lies on either side, it is on that of the giver.—I claim however, no merit for the little assistance I have been enabled to bestow on others. It was an impulse of nature that *I could not* resist. It was an impulse of nature that I *wished not* to resist. And though to the present hour I labour under many and great inconveniences from the indulgence of this liberal disposition; instead of regretting it, I bless the *great Giver* that he has favoured me with so large a portion of his own beneficence.

The *Marquis de Vernieul* was lively, though one of the *Academie Royal*. *Lord Tyrzewley*, to whom I introduced him, was much pleased with his company. And my little house in the Vineyard was always crowded. I had with me, besides my own family, the widow of *Mr. Delany*, and *Miss Hilyard*, a daughter of *Lord Frederck Cavendish*, who had made such a proficiency in dancing, that she afterwards appeared, with great eclat, upon the stage. And though she was far from handsome, she might have made her fortune, had she been inclined to enter the lists of gallantry.

It was one day proposed by the *Marquis*, that we should engage the assembly-room, in order to perform some French plays. This we accordingly set about. The two *Miss Merediths* with whom I was still intimate, spoke French like natives; and so did my two visitants.

fitants. These ladies, with myself, made a tolerable company, without the aid of the Marquis. But he joined us, and I likewise sent for *Madam Brilliant*, who completed our number; and in a short time, we were able to perform *Andromache*, *Zaire*; and the *Atalia* of Racine.

Our frolick was, however, attended with no little expence. For we not only entertained the nobility and gentry with a mental feast, but to show the liberality of our dispositions, we treated them, likewise, with all the delicacies the season would produce. These we procured from London; and I was as happy in the splendor of the night, as if I had been really possessed of the power of *Athalia* to support such an expence. The Marquis paid for the room, lights, music, wine, and servants. I furnished the wardrobe, fruit, tea, &c. &c. But this was not all; for at the conclusion of the flight, by way of epilogue, I found that I had also a debt of three hundred pounds to discharge.

But I was fully repaid for the trifle this affair had cost me, by the promises of *Monel*; who assured me that if I would take a trip to Paris, the next summer, I should not only eclipse the *Dumeril* and *Godin*, but even captivate the Grand Monarque himself. Notwithstanding I loved *Mr. Metham* with the truest affection, and would have rejected being a second *Maintenon* for his

fake, yet the flattering prospect of holding a sovereign in my chains, and at the same time nobly rejecting him, which I was fully determined to do, presented such a train of pleasing ideas to my mind, that I thought the expence which insured me so much happiness a mere bagatelle.

*Mr. Metham* having had a bad run at Scarborough, and the year our house in Duke-street was taken for being elapsed, he wrote me word that he was no longer able to keep it on; and therefore desired I would quit it. He added, that as his father continued inflexible in his resolution of not supporting his extravagance, his coming to town would be uncertain. He further informed me, that he had met *Mr. Garrick* upon a visit at *Lord Burlington's*, who expressed a very great opinion of my talents, and wished to have me of his company. From all these circumstances, he advised me to take a temporary lodging, till he and *Major Burton*, who was with him, could raise money to extricate themselves, and come to town; from whence the Major intended to follow *Miss St. Leger* to the south of France.

I now, for the first time, began to think of pecuniary matters. I found myself greatly involved; and though from being under age, I had no apprehensions for my liberty, yet my spirit was much hurt by being asked for money which I could not immediately

diately pay. My hopes of assistance from *Lord Tyrawley* was now at an end, as his Lordship was preparing to go to his government at Gibraltar, to which it was become necessary he should depart with all expedition, as the fortifications wanted considerable repairs. And indeed, if his Lordship had continued in England, his own love of expence would have put it out of his power to support mine.

About this period the youngest *Dives*, who had been some time with me, was taken ill. And as I loved the children as well as my own, particularly this, he demanded all my care. My much-esteemed *Miss Conway* had likewise relapsed. The Marquis was gone to Scarborough to join *Mr. Metham*, and see that place. He was however to return soon, when he was to bring me a recruit of cash, together with intelligence of my lover, and my dear boy, who with my mother remained still at York.

Every thing thus seemed to conspire to make me thoughtful; and as my disposition seldom retained a proper medium, but was always in the extreme, I was now near falling into a state of dejection; which my intimates were apprehensive would prove of serious consequences. When *Hugh Dives* recovered, I came to town, and took what is generally called a furnished house in Frith-street, Soho. What is meant by a ready

furnished house is, a house with a few old chairs, tables, &c. of trifling value, but which greatly enhances the rent.

The town upon my return to London, being quite deserted, and consequently very dull, I took it into my head to go to Tunbridge to visit the estate of my progenitor *Mr. Seal*. I accordingly sent to have lodgings taken for me at *Mount Sion*; a place, which but for my grandmother's imprudent marriage, would have become in time the property of myself.

Having frequently taken notice of a genteel looking lad, although in rags, who waited upon a poor musician that lived opposite to me, I ordered *O'Bryen* to enquire whether he wanted a place. Being almost starved for want of food, and poisoned with dirt, the youth readily answered that he should be glad to leave his present situation. I accordingly hired him. When he came, I found that he was of *Bruges* in *Flanders*; which was all the intelligence relative to his history, the servants could get out of him. But there was something so distinguished in his manner and behaviour, that notwithstanding I had engaged him to do the drudgery of the house, my own man and he shared it between them as it casually offered. The boy had not been long with me, before he shewed his gratitude for the comfortable exchange I had offered



offered him, by the most alert industry, and scrupulous attention to my wishes; and to such a height did he carry his zeal to please me, that he seemed almost to pay me divine honours.

Having formed the resolution of setting out for Tunbridge, I thought it would derogate from my consequence were I to travel with less than a set of horses. I therefore sent to *Tubbs* ordering him to add four bright bays to my own two; and I set off for the Wells, in my coach and six, with my own maid and two footmen. I took with me my favourite *Virgil*, to amuse myself on the road; and enjoying by anticipation the exquisite satisfaction I should reap from the conquest I was assuredly to make, the next summer, of so great and powerful a personage as the French King, was as great in my own imagination as the Queen of Carthage.—O vanity! vanity! with what pleasing deliriums is the mind of poor weak women too often filled by thy flattering inspirations!—But ah! how unreal and delusive are thy fairest promises!—And yet, bewitching impostor! though we are sensible that the bliss thou dost bestow is transitory, and the expectations thou dost fashion uncertain, we hug thee to our bosoms, and driving away reason and reflection, blindly encourage thy delusions.—I have your licence you know for these flights.

G. A. B.

L E T-

## LETTER XLI.

Sept. 13, 17—

WHEN I arrived at the Wells, I met with a mortification, which was rendered the more extreme by the vain imaginations I had given way to during my journey. A proof of the impropriety of indulging those *waking dreams*. I think I never felt so much from the most degrading circumstance of my life, as from the humiliating situation I was thrown into by it.

*Mr. St. Leger*, whose intimacy with *Mr. Metham*, and the long acquaintance that had subsisted between myself and him, placed upon terms of the utmost freedom and familiarity, was my first visitor. As soon as he entered, I ran to receive him in my usual free way; when I could not help observing that he accosted me with a cool respect, in lieu of that gaiety with which he was accustomed to approach me. Upon my enquiring the reason, he informed me that he was paying his addressee to *Miss Butler*, (with whom as related, I was formerly very intimate) and hoped in a few days to be made happy. That the occasion of his visit was a request which that lady's mother had to make to me. She intreated to know from me, begging pardon at the same time for the liberty

berty she was taking, whether I was really married to *Mr. Metham*, as report said: if not, although she had a very great regard for me, it would not be in the power of either herself or her daughter to take notice of me. This, he added, would be productive of a very motifying reception at the rooms, there being a number of Irish nobility and gentry at the Wells, who had been acquainted with me at her house in Dublin, and who naturally would follow their example.

This was a thunderbolt to my vanity. I could not sustain the unexpected shock. All my vain ideas of self-consequence vanished in a moment; and I found myself a despicable wretch, unworthy the patronage of one of the best of women. As soon as I could recover myself, I thanked him for having saved me, by this timely visit, from so public a mortification as I must have experienced had I gone to the rooms. I begged he would give my respects to *Mrs. Butler* and her daughter, and inform them, that I was, and ever should be, truly sensible of the marks of friendship with which they had honoured me; and that I should ever retain the most grateful sense of their goodness. But that I should feel that I was unworthy of ever having been so happy, could I repay them with deception. I must therefore candidly acknowledge, that notwithstanding I had

had every reason to believe *Mr. Metham* would make me his wife, and he had actually given me leave to assume that character, the ceremony had not as yet passed. I added, that since upon this account I could not hope for the honour of her notice; I would immediately return to London.

*Mr. St. Leger* persuaded me to wait the event; as he was certain my frankness would have a much better effect, than if I had endeavoured to impose a falsehood on the ladies. He said, as there was a ball that evening, and *Mrs. Butler* and her daughter were there, he should not have an opportunity of making her acquainted with my *unexampled* sincerity, as he was pleased to term it, till the next morning. He gave it that epithet, he told me, because to his knowledge the deception would never have been discovered, had I chose to have made use of it; as *Mr. Metham*, upon such an occasion, would readily have supported me in it.

But I was resolute. And, after *Mr. St. Leger's* departure, the consequences of the evening fully confirmed my resolution to return to town. For some of my good friends, who had heard of my arrival, coming to see me, cards were proposed. As I wished to hide the chagrin that *Mr. St. Leger's* conversation had occasioned, I readily joined in the proposal; and sitting down, found, when the company broke up, that out of

two hundred and odd pounds I had brought down with me, I only retained twelve guineas; and out of these I had a week's lodging to pay, which amounted to half of them.

The next morning I set out on my return, with only one solitary half-guinea in my purse, and a mind still more exhausted. So humbled was it, that I could not trace the least resemblance of the *Imperial Dido* in it, to whom, on my approach, I had vainly compared myself—Thus ended my adventure at Tunbridge-Wells. And a most delightful one (to express myself in the true Hibernian dialect) *to be sure, it was, it was.*

On my journey back, I dined at Bromley; but when the bill was brought in, I was obliged to my hand-maid, *O'Bryen*, for being enabled to discharge it. This descendant from kings not only assisted me with her purse upon this occasion, but administered comfort to me; which I was equally in want of. Observing that I was much affected at what had passed at Tunbridge, which could not be concealed from her, she endeavoured to keep up my spirits, by assuring me, that she had not the least doubt, but that next summer, she should see me doubly repaid for the chagrin I had sustained there, by the reputation I should acquire in France. “For  
“Madam,” said she, “will you not then  
“be esteemed as bright a pattern of virtue,  
“through

“ through your rejecting the offers of so  
“ great a man as the French King? take  
“ my word for it you will.”

This well timed observation of my faithful Irish *woman*, drove from my mind that dejection which had a few moments before overwhelmed it; and raised me in my own opinion, nearly to the same elevated pitch of consequence I had assumed during my journey down.—How happy is it for our sex, that the most humiliating impressions do not leave indelible marks on the heart!—Vanity is ever *buoyant*, and when it only soars to an allowable height, it is by no means censurable.—It then answers the noblest purposes, and is productive of the best consequences; which, without staying to enumerate them, I shall comprize in—a wish to render themselves pleasing.

I was set down in Frith-Street, the same evening, without meeting with any impediment, and without a shilling in my pocket towards paying for the four coach and two saddle horses I had thought necessary to my pomp. This, however, was a matter of little concern to me, as I could send to *Mr. Brudenell* for a recruit, who seldom left town, even during the summer season. I accordingly sent to him, and on my informing him of my wants, he immediately accommodated me with twenty guineas.

As my Flemish boy, *Peter*, was stand-  
ing

ing at the door waiting for the return of the messenger I had sent to *Mr. Brudenell*, before whose arrival the extra horses could not be discharged; two gentlemen passed by. Upon observing the equipage, the elder of the two, addressing the other, wondered whose it was. To which my boy pertly replied, "My mistress's." Ah! returned the same gentleman, "I should be glad to know who is to pay for it!" They then went on. Poor Peter, who could not brook any indignity offered to his mistress, immediately came to inform me of the event; which so much affected him, that the tears stood in his eyes.

Seeing the lad so much hurt, I called him a fool, and asked him why he did not tell the rude man that it belonged to him, if he had no objection. The messenger not being returned, the coach still stood at the door, and *Peter* had resumed his station, when the same gentlemen repassed. Upon which, *Peter* hearing the remark repeated, addressed the elder of them as I had hinted he should have done before. To this the gentleman said he could not have the least objection; and without any ceremony, they walked up stairs, to the no small surprise of *Peter* and myself.

Who should the gentlemen be, but *Mr. Fox* and his commissaire *Mr. Calcraft*. I own I was much startled when they entered, hav-

ing never seen *Mr. Fox* but once before. I had, indeed, had the happiness of being introduced to his lady by the daughters of the *Earl of Albemarle*. Those ladies had honoured me with peculiar marks of distinction; particularly the late *Lady Caroline* and the *Marchioness of Tavistock*. Here I must stop to bedew the memory of those two best of women, with a tear of the sincerest affection. The latter in particular claims tears of gratitude, mingled with blood warm springing from my heart; and these she has. My mind still retains the liveliest impressions of her goodness. The last time I had the happiness of seeing her, (I will not call it by so cold a name as *honour*) she assured me of a retreat which would have secured me an independency for life. And which, besides, would have given me an opportunity of enjoying her loved society, whenever the engagements annexed to her exalted situation would afford her leisure; an object of infinitely more consequence to me than rendering me independent.

At the time her ladyship gave me this assurance, she was in perfect health; yet I felt a *presentiment* that I should never see her more. A presage as sure to me, as to those who, we are told, possess the painful gift of second sight; and through every period of my wretched life, it has been the dreadful augurer of all my misfortunes.—The attainment



ment of this instinctive intelligence is not to be accounted for; but I can appeal to every *observant* person, whether they have not found this species of foreknowledge sometimes arise in their minds.—This digression, as it is a debt of gratitude, which is at all times acceptable to the deity, will not, I flatter myself prove *unacceptable* to you or my readers.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R   X L I I .

Sept. 20, 17—

**M**R. FOX introduced himself by saying, that he hoped the whimsicalness, in the first place, and the irresistible temptation, in the second, would plead as an apology for his intrusion. His attendant entered with an awkward blush of inferiority, which would have passed unnoticed by me, had it not been remarked by the servant who was in the room. The messenger now returning with money from *Mr. Brudenell*, the horses were discharged. Just at this time *General Wall* and *Comte Haslang*, passing by, and seeing the house lighted up, they honoured me with a call. Some conversation upon general topics now passed.

When *Mr. Fox* withdrew, he requested that I would permit him the pleasure of call-

ing upon me; as he was in town, and much alone, from *Lady Caroline's* being obliged, through ill-health; often to sleep in the country. I was not at this period acquainted with the virtues of that great man, or I should have embraced the offer with infinite readiness. I therefore, out of respect to his Lady, coolly replied, that I should be happy in the honour of seeing him, whenever he had leisure. Thus ended a visit, produced by levity, and concluded with cold civility.

After those gentlemen were gone, their Excellencies enquired the occasion of my receiving a visit from a person of *Mr. Fox's* eminence; observing that they had never seen him before at my house, though they frequently visited me both in town and at Richmond. Without making a secret of it, I informed them of the ridiculous incident that had occasioned it, with the same simplicity as it had really happened. The General was highly diverted at the story. But as for the Comte, he condescended only to notice it with a smile, and a question, whether upon hearing my situation *he had given me de monies*. Upon my answering that he could not certainly suppose *Mr. Fox* would be guilty of so much ill manners; he replied only with a shrug of disbelief, added to the aspiration, *umph!* This was the only mode by which the Comte usually expressed either his approbation or dislike. In the former

former case he added a recline of the head to the aspiration; in the latter a shrug of the shoulders.

Whilst the card-table was setting, and we waited for two ladies I had invited to spend the evening; the gentlemen went to the chimney piece to view some figures of Chelsea china, which the Comte had some time before made me a present of. As they stood, they observed a bit of paper lie near the figures that had the appearance of a bank bill. As I had informed them that I had only the twenty guineas I had just received from *Mr. Brudenell*, I was asked if I knew what was there. Upon my answering that I did not, they examined, and found it to be a bank-bill for fifty pounds.

I did not doubt but *Mr. Fox* had taken this method to relieve my present necessity, without offending my delicacy. I, however, determined to send it back immediately, not choosing to lye under an obligation to a person who was almost a stranger to me. But I was prevented from doing this, by the Comte, who was the soul of generosity. He observed to me, that by returning it, I should offer the highest affront to the giver of it. He asked me if I should be displeas'd with such a mark of approbation at my benefit? Why then, said he, should you now? He reminded me, that as many persons, at different times, made me presents, I need

not be more scrupulous to receive them from *Mr. Fox* than from the General, from him; and several others, who offered them merely as a tribute to my talents, without having any design upon my person. As I could not help acknowledging the weight of the Comte's arguments, I laid aside my intention and considered myself as indebted to *Mr. Fox* for a bounty so delicately bestowed.

The evening concluded with my making an addition of fifty more to it, which I won of the *corps diplomatique*. Before we broke up, it was agreed between the General, the Comte, and myself, that for the few weeks before the theatre opened, and occasionally afterwards, we should set up a Pharoah bank, in conjunction with the *Marquis de Vernueil*, who was expected every day from Yorkshire. Though I had not much ready cash, I had diamonds, which I did not immediately want, and my credit was good; so that I foresaw I should not have much difficulty in raising the thousand pounds, which was to be my share of the capital.

While this affair was in agitation, I went to Richmond for a few days, before I came to town for the approaching season. I had scarcely got out of the chaise, before *Mr. Lacy*, joint manager with *Mr. Garrick*, of Drury-lane Theatre, was announced. As he lived but at Isleworth, and we were upon the best terms, I imagined his visit to be merely casual.

casual. But when he entered, to my very great surprize he informed me, that *Mrs. Cibber* was engaged at Covent-Garden, together with *Barry*; and that *Mr. Quin*, from some disgust, had quitted the stage.

This last piece of intelligence I knew not how to believe, as I was still favoured with that gentleman's correspondence, and he certainly would have mentioned to me an event which was of the utmost consequence to me in my theatrical situation. So suspicious an assertion, I acknowledge, ought to have put me upon my guard, and made me doubt the truth of the other part of *Mr. Lacy's* information. However, giving way to the first impulse of my rage, at this *apparent* proof of *Mr. Rich's* repeated duplicity; from whom I had a right to expect the most friendly treatment, as his family lived in the strictest terms of intimacy with me, and he himself had often professed that he loved me as well as his own children; without any further consideration, I instantly signed an agreement for three years, which *Mr. Lacy* had brought with him.

I had no sooner done the irrevocable deed, than the Manager, with a malignant grin of self-approbation, such as the Demon assumes in the pantomime, when he has prevailed upon *Doctor Faustus* to sign the fatal warrant, told me that the report of *Mrs Cibber's* engagement was *current*; but he could not vouch  
for

for the truth of it. “However,” added he, “at all events you must be a gainer by playing with my partner, whose consequence stamps merit where there is none, and increases it where there is.”

I was greatly displeas'd at the deception which had been practis'd upon me, although I was not, from my resentment to *Mr. Rich*, sorry for the consequences; and the Manager and I parted not on the best terms.—Such a palpable imposition, founded on chicanery and falsehood, must not pass unnoticed.—Little reason has a man to boast of his cunning, when his schemes are effected at the expence of truth, and at the price of his honour.—My blood boils in my veins at the recollection.—There is no calamity that I could not bear with patience, sooner than to be tricked, even into that for which I most wish'd.—There is such a meanness in deception, that my nature recoils at it. And as I am incapable of it myself, I can forgive it the less readily in others.—But—*requiescat in pace*.—May he rest in peace.—It is the deed, and not the man, that is the object of my indignation.

The same day just as I was sitting down to dinner, *Mr. Rich* and *Mr. Bencroft* came in. He saluted me with his usual friendship; but as there was other company, we could not speak of business before we had dined. As soon as we found an opportunity, he inform-  
ed

ed me that he had engaged *Mr. Barry*, and had brought with him articles for me to sign. I asked him why it was necessary I should sign an agreement now, supposing I was to be of his company, as I never before had? He started at the word *supposing*; and repeating it, said, he hoped it was no supposition. Upon which I acquainted him that I had actually signed an agreement, that very morning, with *Mr. Lacy*, in consequence of hearing from him, that *Mrs. Cibber* was engaged at Covent-Garden.

I will not pretend to describe *Mr. Rich's* feelings on receiving this information. He looked at me, for some time, as if he wished to disbelieve it. I really felt for him; and again execrated in my mind the fiend-like wretch who had occasioned his disappointment; whilst he perhaps was triumphing in the success of his fallacy, and enjoying the most pleasing ideas, unconscious of the dearth of their purchase.—Is it right that deception should be rewarded; while the well meaning dupe is a prey to uneasiness and dejection?—There *must* be an hereafter; if but to vindicate the justice of that Being who permits this *seeming* injustice.

*Mr. Rich* now told me, that he had withstood the most urgent solicitations from *Mr. Barry* relative to an engagement with *Mrs. Cibber*, as she had offered to come to Covent-Garden for seven hundred pounds, which

was

was less than she had at Drury-Lane the winter before. The last season, she had not been able to play through indisposition. He added, that to show his regard for me, and the sincerity of his intentions, he had brought articles with him for three years, at five, six, and seven hundred pounds annually. He produced the agreement, which he had got drawn up the preceeding day, having then absolutely refused to enter into any engagement whatsoever with *Mrs. Cibber*. “And now,” continued he, “must I be obliged to give her any terms she shall demand.”

Upon this explanation, I was equally distressed with *Mr. Rich*; and sincerely wished I could recall what I had done, not only because the agreement I had entered into with *Mr. Lacy* was but for three hundred pounds a year, but on account of *Mr. Barry's* excellence in performing the characters of lovers, which was the line of acting suited to my figure, youth, and powers.

Tho' *Mr. Lacy's* conduct in this transaction is not to be justified, yet I must take some share of blame to myself, from the precipitation with which I engaged with him.—Precipitation, as I have before observed, is the grand bane of happiness.—Had I adhered to the resolution I had formerly made, of consulting my friend, *Mr. Quin*, upon every step of consequence I was about to take, all  
then



then would have been well. I should have discovered the fallacy of my tempter, and have been upon my guard against any imposition that might have been designed. Instead of which, by giving way to the first transports of my resentment, without knowing whether it was well founded or not, I precipitately committed an error so much to my own disadvantage, and *Mr. Rich's* vexation.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XLIII.

September 27, 17—.

**U**PON my arrival in town from Richmond, I found that the ambassadors still continued in their resolution of setting up a Pharoah bank. As I was determined that every thing should be conducted in an elegant stile, I engaged *Gordon*, the most eminent cook of his time ; and *O'Bryen* happening to be in a bad state of health, I hired his wife also to attend upon me as my French woman.

Having borrowed some money to make up my quota of a thousand pounds, we set off in a very splendid manner. The *Marquis de Vernueil* or myself always dealt. We were successful, as the bank was rich. But notwithstanding we always won, I only observed one person that seemed to regret their ill success

success; and that was the *Marquis of Granby*. It could not be supposed that this dissatisfaction arose from his love of money. He never knew the value of that, any more than myself. It was rather an impatience in his temper, which threw him off his guard, and added to his ill luck.

*Mr. Metham* writing me word that he should not be in town till Christmas, I was enabled to carry on our scheme so much the longer. Our *petit soupers*, and convivial parties, drew all the gay, fluttering, unthinking, young people of fashion to us. They procured me the happiness of being introduced to the honourable *Miss Mostyns*, with whom *General Wall* was very intimate. The eldest of those ladies possessed an understanding superior to most of her sex. And without youth or beauty, the company of all of them was eagerly solicited by every one that had a taste for genteel sociability. They were named, out of pleasantry, as they were formed rather in a spiral than a direct line, *Crimp, Crump, and Crumpling*.

In a short time, I had been such a gainer by our bank, that I was not only enabled to redeem my jewels, but to pay my debts, and put some hundreds into my pocket; notwithstanding the great expence I was at. The General and Count frequently made me presents of wine, chocolate, &c. &c. and had not my *theatrical* avocations called me  
from

from this lucrative one, it is a doubt with me, whether I should not have made my fortune.

At this time I lost my faithful *O'Bryen*, whose memory will be ever dear to me. In her I lost not only a good servant, but a real friend. For though at times she would give into my innocent whims, yet whenever she thought me wrong, she took the liberty to represent the impropriety of my conduct to me, with such mildness and good sense, that her reproof always carried conviction with it, and generally had the desired effect. So that *O'Bryen* usually succeeded, when my mother's violence of temper failed, and, I am concerned to add, made me more obstinate.

The *Marquis de Ternueil* now returned to Paris; and as *Mr. Garrick* was come to London, I was obliged to attend to the duties of my profession. The most intense application was necessary for those who fought under his banners. As he was unremitting himself in his attention to business, he expected those he employed to be the same. The last season he had engaged *Mrs. Ward*; a poor substitute for the incomparable *Gibber*. But though necessity compelled him to play with her, he took a great distaste to her, on account of her want of feeling. Of this she gave him, one night, the strongest proof, by being employed in adjusting her glove-

knot, which happened to come untied, during one of the most pathetic and interesting scenes in the *Fair Penitent*.

Both the theatres opened this season with *Romeo and Juliet*. *Garrick* and myself appeared in the characters at *Drury-Lane*, *Barry* and *Cibber* at *Covent-Garden*. But to add to the weight of the latter, *Mr. Rich* had introduced a grand funeral procession. That gentleman was particularly fond of displaying his taste upon such occasions; as in epithalamiums, ovations, triumphal entries, and funeral obsequies. He had an opportunity at this time of laying out nearly as much money as the play brought him. The contest was long; and it was universally allowed, that except that in the scene with the friar, *Mr. Barry* excelled in *Romeo*. The piece was performed so many nights, that the public as well as the performers were tired and disgusted with it. We, however, got the advantage of some nights. But this was not done without a great deal of paper, which was bestowed upon the occasion.

During the run of this piece, I was informed in the *Green Room*, that an old lady and gentleman requested to see me. Upon my giving directions that they should be admitted, a gentleman about sixty, and a lady of nearly the same age, were introduced to me. The gentleman then told me, that his name was *Gansel*. That he had a son a captain

tain in the guards. That the gout visited him so often, as to induce him to decline sitting in parliament. And that coming to see the play, he and his dame were so enchanted with my performance. And the character I bore in private life, which he had heard from the person at whose house they lodged, that he could not resist the strong desire he had of introducing his lady and himself to me. He then requested the favour of seeing me in Southampton-Street, Covent-Garden, the first hour I had to spare, and also at Donnanan Park, near Colchester.

The novelty of such an introduction, added to the open, honest sincerity of the good old gentleman, gave me infinite pleasure; and I promised to wait on them the next day. But nothing would serve him, but I must go in the coach with them that night to supper. Being unwilling to offend persons of their hearty dispositions, and consequence; on their offering to wait till I had undressed, I accompanied them home; and in half an hour, we were as well acquainted, as if we had known each other for years.—True politeness needs not the aid of ceremony.—An engaging freedom, an easy familiarity, and an unreserved sincerity, are the distinguishing characteristics of genuine urbanity.—To narrow minds alone, is a ceremonious formality pleasing.

*Mr. Gansel* was a man of great natural understanding;

derstanding ; which he had cultivated by study and travelling. He had been a constant attendant at Drury-Lane theatre in the time of *Booth*, *Wilks*, and *Cibber*, and a great admirer of those capital performers. He had been likewise an humble servant of the celebrated *Mrs. Oldfield*. He was a living chronicle ; possessing, at the same time, a heart that was generous, humane, and sincere. Though endowed with that true dignity of mind which would not condescend to flatter even majesty ; he was so compassionate and inoffensive, that he would not hurt a worm. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that I was happy in cultivating an acquaintance with so valuable a member of society. In return for the honour they had done me, I requested the favour of their company at my house the next day. With this *Mr. Gansel* complied ; and in doing so, insured *Mrs. Gansel's* acquiescence, who left every thing to his decision.

This lady, conscious of her husband's superiority, submitted her will entirely to his. (A rare instance I own !) She minded little else than her dairy, and family affairs ; being what the world generally term a good housewife ; that is, she was able to make a shirt or a pudding. Our intimacy continued as long as they staid in town. This agreeable friendship, for so it really was, though of such a recent commencement, in the result, however,

however, turned out to be one of the most *unfortunate* epochas of my whole life, as will be seen hereafter.

About this time *Mr. Metham* came to town. The satisfaction he received, from seeing me so much admired as an actress, and from my having successfully stood a competition with the first female tragedian in the world, was beyond expression. And whilst it pleased his vanity, it increased, if possible, his affection. My mother and dear boy were now also come to London. But as my house was too small for this increase of family, I procured a lodging for my mother near me; and *Mr. Metham* took one for himself at *Deard's* in Pall-Mall.

Upon breaking up of our Pharaoh scheme, I had prudently discharged my man-cook, with a promise of taking him again, if I should ever be in a situation to enable me to keep one. I had hired a maid-servant in the place of my faithful *O'Bryen*, who was just the reverse of that worthy creature. She had been woman to a lady of quality; and was, like *Tattlehead*, one of those civil, dishonest servants, that never tell a disagreeable truth, nor speak well of their mistresses when they are absent. Her master was the person to whom she paid the greatest attention, endeavouring studiously to please him; whilst she showed very little regard to me or my commands. But as I still retained *Madam Gordon*

for my dresser, I had very little opportunity of knowing any thing relative to her.

An unexpected event soon deprived me of the services of *Peter*. And my own servant having set up the business of a cheesemonger, I was left to the rapacious depredations of servants, who had no regard but for themselves, and studied their own ease and interest more than mine. And this my attendance at the theatre prevented me from observing, or being able to prevent.

One morning I was informed that a foreign gentleman desired to see me. As *Madam Brilliant* fancied she could never sufficiently repay the civilities I had shewed her in her distress, and took every opportunity which offered of sending me some token of her gratitude and attention, I concluded it was some person that waited on me by her desire. Or else, I thought it might be somebody from the *Marquis de Vernueil*; as he honoured me with his correspondence. I therefore ordered that the gentleman should be admitted.

Being shewn in, he requested to know whether I had not a youth in my service whose name was *Peter*? On my answering that I had, he exclaimed with transport, "Then, thank God, I have found my son!" The agitation of the stranger on receiving this assurance, and my surprize at so unexpected an event, occasioned a silence for  
some



some time. In the interim, *Peter* entered the room, leading in my little boy, with whom he had been taking a walk. Upon seeing his father, he dropped upon the floor in a state of insensibility; and it was not without some difficulty that he was brought to himself. When he was a little recovered, his father assured him of his forgiveness, telling him also that his companion was living. Upon which the boy's face brightened up, and falling upon his knees, he cried with great fervency, "Thank God! thank God!"

This exclamation exciting my curiosity, I begged the gentleman to explain to me the cause of the scene I had just been a witness to. He replied, "that I will do with the greatest readiness, Madam. I am a wine-merchant of some eminence at Bruges. My son, whom you see before you, had a quarrel with his favourite school-fellow, at the time he was about twelve years of age, in which he received a blow. Enraged at the affront, he plunged a knife, which he unfortunately had in his hand, into the bosom of the lad that had offended him. Shocked at the deed he had just committed, and apprehensive of falling into the hands of justice, he fled. And all the enquiries I have made after him, during six years, have been till now ineffectual. Some business calling me to  
"England,

“ England, a townsman of mine informed  
 “ me yesterday, that he had seen my son  
 “ *Peter* go into a house in Frith-street. His  
 “ information was the means of my paying  
 “ you this visit, Madam, and has restored to  
 “ me my child.”

Though I was concerned at losing a servant who had been so faithful to me, and had shown me so much respect and attention; yet I could not help being pleased that his father had discovered him, and that he would now be removed to a situation more eligible than that of servitude. In a short time he left me, with a mind deeply impressed with gratitude for the pleasing reverse he had experienced in my service to that from which I rescued him. And his father gave me a pressing invitation to pay him a visit, if ever I should travel through Flanders. Which some years after I did; when he made my short stay as agreeable to me as he could.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R XLIV.

Oct. 3, 17—.

**T**HE success we met with at Drury-lane Theatre was infinitely greater than we had reason to expect, considering *Mrs. Cibber* had not played the preceding winter, which made

made her appearance the greater novelty now. My mother was continually inciting me to require of *Mr. Metham* that he would make me his wife. This I promised her to do; but no opportunity for carrying my promise into execution, for some time, presented itself. For I was seldom alone with him, either from my engagements at the theatre, or from the company which we constantly had.

At last, finding one day an opportunity, I asked him, without any circumlocution, whether he would marry me? He made me no answer, but abruptly left the room. This cavalier behaviour surprized me the more; as he was usually extremely polite to every one; and particularly so to me. I was therefore highly offended at such an indignity, and resolved to let him see that I resented it. I accordingly rung the bell the moment he was gone, and ordered the servant not to admit him when he came again.

But in about an hour, I received a card from him, which informed me, that his brother-in-law, *Mr. Dives*, and himself, would dine with me; and as they should come about business, he requested that I would admit no other company. I had no doubt but that the business they were coming on, was relative to the question I had put to him in the morning.

When they appeared I observed another gentleman,

gentleman, with whom I was totally unacquainted, but whom I soon found to be an attorney. *Mr. Metham*, who was the spokesman, now entered upon the business which had procured me the honour of this visit. He began with a consequential exordium in favour of his brother-in-law. This was of such a length that it had the appearance of a sermon. At last, however, he came to the point. When I found that they had come to execute a writing before me, in which *Mr. Metham* had agreed, that in case he died without legitimate issue, the estates he expected to receive from his father, and those he now enjoyed in right of his mother, were to devolve to *Mr. Dives*, who had married his sister, and to their heirs. In this deed *Mr. Dives* had kindly consented to join him in securing to me an annuity of three hundred pounds, and the sum of two thousand pounds to our son *George*.

I at first esteemed this acquiescence of *Mr. Dives* to be an act of disinterested generosity; and as such I sincerely thanked him for it. But upon showing the writing to my mother, after they were gone, she entertained a different opinion of it. She told me, it appeared evident to her, that *Mr. Dives*, who had acquired a perfect knowledge of the world, and had studied with the greatest minuteness *Mr. Metham's* disposition, had a view solely to his *own interest*,

in

in the execution of the deed. For under the cover of this disinterested provision for me and my child, he had a design to prevent his brother-in-law from marrying, in order to secure his estates to himself and family. With regard to my settlement, she observed, that it was but an inconsiderable return for *Mr. Metham's* kindness to them. For though they had no other subsistence, than three hundred pounds a year, which had been settled on *Mrs. Dives* out of her brother's estate in Staffordshire, yet he generally, by additional presents, made that at least eight or nine hundred, one year with another; his fondness for his sister being only surpassed by his tenderness for me.

My mother having placed the transaction in so different a point of view; instead of entertaining sentiments of gratitude for *Mr. Dives*, as I had done, and warmly expressed, at the time of the execution of the deed, I now adopted others of another nature. I concluded it to be an artful plan of the two brothers, to induce me to give up my expectations of ever being the wife of *Mr. Metham*.

Though I had quitted the theatre of Covent-Garden, and had given the manager reason to be displeas'd with me, by my precipitate engagement with the other house, yet my intimacy with *Mr. Rich's* family still continued. I likewise was happy in the  
con-

continuance of *Mr. Quin's* friendship; which indeed, I can with pleasure say, I retained to the day of his death. To this never failing friend and faithful monitor, I therefore applied for advice in my present dilemma. Profiting by the error I had committed in my negotiation with *Mr. Lacy*, I solicited his admonitions, without delay, and determined to abide by them.

On my application to *Mr. Quin*, he first asked me whether I really loved *Mr. Metham*? To which I answered that I did, in preference to the whole world. He then advised me not to make myself unhappy, or home disagreeable to him, by urging him again on the subject. "If you were actually married," proceeded he, "you could not go by his name whilst you continue on the stage. And it will be necessary you should pursue that profession as long as *Mr. Montgomery*, *Mr. Metham's* father, lives. You are both single, and if you remain attached to each other, I cannot see of what real service the ceremony would be with regard to outward appearance, as the world are of opinion that it already has been performed, but for prudential reasons kept secret; let me therefore advise you to urge the affair no more to him, leave it to his own honour and affection; of both of which you cannot have the least doubt. These will operate with infinitely more power

“ power than any arguments of yours can  
“ do, when he is left at leisure to reflect on  
“ the propriety of such a step.” Nearly in  
these words did my second father give me  
his advice ; and as I knew his judgement in  
such concerns to be far superior to my own,  
I resolved implicitly to follow the directions  
he had given me. I accordingly returned  
home much more at ease than I was before.  
And when *Mr. Metham* and I met, I took  
care, whatever uneasiness lurked in my heart,  
that it should not be visible to him.

But the consolation *Mr. Quin* had afforded  
me was but transitory.—Though agreeable  
to his advice, I concealed my wishes, I could  
not totally suppress them.—I was conscious  
that my character received a stain from the  
nature of my connection with *Mr. Metham*,  
which, neither the reflection that it originated  
from the sincerest and most disinterested  
affection ; that it was not entered into with-  
out the fullest expectation of a more honour-  
able union taking place ; and that it had  
been continued with an unblemished purity  
of conduct ; were sufficiently palliative to ex-  
punge.—It is true that in the eye of heaven,  
such a connection, when conducted with this  
propriety, may not need the repetition of the  
nuptial ceremony. In such a case the delud-  
ed fair one might say, with *Eloisa*, “ Curse  
“ on all laws but those which love has  
“ made !”—But to preserve the due regula-  
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tion of the degrees of consanguinity ; an indisputable succession of property ; a respect to the rules of society ; and to serve as a restraint to the roving disposition of the libertine ; it is necessary that an odium should be annexed to any other than a *legal* connection.

My benefit this season turned out very lucrative. As I was now in a circle with some of the first people of distinction, besides those who had hitherto been my patronesses, I was honoured with the patronage of the *Essex* family ; the *Lady Capels* were as partial to me as the *Lady Keppels* ; particularly *Lady Mary*. The piece I had was, "Tancred and Sigismunda ;" in which I succeeded much beyond my hopes, as *Mrs. Cibber* was the original Sigismunda, and most capitally great in the performance of that character ; so that I acquired, in addition to the emoluments, an increase of fame.

A most ridiculous event happened at one of the benefits at our theatre this season ; which I shall relate merely for the singularity of it. There was a performer in the company who was retained in it by the acting manager, more for the flattery which he from time to time bestowed upon him, than through any merit he had as an actor. This person, whose name was *Sowden*, was by trade a horse miliner. He had, however, obtained so much influence over *Mr. Garrick*, that he prevailed upon that gentleman to play for his benefit ;



benefit; which was a favour he usually granted only to the first performers. He had the "Orphan" for his night, in which *Mr. Garrick* played *Chamont*, *Mr. Sowden*, *Polydore*, and myself, *Monimia*. In the fourth act, whilst, in the most pathetic part of it, I was informing *Chamont* of all my distress, I heard a voice uttering somewhat aloud; but what it was I could not distinguish, from being so susceptibly interested in my part. Whilst *Chamont* was replying to me, as I was then more at liberty to attend, I heard the same voice articulate the words, "Rumps and burrs! rumps and burrs!" *Roscus*, who was the most tenacious man alive of a due observance of theatrical order and regularity, imagining the noise came from behind the scenes, exclaimed in a quick manner, "What is that?" He was at the same time so disconcerted by the incident, that losing entirely the powers of recollection, he repeated different passages out of different plays, till I was as much bewildered as himself, and totally unprepared to give a connected answer. We had therefore, nothing else to do, than to put an end to our embarrassment by bringing the scene to an abrupt conclusion.

It seems the exclamation proceeded from *the balcony*, where one of the lower ranks of city ladies, an admirer of *Mr. Sowden's* theatrical talents, had placed herself (as a benefit levels all distinction) in honour of

him. During the preceding scene, which, though interesting, was not much to her mind, she had indulged herself with a nap. In this short nap she was conveyed in idea back to her stall in the city. And the duties of her business, which she left but on such particular occasions, being uppermost on her mind, she was crying her rumps and burs, as if she had been standing at her own door. As soon, however, as her favourite actor appeared, she awoke. But I was so much disconcerted by the good woman's sleeping flight, that though I should have continued on during the whole scene, I soon left *Mr. Polydore* to substitute what he pleased for the entertainment of his *polite* audience, and to speak his descriptive conclusion alone.

Methinks I hear you laugh at the foregoing ridiculous scene. I assure you I did, and that most heartily, when it happened; that is, as soon as I had recovered from the confusion into which it had thrown the immortal *Roscus* and myself.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R XLV.

Oct. 9, 17—

**A**T the conclusion of this winter, I lost my much valued friend *Miss Conway*. Having overheated herself at a ball, she indiscreetly

discreetly drank lemonade; which occasioned her dying in a few hours in the most excruciating pains. - As I have already observed, this best and most delicate of women, expired in my arms. And I was happy in being present to sooth, by every tender endearment, the bitterness of death.

I received about this time, also, a very warm invitation from *Miss St. Leger*, to pass the ensuing summer with her in the South of France. Her uncle *Lord Doneraile*, she informed me, was dead, and had left her the whole of his fortune, exclusive of his lady's jointure. To which, she added, that she was married to *Major Burton*, but still enjoyed such a bad state of health, as to be unable to return to England.

I was obliged by a similar affliction, not only to decline this lady's invitation, but to postpone my conquest of *Louis the Fifteenth*, and to suffer that monarch to enjoy his liberty a little longer. My indisposition was productive of a lassitude, which prevented my forming parties, as I used to do, or from carrying into execution any favourite project. It however left me at leisure to enjoy the placid society of those friends who honoured me with their company. Such being my situation, nothing material happened during this summer.

At the opening of the ensuing season, *Mr. Garrick* produced two new performers.

These were *Mr. Mossop* and *Mr. Ross*. The former in the cast of parts which had belonged to the inimitable *Quin*, who this winter retired from the stage; the other in those of lovers and genteel comedy. *Mr. Mossop* had a fine voice, but an uncooth manner. For a more particular description of him I will refer you to *Churchill's* "Rosciad." *Mr. Ross* was handsome, his figure elegant, and his voice agreeable. He would have been a valuable acquisition to the theatre, had not his indolence and love of conviviality prevented his exercising that application, without which it is impossible to shine on the stage. He seemed to wish to imitate *Mr. Quin* in being a *bon vivant*; without remembering that that great man, never gave loose to his favourite passion, till his business at the theatre was over.

The aid of these two gentlemen was not productive of that success the manager hoped for. They pleased; but they did not excite the public attention. And except the nights on which *Garrick* himself performed, there were but indifferent houses. The manager had this season accepted of four new pieces, and he revived "The Mourning Bride," in which he played *Osmyn*. I had unintentionally offended him, by sending to *Doctor Young* to beg the favour of reading his new piece of "The Brothers," during my illness. This unpardonable crime was to be revenged  
by

by teaching *Mrs. Pritchard* the part of *Zara*. He, however, thought better of it, and I performed the character. My success in it, (pardon the seeming vanity) was as great even as *Garrick's* acting; which was beyond description. But notwithstanding the unbounded applause he deservedly met with in the character of *Osmyn*; and the most considerable receipts, for *eight* nights, that had, at that time, ever been known; I believe he would gladly have sacrificed both his reputation and his profit, sooner than I should have acquired the approbation of the public, as I did in the character of *Zara*.

*Doctor Young's* tragedy of "The Brothers" was first put in rehearsal. And from a supposition that it was superior to his "Revenge," great hopes were entertained of its success. The parts were delivered out at the same time for *Mr. Moore's* comedy of "Gil Blas." In the success of which, the manager, from his friendship for the author, greatly interested himself. *Mr. Garrick* sent me a part in the first mentioned piece, which I declined accepting.

This gave him great offence, and provoked him to write to me in the following terms. "Since you have humbugged the town, I suppose you think you are intitled to do whatever you please. The liberty you have taken in asking to peruse *Doctor Young's* Piece, is unwarrantable. And I will con-

" vince

“ vince you that *I alone* am the person to be  
“ addressed in whatever concerns the theatre.  
“ I shall find means to repay the contempt  
“ you have been pleased to show me.” In  
this doughty manner did he write to me for  
having committed an *unintentional* offence, (if  
it could be construed into an offence) as he  
was tenacious in the extreme of every branch  
of his managerial prerogative.

As it cannot be supposed that I would willingly be upon bad terms with the director of the corps in which I served; and only meant to hasten the piece by endeavouring to study the part intended for me, which I had been informed was very long, I could not help answering the manager's undeserved epistle with some asperity. I informed him that I had not meant to infringe upon his authority, or to lessen his great dignity. But that, notwithstanding I was to be governed with the greatest ease by complacency, yet no power on earth should rule me with a rod of iron.

This produced a declaration of war; as it lighted up a flame which had long lain smothering in his bosom.—This great *little* man, for so he was in the literal sense of the word, was possessed of as much meanness as merit. This is a bold assertion I acknowledge; especially as he was allowed by persons of the greatest judgment to be the most complete actor that ever trod the stage;  
yet

yet the dexterity of his management was equal to his performance. Of which I shall give the following specimen.

He used to send *Mr. Varney*, the house-keeper, round among the ladies of quality, to inform them, as a matter of favour, that his master played such a part on such a night; to which *Mr. Varney* used to add, “And, if possible, I will secure a box for your ladyship.” I have been present when he has called on ladies with this story, who have acknowledged themselves much obliged to him for his intelligence, and have given him a guinea for this particular mark of attention, exclusive of the usual present at Christmas, and at his benefit. And this he has done at the time, that to my certain knowledge, there has not been one box really engaged in the book for the night of performance he has mentioned.

Upon my appearing in the green-room for the first time after the beforementioned letters had passed, the manager accosted me with, “Ah, ah, ah, madam, you are come at last.—It was unfortunate for us, that the doctor insisted upon your being his heroine.” To this I readily assented; as I really thought with him that *Mrs. Pritchard* would have appeared in the character to much more advantage; as I had such a natural dislike to haughtiness, that it was with difficulty I could assume it; and when I did,  
I was

I was never successful. I publicly expressed these sentiments, which were not uttered from pique or resentment to the manager, but were the real dictates of my heart. To this I added, that I sincerely thought his favourite, *Mrs. Pritchard*, would gain more credit to herself and the piece, than I should; and, consequently, be the means of acquiring more considerable emoluments for the author. And being thus conscious of my inability, I was ready to give up the part.

Here the doctor cried out, "No! no!" which did not seem to please the manager. Indeed he appeared to be much mortified at my *sansfroid*. But as I had declared with so much disinterestedness, that I had no great hopes of success in the character, there was nothing further left for him to say upon the occasion.

When the piece was read, I objected to a line, which I imagined came with but an ill grace from the mouth of a lady; even from so high flighted a one as the *Princess Irexine*. This was the sentence.

—"I will speak to you in thunder."

Upon my making the objection, the author replied, that he thought it the most forcible line in the piece. To which I answered, that it would be much more *so*, if he joined lightning to it. Hearing this, he began to wax warm; and declared that the performance then  
reading,



reading, was the *best* he had ever wrote. I could not now resist saying, “ I fear, doctor, I shall  
 “ loose your favour, in the same manner as  
 “ *Gil Blas*, upon a similar occasion, did that  
 “ of the *Bishop of Toledo*. And I cannot help  
 “ reminding you of a tragedy called the  
 “ *Revenge*.” My having given the doctor’s  
*thunder* a companion, had set the risible fea-  
 tures of the performers in motion. This  
 unfortunately increased the agitation I had  
 put him into, by not allowing him to be able  
 to judge of the merit of his own composi-  
 tions, and threw him into the most extravagant  
 passion.

I now repented of my petulance to the  
 doctor, as I had the highest esteem for him,  
 and had lived in the strictest intimacy with  
 his daughter. I therefore went up to him,  
 and taking him by the hand, requested that  
 he would not only forgive me for what I had  
 said, but that he would likewise recall to his  
 memory those divine precepts he had pro-  
 mulgated in his “ *Night Thoughts* ;” lest,  
 by thus giving way to such immoderate an-  
 ger, he should convince us, that even *he*,  
 only knew and gave us the theory, without  
 being master of the practical part. The doc-  
 tor thanked me cordially for the rebuke ;  
 and striding two or three times across the  
 room, apparently in as much distress as we  
 may suppose *Jephtha* to have been, when he  
 carried into execution his rash vow ; he took  
 his

his pen, and to the astonishment of *Mr. Garrick*, struck out the line which had occasioned the contest. He then sat down, as composed as if nothing had happened.

But what greatly added to my triumph, and to the surprize of the manager, who well knew the Doctor's tenacious disposition, was his inviting himself home to dine with me. This mark of reconciliation, you may be assured, I received with pleasure; and *Mr. Quin*, coming to town that day, he joined us. A more happy trio, I believe, never sat down to table together. What greatly enhanced the pleasure of the Doctor was, that *Mr. Quin* had been in possession of the character of Zanga, in his "Revenge," alone and unrivalled for years. The Doctor acquainted my much loved friend with the fracas that had happened in the green-room. To which *Mr. Quin* humourously replied, "Oh Doctor! if you knew what that girl could do as well as say, you would not be surprized at any thing relative to her." I well knew this was intended by *Mr. Quin* as an eulogium on me, yet I much feared the Doctor would not esteem it so. He however, said, that he had been informed of the goodness of my heart, which induced him to impute what I had uttered to sincerity; whereas, he should otherwise have esteemed it conceited impertinence.

The force of prejudice has often surprized me. Its influence is unbounded. There is scarcely an adage that has more truth in it, or will bear a more extensive application, than that vulgar one of "Give a dog an ill name," &c. A few brilliant actions will frequently establish a character, of which, from the general tenor of their conduct, the person is not deserving. And on the contrary, one unguarded action will damn their fairest fame.—Thus, though by some trifling instances of humanity, from which I could not arrogate to myself any merit, (the impulse, as I have before said, being irresistible) I stamped an impression in my favour on the minds of two men, who may truly be said to be most valuable members of society.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R XLVI.

Oct. 18, 17—

**T**HE good Doctor's piece ran ten nights. But this arose more from the author's character being so universally revered, than from any intrinsic merit there was in it. Roscius then appeared in "Gil Blas;" of which, had the parts that he and Woodward filled, been reversed, and had a more juvenile figure represented the young lady, so premature a fate might not have been its portion. It was, however, condemned to oblivion the

second night of representation. And had not *Mr. Town* begged a third night for the author, *Mr. Moore* would only have had his labour for his pains.—On the judicious casting of the characters of a new piece a great deal depends. If a play has ever so great merit, unless this part of the business of the theatre be carefully attended to, in vain has the author gnawed his pen, and racked his brains.

Our next essay was a play altered from the French by *Doct̄or Francis*, the then *reputed* translator of *Horace*. It was intitled “*Eugenia, or the supposed Daughter.*” And notwithstanding *Mr. Garrick* and all his principal performers played in it, they could only *drag* it on for six or nine nights, (I cannot recollect which) to empty benches and a dead silence. This discomfited the manager. But his last exhibition, “*The Masque of Alfred,*” written by *Mallet*, carried sure success along with it. This piece had been exhibited some years before at *Cliefden*, the summer residence of the *Prince and Princess of Wales*. The *great part*, though not the principal character, that of the *Hermit*, was adapted by the author to his friend *Quin*. But when he offered the piece to the manager of *Drury-lane*, he made that of *Alfred*, the consequential and striking part, as well as the capital character. In this *Mr. Garrick* exceeded even himself. And when

when he repeated the following line which the author had borrowed from the *Athalia* of Racine.

“ I fear God, and have no other fear.”

he appeared to be another Atlas ; and like him carried a world upon his shoulders. The success I met with in *Elfrida* was more from situation and dress than from the merit of the part ; as it was very mediocre, and short, though the character is amiable.

From being indisposed at the beginning of the winter, and so constantly employed during the remainder of it, I had neither time nor inclination to see much company. I had even very little of *Mr. Metham's* company, as he was generally at *White's*, or some other coffee-house losing his money. The thirtieth of January approaching, on which there was no performance, and it being *Metham's* birth day, I proposed giving a gala to his friends and my own. Accordingly I sent for *Gordon* to dress the dinner ; and I ordered *Robinson*, the confectioner, to furnish the desert.

The gentleman, on whose account the feast was celebrated, brought *Mr. Calcraft* in his hand ; who was only known to me by having been in company with *Mr. Fox* when he accidentally honoured me with a visit, as before related, and from his being a constant attendant at the theatre. He sat at the bottom of the table next to his introducer.

The dinner was much admired. But when the desert was placed on the table, it was extolled in the highest terms. It was indeed more sumptuous than it could be supposed *Mr. Metham's* fortune would afford; and the ordering of it seemed to reflect no great honour on my prudence.

I was much complimented for my taste in it. But one of the company observing, that it might have been spared, or at least that it might have been more confined, I became sensible of the impropriety I had been guilty of, in leaving it indiscriminately to the confectioner. It being, however, now too late to be rectified, I endeavoured to turn it off by pleasantries; saying, "I was not in fear of visiting the new buildings in *St. George's-fields*, on account of it; but if ever I should, I hoped some one or other of them would release me." Upon which *Mr. Metham* arose, more like an inhabitant of *Moor-fields*, than the master of the feast, and declared I might rot there before he would release me.

The surprize this extraordinary declaration excited in the company, and the damp it threw upon them, produced a dead silence for a few moments. At length the newly-introduced visitor, turning to *Mr. Metham*, said to him, "I hope, Sir, you will not be angry with those that will!" I endeavoured to recover my spirits, but all in  
vain

vain. The festivity of the company was entirely destroyed. And though I did not regret the expence of the day, I could not help lamenting that my intentions were frustrated. What added to my vexation was, that there being no place of public entertainment open, on that evening, to induce the company to take their leave, I found myself under the necessity of assuming a cheerfulness, while my heart was bursting; and I was obliged to continue in this state of torture, till three or four o'clock the next morning.

I just had time to request one of the ladies to prevail upon *Mr. Metham* to go away; and I believe he was happy in the opportunity of doing so; as he could not avoid perceiving to what an irksome situation his mistaken jealousy (for to that passion alone was his rudeness to be imputed) had brought the whole company, as well as placed us in the most ridiculous light. *Lord Downe*, who had honoured us with his presence, having entertained a suspicion that the insult was indirectly aimed at him, went away as soon as decency would permit.—And here I must declare, which I do most solemnly, that though I had every reason to believe this nobleman had more than a partiality for me;—whilst I was under the protection of *Mr. Metham*, he never breathed an accent that might be construed into love.

After the gentlemen were gone, some of my female friends pleaded *Metbam's* cause; urging every thing that could be said in his behalf, and soliciting me to forgive him. Till at last, aggravated by the insult, and teased by their solicitations, I dropped on my knees before them, and made the most sacred vow, that if he was now to offer me his hand, I would with scorn refuse it. To which I added, with the same solemn energy, that I never would, even though death were to be the immediate consequence, from that time to my dying hour, have any connection whatever with him.

Oh *Sterne!* had thy recording angel but obliterated with a tear of pity this vow, this hasty vow, and thereby erased it forever from the eternal register of mortals deeds, I might have still been happy.—But ah! it was not to be done.—The occasion deserved not the same sacred interference as that which thou hast so pathetically described.—The pure spirit saw from what a benign source the error of thy offending hero sprung.—He perceived it to be a virtue of the first water almost imperceptibly sullied by the frailty of human nature.—But mine had not any merit to plead in its favour, and excite the compassion of those discriminating Beings.—It was a vow of passion and resentment; and as such claimed not an angel's pitying tear.



*Mr. Metham* came the next day, and endeavoured to atone for the rudeness he had been guilty of, by the most submissive concessions. He imputed it to a momentary frenzy which he could not controul ; but which proceeded from the excess of his love. My resentment was, however, too lively to be subdued by any arguments he could make use of. Neither the most passionate professions of unabated tenderness from *him*, nor the soft whispers of that affection I had long borne him, which would have pleaded his cause in my own bosom, made any impression on my offended mind. I remained inexorable to every conciliating effort, and he went away in a state of dejection scarcely to be imagined.

Next to my boasted sincerity, I have ever prided myself in my perseverance. In which I persist, as I have already said, though ruin follows.—Happy would it have been for me, however, as the sequel will prove, had not the offence been given, or that I had not so far yielded to the impetus of my resentment, as to make such vows upon the occasion, as I considered myself bound to hold inviolable.—Not only seven times shalt thou forgive, says the Prince of Peace, but *seventy times seven*.—Besides, the renewal of love from the quarrel of lovers, is an adage of the earliest ages.—Time, which brings with it experience, too often experience too dearly bought,

bought, enables me *now* to make this cool and dispassionate reflection. But, alas! at that period, I was young, unexperienced, blind to the future, and tenacious of resolutions, which perhaps, as *Hamlet* says, “would have been more honoured in the breach, than in the observance.”

As soon as my company were gone, the preceding night, or rather morning, I retired to my room; but my mind being too much discomposed to think of rest, I only walked about it. Whenever I approached the window, I observed, by the light of the lamps, a man in the street, who seemed as much agitated as myself. My attention was, however, so engrossed by my own troubles, that even curiosity could not excite me to bestow a thought on him. Had I done so, I should have concluded him to be some fortune-hunter upon the watch for a rich heiress, who lived next door to me, and who was deprived almost of seeing the light, by an *Argus* of an old uncle. This would have been my conjecture, had the singularity of the circumstance engaged my notice; little thinking our agitations proceeded from the same source; but it did not.

After some days, *Mr. Metham* finding that I still persisted in the resolution of not admitting him as a lover, solicited to visit me as a friend; and he prevailed upon *Colonel Sandford* to persuade me to receive his visits  
upon

upon those terms. To this I, at length, consented ; and I yielded my consent the more readily, as I had formed a resolution never to enter into a tender connection with any other person, but to dedicate the whole of my attention to the duties of my profession.

I now wrote to *Mr. Quin*, to give him an account of the revolution that had taken place in my affairs ; and at the same time I informed him of my determination to avoid an union with any of his sex. He wrote me for answer, that he very much approved the latter part of my letter, and made use of many arguments to confirm me in the resolution. As to the opinion of the world, it was of very little value, in my estimation. And as a proof that I had always held it so, I had never kept secret from it any part of my conduct. As I was thus unreserved, people charitably gave me credit for more follies than I was guilty of. It being the custom of the censorious to err always on the *unfavourable* side, in such a calculation.

The undiscerning multitude judge of actions from appearance alone. The accidents from whence they proceed, and the motives that have governed them, lie hid from their view.—So that whoever places their happiness on the good opinion of the world, will pass many a sleepless night.—Some respect is indeed due to reputation, especially from the  
female

female sex. But if untoward circumstances have rendered every care to preserve that, ineffectual; and either ill-founded suspicions, or an unguarded moment, have cast a stain upon it; the consciousness of a purity of intention should enable us to set at defiance the slanders of that many-tongued demon, who, "making the wind his post-horse, is continually stuffing the ears of men with false reports."

A few mornings after, my maid brought me a packet that had been left for me; which, upon opening, I found to contain ten bank bills of one hundred pounds each, inclosed in a blank cover. I directly concluded that such an instance of munificence could only come from the nobleman I have lately mentioned. Upon revolving in my mind the circumstance, and endeavouring to trace from probability the sender, I could fix on no one that seemed so likely to be the person as his Lordship. But as a present of such magnitude could not come from any one, who was not greatly interested about me, I judged the person that sent it would not remain long concealed; I therefore locked up the packet with a determination not to break into the sum it contained, upon any account, but to wait the event.

*Mr. Metham* being to dine with me, I asked *Colonel Sandford* to accompany him; as I thought

thought a *tête-a-tête*, in the present situation of affairs between us, would be awkward, and not very agreeable to both. And with these two gentlemen came *Mr. Calcraft*, with whom *Metham* was now grown very intimate. *Mrs. Lane*, the second daughter of *Mrs. Rich*, happening accidentally to fall in, she made likewise one of the party.

During dinner I was regretting that I could not obtain places to see the new pantomime of "Harlequin Sorcerer," the houses being so crowded that there was not a seat to be got. Upon which *Mrs. Lane* politely offered to procure seats for me, any evening I should chuse to go, as well as for the young *Dives*, who still continued to be generally with me. As I was not engaged the Saturday following at the theatre, that evening was fixed on for my going. The *dear* friend of the unsuspecting *Metham*, *Mr. Calcraft*, now proposed to the gentlemen a party to Oxford, on some pretext or other. As the *Colonel* and *Mr. Metham* were both men of pleasure, they readily accepted the offer; and it was agreed that they should set off the next morning.

G. A. B.

## LETTER XLVII.

Oct. 26, 17—.

**M**R. GARRICK, in order to fill his house, was now obliged to play very often himself. And having had such ill-success with all his new pieces, except “The Masque of Alfred,” he determined in future to stick to his old ones; which he had always experienced to be both staple and lucrative. His appearing in Hamlet on the Saturday, which had been announced some time, gave me an opportunity of availing myself of *Mrs. Lane’s* interest at Covent-Garden. She herself did me the favour to accompany me; and I took with me *Miss Dives* and her two brothers.

Soon after we were seated, to my great surprize, I heard my places called for; and who should make his appearance but *Mr. Calcraft*. After a thousand apologies for the liberty he had taken, he seated himself; and as we were confined for room, he was obliged to take one of the boys upon his knee. I then naturally enquired, why he did not pursue his journey to Oxford; and whether *Mr. Metham* was returned? He gave me for answer, that he had been obliged to come back upon some very extraordinary business, an express having overtaken him at Salt-hill,

to

to recall him to town; but that the two gentlemen had continued their rout.

As *Mr. Calcraft* was a man of business; this story passed current with me. Indeed as I could not entertain the most distant idea that he could have had the presumption to conceive any design upon me, or the vanity to attempt to rival *Metham*, the excuse he made carried with it an appearance of probability, and passed without further notice. At the conclusion of the piece, he handed us to the carriage, and requested permission to wait upon us home. This I consented to, and when we were set down, I asked him to stay supper.

It being very late before the entertainment was concluded, supper was not over till near two. And as there was neither coach nor chair to be got for *Mrs. Lane*, and my carriage was set up, *Mr. Calcraft* offered her his chair, which was in waiting. As that lady's house was as far off as *Carey-street*, *Lincoln's-Inn Fields*, he was obliged to stay a considerable time before his chairman could return. This procured him a *tête-à-tête*, which otherwise he could never have obtained.

Before I proceed, it will be necessary to give some description of a person who will constitute so conspicuous a part in the dramatic personæ of my work. He was at that time called *honest Jack Calcraft*. Whether his conduct since intitles him to this invaluable

epithet, I shall leave to your discernment. He was tall, rather inclined to the *en bon point*, of a florid complexion, blue eyes, auburn hair; and, taken altogether, he had a manly handsome face, and a well made person; but from a slouch he had by some means or other contracted, or perhaps *from not having learned to dance*, as *Coupée* says, he had a certain vulgarity in his figure, that was rather disgusting. Indeed, but few men appeared to advantage, when *Mr. Metham* was present, as his form was eminently attracting, and his department truly elegant. *Mr. Calcraft* did not attempt to impose himself on his acquaintance, either as a man of letters or a wit. He had sense enough to know that such a deception would prove too manifest to pass without discovery.

His father was the town clerk of Grantham. He had given his son a country school education, that is, he could read indifferently; but to make amends for this he was an adept in figures, and was perfectly acquainted with keeping a ledger. This qualification, joined to unremitting assiduity, enabled him, from being a clerk with a salary of only forty pounds a year, to acquire a *princely* fortune.

When we were left alone, the conversation turned upon the impropriety of *Mr. Metham's* behaviour to me, at which he had been present some days before. He said, it was only to be excused, by considering it as the



the madness of jealousy. And he seemed to regret his friend's extravagance of temper, which had led him to make use of a brutal expression, that had rendered him miserable.

This apparently unaffected concern for his friend, added to the general character he bore, gave me so favourable an opinion of him, that I doubted not but he was really as honest a young man as he was represented to be. I therefore informed him, in confidence, of the bills which had been sent me. As I considered him at too great a distance to form any design upon me, his seeming diffidence, his affected moderation, and apparent frankness, pointed him out, since he had been thus thrown in my way, as the most proper person I could consult upon the occasion. I accordingly showed him the bills, and asked him whether he could judge, by the superscription, from whom they came.

He seemed highly flattered at the confidence with which I honoured him ; and advised me by all means to make use of them. At the same time he declared, that had he possessed the power, he would have done the same, without any interested views. Having myself the most romantic notions of generosity, I was readily induced to believe that the person who had sent them, (which, in my own mind, I believed to be *Lord Downe*) had no other view than to extricate me from

some difficulties, which, upon the terms *Metham* and myself at present were, I might not chuse to ask or receive from him.

*Mr. Calcraft* then asked me, whether I thought *Mr. Metham* intended to marry me? In answer to which, I frankly told him, I would not accept his hand was he now to offer it to me. To this, I added, that I had formed a resolution never to enter into another engagement, let it be ever so eligible and advantageous. At this part of our conversation the return of the chair being announced, he took his leave; requesting that I would permit him the honour of waiting upon me when I had leisure. To this I assented; and then retired to my room, without entertaining any idea of what an indiscretion I had been guilty, in sitting till such an hour in the morning with a young man, who, though I esteemed him to be too insignificant to cause reflections on my character, might not be deemed so by *others*.—The consciousness of acting right is not alone sufficient to secure from censure; every *appearance* of indiscretion must also be attentively avoided.—If, notwithstanding, “we be as chaste as ice, and as pure as snow, we shall not escape calumny,” as *Hamlet* tells *Ophelia*; with what circumspection must it be necessary that the most innocent should act, to preserve their characters as much as possible, from imputed stains!

The

The next night, was *Mrs. Pritchard's* benefit, in which I performed. The stage was exceedingly crowded. When a person in liquor accosted me, as I stood ready to go on, in a very rude manner. *Mr. Calcraft* who happened to be by, hearing what passed, immediately resenting the affront that had been offered to me ; and, after some words that ensued, knocked the stranger down. As soon as the aggressor was able to rise, my champion desired he would walk out, as he wanted to speak with him. They accordingly withdrew together ; but upon *Mr. Calcraft's* speedily returning, with looks of cheerfulness, we all concluded the affair was amicably adjusted. This excited the first idea that ever arose in my mind of his entertaining a partiality for me ; and made me repent that I had given him an invitation to be of a large party that were to sup with me after the play was over.

The distant respect which *Mr. Calcraft* showed towards me during the evening, induced me to imagine I had been mistaken in the conjecture I had formed. And as he was the first of the company that went away ; and had been rallied during supper, relative to some lady he was partial to ; I was convinced that I had been in an error.

The next morning I went to take a walk in the Park ; where a servant of *Mr. Metham's* came up to me, and informed me that his

master was come to town, and desired to speak to me at his lodgings. As it was but a step from the Park, I immediately went. In my way I saw, to my great surprize, *Mr. Calcraft* and the person who had offended me the evening before. I afterwards found that *Mr. Calcraft* had paid the stranger an early visit in the morning, and insisted on his either asking my pardon, or exchanging a shot with him. The poor man, who did not even recollect, when he awoke, how he had got the bruises he felt, could not at first be persuaded that any thing had happened to occasion this requisition. Nor even if the affront had really been given, did he conceive there was any occasion to make an apology to an *actress*. *Mr. Calcraft*, however, convincing him that there was a necessity for either one or the other, the Hibernian (for of that kingdom he happened to be) wisely preferred the former.

He accordingly prepared to attend his unwelcome visitor. They had been at my house, and hearing I was gone to the Park, were making the best of their way to *Mr. Metham's* lodgings, where *Mr. Calcraft* judged I might call in. We all entered together; and the stranger made an awkward apology; uttering something, at the same time, about the delicacy of an *actress*.—A set of wretches, that he seemed to think, might at any time be offended with impunity. *Mr. Metham* no  
sooner

sooner heard this, than he said to him, with great solemnity, "Sir, that lady is to be my wife!" So unexpected a declaration frightened the poor Irishman, who thought he had met with *Don Quixote* himself; and he took his leave as soon as he possibly could. For *Mr. Metham* had an air of consequence, when he pleased to assume it, that was sufficient to strike awe and terror into a braver man than my insulter seemed to be.

When the stranger was gone, instead of thanking *Mr. Calcraft* for having rescued me from the insults of an intoxicated brute; with all the *hauteur* of an eastern monarch, *Mr. Metham* asked him what right he had to insist himself as my champion. My surprize at this fresh absurdity, was greater than I can express; for I expected, as he certainly ought to have done, that he would have loaded my protector with thanks, for having guarded me during his absence.

But the mystery was soon unravelled. By what dropt in the conversation which ensued, I found, that having unluckily called at my house, he had been informed by my maid (of whose partiality to him, and disrespect to me, I have already made mention) not only of the *tête à tête* which had taken place at so unseasonable an hour, the night before, between *Mr. Calcraft* and myself, but of his walking in the street during the whole of the night after our quarrel. Whilst this information

information made me acquainted, that *Mr. Calcraft* was the identical person whom I had a casual view of from my window, and evinced his attachment to me more than any other circumstance had done, it accounted for *Mr. Metham's* present behaviour. The intelligence he had thus obtained from my servant, added to *Mr. Calcraft's* sudden return to town, awakened all his jealousy, and convinced him of his new friend's duplicity. The effect this discovery, and the altercation which ensued, had upon me, was greater than my spirits were able to bear; I accordingly fainted away. When I came to myself, I heard that a challenge had been the consequence, and that *General Burton* and *Colonel Heywood* were to be the seconds; but what was the result of their meeting, I never heard, as fortune disposed of me for some time in a manner I little expected.

As my benefit was to be the Saturday following, the consequent employment which I had upon my hands, prevented me from seeing either of my heroes but at a distance, during the interim. I had made choice of "Venice Preserved." The house was crowded, and the applause uncommon. *Mr. Murray* (now *Earl Mansfield*) sat near *Mr. Fox*, and after expressing great satisfaction at the performance in general, concluded with saying, "I came to admire *Garrick*, but go away enchanted with *Bellamy*." *Mr. Fox*, al-  
ways

ways happy to be the harbinger of good news, came to inform me of this most flattering circumstance of my whole theatrical career. You may be assured I was not a little elevated with receiving the approbation of so great and sensible a man. *Mr. Garrick* being in the Green-room, at the time *Mr. Fox* delivered me the pleasing intelligence, he beheld the honour that was thus conferred upon me with an envious eye; and it confirmed that dislike he already had imbibed for me. For more apprehensive of a rivalship in fame, than an eastern monarch of his power, he could not bear, *even a sister* near the throne.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R XLVIII.

October 30, 17—

**T**HE fatigue both of body and mind I had gone through the preceeding day, occasioned me to lie longer in bed than usual, the morning after my benefit. I had given my servants orders not to admit *Mr. Metham* if he came. But he was the master, and would not be denied. He accordingly made his way to my bed room, and came up to the side of my bed, with a look as frantic as if he had just escaped from *Dr. Munro's*. Then looking steadfastly at me, he asked if I would live

live with him again? Upon my answering in a determined tone of voice that I would not, he drew his hanger, and swore by his maker that I should then die with him. Very fortunately my little boy was playing in the room; who, upon seeing the shining weapon held over me, he screamed out, "Oh my mama! my mama!"

This exclamation of his child awakening a gleam of tenderness, and observing that I was deprived of my senses, he came a little to his. As soon as I was recovered, he tried by threats and imprecations to prevail upon me to lay aside the resolution I had formed, and to renew our late intimacy; but in vain. I was not to be moved. Intimidation, as I have before observed, never had any weight with me. Finding this method would not succeed, he had recourse to milder means. He intreated; he prayed; and made use of every winning argument the utmost tenderness could suggest. This mode of proceeding was much more likely to answer his purpose than the other. Yet I still resisted every offer, even that of his immediate hand; together with the most solemn assurance that he would endeavour to atone for the offence he had given me, by the most unremitting attention during the whole of his life.

Upon my still obstinately persisting in my refusal, his phrenzy again returned. I repeatedly desired him to leave me; and nothing



thing but his excessive tenderness, and the fear that I might be once more deprived of my senses, could have induced him to comply with my request. At length, however, seeing the situation to which I was reduced, he went away. But this was only on condition that I would permit him to return in two hours. As he went out, he gave the servants strict orders not to suffer any person whatsoever to see me. He then, as I afterwards learnt, proceeded to his lodgings, where he found *Major Burton*, who had been some time in London, and had postponed his return to France on account of the distraction of his friend.

The moment he was gone, I dispatched my maid upon a senseless errand to one of my female acquaintances. And to prevent any apprehensions that might arise in her mind from being sent out, I told her I was so ill, that I would endeavour to compose myself till she returned. But instead of doing this, she was no sooner out of my room, than I arose, and putting on the first cloaths I could find, I ran more dead than alive, like a distracted woman, into the street. The people, at this time, it being Sunday, were just coming from church. And seeing a young creature, in a dress not adapted to walking in the streets, and with a wildness in her looks, they naturally concluded I was deprived of my senses.

As

As I went along, I was composed enough to recollect that my mother's lodgings, or the residence of any one of my intimates, could not furnish me with a refuge, as those would be the first places my pursuer would search for me in, when he was acquainted with my flight. I therefore winged my steps to Southampton street, to the house where I lodged when I first returned from Ireland; which was the same as the worthy *Gansels* had taken up their abode in. *Mrs. Smith*, the mistress of, it did every thing in her power to compose me. And after she had got me some breakfast, went herself to my mother to inform her of my being there. This precaution proved well-timed, as *Mr. Metham* was at her lodgings, and raving like a madman. He had been at *Mr. Calcraft's* house, as he concluded he was the lure that had tempted me to fly. But being assured that I was not there, he continued his researches. *Mr. Calcraft*, upon hearing I had absented myself, experienced nearly the same tormenting sensations that *Metham* did. Love and jealousy made *him* suppose that I had put myself under the protection of *Lord Downe*; his Lordship possessing every attraction which captivates our sex. He consequently felt little less from his jealous apprehensions than *Mr. Metham* experienced.

My mother after promising *Mr. Metham* that she would inform him of my retirement

as soon as she had discovered it, came to me. She would have been better pleased, had I accepted of what had been so long the grand object of *her* constant solicitations, and of *my* wishes, now it was offered to me ; but as *Metham* was in the frantic state she found him to be, and danger might have attended my continuing any longer at home, she did not entirely disapprove of my precipitate flight.

The passion week, very fortunately for me, was the succeeding one to that in which I had experienced such a variety of perturbations. To obtain a little respite from these, and to avoid the frantic *Metham*, till he should be restored to a greater degree of tranquillity, I determined to seize this opportunity of paying a visit to my friends at *Donnalán-Park*. *Mrs. Smith*, who had likewise received a pressing invitation from the hospitable owners of that mansion, when they were at her house, agreed to accompany me.

Accordingly we set out the next day, in a hired post-chaise, and on our arrival were received by *Mr.* and *Mrs. Gansel* with the greatest cordiality. In the old gentleman it was more than cordiality ; it amounted to transport. He even declared that the pleasure of seeing me would add ten years to his life ; as he felt himself regenerated by it. He overpowered me with the profusion of

with which he loaded me. So that all those who were present, supposed that I not only surpassed the *Oldfield* and *Porter* of *his* time, but equalled the inimitable *Gibber* of *ours*; a pitch of excellence to which I could scarcely hope to arrive. My youth, indeed, claimed the indulgence of the public, and this they were pleased to bestow with a more lavish hand than, I fear, my merit deserved.

The unfeigned marks of pleasure which were to be seen in the countenances of the master and mistress, diffused itself through the whole family; and all the domestics seemed to wish to surpass each other in their attention towards me. I found myself in a terrestrial paradise, where every thing proclaimed it to be the abode of peace, innocence and delight.—*Mr. Gansel*, who from the frequent attacks of the gout to which he was subject, was an invalid, usually retired at eight o'clock, and left his dame to entertain their company at supper. At dinner he always took the lead, and not only kept *Mrs. Gansel* silent, but saved her the trouble of doing the offices of the table. But notwithstanding this was his usual custom, in order to shew me every respect in his power, the evening of my arrival, he declared he would sit up, if he never did on another. It was in vain that I united my intreaties with those of his Lady and the  
company

company, that he would not risk his health by staying up after his accustomed hour. He said, he felt so much satisfaction from seeing his admired *Juliet* at Donnalán-Park, that nothing should induce him to leave her till she retired to rest.

I was not a little amazed to hear the old gentleman order for supper, three boiled chickens, three roasted, three broiled, and the cold chicken-pye. Such catering, where there seemed to be a variety of every thing necessary to please the appetite, carried with it the appearance of a peculiar species of oddity. Nor did his interference in his lady's province seem less singular. And though such a quantity of provisions of the same quality was ordered, the company consisted only of eight persons.

During supper, a gloom overclouded the countenance of *Mrs. Gansel*, which, I likewise could not account for. Her invitation had been as pressing as that of her husband, and the pleasure she shewed upon my alighting from the carriage, had all the appearance of sincerity.—What can occasion these mysteries, thought I! They were, however, at length cleared up.

When *Mrs. Gansel* did me the honour to show me to my apartment, she apologized for the indifferent supper I had sat down to. She said, she had provided one much more suitable to those I had been accustomed to,

but her lord and master, having in his younger days made an oath, never to have at his table, when he himself was present, but one dish, or rather, only food of the same quality, excepting vegetable and fruit-pyes; she had been obliged that evening to conform to his humour. I told her, as that was the case, I could not conceive how he could entertain such numbers as frequented his table, and preserve his resolution, unless he roasted a whole ox. She replied, that on the morrow my curiosity would be fully gratified, as his brethren of the quorum were to dine there. She then assured me, that as she found supper to be my principal meal, I should have one of a different nature from the dinner, as long as I did them the favour to stay; *Mr. Gansel* giving her permission to please herself in that point, when he was not present. I own the oddity of my new friend, and the innocent frankness of his wife, gave me as much entertainment, at that juncture, as my harrassed mind could be susceptible of.

G. A. B.

## L E T T E R. XLIX.

November 9, 17—

**T**HE next morning I got up to contemplate the beauties of a place, which seemed to abound with every thing that was convenient and elegant. The first thing which struck my notice, and which I had not observed, through my fatigue, the night before, was the furniture and hangings of the room in which I slept; these, as well as the bed and the window-curtains, were of blue sattin, with borders composed of flowers cut out of fine point lace, such as was formerly worn. This had the most beautiful effect of any thing I had ever seen of the kind.

The house was small, but very convenient; there were, however, apartments at the Pheasantry, an adjacent building, which could be occupied upon any particular occasion. The kitchen was large and well furnished. The pantry was supplied with every thing that could gratify the taste of the greatest epicure. The neatness of the dairy proclaimed that the mistress had an eye over it. The park, though well stocked, was kept so clean, that it had the appearance of a kitchen-garden. The menagerie, which contained many sorts of curious beasts, was taken great care of. The house was plea-

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santly.

fantly situated, but what conduced to make it more so was, that from the parlour window you had a view of the lighters and boats passing and repassing on the neighbouring river, which formed a most beautiful moving picture.

And yet the worthy possessors of this delightful residence were not happy. They found a great alloy to their comfort from their only son, *Colonel Gansel's* obstinately refusing to comply with their wishes, in marrying. This occasioned much regret to his parents, who were apprehensive that from his living and dying in a state of celibacy, their estate, which they had taken so much pains to improve for him, should devolve to strangers.—Such is the lot of mortals.—Some darksome cloud or other will intercept the beams of happiness.—We vainly flatter ourselves with tasting unimbittered pleasures.—To every state and condition are annexed its advantages and disadvantages.—Even a monarch, “sleeping in perfumed chambers, “under the canopies of costly state, and “lulled with sounds of sweet melody,” sometimes can envy the peaceful slumbers of the meanest wretch.—And, like the *Fourth Harry*, exclaim,

\* “Can’st thou, O partial sleep, give thy repose

“To

\* Henry 4th, Second Part, Act 3d, Scene 1st.





master of the feast, who sat next to me, gave me a gentle tap, adding at the same time, "sit still, my dear girl; we never say any thing women would blush to hear. And I can see no reason for ladies retiring after the first or second glass, without it arises from an apprehension of something of that nature, or that the men propose to make themselves brutes."

This sentiment, which would have done honour to the most refined understanding, pleased me so much, that it was with difficulty I refrained from kissing the hand that had tapped me.—The want of decency, indeed, argues a want of sense. It is very hard that woman should be excluded, as they too frequently are at the politest tables, from sharing in the mirth and conviviality, usually attendant on the circulation of the bottle, because some gentleman cannot refrain from mingling with their wit, what must give offence to a delicate mind!—With men of true genius and perfect good breeding, the mental bowl, (as my much lamented friend *Thomson* terms it) is more plied than the bottle.—Their feasts not only tend to the refreshment of the body, but furnish food for the soul.—And as the intellectual bowl, though elevating, does not possess the intoxicating power of the juice of the grape, the wit and humour it inspires, are seldom tinged with indelicacy.

At

At *Mr. Quin's* petit soupers, which were honoured with the presence of some of the brightest geniuses of the age, nothing escaped that could offend a female ear. There the conversation was delicate, lively, and interspersed with every thing that could improve the understanding, as well as delight the heart.—Some expressions, not altogether becoming the lips of this best of men, have been, I know, imputed to him. And from the luxuriancy of his imagination, some might have escaped him in an unguarded moment. But these *jeux d'esprits* have, I doubt not, been multiplied; and many have obtained the sanction of his name which owed not their being to him.

*Colonel Gansel* joined us in the evening; and as his mother doated upon him, the fattest calf was killed. Upon this occasion *Mrs. Gansel* gave evident proofs that she had made *Mrs. Glass's* art of cookery her study. The next day as we were sitting at dinner, the old gentleman was informed that a stranger wished to speak with him. Upon his sending out word that he would be glad if the gentleman would walk in, he received a note acquainting him, that as the business was of a very particular and pressing nature, the writer begged to have the honour of speaking to him.

*Mr. Gansel*, who added curiosity to his other qualities, gave orders that one of the  
four

four dishes which were on the table, (four being his usual number) should be kept warm for himself and visiter. He then desired us to proceed with our dinner, as from the contents of the note, it was uncertain how long he should be detained. The air he assumed as he said this, seemed to affect his son very visibly. I observed that he changed colour, and appeared to be much agitated. After some time the bell rang, and the reserved dish was ordered to be served up to *Mr. Gansel* and his guest. *Mrs. Gansel* going out at the same time, she soon returned, and smiling on her son, said to him, “you need not be alarmed, your father “ is in high good humour. You are not the “ first son that has fallen in love without the “ leave of his parents.” From this I learnt the cause of the Colonel’s anxiety. And was further informed, afterwards, that he had been for sometime privately married to a person, to his union with whom he had but little hope of obtaining his father’s consent.

The Colonel had brought down with him a beautiful white bull, as an addition to his father’s menagerie. It was the most extraordinary creature of the kind I ever saw. After dinner we went into the park to view it. Whilst I was there, a servant came to inform me that his master requested to speak with me. As I supposed the old gentleman

Gentleman only wanted me, through his fondness for my company, to join in the conversation, I was not very well pleased with this mark of distinction. I had much rather have remained with the party I was on, and continued my walk; but, notwithstanding my reluctance, I obeyed the invitation.

This being my idea relative to the cause of the message I had just received, I went into the room where *M. Gansel* was, without any other suspicion. When, to my inexpressible surprise, I saw *Mr. Calcraft* with him. I had no sooner entered, than the old gentleman taking me by the hand, and his new visitor by his, introduced him to me in the following words. "Here, my dear, is your protector from a madman. This is a gentleman of honour, and he proposes, with your consent, to make you happy for life."

He then showed me a paper; but without explaining the contents of it, rung the bell, and ordered a servant to go to his attorney, and desire him to come immediately. The servant soon returned, and informed his master that the attorney he usually employed was not at home, but that *Mr. —* (I have forgot the name of the other) was. "No! no!" exclaimed the old gentleman, "he will not do. I do not want a fellow to come and dine with me, and then charge me for his company." "Do you know, Sir,"

“ Sir,” said he, turning to *Mr. Calcraft*,  
“ that I frequently asked that man to dine  
“ with me in the same manner I may do  
“ any other of my neighbours, and the  
“ scoundrel, besides cramming himself  
“ with the best that my table afforded,  
“ charged me thirteen shillings and four  
“ pence for every time he did me the ho-  
“ nour to visit me, till it amounted to the  
“ sum of two hundred pounds. But you  
“ are in no haste,” continued he; “ my at-  
“ torney will return in the evening, and  
“ then the business shall be concluded.”

My confusion at so unexpected a proposal deprived me of the power of speech. Upon which *Mr. Gansel* went on to inform me that *Mr. Calcraft*, in whose praise he launched out, had it not in his power to marry me immediately, as his dependence on *Mr. Fox* prevented him from doing so. But that the paper he held in his hand was the copy of a contract of marriage, in which *Mr. Calcraft* had engaged, under the forfeiture of fifty thousand pounds, to make me his wife within the term of six or seven years; in which time, from every appearance, there was no doubt of his acquiring such an independency as would enable him to avow his situation. But at present he could not suffer the ceremony to be performed, as his patron had enjoined him upon pain of his displeasure, and the loss of his support, not to enter into  
a serious

a serious engagement with a woman in public life. That as these were the sentiments of the man to whom he was indebted for his present affluence, and on whom his future prospects depended, he thought he was bound in gratitude to obey his injunctions on this head. Therefore, though he loved me to distraction, he had too great a regard to his honour, which he had pledged to his patron, to purchase even me at the expence of it. As things were in such a situation he had thought of this method as the only one by which he could secure *me*, and keep his own word.

I heard with patience *Mr. Gansel* repeat his visitor's reasons for his present conduct; but he had no sooner done so, than I expressed in the strongest terms my dissatisfaction to the latter, at taking the liberty of troubling either *Mr. Gansel* or myself upon the subject. I then assured him that I was firmly resolved never to form any connection whatsoever, and desired he would let me hear no more of his addresses. I was now about to leave the room; when *Mr. Calcraft*, who was visibly affected at my determination, stepped between me and the door, and endeavoured to prevent me from going.

Offended at this freedom, passion got the better of good manners, and, I am almost ashamed even at this distant period to indite it, I struck him. The thought of having

demeaned myself so much, operated so forcibly on my mind that I burst into tears; and I felt myself more confounded at having given the blow, than Zanga did at receiving one. *Mr. Calcraft* vented his feelings in sighs and groans; and the old gentleman was almost distracted. At length, the latter having compelled me to sit down, he expatiated upon *Mr. Metham's* ungentle man-like treatment of me. By his means, he said, my veracity was doubted; my reputation blasted; and I was every moment liable to fall a sacrifice to a madman's jealousy. In short, he painted my situation in such lively colours, that I now trembled as much from fear, as I had just done from anger; and I sat deprived of the power of speech or motion.

When *Mr. Calcraft* found he had so warm an advocate in *Mr. Gansel*, he thought it would further his suit, if he left him to plead his cause alone. He accordingly apologized to the old gentleman for his abrupt departure, by making business his excuse. He further told him, that he feared the same reason would impede his visiting *Donnalan-Park* again for some time, unless he should honour him with the pleasing intelligence of my consenting to be his. This he begged he would strive by every means in his power to obtain, and as soon as he had done so, he would fly to execute the deed.

He



He added, that his affection for me made him unhappy to a degree on my account, as he knew not what would be the consequence of my returning to London without some person to protect me. This task he assured me he would undertake if I would permit him, though at the hazard of his life. He then, as I made him no answer, took his leave.

Happy was I when he left the room. The agitation however, that I had undergone during this disgusting trial, threw me into a fever; and as the passion week was expired before I recovered, *Mr. Gansel* was obliged to write to his son, who had returned to town, to desire he would wait on *Mr. Garrick* to inform him of my inability to attend the duties of the theatre for some days. This the Colonel did, and found that my presence was not very requisite to the manager, as most of the nights were appropriated to benefits.—Surely never woman experienced such a succession of anxieties and troubles.—I was born to be unfortunate.—And every incident, even at this early period of my life, tended to fulfill the fatal decree.—Prepare yourself therefore to meet in the sequent pages a variety of sorrows, thinly, very thinly, sprinkled with comforts.—But I will not anticipate.

G. A. B.

## LETTER L.

November 20, 17—

**M**R. *GANSELL* soothed, advised, and used every art, to induce me to accept of what he termed happiness; and when my indisposition was at the height, he attended me rather like an old nurse, than a man of an affluent fortune, and one who had sat so many sessions in parliament.

At length I received a letter from my mother, wherein she informed me, that she had let *Mr. Metham* know the place of my retirement, with which he seemed perfectly satisfied. That she found his exasperation against me, proceeded more from the wound his pride had received by the supposition of his having a rival, than from the fervour of his affection. She added, that it was reported he had renewed his intimacy with a demirep of quality, to whom he had formerly been devoted. And concluded with saying, that she had every reason to believe, from what she had heard, that were I now to relax from my severity, (judging from the indifference with which he spoke of me) he did not mean to marry me.

This letter, this fatal letter, strengthened by *Metham's* silence, when he knew, or was supposed

supposed to know, the place of my refuge; renewed my resentment against him, which for some time had been upon the wane; and put the finishing stroke to my undoing. For had I seen him before the union, to which I was so much solicited, had taken place, though I might not have consented to be his, I never could have been anothers. Thus by the most cruel deception, (for a deception I afterwards found it to be, and my mother the innocent means by which it was rendered effectual) was I made the dupe of my resentment.

That passion now exerting its greatest power over my mind, and my well-meaning tempter, *Mr. Gansel*, making use of every art to obtain my consent, to be the future wife of *Mr. Calcraft*, I could not withstand their united efforts. The writing was immediately copied, and a letter dispatched to require his attendance to sign and seal it.

But my consent was scarcely given, before the dear idea of the man I still loved, in spite of his unkind words; my first and only love; the father of my child; rushed, in its most pleasing form upon my mind, and banished every other object. My heart recoiled at the reluctant union I was about to enter into, and I determined to adhere to the resolution I had made, of avoiding a connection with any other man. My kind-hoist no sooner was informed of this alteration in my sentiments,

than he endeavoured to combat it with his most powerful arguments. He represented to me, the absurdity of opposing my good fortune, which had thrown in my way an *assured* connection with a man, who was already in a good situation, and who bid fair to be soon in an opulent one. That it was foolish and childish in the extreme, to recall my promise when I had once given it. And, reserving his most forcible one till the last, he concluded with observing, that he wondered my *spirit*, which, upon almost every other occasion, was uncontrollable, could bear to be treated with indifference. This thought, added to the recollection of my reception at Tunbridge, which made me severely feel my degraded situation, aroused once more my resentment; and it “came o’er me, as doth the raven o’er the infected house,” till it totally me deprived of the power of making any further opposition.

I need not say that *Mr. Calcraft* soon reached Donnalan Park. The contract was immediately executed; and, except the omission of the ceremony, our nuptials were solemnized to the satisfaction of all parties, *but my poor self*. The old gentleman was as happy and as proud of his having succeeded in the negotiation, as if he had married a darling daughter to an hereditary prince. As for myself, I still, like the patriarch’s dove, longed to return to that home, where  
all

all my happiness had so long been deposited; and had I known the *real* situation of the man that had offended me, instead of waiting for his submission, I should myself have produced the olive branch, and have sued for peace. When we returned to town, the contract was left with *Mr. Gansel*, as a place of the greatest security, and as being lodged in the hands of one of my most zealous friends.

Upon my arrival in London, supposing *Mr. Metham's* state of mind to be such as it had been represented to me, I wrote to him to let him know that I had now placed an everlasting bar to any future union between myself and him. But how shall I relate it! I found, that instead of the unconcern I supposed him to have acquired, he had been confined to his bed, ever since our separation, by a violent fever, which he was at this time slowly recovering from. But upon the receipt of my letter, his disorder returned, and with it his delirium. So that he was now more frantic than ever. And in the paroxysms of his rage, he repeatedly attempted to destroy himself. He was, however, prevented from accomplishing his dreadful purpose, by the tender care of his friend *Major Burton*, and the vigilance of his faithful valet, who never left him.

The account my mother sent me relative to *Mr. Metham's* recovered coolness, and of his

his renewing his connection with the demi-rep of fashion, I afterwards discovered, was communicated to her by my servant, whose disregard for me I have more than once mentioned, and who had been gained over to his interest by *Mr. Calcraft*. But this manœuvre, though it answered the purpose in some degree, by bringing about the union he wished for, did not in the long run, (as will be seen) insure him the happiness he expected. The very falshood and deception made use of upon these occasions, are always sure to counteract the purposes they have been designed to serve.—Pleasures which are acquired by truth and honour will alone prove satisfactory and lasting.

A few days after my being in town, I was told that *Sherrad*, *Mr. Metham's* valet, wanted to speak to me. He had brought me a letter. The poor fellow with tears in his eyes informed me, that his master was still confined to his bed, and would certainly die, if I did not see him, and give him some comfort. He told me that he raved continually about me, wishing to call me his once more, and conjuring me on his knees to be reconciled to him. When I assured *Sherrad* that it was too late, as my fate was already determined, the kind creature exclaimed. “Then  
“we are all undone; my poor little master  
“and all.” Having said this, he hung his head oppressed with sorrow and dejection.

This

This unaffected tenderness in the servant, and his mentioning my dear child, whom he loved as if he had been his own, was more than I could bear. It harrowed up my soul. I rushed from him, to hide my agonizing sensations; and in my distraction reproached both my mother and *Calcraft* for having joined to deceive and betray me. The effect of these exquisite sensations was too much for my strength, and I fell senseless on the floor. From thence I was conveyed to my room, in a state of frantic grief, little short of *Metham's*, and considering myself a wretched creature, lost for ever to the world.

When *Mr. Metham's* faithful valet returned, and gave his master an account of what had passed, his distraction increased; and in a fit of real madness, for nothing but madness could dictate such an epistle, as he now knew the insurmountable obstacles which intervened, repeated his promise of marriage if I would return to him; and conjuring me at the same time, by our past happiness, to permit him to fulfil it.

The perturbations I had been thrown into by *Skerrad's* visit, added to the other severe trials I had before undergone, continued for some days to keep my mind in a state of frantic confusion; but they were too violent to last long. They at length subsided, and gave way to a stupor which threatened idiotism. As I had not, amidst all this, answered

*Mr.*

*Mr. Metham's* letter, he was so displeas'd at the omission, that he sent for his son from my mother, and plac'd him with *Mrs. Dives*, his sister. This, however, gave me no additional uneasiness, as the infinite obligations that lady lay under to her brother, as well as the tenderneſs with which I had treated her children whilst they were with me, insured a return of affection to my little boy; who was now two years and a quarter old.

You see me now enter'd into a new track of life; and will, I doubt not, do me the justice to acknowledge, that a train of events contributed towards it, which it was scarcely in the power of human prudence to counteract.—I have, indeed, to blame myself, as I have had occasion to do more than once before, for *precipitation*. To my precipitation in making the rash vow I did, never to have any further intimacy with *Mr. Metham*, and to my obstinate adherence to that vow, notwithstanding his penitence and promise of an honourable atonement, am I indebted in a great measure for the fatal consequences which ensued.—“There is,” as *Shakspear* tells us, “a tide in the affairs of men, (and why not of women!) which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune.”—But how are poor mortals to know when this successful tide begins its course? Was it, indeed, to rush with the impetuous Hygra of the Severn, we may then be assur'd of its



its having taken place. But as it commonly flows in a gentle stream, and rises by degrees, its advance is imperceptible. The consequence of which is, that being unnoticed by the greater part of mankind, particularly those possessed of enlarged minds, the opportunity is “omitted, and all the “voyage of their life is bound in shallows, “and in miseries.”

I will not pay so ill a compliment to *your* taste, as to suppose the frequent quotations I make from my favourite *Shakspeare*, most of whose female characters I have filled, prove disgusting to you; nor will I pay myself so ill a compliment, as to imagine you accuse me of applying them improperly. They are so consonant to my own sentiments, and expressed in a manner so infinitely beyond the reach of my pen, that I cannot help making use of them whenever they occur to my memory, and appear to be apropos.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R L I.

Dec. 29, 17—

**A** LONG chasm in the prosecution of my narrative has taken place, contrary to my wishes.—Troubles, vexation and illness, one the consequence of the other, must plead my excuse. I am, however,  
 thank

thank Heaven! so far recovered as to be able to sit up. I shall of course employ every hour, that my aching head and aching heart will allow, in prosecuting the task I have undertaken. As I design my narrative for the inspection of the public, as well as yourself, I shall continue it with as much speed as possible; the sooner to clear myself from the imputations with which I have been undeservedly loaded. Nor will I doubt but when they are acquainted with the *real sources* of my misfortunes, they will judge of them with more lenity, and give me credit for some good qualities which have hitherto lain hid under the miry incrustations of slander.

My illness, from the agitations recounted in my last letter, obliged *Mr. Ross* to postpone his benefit, at which I was to appear in the character of Juliet, and he in Romeo. *Mr. Garrick*, upon this, wished him to change that play for one in which my presence was not necessary. He at the same time hinted to me, that it would be degrading to my consequence to appear with an inferior actor. But as I was always of opinion that the greater the consequence of the performer the more incumbent it was upon them to assist with their abilities the community to which they belonged, I revolted at the idea, and by this generous sentiment, increas-

ed.

ed the disgust which the manager already entertained for me.

For my benefit this season, I had the farce of the "Oracle," acted by Lilliputians, in which I introduced the justly celebrated *Miss Pope*; whose character in private life, excels, if possible, her allowed merit on the stage.

*Mr. Quin*, hearing I was dangerously ill, came to town, at once to see me, and to compleat an act of generosity, the recital of which, as it redounds so much to the honour of *my* worthy friend, claims a place here. He had performed, the season before, the part of *Falstaff* for the benefit of his old acquaintance, *Mr. Ryan*. This testimony of regard had the desired effect; and the actor profited greatly by the exhibition. His success upon this occasion, induced *Ryan* to solicit the same favour this year. The application produced an answer from *Quin*, which, whilst it is in the true laconic stile, is rich in meaning; I shall therefore give it verbatim.

"I would *play* for you if I could; but will not *whistle* for you. I have willed you a thousand pounds. If you want money, you may have it, and save my executors trouble.

Bath, March 1st.

"JAMES QUIN."

This instance of his friendship to an indigent cotemporary, if possible, increased my

esteem for him. When he came to see me, I told him the situation of my mind; and found great relief from unbosoming myself to the good man. He advised me to be easy if I could not be happy. He entertained, I found, in common with every one else, a high opinion of *Mr. Calcraft's* probity and rectitude. And though he admitted that we were not congenial souls, yet it was in my power, he said, as his affection for me appeared to be great, to bring him to my bent.

This, I own, might have been the case could I have returned his passion; but with the indifference I felt for him, such an effect was not to be expected. *Mr. Calcraft* and myself may be justly said, to be *joined, not matched*. For, with a soul of fire like mine, and thoughts which out stripped the wind; to be *happily* united to a being, who was only sensible of the effects of passion, but totally unacquainted with the delicate sensations of an exalted affection, was a consumation not to be hoped for.

A pure and delicate love, where “two fond hearts in one unite;” without being refined into what is usually termed *platonick* love, deviates not, however, into the contrary extreme.—A thousand nameless pleasures, which the merely sensual can form no idea of, constitute the happiness of such. A look, a word, a touch, conveys exquisite sensations

sensations to the soul.—But their *supreme* pleasure consists in rendering the beloved object happy by *every* means in their power.—Divested of each selfish thought, they make the happiness of the person thus adored, the medium of their own. And when the enchanted soul, by these intellectual enjoyments is elevated to a pitch nearly beyond humanity, enjoyments dependent on the senses, restore it by gradual steps to its wonted tranquil state.—Such are my ideas of love; that is, of a sincere and disinterested affection.—I doubt not but they will be termed *romantic*; as they are (to express myself in the words of *Shakspeare*, which I have already applied to susceptibility in general) “cavaire  
“ to the million.”

To the indifference I entertained for *Mr. Calcraft* he was, however, indebted for the greatest part of his fortune; for could he have inspired me with a love for him, a mind active as mine, and ardent in its pursuits, would have been lost in the sweet delirium. In lieu of which, I now bent all my thoughts on the duties of my profession, and on promoting the emoluments of his. And I might be truly said to suffer love, but not feel it.

It could not be expected that any of *Mr. Metham's* particular friends would notice me after what had passed. I therefore, for a time, lost the friendship of *Mr. Brudenell*; he

has, indeed, since done me repeated favours ; but he never honoured me with a visit, except just calling on me twice to render me some services. *Major Burton, Colonel Sandford, and Captain Shaftoe,* were men of the world, and considered their own convenience, more than their friend's romantic agonies.

*Mr. Metham's* despair made him form a resolution of going abroad, to revenge my perfidy, as he termed it, on the whole sex. He had made the graces his study, whilst a *Cantab*, more than the classics. And least there should be a tinge of college rust remaining, he had completed his studies at the *Academie Royal* at Paris. He was generous without being *liberal*. Being a perfect master, as the French express themselves, of the *du monde*, he knew perfectly well how to lay himself out to please. He at the same time possessed a tolerable share of vanity, which prevented that false modesty the learned are often addicted to. And though no great adept in the dead languages, he was so well versed in the living, as to be able, when in company with ladies, to substitute flowery fiction in the place of truth. With these attractions, aided by a fine figure and an elegant address, he might well expect success with the fair sex ; particularly with *les petite maitresses de Paris*. And I had soon the pleasure to hear that he had dropped his handkerchief at the feet of the *Gosin*. This lady I had formerly intended to eclipse  
by

by my transcendent talents, when I proposed captivating the *Grand Monarque*. Instead of which, I was now dwindled down into a passive, thoughtful, (and as I imagined) a good *wife*.

At the conclusion of the theatrical campaign, *Mr. Calcraft* took a little box at Twickenham, called Ragman's Castle, where we spent the summer. His affection seemed to be increased by my indifference. As I had lost my two female friends by death, I had but few fair visitants. When we were in town we still lived in separate houses, as *Mr. Digby*, (the late lord of that name) had an apartment in *Mr. Calcraft's* house in Brewer-street.

*Mr. Garrick* wished to enter into an engagement with me for the next season, in order to prevent *Barry* from having any female performer to play with him, who could stand against *Mrs. Cibber*; whom he himself had engaged. *Mrs. Woffington* was returned from Ireland, but she was out of his line of acting. *Mrs. Cibber* and I had contracted an intimacy of the most friendly kind. For, notwithstanding the great marks of approbation I was honoured with by the public; whenever the merits of that lady were mentioned, I always spoke my real sentiments, and acknowledged her indubitable superiority.

*Mr. Clutterbuck*, an intimate acquaintance of the manager's, was deputed as ambassa-

dor upon this occasion. He had power to offer me not only an increase of salary, but the parts of Juliet, Desdemona, and Calista; which *Mrs. Cibber* condescended to resign in my favour, to induce me to continue in the company. I however insisted on the article which at present subsisted, and which was not yet expired, being given up; as it was now void by *Mr. Garrick's* having engaged *Mrs. Cibber*. When I had entered into this engagement, conscious of the great superiority of that inimitable actress, which I thought would throw me at an infinite distance, I had insisted on this circumstance being particularly specified in it.

The numerous patrons and patronesses who honoured me with their protection, and still declared warmly in my favour, made my desertion much feared by the patentees of Drury-lane, and courted by the proprietor of Covent-Garden. With the latter at length I engaged, in defiance of the advice of all my friends, and the most earnest solicitations of *Mrs. Cibber*. There seems to have been some evil genius presiding over me during my whole life, which has frustrated every opportunity of doing well that offered in my favour. In this case, my determination was peculiarly ill-judged; as my continuing to play with *Garrick* would have improved me, and through *Mrs. Cibber's* frequent confinements from indisposition, which



to my knowledge were real and not feigned, as represented, would have afforded me as many opportunities as I could have wished for, of endeavouring to merit the indulgence which the public so lavishly honoured me with.

Here I could load myself with censure, and that with the greatest reason, for this injudicious conduct; and thereby anticipate the reflections which will naturally arise in the minds of every one to whose knowledge it comes. I could likewise attempt an extenuation of it. I shall, however, only relate the fact, and add to it, by way of comment, an admonition against yielding to the dictates of self-confidence; which generally chooses wrong, when opposed to the advice of unprejudiced friends.

At our return to town on the approach of the season, *Lord Digby* being gone abroad; and *Mr. Calcraft* being fearful of the return of *the hot-headed Percy* from his tour, he prevailed upon me to reside with him at his house. As I really thought it a duty incumbent on me to oblige him in every thing that lay in my power, I readily consented. His fondness seemed rather to increase than abate, and there was every appearance of our passing our lives as quietly and comfortably together as old *Darby* and *Joan* did.

Upon my removal, he informed me of the amount of his income. I was greatly surprised

prised when he mentioned the sum, as it was not equal to my own, including my benefit, which was indeed incredible, and by my connection with him would in all probability be greatly augmented. He now asked me what allowance I thought would be necessary for our joint house-keeping. Without making any calculation, I replied, one hundred guineas a quarter; to which he readily agreed.

As it was so long since I received the bank-notes, and my unknown friend had never given me the least hint by which I might know from whom they came, I thought I might now make use of the thousand guineas. I accordingly did so. In the first place I paid every shilling that I owed. I then laid out the remainder in making an addition to my jewels. Thus free from every incumbrance, equipped with every elegance, and possessed of a great deal of plate, together with more diamonds than private gentlewomen generally are, I removed to Brewer-street, and became the domesticated wife of *Mr. Calcraft*.

I have mentioned these particulars to let the world as well as yourself see, that when I entered into this family union with *Mr. Calcraft*, instead of owing any debts that I could want his assistance to discharge, I was clear of the world, and possessed of an income superior to his own.—I cannot miss  
this

this opportunity of repeating the assurances I gave you in my first letter, that my narrative should contain nothing but real facts.—I once more assure you, that truth shall guide my pen throughout every page. And if I happen to misrepresent even the minutest circumstance, it will arise rather from a want of discernment than of veracity.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R LII.

Jan. 12, 17—.

**M**R. FOX continued at this time Secretary at War, in which employment, neither any of his predecessors nor successors have been held in greater estimation. He honoured me with his company often. And as I considered *Mr. Calcraft's* interest as my own, I made it my business to get acquainted with as many of the military as I could. In this I succeeded so well, that we had generally several officers of the first rank at our table.

*General Braddock*, to whom I had been known from my infancy, and who was particularly fond of me, was about this period appointed to go to America. From our intimacy, he gave me his agency without my applying for it. Whilst he was making  
the

the necessary preparations for his voyage, he was more frequently than usual at our house. The evening before his departure he supped with me, accompanied by his two aids-de-camp, *Major Burton*, (who had just lost his much-loved wife, and my darling friend) and *Captain Orme*.

Before we parted, the General told me he should never see me more; for he was going with a handful of men to conquer whole nations; and to do this they must cut their way through unknown woods. He produced the map of the country, saying at the same time, "Dear Pop, we are sent like sacrifices to the altar." The event of the expedition too fatally verified the General's expectations. On going away he put into my hands a paper, which proved to be his will. As he did not doubt my being married to *Mr. Calcraft*, from his apparent fondness for me; from the alteration in my behaviour; and from the preference I had given to him before *Mr. Metham*; he made *him* his sole executor, leaving me only the plate which he had received as the usual perquisite from government on his nomination.

The season at Covent-Garden theatre was attended with success. It commenced with "Romeo and Juliet." Upon this piece *Mr. Rich* seemed to build the most flattering hopes, saying, "I have the Juliet now as well as the Romeo." From the concurrence  
of

of people that crouded for seats, it appeared that he was not mistaken. However, when I, one night, observed this to him with a great degree of pleasure; he took a pinch of snuff, and turning upon his heel as if he was much dissatisfied, made this short reply; " Yes Mistrefs ! but it is owing to the *pro-*  
" *cession.*" Had I not had reason to believe that he had a sincere regard for me, I should have been offended at his oddity; but as it was, it rather diverted me.

It can scarcely be credited that the bare crossing the way, (for it can be called no otherwise) from Drury-lane to Covent-Garden, should excite the timidity of a performer of my standing. But it is really a fact, that notwithstanding the favour of the public towards me was more vehemently shown than ever, by repeated applause; though I retained my powers, I was under as strong apprehensions, as when I first deputed it under *Mr. Rich's* auspices in *Monimia*. I can only account for this extraordinary effect by supposing it arose from the consideration of my now having a reputation to *lose*, as at that time I had one to *gain*.

My pregnancy prevented this play from having an equal run with that which had attended it two seasons before. *Mr. Garrick* tried to stem the current of our success by purchasing a *new Bell* at an enormous expence; but finding that its harmonious notes  
during

during the procession did not congregate the numbers he expected, he put it to a use which was sure would be attended with profit; that was, in tolling for the execution of Pierre, in the piece where he and *Cibber* excelled beyond a possibility of competition. During my confinement, "Romeo and Juliet" was unavoidably obliged to be postponed, much to the regret of the manager. The last night of my performing, I could not help advising him to introduce the procession, which according to his opinion, had been the sole means of filling the house, into some other piece. When taking another pinch of snuff, he said, "If I did not know  
" to the contrary, I should suppose that the  
" man in Brewer-street did not lead the most  
" easy life."

*Mr. Rich* had accepted a tragedy from *Doct̄r Francis*, intitled "Constantine." This gentleman I have mentioned before as the\* reputed translator of Horace, and the introducer on our stage of a French piece called "Eugenia;" in which I had the honour to represent the heroine; but as that lady died away unnoticed, I had almost forgot that I had done so. With the world of gaiety, which I had lately left, I had relinquished

\* I have been creditably informed that this translation was the production of *Air Duncomb*.

my taste for dress; of which I had usually been, at the theatres, the sole arbitratress.

The character of the *Empress Fulvia* which I was to play in the Doctor's piece, reminded me of my darling foible. And as I had a certain sum allowed me by the manager to find my own dresses, I thought I would show that I still knew how to display upon proper occasions my genius in that line. I accordingly prepared to astonish and captivate all my beholders by the splendour of my Regalia. The piece had merit; but the similitude between the striking incident in "Othello" and that in "Constantine," was too conspicuous,

We had, however, no doubt of its success. For notwithstanding "Eugenia" was but short lived, yet as the author of it was known as the translator of Horace, and Barry's name with all the strength of the company was to support it, we expected the curiosity of the public would be excited thereby. However, to the great surprise of the whole theatrical corps, and to my great mortification, instead of a crowded house, we had the melancholy prospect of empty benches; and the court of the great Constantine was attended only by his own immediate suit. This was the first instance of the kind I ever knew or heard of; and to the present hour could never account for it.

Having been accustomed to be, what is termed in the theatrical phrase, *followed*, I felt my vanity much hurt. And I determined to revenge myself upon the public, by providing for the neglected author. Accordingly I went to the Doctor, who sat almost, if not quite, dissolved in tears, for which the poor man felt another incentive than that of the disappointment of his vanity, and requested the favour of his company to supper. As I knew *Mr. Fox* would be there, I was in hopes of having an opportunity of introducing the unfortunate author to him before the company met. The event turned out to my wish; for on our entering the drawing room we found him there alone. I immediately introduced my reverend to him, and having informed him of our disgrace, concluded with a request that he would immediately provide for him. As I had never solicited him before for a favour, my enforcing my present solicitation so earnestly, made him smile. He replied that he could only make him his chaplain to night, but desired he would breakfast with him in Conduit-street the next day. Then taking our neglected bard by the hand, he concluded, in the most complacent manner, by saying “ Well-Doctor! who knows but your damnation as a play-wright, may be the means of your promotion as a divine!”

The



The very morning which followed that night, put a stop for some time to my appearance in public, as well as to my great attention to the business of *Mr. Calcraft's* profession, by the introduction of a daughter into the world. This event seemed of more consequence to *Calcraft*, than if he had been made master of the world. He imagined the Marmoset to be already the very likeness of himself; and was in hopes that this pledge would insure to him my affection in future. *Lady Caroline Fox, Lady Tyrawley,* and *Mr. Fox*, stood spongers in person. This circumstance put the certainty of my being married out of all doubt; as it was not to be supposed that I should have been so highly honoured had it been dubious. Indeed, it could scarcely be imagined that I would live upon any other terms, with a man who could not in any shape be put in competition with *Mr. Metham*, not only from the inferiority of his qualifications, but of his fortune both in possession and expectation; the one being possessed of a large estate and property, with further expectancies, the other wholly dependent upon the patronage of the Secretary at War.

When I recovered from my lying in, *Mr. Calcraft*, alarmed at a report that was spread of *Mr. Metham's* coming to England, requested that I would return the annuity he had settled on me; alledging the impropriety of

a woman, *that was to be his wife*, and whom the world, as well as himself, esteemed to be so, having a settlement from any man but *himself*. To this I readily acceded. When he had received my consent, he told me, that in return for my kind condescension, he would settle an estate\* of one hundred and twenty pounds a year, at Grantham, which he had just come into possession of by the death of his grandmother, upon me for my life, and afterwards upon my little girl *Caroline Elizabeth*. He at the same time gave me his will; in which he left me the interest of eleven thousand pounds in the funds, which he had accumulated whilst he was paymaster and contractor to the king's troops, during the rebellion in Scotland. A place he had been promoted to by the interest of *Mr. Winnington*, *Mr. Fox's* intimate friend.

In order to return the deed relative to *Mr. Metham's* annuity, I immediately sent to *Mr. Moor*, a gentleman for whom I had the most sincere regard on account of his many amiable qualities, and who, from the first of our acquaintance had honoured me with a reciprocal return. To this gentleman I delivered the writing, requesting that he would return it into the hands of *Mr. Metham* upon his arrival in England. But from what reason I know not, this request was not

\*This deed was executed in the year 1752.

complied with. I can only impute it to the distraction of his thoughts.

These were, at this time, unfortunately absorbed by his affection for a married lady in Dublin. His enamorata had flattered him that she returned his passion; and had promised, as her husband was an inebriated brute, that upon their arrival in England, which was expected soon to take place, she would go off with him to the continent. Some new attachment, however, proving more agreeable to her, she was induced to alter her intention; and she wrote him word that she had done so.

*Mr. Moor* received this affecting intelligence whilst he was at dinner with a club of noblemen and gentlemen, at the King's Arms Tavern in Pall-Mall. Not being able to stand the shock, as his passion, though an illicit one, had taken full possession of his heart, he retired into another room, where in a fit of black despair, he put an end to his existence with a pistol. The company hearing the report, hastened to the place from whence it proceeded, and found him weltering in his blood. *Lord Chedworth*, who happened to be present, went to his lodgings, and sealing up his writings and valuables, sent to acquaint his nearest relation with the dreadful catastrophe. This person, who lived upon Ludgate Hill, being his next heir, took possession of his

effects, as he died intestate. And with him the writings relative to *Mr. Metham's* annuity continued till my son, *Captain Metham*, came of age.

What made this event the more striking to me was, that he had been at my house in the morning. And *Mrs. Molloy*, a lady from Dublin, being upon a visit with me, we three had made a party for the evening, which was to commence early, that we might have a long *gamble* as he termed it. *Mrs. Molloy* and myself, accordingly, returned from the Park, where we had been walking, sooner than usual; when, to my unfeigned grief, and her great surprize, we were informed of the melancholy incident by the servant who opened the door to us. The poor fellow, as he told the shocking tale shed tears; for as *Mr. Moor* almost lived in the family, and by the gentleness of his manners and his good nature had endeared himself to every one in it, there was not a person belonging to it, but what sincerely lamented his loss.

Thus through the coquetry of a woman, who was esteemed by her acquaintance as a pattern of virtue, was society deprived of one of the most accomplished, and admired young men about town. His loss was greatly regretted by every one that knew him, but by no one more truly than myself. For our friendship was of such a nature, that I believe we neither of us scarcely entertained a thought,

thought, which was not communicated to the other, nor had a want that was not mutually supplied. At the same time, I declare, that I firmly believe he never indulged a wish which was inconsistent with the purest friendship for me. And with equal truth can I assert, that notwithstanding his qualifications were of the most attractive kind, I felt for him only as a brother.

This nice distinction between friendship and love, as I have already observed with regard to every species of susceptibility, is beyond the comprehension of the *million*. And to them the assertion I have here made, may appear to be devoid of truth. But a truly delicate mind, judging from its own purity, will readily conceive that a friendship might exist between two persons of different sexes, and be carried to the greatest height, without being impured by a sensual desire. From such I doubt not but the foregoing declaration will receive the readiest credit.

*Doctor Francis*, after the introduction I had given him, attached himself to *Mr. Fox*, but much more to his commis. For as *Lady Caroline's* frequent indispositions prevented her from seeing much company, there was no table kept. And the doctor being a *bon vivant*, and preferring a magnum bonum to his breviary, he fixed himself with a man with whom he was sure of enjoying good living,

ing, and who had no objection to take a share of it. I must here remark that both these gentlemen afterwards repaid their patron with the blackest ingratitude.

But indeed that great and *good* man never received any other return from those he showered his favours upon. *Mr. Fox's* private character was truly amiable. He was one of the tenderest husbands; too indulgent a father; the best of masters; and the warmest and most attached of friends. He was blest with penetration, wit, learning, and every social virtue. But notwithstanding he possessed all these valuable endowments, he could not escape the shafts of calumny, nor the stings of ingratitude, from those serpents he fostered in his bosom.

I cannot here help taking notice of an instance, among many, of this worthy man's fondness for his son who justly makes so conspicuous a figure in the political annals of the present times. The wall at the bottom of the lawn before Holland-house being to be taken down, and iron palisades put up in its room, that the passengers on the road might have a better view of that fine antique building, it was necessary to make use of gunpowder to precipitate the work. *Mr. Fox* had promised master *Charles* that he should be present when the explosion took place. But finding the workmen had completed the fall of the wall without giving him

him notice, he ordered it to be rebuilt. And when it was thoroughly cemented, had it blown up again, in order to keep his word with his son. He at the same time recommended it to those about him, never, upon any account, to be guilty of a breach of promise to children, as by doing so they instilled into them an indifference with regard to the observance of their own promises, when they arrived at years of maturity.

G. A. B.

L E T T E R LIII.

January 22, 17—.

**M**R. RICH had been advised to revive *Lee's* tragedy of "Alexander;" as the character of that hero would suit the powers, and show the person of *Barry* to singular advantage. The parts of the rival queens he judged would be likewise well filled by *Mrs. Woffington* and myself. The animosity this lady had long borne me had not experienced any decrease. On the contrary my late additional finery in my jewels, &c. had augmented it to something very near hatred. I had, during the summer given *Madam Montete*, wife of the hair dresser of the time, who was going to Paris, a commission to bring me from thence two tragedy dresses, the most elegant she could purchase. I have already observed that the proprietor

proprietor allowed me a certain sum to find my own habiliments.

My *chargée d'affaire* opened her credentials at *Madam Bonfoy's*, principal *marchand du mode* in that metropolis. I had requested this lady to consult *Brilliant*, who would consult *Du Menil*. She was likewise to take the joint opinion of all the people of taste there, upon an affair of such momentous consequence. The revival of "Alexander" furnished me with an opportunity of showing all my elegance in the character of the *Persian Princess*.

My royal robes in which I had represented the *Empress Fulvia*, in *Doctor Francis's* "Constantine," to the great loss of the public, had not been seen by them. They were showy and proper for the character. But in these *robes de cours*, taste and elegance were never so happily blended. Particularly in one of them, the ground of which was a deep yellow. *Mr. Rich* had purchased a suit of her royal highness's the *Princess Dowager of Wales* for *Mrs. Woffington* to appear in *Roxana*. It was not in the least soiled, and looked very beautiful by day-light; but being a straw colour, it seemed to be a dirty white, by candle-light; especially when my splendid yellow was by it. To this yellow dress I had added a purple robe; and a mixture so happy, made it appear, if possible, to greater advantage.

Thus



Thus accoutred in all my magnificence, I made my entree into the Green Room, as the *Persian Princess*. But how shall I describe the feelings of my inveterate rival! The sight of my pompous attire created more real envy in the heart of the actress, than it was possible the real *Roxana* could feel for the loss of the Macedonian hero. As soon as she saw me, almost bursting with rage, she drew herself up, and thus, with a haughty air, addressed me, "I desire Madam, you will never more, upon any account, wear those cloaths in the piece we perform to-night."

You are too well acquainted with my disposition, and so I dare say are my readers by this time, to suppose this envious lady took the proper way to have her request granted. I replied, "I know not, Madam, by what right you take upon you to dictate to me what I shall wear. And I assure you, Madam, you must ask it in a very different manner, before you obtain my compliance." She now found it necessary to solicit in a softer strain. And I readily gave my assent. The piece consequently went through, without any more murmuring on her part, whatever might be her sensations.

However, the next night, I sported my other suit; which was much more splendid than the former. This rekindled *Mrs. Wofington's* rage, so that it nearly bordered on  
madness

madness. When, oh! dire to tell! she drove me off the carpet, and gave me the *coup de grace* almost behind the scenes. The audience, who I believe preferred hearing my last dying speech, to seeing her beauty and fine attitude, could not avoid perceiving her violence, and testified their displeasure at it.

Though I despise revenge, I do not dislike retaliation. I therefore put on my yellow and purple once more. As soon as I appeared in the Green Room, her fury could not be kept within bounds; notwithstanding one of the *corps diplomatique* was then paying homage to her beauty, and, for the moment, made her imagine she had the power of controul equal to a real queen. She imperiously questioned me, how I dared to dress again in the manner she had so strictly prohibited? The only return I made to this insolent interrogation, was by a smile of contempt. It was not long before I had my plenipo likewise; the never failing *Comte de Haslang*; to whom I told the reason of my changing my attire, which was meant *par oblique* to her. Upon hearing which, she immediately sent for *Mr. Rich*; but that gentleman prudently declined attending her summons.

Being now ready to burst with the contending passions which agitated her bosom, she told me, it was well for me that I had a *minister* to supply my extravagance with jewels

els and such paraphernalia. Struck with so unmerited and cruel a reproach, my asperity became more predominant than my good nature; and I replied, I was sorry that *even half the town* could not furnish a supply equal to the minister she so illiberally hinted at. Finding I had got myself into a disagreeable predicament, and recollecting the well-known distich, that

He who fights, and runs away,  
May live to fight another day;

I made as quick an exit as possible, notwithstanding I wore the regalia of a Queen. But I was obliged in some measure to the Comte for my safety; as his Excellency covered my retreat, and stopped my enraged rival's pursuit: I should otherwise have stood a chance of appearing in the next scene with black eyes, instead of the blue ones which nature had given me.

The next summer *Mr. Foote* profited by this behaviour of *Mrs. Woffington*; and produced a little piece, which he intitled, "The Green-room Squabble; or, a Battle Royal between the Queen of Babylon and the Daughter of Darius." It may be supposed that after so public a rupture we never spoke. This taciturnity continued, till being upon her death-bed, some years after, she requested to see me. She then informed me, that she had once done me an intentional injury, by prevailing upon one of

her lovers to show *Mr. Fox* a letter of mine which had accidentally fallen into her hands, and the contents of which would admit of a different interpretation from what it was designed to convey. Her malicious intention had not, however, the desired effect, as that gentleman and myself were not upon the terms she suspected, or at least wished to have thought. I own I could not refrain from being much surpris'd at the wickedness and meaness of the intended injury. And though my humanity prompted me to forgive an offence which seem'd to lie so heavy on her mind, I left the lady, as soon as possible, to reflect upon the illiberality of such a proceeding.

The play of the "Rival Queens" was very well supported by *Barry's* excellence in representing the Conqueror of the World. But the piece is composed of such bombastic language, that even *Mrs. Woffington's* beauty, and my fine robes, added to *Barry's* excellence, would not have been productive of much advantage, had not *Mr. Rich* display'd his genius in the triumphal entry of the hero into Babylon. This he did with such taste and magnificence, that it excell'd every thing of the kind I ever saw. And though it was attended with very great expence, the return made ample amends. Here, indeed, he might with great justice  
have

have produced his snuff-box, and cried, "*It is my triumph.*"

At this period I met with a very severe loss in being deprived of the company of the two *Miss Merediths*; between whom and myself there had always subsisted the most cordial intimacy. The younger of them being judged by the physical gentlemen to be in a decline, she was ordered to the continent; and her sister attending her, they wished me to accompany them. But I had so much business upon my hands at this time, that my going was impracticable. For as I asked all the officers of my acquaintance, who were likely to have a regiment to make me their agent, I was obliged to remain on the spot, to be ready to claim their promise as soon as they were preferred.

Since I had been united to *Mr. Calcraft* I had obtained the agency of *Sir John Mordaunt*, and *General Campbell* (the late *Duke of Argyle*) exclusive of *General Braddock's* already mentioned. I had further procured the promise of *Colonel Honeywood* (since *General*) who was upon the list for an English regiment. And I was as alert in endeavouring to acquire their agency, as *Mr. Calcraft* was in doing the requisite business when honoured with it.

As to my own affairs, they claimed little of my attention. I left the management of them, with regard to money matters, solely

to my Cook, whom I believed to be as honest in his principles as he was perfect in his profession. We had company to dinner and supper every day, which consequently was productive of an expence three times as large as what *Mr. Calcraft* allowed me. But as his affection seemed to experience no diminution, I did not harbour a doubt but that as his business increased, an increase for which he was chiefly indebted to my assiduity, he would readily discharge any debts that should be contracted for the entertainment of those by whose company *his interest* was promoted.

*Mr. Fox* generally honoured us with his company at dinner, as *Lady Caroline* seldom left Holland-house. The late *Lord Kildare* being this winter in England, his Lordship generally attended *Mr. Fox*. The *Marquis of Granby* and *General Hervey*, were either at breakfast, dinner, or supper, and some days at all three. To entertain such guests required delicacies; and I piqued myself upon understanding a bill of fare as well as any *maitre d'hotel* in London.

My gentleman had purchased a place, which from the beauty of its situation was attracting, but it had its inconveniences. It is called Hollwood-hill, and is situated near Bromley in Kent. As he was subject to the gout in his head, he was always talking of dying. And, indeed, he had some reason to be apprehensive, as his mother died young  
of

of the same disorder. During these fits he used to say that he intended this seat for my daughter and myself; upon which account I spared no expence to clean and beautify it. What made me the more partial to Hollywood was, that *Lord Tyravley* had been once the owner of it.

Some years before *Mr. Calcraft* bought it, the house had been occupied by six gentlemen belonging to the Croydon hunt; as it lay adjacent to a wood, consisting of several hundred acres, from whence the foxes were unearthed, and from which it takes its name. This induced those gentlemen to erect offices and stables to it worthy of a better house; for it was old, and built after the ancient manner in apartments. It not having been tenanted for four years, I found it required nearly as much cleansing as the *Ægean* stable. For the house had as many inhabitants of the vermin kind, as the gardens and ponds, which were overrun with weeds, had of frogs, toads, and other reptiles.

This made the task, which I had undertaken to see performed myself, not only troublesome but expensive. However, a fortunate circumstance tended to accelerate it. There being in the cellar a great deal of curious wine, *Doctor Francis*, who as I have before observed loved his bottle, chearfully afforded me his assistance to forward my Herculean labour. *General Campbell* sent me

a gardener, and supplied me with many shrubs and exoticks from Combe-bank. He likewise favoured me with his advice how to lay out the ground, which consisted only of eleven acres. In the garden I built a hot-house, a succession-house, a green-house, and an ice-house. And I completed the whole of this complicated undertaking, within four months; that is to say, from the beginning of February to the latter end of May.

This seat is four miles from Bromley, which is the nearest market town to it. It is situated on an eminence, and command an unlimited prospect. On one side you can see London at fifteen miles distance, and on the other, you have a most extensive view of the adjacent country. The expedition with which I had rendered it completely habitable, excited the wonder of every one who heard of it, and obtained me their praises. Its situation so near town, however, made it an inn, without the usual advantage arising from carrying in a bill in the morning. And as I was never without two or three, or more female visitants, who were innocently chearful, and witty without ill nature, it must be supposed we did not want for the company of such of our male acquaintance as loved society, and wished to taste the nepenthe that had procured me the Doctor's assistance.

The



The next year, *Mr. Calcraft* took an adjacent farm, which was sufficient to maintain the house. But for the present, *Dr. Betts* supplied me. This clergyman lived at a village called *Caston*, about a mile from the wood; and as he kept his tythes in his own hands, he was able to furnish me with poultry and other articles. *Mr. Calcraft* had presented me with six *Alderney* cows and a bull. And as he had secretly joined *Mr. Shaftoe* in his stud, we had a number of attendants belonging to the stable; which was not a disagreeable circumstance in so lonely a place.

At the end of the summer, I found that I had expended six hundred pounds here, notwithstanding *General Campbel* had presented me with all my curious plants and shrubs.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R L I V.

Feb. 16, 17—

I HAD cleared at my benefit the last season upwards of eleven hundred pounds. This was owing to several causes. I had for some time been allowed to be sole dictatress among the polite ranks in the article of dress. My judgement in this point was held in so much estimation, that the ladies would

would have been wretched who did not consult me relative to their birth day or fancy cloaths. A masquerade had been given by the foreign Ambassadors, which was the most splendid entertainment of the kind ever seen in England. This afforded me and my dresser, *Mrs. Timm's* (whom I had left behind me at Drury lane when I removed from that theatre) sufficient employment. Fancy was tortured to fix on different dresses for the crouds of ladies that applied to us. Had I suffered it, there would have been a hundred Eltrudas. *Lady Kildare* and *Lady Granby* were now added to my list of patronesses. In return for the assistance I had given the numerous ladies upon this occasion, they each of them made a point to employ all their interest to increase the emoluments of my night.

*Dr. Francis* having been promoted through my application to *Mr. Fox*, and his promotion much talked of, I was looked up to as a proper person through whom to seek for preferment. All the military gentlemen, therefore, seized this opportunity to court my favour; and as the surest way to do so, paid a handsome tribute to my theatrical merit. *Lord Kildare*, *Lord Granby*, *Mr. Fox*, and *Mr. Digby* who was now returned from abroad, took four tickets at one hundred pound each; and the three last continued their liberality to me till death. All these circumstances

cumstances combined, account for the largeness of the before mentioned sum.

I besides received presents from Asia, Africa, and America, together with others the produce of our own climate. In short I was now in possession of every thing that could excite the envy of the world. And yet amidst all this, even in the very zenith of my splendor, I was not happy. Like the celebrated *Harlequin Carolin*, who wept under the masque, whilst he excited peals of laughter from his admiring audience, my smiles covered an uneasy mind. And many a time when I have been thought by my surrounding guests to be as happy as affluence and the acquisition of fame could make me, I have secretly exclaimed. "Where art thou to be found, O happiness! Thy only residence can be with those blessed votaries to Heaven, who having never experienced the delusive pleasures and corroding cares of the world, secure within the cloistered walls, the peaceful abode of innocence, know not a wish but to render themselves acceptable to their God."

The constant perturbation I underwent from these uneasy reflections, and the unceasing fatigue I had gone through, had greatly impaired my health. It was therefore thought adviseable for me to go to Bristol for a few weeks, before the ensuing season commenced. I was accompanied by the

*Widow*

*Widow Delany*, who, as usual, was generally with me, and who had married one of *Mr. Calcraft's* clerks whose name was *Walker*. When we reached Marlborough, as we drove into the yard of the Castle, *Mr. Ryan* ran out to receive me, and greeted me with the pleasing intelligence, that my *Daddy Quin* was in the house; adding, that he would instantly go and wake him.

It being eight o'clock in the evening, I was apprehensive, from his being in bed, that *Mr. Quin* was indisposed. But I was informed by *Mr. Beard*, who was likewise one of the company, that my worthy friend, having been detained longer in town, the last time he visited the metropolis, than he wished, through his engagements with his numerous acquaintance; he had made a resolution not to go to London again. And as he did not choose to be totally deprived of the society of a few of his particular friends, he had requested them to make a party and meet him every summer at *Smith's*. It was agreed that they should remain here till they had drank such a quantity of wine. I cannot now recollect how much that was, but when *Mr. Beard* mentioned it, I thought it was sufficient to serve them for a year.

Whilst I was receiving this information, by which time we had reached the garden, I heard his much-loved voice calling out to me, "I will come to you presently!"

Turning

Turning about, I perceived him at the window, with his night-cap on. And before I could suppose he had pulled it off, he joined us. As he came along, he had ordered *Smith* to dress *every thing* in the larder; and if he could procure any niceties in the town, to do so. His orders were obeyed to the very letter of the command. And my journey being protracted by this unexpected encounter, before ten o'clock we sat down to *dinner*, six and twenty in company, to a table furnished like a Lord Mayor's feast.

Previous to our dining, I had the happiness to enjoy an agreeable *tête à tête* with this best of men. In it, I acquainted him with every circumstance relative to myself, that had passed since I saw him last. And as I had the inexpressible satisfaction to find that his friendship was unabated, and he still loved me with the fondness of a father, I received that consolation from his advice, which I always experienced from unbosoming myself to this most disinterested and sincerest of friends. At three o'clock I retired, and ordered a post-chaise to pursue my journey; leaving those chearful sons of Bacchus, I cannot say to their *nocturnal* orgies, for it was one of the finest mornings I ever beheld, but to conclude their oblations to his divinityship—Great geniuses will be excentric.—Defying the common rules of plodding mortals, they will not admit of any restraint  
from

from time ; but indulge the vivifying inspirations, till wearied nature, unable to keep pace with the intellectual powers, calls for repose.---This accounts for the not unfrequent irregularities, with regard to hours, of my friend *Quin*.

Upon my arrival at Bristol, I found a letter from my maid, wherein she informed me that her master was laid up by a violent attack of the gout in his head ; that my daughter had taken the small pox ; and that my mother had indiscreetly suffered the child to lie in her arms, as she had before permitted my son, *George Metham*, to do, which had occasioned symptoms that *Mr. Adair*, seemed to think dangerous. This obliged me to remeasure back the road I had just come. My anxiety for my mother, whose tenderness for my child had induced her to run such a risk of her health, she not having had that cruel disorder, as already observed, impelling me to use the utmost expedition, I ordered two additional horses to be put to the chaise, and wished for wings to hasten my journey.

When I again reached Marlborough, which was about two o'clock at noon, I found that *Mr. Quin* was not yet stirring. But as I could not, either from my own feelings, or *Mr. Calcraft's*, whose impatience I well knew, avoid making the most expeditious return, I would not wait till he got up ; but insisting upon his not rising, I chat-  
ted

ted by his bed-side till the carriage was announced to be ready.

When my companion and myself were seated in the chaise, in the course of conversation I found, that though we were both impatient to be in town, that impatience sprung from very different motives. Whilst I was lamenting the cause of my sudden recall, *Mrs. Walker* was pleasing herself with agreeable expectations. Being always above disguise, I had made no secret to her, as she had so long known every transaction of my life, of my having a man of quality as a professed admirer, who was both rich and generous. She from thence concluded, that as soon as *Mr. Calcraft* was dead, I might be induced to form a connection with this nobleman, and thereby have it in my power to be more liberal to her than at present I could be.

She was the more anxious for this event, as she imagined I should then enable her to retrieve a loss she had sustained through her indiscretion. After her first husband, *Mr. Delany's* death, she was unkind enough, though possessed of the ability, to refuse assistance to his sister, who was rather in distressed circumstances. Enraged at this, the sister commenced a suit of law against her, and as her only surviving child was now dead, and there was no legitimate heir, she gained from her an estate, which her hus-

band had left her for her maintenance. By these interested views were my companion's thoughts agitated during our return, whilst mine were filled with anxiety.

As I shall have occasion to mention *Walker* and his lordship again in the course of my narrative, I shall add nothing further relative to them here, but pursue my journey to London.

Upon my arrival in town, I had the happiness to find that the intelligence I had received of my mother's indisposition was but a false alarm. That *Mr. Calcraft's* gout had only been occasioned by *potations strong*. And that my dear little girl, whom *Mr. Adair* had attended with unremitting assiduity, was thought by him not to be in so dangerous a state as was at first expected.

There is nothing excites the tender passions so much as indisposition. To a susceptible mind a friend or relative labouring under disease and pain, is doubly endeared by the afflictive visitation. At least such have always been my sensations. Which induced my dear departed friend, *Miss Conway*, to declare, that I should make the best \* *Beguine* that ever attended an hospital. No wonder then that anxiety took entire possession of my mind, when the angel of death seemed to threaten with his dart, the little innocent, whose

\* An order of nuns, who by their rules are obliged to attend the sick.



whose happiness my own was so entwined with. *Mr. Calcraft* appeared to have no apprehensions but for the loss of beauty in his darling child, from the disfiguring disease.

This, however, was the least of my care. To me, a want of attraction in her, seemed rather more desirable. Judging from sad experience, I lamented my own power to please. For though *a sense of duty* enabled me to behave with the utmost propriety towards *Mr. Calcraft*; and an absence of almost eighteen months had obliterated all sensations of tenderness for *Mr. Metham*; it was with perpetual regret I reflected that I had ever had any qualifications which could have been the means of my being forced into a connection with a man I *never could love*.

Cupid has been represented by painters, in the attitude of riding upon the most powerful of beasts, and guiding it according to his will. But it never entered into the imagination of those depicting sons of science, that love himself was to be rendered subservient to any sway.—He rules with as high a hand as the most despotic sovereign.—And as it is not in the power of mortals to *withstand* his shafts, so neither is it to *direct* them.—The union of hearts is a prerogative in which he will not bear the least controul.—I must therefore stand acquitted for not being able to bestow my affection on a man, whose mind the great uniter of hearts had not set

in unison with my own. Affection might be counterfeited indeed; and it too often is; but the deception cannot last long. Nor would I forfeit that sincerity I so much value myself on, to reign the mistress of the world.

May you, my dear, when your appointed hour comes, (for an appointed hour, they say, there is for love as well as death) find in the man you call yours, a soul congenial to your own. And may you never know, like me, what it is, to bestow your hand where it cannot be accompanied with your heart.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R LV.

February 23, 17—.

**M**Y favourite *Sterne*, in his *Sentimental Journey*, when he set out in order to wait upon the French minister at Versailles, and went to the *Count de B——*'s, exclaims, "I think there is a fatality in it.—I seldom go to the place I set out for." I have frequently made a similar observation, (and I think I have hinted something of it in a former letter) which is, that our best laid plans are often circumvented.—Thus, I set off for Bristol, agreeable to the account I gave you in my last, in order to enjoy a few weeks of relaxation from the cares and anxieties I was constantly a prey to. But I was not suffered  
by

by the invifible agents who make all our moves, to carry my defign into execution. I had no fooner reached the place of my deftination, than from unforefeen accidents my recall had outftripped myfelf; my expectations were totally fruflrated; and I was obliged to return to accumulated vexations. ---Such difappointments, I know are ufually imputed to accident, and lightly thought of. But I cannot help confidering them as a part of the arrangement of the aforefaid fportive beings, who are either permitted to enjoy the perplexities which they themfelves occafion to poor mortals; or elfe, they are intended as trials of our patience and fubmiffion.—Proceed in your ftory, fay you?---I obey.

The next feafon, from an incidental circumflance, was productive of a confiderable addition to my income. *Mr. Barry* introduced upon the flage, a young lady, who was unhappily partial to him. Upon her being engaged, *Mr. Rich* requested my permiffion for her to debute in *Juliet*; which I readily granted. This lady, whofe name was *Noffiter*, in addition to a genteel figure, had had a liberal education beftowed upon her by the late *Lord Cholmondeley*, as her mother attended his lordfhip in the quality of houfekeeper.

*Barry*, who fpent his whole income in entertaining his countrymen, upon this occa-

sion brought his Hibernian phalanx to support the lady. He likewise spoke an occasional prologue by way of introduction to her. In this there was introduced a line containing the word, *and just her age*. *Mrs. Cibber* having planted herself in the front row of the balcony, so injudicious a step attracted the notice of *Barry*; and when he came to that sentence, he spoke it so pointedly, that it could not fail of hitting the lady over him; who, though now advanced into the vale of years, still continued to perform the youthful character of *Juliet*. The audience likewise felt the justice of their application. And as they always kindly interest themselves in the success of a new performer, showed their disapprobation of *Mrs. Cibber's* imprudence, by bestowing a profusion of applause on the new *Juliet*.

I had caused it to be stipulated in my articles, that I was to have a larger salary than any other female performer at that theatre. *Mrs. Woffington* was prevented by indisposition from appearing this winter. And consequently, as *Mr. Barry* insisted upon having five hundred pounds for his pupil, my salary was raised to five hundred guineas. But what was of much more consequence to me, it procured me a considerable relaxation from the duties of the stage, and gave me more time to attend to serious avocations; particularly to the study of natural philosophy,  
which

which I had commenced, upon having the happiness of being introduced to *Lady Anson*.

As the concerns of my brother *Lieutenant O'Hara*, procured me the honour of an introduction to that Lady, I will beg leave, as I have not mentioned his name a long while, to devote a few pages to him. The ship to which he belonged being stationed at Gibraltar, of which place *Lord Tyrasoley* was then Governor, he frequently went ashore, and was treated with the respect due to his affinity to the commander of the fortress. But his humour one evening overcoming his reason and duty, he justly incurred his father's displeasure. The old veteran having been wounded in almost every part of his body, during the different engagements wherein he had bravely fought, a lameness had ensued. As he was walking up the ballroom, at one of their assemblies, his son, forgetting the honourable cause of his Lordship's limping, *hopped* after him to excite a laugh from the company; which being observed by, or told to his Lordship, who gloried in his wounds, he never would forgive a son that had endeavoured to ridicule those testimonies of his valour.

Not long after, the ship being ordered upon some immediate service, and the Captain happening to be on shore ill, my brother, as first Lieutenant, took the command.

During

During the cruize he fell in with a ship of much superior force, which he bravely fought, notwithstanding the manifest disadvantage; and having dismasted his adversary, brought his own ship off with great skill. By an action so brilliant he acquired great honour; and the affair was much talked of. The Captain in a short time dying, my brother made no doubt but he should be nominated Commander of a vessel which had been saved by his bravery. But he was disappointed in his expectations. *Lord Tyrarwley*, not being able to forgive the insult he had received from him, he had, with too much rigour, applied to the Admiral upon the occasion, and requested that his son might *not* be promoted to the command.

My brother was no sooner informed by the Admiral of his Lordship's application, than he was incensed greatly both at his father's severity, and the Admiral's too easy compliance with so unjust a request. And in the first transports of his rage, he inclosed his commission to the Lords of the Admiralty, desiring they would offer it up, with their next sacrifice to the Goddess Cloacina. It was expected that my brother would have been called to a court martial for this indignity. But their Lordships taking into consideration the provocation he had received, and attributing his rudeness to them, to the unkind treatment of *Lord Tyrarwley* and the Admiral

Admiral, they only entered into an official resolution that he should never be employed in the service more. It was a long while before I could get him reinstated, though I exerted all my interest for the purpose. And it impeded his being made a post captain for years.

In the prosecution of my brother's reinstatement, I applied to the late honourable *Mr. Yorke*, who was one of the most zealous of my theatrical admirers. I requested of him that he would interest himself with his sister, *Lady Anson*, in behalf of my relation, upon which he told me, he would introduce me to her ladyship, that I might plead for him myself. He accordingly did me the honour; which procured me the happiness of being acquainted with that lady.

As the bad state of health her ladyship laboured under confined her much at home; and she had a taste for literature, she applied herself for study; and became an adept in most of the sciences. When I took my leave of her ladyship after my first introduction, she requested that I would call upon her often. And as we generally adopt the researches of those we admire, I resolved to study philosophy; and endeavour, if I could not arrive at the honour of being the first, to be the second female *Newton*. For this purpose I visited the observatory at Flamsteed house; constantly attended *Martin's* Lectures;

Lectures; and soon became acquainted with the Ram, the Bull, the Lion, the Scorpion, and all the constellations. Having acquired a knowledge of Astronomy, I do not know whether I should not have become an adept in every branch of natural Philosophy, had not my humanity stood in the way. For upon seeing a cat tortured in an air pump, of which, though an animal I have the greatest dislike to, I could not bear to behold the convulsive struggles; I left the pursuit of Philosophy, and turned my thoughts to politics.

When I entered upon this science, I determined to become, if possible, another Maintenon. Though I could never admire that lady's sentiments in private life, I readily allowed that she possessed great talents in the cabinet. I now studiously sought to acquire a knowledge of the laws of nations. I read Grotius, Puffendorf, and all the great writers upon that subject. And paid as much attention to the study, as if I had been about to be appointed Ambassadors to the first court in Europe. What greatly accelerated my proficiency in this branch of science, was my having had the pleasure of meeting *Lady Rochford* at Holland-house.

I need not inform you that this lady was one of the first wits of her time, and from having been bred in a court, one of the most polished of women. Her extensive knowledge



knowledge enabled her to render herself of great service to *Lord Rochford* during his embassies to most of the principal courts of Europe. Though she was thus elevated by her station and great abilities, she had the good sense to be above forms. She made her own etiquette. As I did not accept her invitation so soon as her ladyship expected, she came to visit me. This circumstance, not only highly flattered me, but procured me the pleasure of her conversation, which I scarcely knew equalled by any of her sex.—The boasted superiority of the men over our sex in the endowments of the mind, is a mere common-place vaunt.—How many ladies could I point out, from my acquaintance with the great world, whose mental accomplishments are incontrovertible proofs of the fallacy of this much talked of opinion! Among these, the lady I have just mentioned was a brilliant instance.

This season I appeared but seldom, as *Barry* revived several old plays, and procured a new one, in order to show *Miss Nof-siter* to advantage. He was obliged to adopt such a measure, the possession of characters being, as I have already observed, esteemed at this time, the property of the performer. And it was an invariable rule at the theatre, not to make the smallest encroachment on a custom so long established. The new piece  
he

he had procured was at length announced. The name of its author I think, was *McNamara*. I am not altogether certain as to the title of this tragedy of tragedies, but I believe it was christened “*Philoclea*.”

The first night of its being performed, I went to *Mr. Rich's*, with an intent to accompany some of his family into the house to see it. By some incident or other we were prevented from carrying my design into execution. About eight o'clock, we were greatly surprized to hear the most violent shouts, and loudest peals of laughter, that can be conceived, issue from the theatre. Our curiosity being now excited, we all hastened in, to know what could occasion such unusual marks of distinction to a *serious* piece. We found the heroine of it, and another female upon the stage; and were informed that they were the eighth or ninth characters which had made their exit to be decapitated, and returned immediately with their heads on. This gave the piece, at least the charms of novelty; and showed that the author had adopted *Bays's* mode, to *elevate and surprize*. It could not however, secure it from being damned.

Among other plays, *Barry* revived “*Mithridates*.” But it was attended with no better success than that of his countryman. And the proprietor loaded with such an additional expence, found this to be the  
least

least profitable season of any within my memory.

During the present winter, I obtained another patroness, in the young *Lady Essex*. This lady, who was just married to the Earl, was the daughter of the celebrated wit, *Sir Ambrose Williams*. Her partiality for me exceeded all belief. So extraordinary a prejudice in my favour can only be accounted for, by her mother's having never permitted her to go into public till her nuptials took place. It was a first impression; and those are generally lasting. To this amiable young lady I introduced *Madam Monteté*, of whom I have already made mention. An honour which she repaid with the loss of her life.

G. A. B.

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L E T T E R LVI.

March 1st, 172—.

**A**S you put a stop, or at least my imagination represented you as putting a stop to my reflections at the beginning of my last letter, I shall in this enter at once upon my narrative. Only premising, that you *must* indulge me in them now and then. The observations I am frequently led to intersperse through my "Apology," are such as naturally arise from the incidents; and they afford a

needful relief.—Hold pen!—Shall I not myself be guilty of as great an Hiberniacism as the author of “*Philoclea*,” if I make the introductory part of this letter a long one, at the very time I am asserting that I will proceed without any introduction at all?—I fear I shall.—But how to remedy it I know not; unless I either add to my blunder by adding a long string of apologies; or tear to pieces what I have already written.—The former would probably put your patience to too severe a trial; and the latter I am loath to do, least I should rob you of a smile which this little excursion of my pen perhaps may excite.—I will therefore let it stand as it is, and proceed.

My benefits were increasing every year. And I was now so accustomed to receive the tribute of the public, that I accepted their presents with as much easy indifference, as the Princess in *Dryden’s* “*Indian Queen*,” does her lover’s laurel. Fashion had for some time made me her standard. But now I reaped more solid pleasure, and more lasting praise, from having my company courted by a \**Doddington*, a † *Lyttleton*, a § *Williams*, and a *Mallet*. To these I might add the  
modern

\* George Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe.

† Lord Littleton.

§ Sir Ambrose Williams.

modern *Aristophanes*, and all the *wits* of the age. And what was still more flattering to my pride, females of the first rank, and those, *exemplary patterns of rectitude*, admitted me to their intimacy. A *Pozverscourt*, a *Dillon*, and a *Tyrawley*, honoured me with their friendship. I visited occasionally those ladies, and, though I was not in a situation of life, even if I had been married, to hope for a return, they always returned my visits, and accepted my invitations. As did also, the *Countess of Rockford*, with whom I was lately become acquainted.

Judging by these fortunate circumstances, for which I was more indebted to chance than to real merit, the world supposed me to possess as many mental qualifications, as the superficial ones fashion had given me credit for. I was too indolent to convince them of the contrary. I suffered them to remain in the error. They, however, took it for granted. And though I might not be esteemed by my acquaintance, a *first rate wit*, I was termed *extremely clever*. This opinion passed current. And at that time I was too much beloved to have it contradicted.—Thus does our consequence in the opinion of the world generally depend upon circumstances. Whilst fortune smiles, we stand high in their estimation; our most trivial accomplishments are magnified into perfections; and every word we utter abounds with good sense.—

Yet let but a cloud appear to darken our prospects, and those who before were charmed with what bordered on folly, now became insensible to our most refined wit.

*Mr. Fox* continued at the head of the same department, with universal approbation. He not only executed his high office with satisfaction to himself, but to those who were dependent on him, or had concerns with him. To those who came to transact business, or to solicit such favours as he could with propriety bestow, he gave a ready admission, and sent them away pleased with their reception. But those who applied merely to court the sunshine of his favour, met with an unreserved refusal. He did not, as is too often the case, buoy up their hopes with promises he never intended to fulfil; on the contrary, he put a stop at once to further applications. And thereby prevented his levee from being crouded with vain expectants, to their great inconvenience and loss of time.

*Mr. Calcraft's* agencies increased daily. And my company and business kept peace with that increase. I was so much interested in promoting his emoluments, that I did it at the hazard of my life. Hearing one night, at a late hour, of a promotion that was about to take place, I arose from my bed, to which I was confined by illness, dressed, and went to a masqued ball at the Hay-market, where

where I heard the two gentlemen I wanted to apply to were, on purpose to remind them of their promises. These were *Colonel Lascelles*, and *General Honeywood*. They recollected having given me a promise, and I succeeded in my application. But the fatigue I went through to do this occasioned my being confined to my bed for a fortnight.

The increase of business *Mr. Calcraft* now experienced, rendered it necessary, from the additional clerks and servants which were become needful, to take a much larger house than that we were in at present. As one which was both roomy and elegant was requisite, and likewise that it should be situated contiguous to the public offices, the sum was allowed for the acquisition of such a one. As for my own part, I was determined to have no concern in the transaction. Finding myself near twelve hundred pounds in debt, I declared I would no longer be the ostensible housekeeper. And in order to avoid being so, I resolved on a tour to the Continent, instead of a journey to Bristol, as I at first had proposed. My next inducement in fixing on the former, was to see my much esteemed friend *Mrs Meredith*, who, had to appearance, almost come to the last stage of her journey through life. Another motive was, that I wished to thank in person *Madam Brilliant* for the civilities I had received from her.

My gentleman, who by this time imagined that I had relaxed from my insensibility, and had contracted some regard for him, no sooner thought he perceived this, than from the natural fickleness of his sex, he became indifferent himself. As an indisputable proof, he avowed a partiality for a lady of easy virtue, ycleped *Lucy Cooper*. In consequence of this, he encouraged my resolution of going to France; and we parted equally well pleased.—Is it not strange that there should be this unaccountable propensity in man? What they strive to obtain by vows, by bribes, or the most abject submission; and purchased by whole years of assiduity; is no sooner secured, than it loses its value. “By keeping men off,” as *Mrs. Peachum* tells her daughter, “We do indeed keep them on.”—Had any one told *Calcraft*, when he made use of the arts he did to gain possession of me, that *the very appearance* of the regard he then so earnestly sought, would prove destructive of his love, his answer would have been, “It is impossible.”

My first visit when I arrived at Boulogne, was to the convent of the Ursulines, where I had spent so many happy years in the early part of my life, and from whose peaceful walls I had often regretted my removal. I was here a welcome guest. Having from the time of my leaving France kept up a correspondence with the ladies, notwithstanding  
fo



so many years had since elapsed, I was not totally forgotten by them, as otherwise might have been expected. I continued with them four days, which I passed in sweet converse with the holy sisters, and in the pleasing duties of that religion, the first rudiments of which had been there instilled into my mind.

From thence I proceeded directly to Paris. Had I not been accustomed to attention, my situation here would have been troublesome. There is so much *fadeuse* in the adulation you receive from the French, that it sickens instead of pleasing. I was introduced to the *Du Miel*. The *Clairon* and *Lequin* were in confinement for having refused to play upon some particular occasion. When I received this information, I congratulated myself on being a native of Britain; where the laws would have protected me from an arbitrary imprisonment. For I certainly should not have submitted with passive obedience to such an injunction.

I had a very pressing invitation to go to *Voltaire's* elegant retirement, where the *Marquis de Vernieul* was then upon a visit. And I was very much mortified that the limitation of my time prevented me from enjoying a happiness I had long languished for. I wrote the reason of my not being able at that time to accept the honour intended me; but promised that I would, with the utmost pleasure,  
make

make it my *business*, the following summer. I marked the day of my intended return from the south, where the chief purpose of my tour called me; which would be about the same time, I learnt, that the Marquis was to be in Paris.

Upon my arrival at Thoulouse, which had been the residence of my fair friends the *Miss Merediths*, I found that the eldest, who to all appearance was in good health when she left England, had breathed her last, some few days before I reached the place. I was apprehensive that the melancholy event would have proved fatal to her sister, who had been so long ill, and on whose account they had come to France. But contrary to all expectation, in a fortnight after her sister's decease, she was so well recovered as to be able to return with me to Paris. Where the gaiety of that lively city, which her indisposition had prevented her from enjoying as she passed through it in her way to Thoulouse, dispelled her grief, and quite re-established her health. The never-failing spirits of the *Marquis de Verneuil*, who was returned from *Voltaire's*, together with our trips to the environs, and the *petit soupers* we were incessantly partaking of, made the three weeks which we continued in Paris, fly with the nimble pinions of a dove. So much for my excursion to France; which not only afforded me  
a tem-

a temporary suspension of my cares, but *Mr. Calcraft* time to engage a house.

Upon my return to England, I was set down at our *hotel* in Parliament-street; for so it really was in comparison to the house in Brewer-street. I was very happy to find things *comme ils faut*; in consequence of which my maid was to return to her former situation, and be termed my woman, *Mrs. Clifford*. *Mr. Calcraft* had now fourteen or fifteen clerks, which made the whole of our servants to amount to upwards of thirty. He had engaged a most reputable *maitre d'hotel* named *Guince*, who had lived with *Mr. Pelham* till his death. Having made so considerable an addition to our stile of living, *Mr. Calcraft* agreed to allow two thousand five hundred pounds a year for the table; which, with the produce of the farm, presents, &c. was fully sufficient to maintain, in this point, the magnificence we were entered into. For though the quantity of the provisions was thus increased, the quality was by no means the same.

From this expensive arrangement, I did not entertain the least doubt but that *Mr. Calcraft* would readily discharge such a trifle as twelve hundred pounds; which was the amount of the debts I had contracted for the house expences, as already observed. The extra ones, which I had incurred by purchases, during my excursion to France, my friend

friend *Miss Meredith* had enabled me to pay. Upon their setting out for the continent, their banker *Sir Joseph Hankey*, had given them an unlimited credit on a house at Thoulouse, and the sister that died having left the surviving one the whole of her fortune, the companion of my return was mistress of more than twenty thousand pounds. The sum I borrowed of this lady amounted to six hundred pounds.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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