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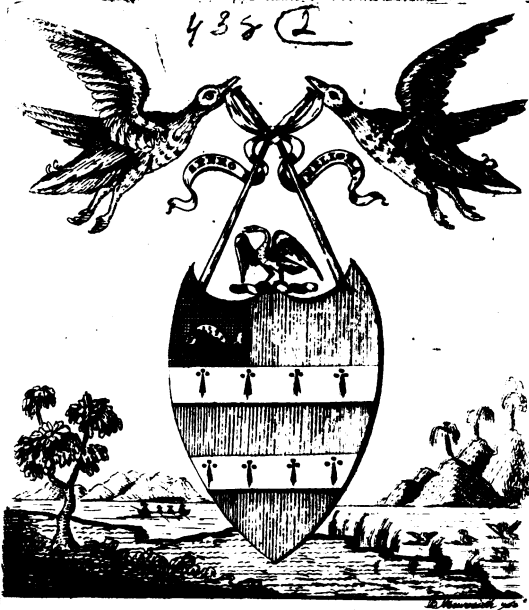
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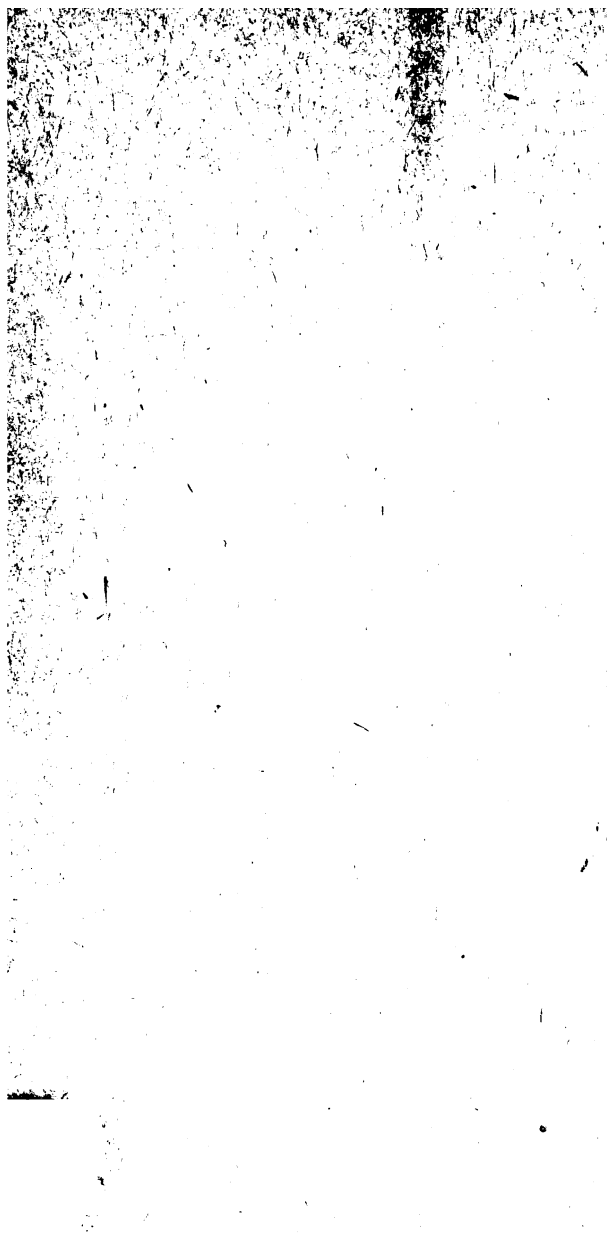


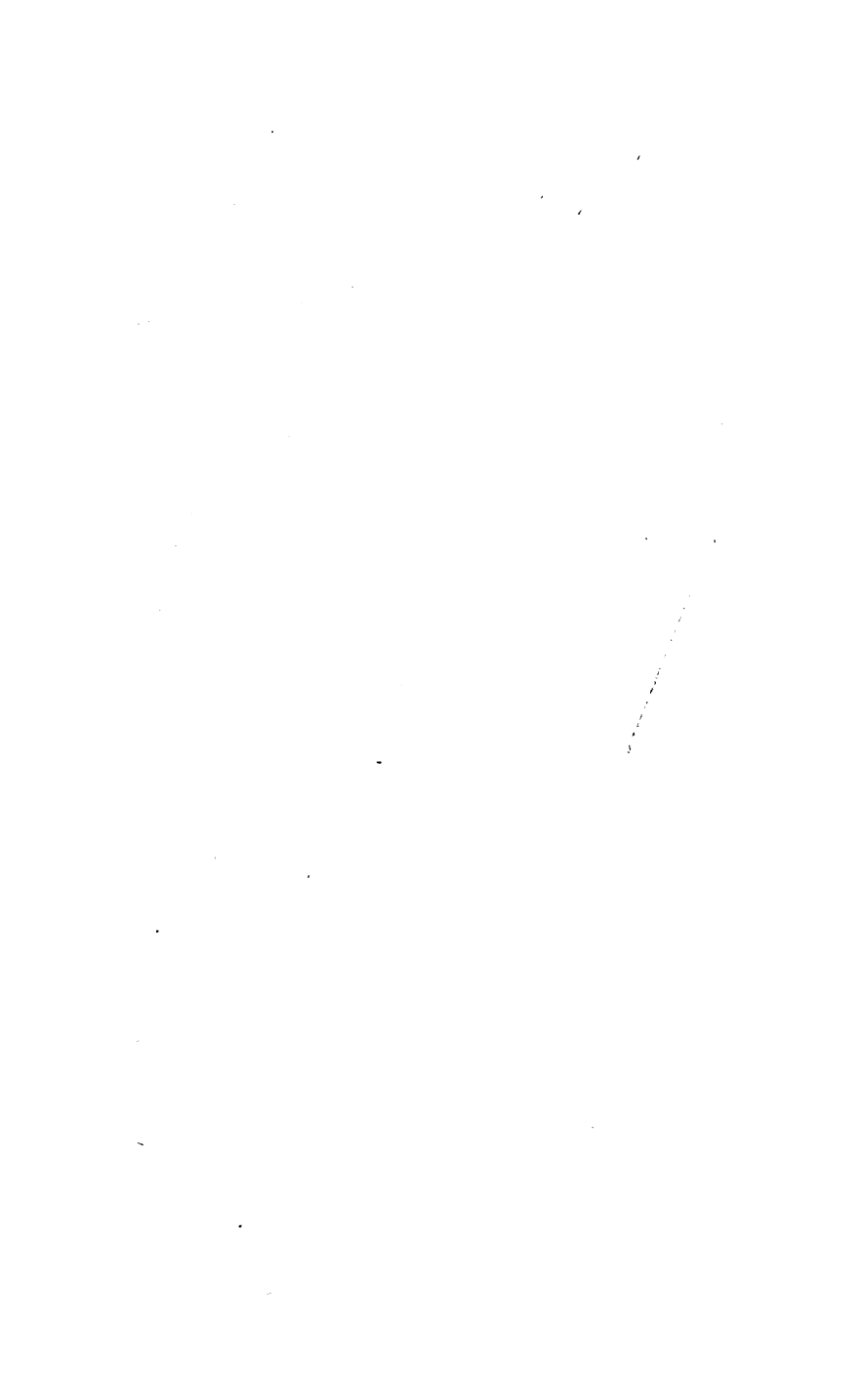
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Francis Canton Junr.

Letter
NCV





10/10/10



L E T T E R S

F R O M

H E N R I E T T A

T O

M O R V I N A.

INTERSPERSED WITH

A N E C D O T E S,

HISTORICAL AND AMUSING,

O F T H E

Different COURTS and COUNTRIES through
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MDCCLXXVII.



T H E

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

THE following manuscript accidentally fell into my hands. The style and sentiments of the Letters cannot, I think, offend the most refined taste. The pleasure I received on perusing them induces me to offer them to the public in their native simplicity, and needs, I hope, no apology. If the beauties of epistolary writing consist in its wearing the face of conversation, may not those beauties be corrected away,
since

(iv)

since many fine pictures are spoiled by
over finishing?

I shall be happy if I find, from the
reception this trifle meets with, I am
not singular in my opinion, or vain in
flattering myself the world will not, at
least, condemn the taste of its

most obedient,

humble servant,

The EDITOR.

L E T.

LETTERS

FROM

HENRIETTA

TO

MORVINA.



LETTER I.

My dear Morvina,

THE pain my whole family expressed about that health, *you* know I do not want, made parting from you all still more grievous to me; and nothing but the deference, the awful respect, I ever feel towards

VOL. I.

B

my

my mother, joined to the tender regard I bear her, can excuse me to my own heart for not letting her into the real cause of this precipitate excursion.

Although returning the passion of a much admired young man of fashion has in it nothing singular, or unpardonable, when it exceeds not the limits prescribed our sex, and where the lover has ran through all the forms of knight-errantry, forms *you*, well know, my romantic turn of mind could by no means dispense with, I feared knowing the wretched state of my heart ^would not a little hurt my mother's, ever fondly tender towards me; and that her pride would ill brook the thought of her first and favourite daughter

daughter (pardon me the expression) marrying a younger brother, though of the best blood in Europe, without a fortune sufficient to support that rank she had hitherto maintained in the world, and by her birth had every right to maintain; besides, my settled purpose is to put an end to this affair one way or the other; and I am apt to believe, my dear Morvina, it must be done in the least pleasing but most salutary way, for my *mind's health*, for believe me, the mother deceives him, perhaps herself, and knows not that the fulness of her heart is avarice, which will not allow her (when it comes to the point) to part with a single toe of the golden calf so long as her eyes are open. A little of her ladyship's œco-

nomical turn might have rendered less needful for him.

Your offer, the delicacy of which no language can reach, my heart ever moment feels in its full force: but was I capable of accepting of it, I must be totally unworthy of it, unworthy the name I bear; and whilst a single spark of generosity remained in my breast, detest myself. The company of a sister I so truly and tenderly love, must add to my happiness in every situation of life, but then it must be obtained on terms less injurious to you, my dear Morvina, and less shameful to me. But enough of this, our hearts are too nearly akin to leave us ignorant of each other's sentiments. I shall write to my mother from Lord

M———'s,

M——'s, where I hope to be to-morrow, and to you again so soon as I reach town, which must be the day following. *There* I expect to meet with letters from D——, perhaps with too much impatience; not that I think he merited my rage about the chaste Penelope, yet, from the aspects things at present wear, I cannot begin too soon to subdue a passion which may probably turn out unsuccessful, and which at best affords no very bright prospect.

Two days travelling in an easy carriage with my servant only, allowed me ample leisure for reflection. I viewed this affair in every different light my reason could suggest, yet

never was I able to draw *happiness* within that point of view where I once thought it inseparably united; my nearer connection with D——. His vanity is unbounded; my pride and jealousy would keep pace with it; the consequence must be eternal wrangling; distressing in every situation, infinitely more so when a narrowness of fortune will not admit of amusing that melancholy indulging fails not to increase. The dissipated turn of mind men are born with, at least bred up in, makes it very possible for a man to render a wife completely miserable, though he at the same time loves *her* and her only, and prefers her to every thing but variety; for what avails the cause, if the effect is the same. I am entered

on

(7)

on a subject I know not where, or when to end. But I must to bed, as I proceed on my journey at four in the morning. Adieu, my Dear; would you were with me. But how far foever our lot casts us afunder, our hearts I trust unite; nay, endeavour to out-strip each other in sisterly affection, &c.

B 4

L E T 2

L E T T E R II.

London, Monday.

N O sooner am I arrived in town than I long to tell my dear Morvina D——'s letters (three of which I found here) say all I can wish. But do they speak the language of his heart, or is not vanity the reigning passion there, ever ready to sacrifice the ease of those *be* best loves to the idle gratification of the present moment? You cannot judge these suspicions unwarrantable, when you reflect on that behaviour I first took umbrage at. That he had any attachment for ——

I by

I by no means imagined; hardly could I believe her food for his vanity; so liberally and undistinguishingly does she bestow her favours. You will think then she is below my jealousy; so do I. But if a man within three days of that fixed for his marriage, can suffer a brutal passion to run away with him so far, as even to risk offending, if not losing the woman of his choice, she has little to expect when absolutely in his power, and nothing to do but silently and sorely to lament her own folly; a folly the world in general will incline more to laugh at than pity; therefore I must have more solid assurances than the brittle promises of a lover to rest my faith on for his future conduct, and to induce me to

resign up my liberty to one who on
 the bare presumption he was sure of it,
 has dared to abuse his power. No,
 my dear sister, time and a steady per-
 severance in endeavouring to merit my
 hand can alone convince me he is
 worthy of it. I may perhaps be too
 expecting, but were breaking my heart
 to be the consequence, bend it shall
 not, or recede one tittle from what I
 at first exacted from him. I hate your
 whining nymphs, and marvel not that
 men despise them. If sentiment, if
 reason, if friendship has any part in
 forming a connection, it must be reci-
 procal. Your tassel gentles, your
 cooing turtles, who sighing wait their
 tyrant mates return, are incapable of
 a heart-felt passion; and deserve to
 lose

lose the esteem of a husband, as well as his person. If he ever allows himself to reflect rationally, he cannot but believe their tenderness, their attachment, is merely personal; and that a woman who wants spirit to feel, and resent an injury, wants every generous sentiment necessary to either love or friendship. Lord M—— met me on the road, and carried me to his house, where my dear lady M—— waited for me with an impatience you will be better able to imagine than I to paint. Indeed, the joy which appeared in all our countenances on meeting was such as friendship only can inspire. With some difficulty, and much reluctance, I left them this morning, not without a faithful promise to return the first

moment it was in my power, which I certainly mean (and shall be happy) to do. Fear of making another faux couche confines her to the house, though her ladyship is in perfect health and spirits. Her lord, and lady E—— are ever with her, and ever seeking fresh amusements for her: She merits it from both. Is it not almost time to tell you my lodgings are the prettiest in town; the furniture elegant, trois peice sur le plein pié. My bed chamber is over my dining room, a very pretty dressing room within, and a closet within that; in short, the whole house is mine, one room only excepted, which the good old woman, who has the care of all, occupies. Besides all this, I have a wonderful pretty garden,
with

with a portico at the end of it. I began to fear my lively friend had never considered the rent, but upon examination I found that too as reasonable as I could wish; it is the very next street to lady ——— and madame D ———. I have sent to them. A violent rap at the door. It is them. They met my servant, and would not delay a moment coming to their dear cousin, their estimable friend, &c. &c. you will readily believe.—But I hear them on the stairs, I must go and make my curtsy. How mighty civil does curiosity appear. Just done tea. *They* have seized this moment to make some visits. I sup with them this evening: must bid my dear sister adieu, for this day. I have written by this post to my
 mother,

mother. I know you will be ever attentive and affectionate towards her; and believe, my dear Morvina, I love her too tenderly to consent to any thing that can give her a moment's pain, cost *me* what it will. Should she have any apprehensions, you may safely venture to quiet them, on the score of

Your truly affectionate sister, &c.

L E T.

L E T T E R III.

My dear Morvina,

WE had a private party last night, composed of les bel esprits of the very first class. Lady ——— and madame D———, extremely lively; they shewed me very particular honours; Sir F. D——— was uncommonly entertaining; and you know he is always enough so to rouse any thing animate; the little effect it had upon me convinces me my spirits are sunk into a lower state of dejection than I was aware of, and require every effort on my part, to restore them in any degree

degree to their original standard. A pretty expression, that, suitable to the taste of the times, and to *my taste*, I fear. Can you believe an ear so nicely delicate as mine once was, is now infinitely more delighted with the noisy drum, fife, &c. than with the most sublime opera? I shall notwithstanding go to the next, to hear a new singer, infinitely beyond all I have ever heard, I am told, equal if not superiour to the much famed Farenelli, in whose praise my mother and aunts have often been so lavish, as to make us wish we had made our appearance in this visible world somewhat sooner. I am not clear I wish it not still, though from a different motive. Will you forgive me, my honest Morvina, if I say because I should

should be so much nearer leaving it. But I must either change my subject, or put an end to my letter. To dwell upon grievances, to the world in general, is impertinent, to our particular friends, cruel, and by no means likely to remove them, since it only serves to perpetuate the remembrance of them, and the surest method is to forget. Fortunately for you, I hear a rap at the door; expect a transitory relief only, for I shall resume my pen so soon as the visit is over.

Who is it, can you guess, that says I shall not write six lines more to you? I know you cannot, and I hate suspense too much myself to inflict it on others. It is the dear, the worthy,
 but

but a truce with epithets, since none can reach her amiability; it is lady B——, who insists on my going home with her to dinner. I have already opened my heart to her in part, and mean to do it wholly, though I am perfectly satisfied she will immediately set about divesting it of every foible; to make way for that native dignity the men term pride: be that as it may, it is our best resource, the never failing refuge of our sex. I hope to-morrow will bring me a letter from you. Adieu! love with equal friendship your affectionate, &c.

L E T T E R IV.

My dear Morvina,

I H A D an uninterrupted conversation of three whole hours with lady B—— yesterday, on the chapter of —— . To an excellent head and heart, her ladyship has added some erudition and much knowledge of the world; her rank in life, the public character she held abroad, for many years, afforded her various opportunities of knowing mankind; her extraordinary penetration, vivacity, and clearness of judgment, aided her in making the best use of all. Happy in such a friend to
guide

guide my unexperienced youth, ought I to repine at little rubs we all must meet with, the common lot of humanity; and it greatly depends on ourselves to lessen or augment even them. But to my more immediate purpose: lady B—— views ——'s behaviour through reason's eye, and finds him culpable, and so often as passion suffers me to appeal to *mine*, I join in verdict with her, wonder at the power of partiality, the despotism it holds over our understanding. I am far from suspecting he meant to offend me; but he meant what is a thousand times worse, to deceive me; to abuse that tenderness, that opinion I had of him, to render me in a short time the miserable dupe of my own own credulity;

credulity; and his predominant passion once gratified, to make me a tame domestic animal, useful to his interest, nay, perhaps to his pleasures too. He reckoned my *pride* would turn to his account, and no sufferings, however severe, force me to confess to the world, to my family, and friends, how weak my judgment, how strong my passion, for an object unworthy my attention, otherwise than merely as an object. Handsome he certainly is; but alas! personal charms, alluring they *were* permanent, cannot ensure happiness for any length of time: and no sooner do we know a man capable of playing the villain, than we perceive it marked most strongly in every feature, and feel disgust towards the whole.

whole. This preamble will lead you into a knowledge of my determination, to put a final end to this silly affair. I mean to see *him* once more, in order to receive my letters, and restore *his*. Pronounce me not unstable, prone to change, &c. No, my Morvina, my heart has felt too fore a wound to be susceptible of a second flame, or to regain its native ease; that ease, which shone through every thing I said, through all I did; which made me ever pleased, ever happy, and desirous of rendering others so. That I may not now break in upon their happiness, and become a tax upon my friends, I put on spirits when they are far from me, and speak of myself rarely; indeed, never in confidence to
any,

, save you and lady B——. You
 y remember it was an early maxim
 mine, we should never make more
 fidents in any affair than what is
 solutely necessary towards the accom-
 shment of it. Notwithstanding my
 icas with —— had reached the
 rs of lady P——, and twenty
 ore of our *chers ami*, before my ar-
 val, I carefully avoided dropping a
 ngle syllable that could betray my er-
 nd to town, or my resolves since. I
 ve sent my own servant with a letter
 ——, who now commands a
 y of the guards at N——, to in-
 him of my settled purpose; and
 if *he* still persists in requesting to
 er my letters into my own hands,
 ay have an opportunity of doing
 it

it at a water-drinking place, where I shall be in a few days, and which is at least thirty miles nearer *him*. Any mortal but my dear Morvina, would wish me near any thing but a *pen* and *ink*. To be conscious of this, and still run on tiring you to death, is too indelicate, too selfish; therefore farewell; love, and believe me ever your tender and unfeigned friend, &c.

P. S. The account you give of our dear mother's health and spirits, is the only pleasing occurrence that has been able to force its way into my heart since we parted: pray Heaven she may long remain on earth, a blessing to us; and enable us to merit, in some degree, a gift so inestimable.

I must

I must not forget to tell you, I was at the Opera last night. Very full, very fine indeed; Manzoli's voice beyond imagination charming; his action and figure nothing remarkable. My old friends, Lady D—— and Miss S——, were in the very next box to ours; surprized not a little, but agreeably so, to find me in town. I wish the latter may not divine the cause. Once more, *good night*. My next letter will be from S——, where I go to-morrow to drink the waters of Lethé; *they* only have power to heal my malady.

L E T T E R V.

My Dear Morvina,

Lethel May it merit
that appellation from
me!

I AM this instant arrived at the most shabby of all shabby places. Such rooms! such walks! But no matter; it is new; and from that charm alone so crowded, it is a mercy I have been able to get a lodging. A piece of good fortune I owe to the Nash of the place, having had the honor (as he says) of being known to the Viscount my brother. It is the only house empty near the Wells. My friend, after begging leave to present his wife to me in the walks, informed me my acquaintance

Lady

Lady B. W. her sister, and two daughters, are *here*, and live within an hundred yards of my house. I shall go to *them*, but make no new acquaintance. My spirits are too much depressed to let me relish the melange of company, consequently the riotous, vulgar jollity of the very first places of this sort. I send this by my postilion, who is this moment setting off for town, to get me a better pair of horses, for I mean to travel about much; the country is pretty, and to me entirely new. Adieu,

Yours ever.

Let me hear from you soon. I shall write no more till after the interview.

L E T T E R VI.

My dear Morvina,

I SEE you stand aghast! You wonder what is become of me! You conclude my fine resolves are vanished: finished at the sight of ———, he has been *here*) and that I would be the first to give you an account of my own defeat: *toute au contraire*. The very sight of a man who has so far presumed upon the strength of my attachment to him, as to venture risking the loss of it, roused all the Bravery in me, enabled me to shew him, I despised and abhorred an heart capable of duplicity, not to add ingratitude

and I could not, I said, persuade myself to believe, the head which accompanied it much more valuable : and I should hold that woman cheap indeed, who pretended to love where she could not esteem. A passion so shameful ill became the delicacy of our sex, and deserved a much harsher name than that of love. Personal likings were certainly very conquerable ; for the moment reason had withdrawn from before our eyes the cloud of partiality, so far as to let us see even the trifling light such characters must appear in to the rational part of the world, little would remain, but *oh! the pity on't, Iago*. You will think, my dear Morvina, my heart did not altogether agree with my tongue ; I believe *he* thought so too, by the infinite pains *he* took to reinstate himself

there, and his steady perseverance in refusing me my letters. He said, unless I would tell him what cause I had to think they were less safe in his hands now, than at the time I wrote them, he hoped I would permit him to preserve them, however severe and cruel the lot I doomed him to: knowing I had once harboured gentler sentiments, less injurious to *him*, and more worthy of *me*, would afford him some consolation, &c. I told him, with a smile of contempt, I believed they contained nothing singularly absurd, nothing more than all idle letters of that sort contained; yet I could not, I must confess, forbear regretting that such monuments of my folly should survive even the folly itself. I perceived his vanity felt no inconsiderable wound: indeed his heart
 seemed

seemed hurt, and to join most sincerely with his tongue, which wanted not oratory to paint his sufferings in so deplorable a light, that I began to fear the contagion; and judging it easier to fly than resist temptation, rung my bell, ordered my carriage instantly to the door, told him I had outstay'd my engagement to Lady E—— W——. He entreated a few minutes farther audience, which like a most cruel princess, I refused. He handed me into my chaise: it was well I was not going by water, the vehemence of *his sighs must have overset* the boat. Suppose it had, he would undoubtedly have plunged into the gulph, saved my life at the hazard of his own, and gratitude on my part must have paid the price of his prowess. I supped at Lady E—— W: *he* was

C 4

obliged

obliged to return that night to his quarters, which however he did not do, until he had traversed under her Ladyship's windows at least a thousand times. He had no sort of acquaintance with her; there was not the smallest chance of his being asked in; but I had the pleasure of hearing my taste universally approved by those who knew not of my passion, consequently could not mean to flatter me. In short, I found he has charms enow to justify me to the *world*, though not to *myself*; and that my head and heart were likely to continue at war with each other some time longer. I cannot too soon return to the amiable Lady B——, whose councils have ever been to me most salutary. *He* may get leave to come here again; *he* may come for a few hours without leave, and persecute

persecute me with a passion, I could almost believe he now feels. That belief may perhaps awaken mine. The agitation of mind this interview threw me into, you will readily believe, appeared in my countenance. Lady E—— marked it. I seized the opportunity of telling her the waters by no means agreed with me; that I believed I must desist from drinking them, while I did stay at S——, and that my stay there would necessarily be shorter than I at first intended; as my physicians in town might probably recommend some other spa to me. You know Lady E—— and her sisters are old friends of mine: we have lived together ever since I have been at this place. Her Ladyship's house is not above two hundred yards from mine: no vulgar mansion (I assure you)

you) in the days of our Henrys and our Edwards, though dwindled into the habitation of an honest farmer, who lives in the superfluous offices, and lets the rest out for the water-drinking season. My domicile is every thing in miniature, and was you to come here, you would be tempted (as our friend Mr. W— was at a certain dutches's) to desire it might be brought to your carriage. After all, it is every thing I want; and infinitely better adapted to my present turn of mind than the most superb palace. The situation to the full as romantic as I am, or *was*, when I used to stand freezing at the end of the terras in poor R——'s park, listening by turns to the gentle murmuring stream, and rapid cascade, *your* mortal aversion. The length of my letter
 wil

will I hope serve to convince you my silence can never proceed from want of inclination to converse with you. I shall write to you, once again at least, before I leave this place, though I mean to be laboriously civil, and fly about abundantly while I do stay. That we cannot fly from our own minds I will allow, but we may amuse that melancholy it would be madness to indulge. I omit not one post writing to my mother, therefore you know I am in perfect health; and to know the weakness of my heart, which by the way argues no great thought of head, will be as irksome for you to read, as for me to write; but in every humour, in every situation, rest assured I am truly yours, &c.

LETTER VII.

My dear Morvina,

HE has tried every effort to disturb my peace of mind: alas! he does disturb it: has, I fear, for ever ruined it. Yet there is some consolation, some satisfaction in being able to conceal our woes from the worthless author of them. Oh! just Heaven, can I, do I live to write him worthless, and to you, my dear indulgent sister, who have listened to me whilst I spent whole days in telling forth his praise. The instability of human nature! Was I then deceived, or am I now mistaken? Fain would I believe

believe the latter: but when doubts once seize upon the mind, trifles light as air, seen through that magnifier jealousy, are indeed confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ; and we may bid adieu, a last adieu, to future friendship, which by mutual confidence alone subsists; that food denied, it sickens, and shortly dies. Ought *I* not *then* to feel the gentleness of my lot, compared to that I was on the very verge of sustaining; to have been in the power of my tyrant, obliged to bear his taunts, to supplicate his smiles; perhaps have little innocent partners in my sorrows, who could have no share in the follies which caused them: to bring them up with sentiments different to my *own*, unequal to their birth, had to *me* been as impossible, as to have given them the de
quoy

quoy to support *such* sentiments ; while a father lavished on vanity and dissipation the only possible means towards it. Reflections such as these must surely render every ill we suffer singly supportable, at least to a mind not totally void of delicacy, and secure us from danger of relapses. To you I will confess, I believe myself heroine enough to endure the sorest strokes of fortune singly and secretly ; but to sit the sad witness to the pangsof those I love, a pointed object for fools to gaze at, and for the best-natured part of mankind to insult with their pity, is more than I am equal to : therefore I am determind to persevere in my first resolves, cost me what it will ; and should my heart be made of such brittle stuff, e'en let it break : it shall ; nor act unworthy the heroic race
whence

whence it sprung, or the character of your affectionate sister and friend.

The chaise is at the door. Adieu to ———: I have already sent back several of his letters unopened, and cautioned Sanchonia, as she regards my favour, to receive no letters or messages from his servants, &c. above all, to remember I am never at home to him. Meet in public we unavoidably must. Perhaps that may aid me not a little, in conquering this unhappy passion; as it is more than probable *my* apparent indifference will pique *his* vanity, and the absurdity of his conduct, disgust *me*. Every thing is ready; I must away; adieu! ma chere fans adieu. My mother's letter gave me much pleasure. I will

will meet you at Bath: and I hope long before that time to recover my spirits so far as to wear the face of that mirth and ease it once was famed for.

L. E. T.

L E T T E R VIII.

My dear Morvina,

AN easy chaise and four fleet horses whisked me to town insensibly; less fatigued with the length of my journey, than the agitation of my mind. I went into bed, drank tea, read a packet of letters that had lain some time expecting me to town; one from my dear Lady B——, who is still in the country, I shall feel little mortification in being denied to all other visitants. The faithful Sanchonia sits by my bed, making my tea, and displaying the superior talents of an Abigail. Lappet is a fool to her.

her. I much doubt if any character exhibited on the stage can reach her. I sometimes smile, at other times am tempted to be peevish, till I reflect she means well, and that is as much as the best of us dare boast. Her sighs echo mine, her tears flow faster. Upon the whole, I esteem her a treasure invaluable; she is honest, faithful, affectionate, and has the honour to think with Rochefoucault, that we forgive as long as we love. Wonders! I will torture my own heart, merely to break D——'s: that *his* heart will break, she is perfectly convinced: *there* I confess I am an infidel, having met with few male martyrs in the annals of love. I must write by this post to my mother, and to Lady M——; her lord comes to town next week; *him* I shall be glad to see: a
 worthier

worthier, more happy pair exists not. I will enclose Lady B——'s letter to me; more worth your reading than all I can write; except that I am, my dear Morvina's fond sister and unalterable friend.

To the Honourable Miss H——:

THINK not, my dear Miss H——, I apprehend you capable of breaking your promise, were your future happiness less dependant on the performance of it. When I say your sejour at S—— is rather long, the pleasure your company ever affords me, may, I allow, make it appear longer to me, than to your acquaintance in general. The many and great inconveniencies arising from such stay, present themselves to *my* imagination by thousands: above all, the continual agitation of mind your present situation necessarily subjects you to, *may* affect your health, a blessing you are bound by all laws, human and divine, to preserve, by every means in
 your

your power. However little value life may appear of to you at present, delicacy to your friends should make you wish to hold it on any terms. Besides, death will not come when we call him; neither can we be sure our heroism will enable us to stare him in the face, tho' it often represents him in a despicable light. In short, my friend, you need not add bodily pain to the misery of mind you suffer. Trust me, you cannot change the scene too soon; you have heard all ——— has to say, which amounts to no more than this; he has deceived you once, he would be glad to have it in his power to deceive you again. You are food for his vanity; his pride is piqued: I say his pride; for had he a heart worthy yours, he would have understood it better, and valued it more.

more. Without any other reason to dissuade you from such a connexion, this alone might suffice. He is lost in dissipation; incapable of attachment; would sacrifice all, and every person upon earth, to the present moment. This truth (my dear friend) you have amply proved. Was you wild enough to put yourself again in his power? Without dealing with Demoniacs, I will venture to pronounce you would daily, nay hourly experience each pang the human heart is heir to; this one hope, left you and your friends, that the delicacy, the sentiments of your heart, and feeling disposition, could not let you long survive misfortunes little likely to be your lot—Whither am I rambling? to dwell on grievances is not the way to remove them. Hasten to scenes of amusement; when you are
not

not in humour to join in them, I will listen to all your sighs, with that unwearyed patience you often admired in me. Should it ever fail me, your friend the Marquis, has a fund inexhaustible; and having nothing but mere conjecture to judge from, piques himself greatly on his mighty penetration in finding out your illness was wholly mental; talking English is the highest compliment you can make him, though he understands not six words of it; and cannot betray your confidence, nor break in upon your history farther than you yourself would wish; by exclaiming ever and anon, *ab! mon Dieu, quelque dommage, ob! abominable, &c.* You see I am quite in nonsense humour; laugh at me, laugh with me; but believe me perfectly serious, when I assure you, you have not
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on earth a more sincere and affectionate
friend.]

P. S. A very few days will carry
to town, where I flatter myself we shall
meet you.

L

L E T T E R IX.

YOUR letter, my dear Morvina, spoke the language of your honest heart. I saw you in each syllable, I admired you through every line of it; regretted the distance that separates us, abhorred the cause, or rather myself. What unpardonable weakness! To wait for a remedy from time, my own reason should long since have brought me. I rejoice you agree with lady B—— at last. I knew you would like her letter; it is so unaffected, friendly, and sincere; written more from the heart than the head. I hate your florid advisers, whose weight of wisdom, knocks you down at

once; and who insult you on those foibles, an exemption from which they owe to no other cause than sheer insensibility. I need not tell you I am infinitely happy to learn my mother is free enough from her head-achs to give up all thoughts of the Bath this season, though it will, I fear, delay for some time our meeting. Lady P—— has just sent to ask me to dinner to day. I have pleaded inability to stir out, and she graciously comes to me, I should be mighty glad to see her, was she less prying into what by no means concerns her, and had not an hundred friends to talk one over to. Then her Ladyship is so youthfully romantic in her ideas of love. She will expatiate for ever on the subject; cry with you, or for you; chime in with every folly, every absurdity of a

love

love distempered brain; find out more excuses for a faithless lover, than the most assured would dare to offer for himself; and by this means softens your heart into a kind of involuntary confession, which though she intends not to misuse at the time, she will frequently turn against you in the end; for it is not from the cause but the effect, that she judges and decides; and holds no sin unpardonable but poverty. With all this I believe her perfectly virtuous, and on many occasions good-natured. Had she the gifts of stability and retention, I believe she would be always so. She consults not her judgment so much as the fashion, in chusing friends, therefore is often disappointed in them, and places it to the account of human nature, not want of penetration in selecting

her favourites. These frequent disappointments have poisoned her mind to such a degree, as to make her live in eternal suspicion of mankind in general. This account of one whose understanding, &c. we were taught to idolize, will a little surprize you. I still think she has a good one, though not a bright one. Her mind is well informed by reading both books and the world. Nobody sees more or better company; her house is still the ton; notwithstanding you would at times swear it was Noah's ark; but violent party spirit unavoidably subjects us to that. Her house is in general a receptacle of belle esprit. I have seen some of the very first class *there*, and been enough charmed to forget my sorrows. *These* seem to revere her judgment; and as many of them want neither

ther

Her interest or her purse, it would be too severe to suspect them capable of stooping to flattery, where no lure, no temptation could be thrown out. Indeed I believe her judgment is good, when she lets it have fair play: it is too often warped by affectation, prejudice, and partiality. I must to dress, or she will find me in my night-cap. I am high in her Ladyship's good graces, and I could, I confess, really love her, did I dare to depend upon the friendship she so warmly professes for *me*, and for all our family. She often asks after you in the kindest manner. Nobody can love you too well, my dear Morvina, and few so much as your affectionate sister, &c.

D 3.

Lady.

Lady B—— is to be in town
to-morrow. Rejoice with me. I know
you will, without my entreaties. Good
night.

LET-

L E T T E R X.

THIS lady P—— (my dear Morvina) will force herself into one's confidence; nay, into one's heart. She is extremely agreeable. I never knew her half so much so, as she was yesterday. She stayed with me till past three in the morning: few women have read so much, or books so well chosen, or so happily digested their reading. She has clearly selected the best ideas of the best authors, so as to make the sense her own. Is it a wonder then her judgment should seldom err? For by comparing the past with the present, we may give a shrewd guess at the future, without the gift of foreknowledge. In short, much

improvement is to be gained, as well as pleasure, by conversing with her Ladyship. Nor does she deal out her information with an air of superiority, mystery, &c. I know no person better, if so well, qualified to form the mind of a young woman ; to point out the surest paths to virtue, and those flowery ways which insensibly lead us too near the reverse, by inducing us to fix our hearts on transitory delights, nor raise our views beyond this globe terrestrial ; delights which may intoxicate, but never can satisfy a rational mind, even in its present state, and must render it totally unfit for another. She feels the unpleasantness of my situation ; would do any thing to extricate me from it. Sometimes her Ladyship piques me on my good understanding, (as she partially calls

calls it,) and on that religion which I hope I *do* in some degree possess; on my duty to the only parent heaven has left me; the love and delicacy I owe you all; to make an effort, and get the better of a passion, which allowing the object ever so sincere, in gratefully and tenderly returning it, must end unhappily, and involve you all in those distresses, the narrowness of his fortune, and expensive turn of mind, must subject me to. Indeed, my dear sister, the strength, the truth of this reasoning makes me tremble, on a retrospect of the dreadful precipice I have so narrowly escaped, and a conduct I feel *was* criminal. I had certainly no right to indulge a passion one single moment, that I knew too well my mother would be utterly averse to. Being what the

world calls our own mistress, is a bad reason for relaxing in our duty to those who gave us being. A parent less indulgent than ours, merits more regard, more duty and attention than we can offer. Had these reflections struck me with equal force somewhat earlier, it would have saved me many an anxious hour. Diseases of the mind, as those of the body, cannot be too speedily attended to. Keep this ever in your mind, my dear sister, and let not your gentle easy nature be a dupe to that artifice men in general practice towards us all; often from no other motive but to indulge their vanity, or raise their merit with some worthless object, whom fashion induces them to follow, and the glory of supplanting a rival makes them sacrifice every thing to a wretch, who in their heart

heart they despise. Infer not from this, I look upon the whole sex as dangerous betrayers. Far from it. I hold the friendship of a sensible well-bred man of honour, a very valuable acquisition. But then his honour must not consist in running a man thorough the body, or shooting him thorough the head. It must arise from a principle in the heart nursed up and cherished by religion and reason. A meer moral man is my aversion; though in truth he ought to be an object of my compassion; for what is he more than a puppet, strutting his hour away on this stage of misery and folly; vainly assuming to himself the attributes of his maker; peremptorily deciding on the present, regardless of (if not denying) the future; at the same time his coward heart gives the lye to his
 life

life, nay, to his tongue, which in every danger, under every calamity, invokes the aid of that all-wise, all powerful Being, he has dared in his hours of mirth and jollity, to blaspheme. Too many of these wretches are termed good sort of men; men of honour. But should we wonder, can we be surprized, to prove them otherwise, who make pleasure or profit the sole criterion of their actions, whose views are contracted within the narrow compass of the present space? I am only amazed such a man thinks it necessary to wear the mask so far, as to stop at any ill his wild imagination suggests, where his rank and fortune shamefully bid defiance to the laws. But I must end my reflections, or be too late for the post. God bless you; believe me truly yours, &c.

L E T.

L E T T E R XI.

My dear Morvina,

AFTER so long an absence, and having seen ——, you will easily believe I had too much to say to Lady B—— to find time for writing yesterday, and a very short letter must now suffice to convince you nothing can put you out of either my head or heart. To possess the last you think is perhaps the speediest and surest way of securing the first; that it frequently so happens I will allow; yet to my shame and confusion I will confess, my heart approves what my reason condemns; yet trust me, I will be led only by the latter, and I flat-

ter

ter myself this imbecility of heart, arises more from constitutional fidelity, for which you know our family have long been famed, than want of spirit in me. My friend not only approves, but admires my whole conduct at S——, and by way of inducing me to persevere to the end, has told me the prettiest love story you ever heard, though somewhat tragical. The heroine is an intimate friend of lady B——'s, as the sequel will shew, and made her ladyship the confidante of her heart throughout the affair. But time and accident, the discoverer of all events, brought to light the greatest part of this. Should I find time to write it, and be able to obtain lady B——'s permission, you shall certainly have it. I dine with her to-day, and we go to Ranelagh in the evening,

with

with two Italian princes, an ambassador, his lady, an envoyé, a resident, and a very pleasing young man, just returned from making the grande tour. He has brought home much of the foreign ease and politeness, without the foppery; and a great fortune is the least of his agreements. Sanchonia announces the friezeur, and I must for this time bid adieu to my amiable Morvina. Love and believe me ever your affectionate sister, &c.

I have this moment received my mother's kind letter. I long infinitely to see her and you. My dear Morvina, she speaks much in your praise.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XII.

A T length, my dear Morvina, I have gained lady B——'s consent, and what was much more difficult to obtain, an uninterrupted morning, to send you the history I promised, and much wish you to read. If I usher not my heroine in with a long train of ancestors, perhaps you will not receive her; at least, (I am sure) you will not be much interested about her fate. Besides, as you do not know her, it is necessary towards the carrying on my story.

Know then, the father of Eudocia sprang from one of the most noble and ancient of the Saxon race. Though distinguished

tinguished by no mark of court favour, save that of baronet, it is certain they merited much higher honours, and would undoubtedly have obtained them, had not their steady adherence to their unfortunate monarch, thrown them at a distance from the fountain where those honours arise. Their estate, either from being settled, or their never having forfeited it by any overt act of rebellion, still remains in the family, and is a very good one. Her mother need yield to no one in blood or merit, and has blessed the world and her husband with many patterns of her virtue. In short, she has produced a race of healthful, dutiful, and beautiful children, valuable members of society, and friends to their country. Of her ten children, Eudocia possessed the largest share of beauty, nor

nor were her charms merely personal; every single feature was brightened by that benevolence of heart, that sensibility of soul, that gentleness of disposition which light up the whole; her understanding only was masculine. With all these, and many more agreements, than either my pen or memory can trace, you will readily believe she wanted not suitors. No sooner did she appear in the world, than the chevalier received proposals innumerable. Many very great ones, such as neither prudence, nor parental feelings would have allowed him to reject, had Eudocia's inclinations coincided with his and her mother's wishes, for a bon'establishment, which however they were far, very far from desiring to purchase at the expence of her happiness. She had ever assured them, with

all

all imaginable deference to their judgment, that an union of minds and manners appeared to her the principal, if not sole ingredient towards constituting happy marriages; that might she be permitted to speak her opinion freely, she held all other unions the lowest, the basest prostitution, and abhorred the very idea of living (or more properly speaking) existing, a wretch in splendour. These sentiments were the sheer result of delicacy; for at this time her heart was perfectly at ease: but she had no idea of bestowing her hand without its dictates. The time of their going to town drew near. Though Sir J. and lady D—— did not go to court, they lived much in the beaux monde; visited without idle party distinction, and were admired and beloved by all. Amongst her brother's intimates,

intimates, was a young man of fashion, whose genius was to the full as superior as his person was striking; he occupied a post of honour about the then Prince, but of no great emolument, and unfortunately for my heroine, he was a younger brother. The charms of his person were less attractive than the sprightliness of his wit: in effect, it had been difficult to possess a larger share of either, and along with it a manner so pleasing. He *stared* not about for approbation, or ever seemed to think he merited it, by saying a lively or a good thing; politely attentive to the delicacy of your self-love, he frequently talked to you of your exploits, but never entertained you with his own; praised you little, but flattered you much, by the pleasure you seemed to afford him. He was not ignorant,

that

that of all the gifts nature bestows, wit is that which men envy the most, and pardon the seldomeft, consequently was better pleased, you should not see *that* he really had, than to appear superior to you ; *whence* no person ever parted from him, without being fully persuaded, next to themselves, he was the most elevated genius the world ever produced. If he disputed your opinion, he seemed to mean it for his own information, and to give your arguments greater force. His verses, his sentiments, the goodness of his heart, and the whole turn of his understanding, failed not to render him conspicuous, and to *charm* the love and admiration of all who knew him. Was it a wonder then, that Eudocia should distinguish him from a crowd of airy, empty fops, though adorned with the

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most

most specious marks of court favour, &c. She saw him often; for when he was not in waiting, he might be said to live at Sir J——'s. His friendship for Mr. D—— gave him this privilege, and the passion he early conceived for the lovely Eudocia, rendered him less nice in the use of it, than his modesty would otherwise have suffered him to be. But nothing could tempt him to make an ill use of that friendship, by endeavouring to seduce the heart of Eudocia, when he believed her parents (tender as *they were* towards *her*) would never consent she should bestow her hand. He was happy in the passion he felt, and in seeing the object that raised it, even without seeking a return, or cherishing the smallest hopes: though that naïvetè inseparable from uncorrupted youth, made

hes

her on a thousand occasions betray a partiality towards him, she little knew the source of, and which a less respectful, less passionate admirer, would have construed into downright love. He frequently breathed out the tender feelings of his soul in little pieces of poetry, the most elegant and pathetic, which she read, admired, and applauded, without a single idea that Artamon was the author, or *she* herself the muse which inspired him. Never did she appear in public that she did not draw the attention, nay, admiration of all the men of taste, as well as of those who wished to be counted such. To be in the list of Eudocia's lovers, was alone sufficient to gain the bon ton. Imagine then (since *paint I cannot*) the vicissitudes of misery the wretched Artamon's mind must run

thro' on these occasions ; yet the inviolable respect, which ever attends on real love, withheld him from declaring a passion, he deemed so unequal to her deservings, to the reasonable views of her family ; and had not the little blind deity dealt a share of *his* woes to Eudocia's heart, she had gone into the country totally ignorant of all he suffered for her. No sooner was she settled quietly there, than she found she loved, or rather that she could love Artamon, was she satisfied he had sentiments equally tender towards her. But since *he*, whose province it was to speak, and whose passion she thought must flatter every woman's vanity, had hitherto remained silent, she dared not allow herself to believe his seeming partiality for her had any other source than his long, steady friendship for her brother,

ther, and his politeness to women in general; therefore determined to try every means in her power to chase his image from her breast. Her good sense soon shewed her, that employing every moment of her time in something useful or entertaining, was the most effectual method to bring that about; as well as the despicable figure a woman must make in the *world's eye*, above all in the eyes of him she wishes most to please, that allows the smallest share in her heart, to a man who never thought it worth asking for: an idea so base, wounded her modesty, her delicacy; it shocked her devoir. Music, though termed by poets the food of love, she found relief from; likewise from drawing, in both of which she excelled; but her pencil was apter to sketch out resemblances of Artamon,

than beautiful landfhips of the country round her, which indebted as it was to nature, received ftill *new* charms from *her* hand. Reading was her favourite amufement; ſhe reaped benefit as well as pleaſure from it: ſhe felt it left a laſting good behind, and qualified her more and more for the friend and companion of Artamon, ſhould that ever be her lot. At the worſt, it aided her to conquer her weakneſs ſo far, as to be able to hide it from the prying world, and eſcape that black-wounding calumny, which ſhakes the faireſt virtue. The ſummer wore heavily away; they had but one month more to ſpend in the country, when Mr. D —— arrived with Artamon. The reciprocal confuſion which ſeized both him and Eudocia on meeting, betrayed the feelings of their hearts.

hearts to the amiable Lady D——. She knew but too well of how little avail argument ever is, on such occasions, and that it is better to talk at, than to the passions; that her daughter's heart and head were much too good to suffer her to act essentially wrong; and that the idea of a mother's displeasure was a thousand times more dreadful in Eudocia's imagination, than any effects she could bring herself to make her feel of it. She was perfectly satisfied Eudocia must see the impropriety of such a marriage in its full force, and had been too early taught to govern her passions, both by religion and reason, ever to suffer them to carry her beyond the bounds of her duty to her parents, indeed to herself; therefore had not the smallest apprehension she might steal a marriage

upon them, and determined never to drop the most distant hint of her suspicions, even to Sir J——. That freedom of conversation which arises from the uninterrupted ease of the country, and the sociability natural to it, creates a stronger intimacy between people who live *there* together, for one month, than half a dozen winters in town, could effect; besides, that the country amusements, viz. dancing, walking, riding, &c. not only afford frequent opportunities, but take off from the form of a declaration of love, which the timid Artamon had never been able to make tête-à-tête in a drawing-room, and emboldened him, ere he had been ten days at ——, to lay before the adorable Eudocia the wretched state of his soul. She received the declaration with all the delicacy

delicacy, tenderness, and modesty natural to a virtuous mind; ever above acting a part, or suspecting others capable of a vice her very soul abhorred. *She* allowed him to hope, if fortune favoured *either*, he should not sigh in vain. Indeed, added *she*, I cannot allow you now do. What higher gratification can a lover feel, than that of knowing his passion is answered. Attachments formed in the heart, founded on esteem, strengthened by friendship, can surely need no other good, or form higher ideas of pleasure. We shall meet frequently, and letters may beguile the pangs of absence. I can never be persuaded I have a right to dispose of my hand without the consent of those to whom Providence has subjected me, and who on every account so well deserve

the most submissive, most implicit obedience at my hands. Yet trust me, I will never give my hand, where mine heart cannot accompany it; and so long as you continue to wish to preserve it, it will not be mine to bestow elsewhere. If this candid confession leaves any void in your heart, your sentiments, my friend, are less pure, less elevated than I either hoped or expected to find them. The opinion my family have of you, the warmth of their friendship for you falls not far short of mine; nay, I am perfectly satisfied my mother has founded the very bottom of my heart, penetrated its inmost recesses long since. But she knows me too well, and is too just to your sentiments to suppose our passion for each other tinged with that grossness of ideas, which leads romantic girls

boys to live in cottages on love, or more properly speaking, his greatest foe, the usurper of his name only ; a truth, alas, they to their sorrow find out but too late, and invoke some friendly blast to blow them far, far as the Poles asunder. No, Artamon, true love ever seeks the good of the object it adores, and would not risque its happiness for selfish views, for transitory joys, however great. Suffice it then for us to know our hearts are inseparably united, united beyond the power of wealth, with all her tinsel tawdry train, to shake. Can there be a situation more truly enviable on this side Heaven. Sir J——'s coming into the saloon, put an end to the conversation, which however was constantly renewed as occasion offered. The rectitude of Eudocia's morals, joined to the

force of her arguments made an indelible impression on the mind of Artamon. He immediately adopted her philosophy, and esteemed himself the most happy of mortals; regained his usual cheerfulness; was more sought after, and more admired than ever. At the top of his admirers, those who singularly distinguished him, stood the earl of C——, an established genius of the times. He applauded above measure all Artamon said or did, enough to have turned the head of a young man less worthy his lordship's praises. The trifles *he* wrote in praise of Eudocia by some means or other, often got about, were said and sung by every amorous spark, and often gained them those hearts their own eloquence would never have touched. All this while Sir J——s was pestered with proposals

propofals for his daughter ; but finding her more and more averfe to marriage, he preffed her no further, and Lady D—— begged he would defift talking on the fubject, for fome time at leaft, from judging it cruel to her daughter, and rather dangerous ; for the meer apprehenfion of being forced into the arms of another, might tempt her to feek an afylum in thofe of the man ſhe loved, even in ſpight of all her good ſenſe and filial affection. But this was an unneceffary fear. Her reſolution, her judgment never forſook her. She ſeemed perfectly eaſy, indeed happy, and looked handſomer than ever. When they returned into the country, Artamon went along with them, and remained *there* the greateſt part of the ſummer. The prince having little occaſion for

him, and little room to spare, in his summer residence, readily excused his waiting; and well was it for the lovely Eudocia; nothing but his presence could have enabled her to survive the dreadful blow she received in the death of two such parents as she was blessed with, so immediately following each other. Sir J——s was first taken from her. That the amiable Lady D—— did not long outlive him, was little cause of wonder, for a more happy pair never yet existed. The tender leave they took of their children is too affecting for a sensible heart to repeat; besides, that to do it justice, you must have their sentiments, and be in their situation. Eudocia was their only unmarried daughter. Sir J——s had during his illness frequently talked to her on the subject of marriage,

which

which must, he said, paint the colour of her future hours. My way of thinking, says he, my dear child, is very different from that of the generality of parents. I place happiness in the mind. I have found it there, and that I did no more than justice to your mother, when I preferred her to the rich heiress of one of the first peers in the kingdom, offered to my father for me, more from friendship towards him, and a spirit of party, than any peculiar merit in me I then thought. Therefore I cannot now be suspected of vanity in repeating it to you. No (my dear Eudocia) may neither you or I ever be actuated by such absurd, such idle motives. I mean only to shew you, that I still feel and think for you on this most interesting occurrence in life, as I did think for myself at your age. That I then saw not
my

my happiness through the medium of passion, but through reason's eye, the uninterrupted continuance of it amply evinces. Should fortune deny you the man of your choice, accept of no other. Persevere in that honest, virtuous way of judging, that no contract made from the lips, outward, can appear valid in the all-seeing eye of infinite goodness, truth, and wisdom, or that he knows not the inmost recesses of the heart he formed. I can make up your fortune, with the legacies you have had left you, ten thousand pounds. More than that is not in my power, without injuring the rest of my younger children; a thing I am satisfied my Eudocia's honest heart, so far from wishing, would ill endure. Should Artamon's virtues, his talents, &c. meet with the countenance they justly

justly claim, he may turn out an advantageous match for you. But put it to the worst, if you can forego some few indulgences my fortune has allowed, and my fondness bestowed, it may be a contented, nay a happy marriage, and my blessing will follow you both. Your mother and I have long seen the attachment you have for each other, but since we could neither confirm nor disapprove it, and that you were both young, we ventured to trust your own prudence, pointing out to you to wait for happier moments. The Prince who Artamon serves is a good-natured man, and does (I have learned) a little distinguish him; admires the trifles he has written in your praise. Whether from his own, or others' taste, it matters not, if the effect prove fortunate, which for my child's peace I

pray

pray Heaven it may. Retire to your apartment my dear, reflect on what I have said. It is all I am now able to say. Send to me your amiable mother, the sight of her will help recruit those spirits I have too far exhausted. Poor Eudocia's heart was too full, you will readily believe, to find vent. For some time after she shut herself up in her closet. Tears at length came to her aid. Without that relief, her health, perhaps her life might have been in great danger, from the excessive agitation of soul she sustained. No sooner had Sir J——s recovered his spirits a little, than he desired to see Artamon, and Mr. D——, his eldest son. To the first he talked with that open frankness natural to a generous unsuspecting heart, on the same subject he had talked to Eudocia. He

said

said he already looked upon him as his child, and entreated the share he had given him in his affection might add (if there needed any addition) to his daughter's own merit, and redouble his tenderness towards her, should Heaven ever allow him to possess so valuable a treasure; and let me tell you young man (added he) such a woman is a treasure rarely to be met with in either court or country. Artamon, answered but in tears of heart-felt sorrow and gratitude. Sir J—— turning towards his son, said, my dear D—— I know your heart; follow its dictates; you cannot go wrong. I trust it is unnecessary for me to conjure you will all use your utmost efforts to console and support Lady D—— under an affliction I fear will sink too deep to let you long preserve her

her on this side Heaven. *There*, in those blessed mansions, we shall, I trust, meet again. Do all you can to render the short space she lingers after me less painful, less irksome to her. Easy I fear it cannot be, though I am convinced on any other occasion her fortitude would never forsake her. Her understanding is infinitely superiour to the estimation the world holds it in, great as you know that is; for that self-restraining modesty which she is so largely endowed with, makes, and has ever made her, suppress more sheer wit, more of what the French call the *bon mot*, than two-thirds of mankind are capable of uttering, which tho' it proves a general loss, serves but to enhance her value to her nearer friends. In the many happy years we have lived together, she never once offered me her
 advice

advice unasked; but whenever I required her opinion of the world, of men, or of books, she gave it in a manner that at once both charmed and informed me.

But no more; I must talk to, not of this partner of my soul, Heaven's best gift to me. Artamon, receive my blessing and warmest wishes for your good. My son fetch your mother and Eudocia; I have much to say to them and you, and my physicians flatter me not with length of days. The reluctance I feel at parting with my wife and children I pray Heaven to pardon. On a retrospect of my past life, *that* (I thank the wise beneficent author of all things) is the only pinch I fear in death. Mr. D——— flew to Lady D———'s apartment, and soon returned with her and Eudocia, when a scene ensued which must *indeed*
 beggar

beggar all description; each endeavouring to suppress that sorrow they knew would sorely wound the other's heart, should they allow it vent. When Sir J——s had enough collected himself to be able to speak, he entreated Lady D—— would tell him if the disposition he had made of his fortune was perfectly satisfactory to her, while it was yet in his power to alter it. I have no cause, said *he*, neither do I doubt my son's readiness, nay desire to comply with all your wishes, madam; but I can never suppose Nature meant that they to whom, under Heaven, we owe our being, should be so circumstanced, as to need the smallest favour at our hands. She begged he would be assured, had she been capable of bestowing a single thought on any thing so trivial, as all pecuniary.

cuniary concerns appeared to her, abstracted from his interest, she could only have felt he had been too bountiful to her, and desired to wave a subject of all others, to her the most cruel; wished him to take some repose; so apt are we to believe what we ardently desire, that poor Lady D—— had still hopes he might recover, could he by any means procure a little sleep. But that, alas! had forsaken him; and the next morning's dawn released him from all his pains, and rendered her of human race the most miserable; cry, she could not, nor was it possible for the whole family united to prevail upon either her Ladyship or Eudocia to quit the chamber of death, so long as poor Sir J——'s manes lay in it, which was ten days. They must surely have had some extraordinary

(and

(and if I may be allowed the expression) supernatural aids, to enable nature to sustain such fatigue of both body and mind. Mr. D—— and Artamon spent most of their time *there*, where sorrow wore its native garb of wretchedness, undecorated with pompous sound and pageantry of woe. But let us leave this melancholy subject, wide from my present purpose. The excellent Lady D—— survived Sir J—— a very few weeks, and they who loved her, and were witnesses of her sufferings, ought not to have repined at a change for her so gloriously happy, however painfully they themselves felt the loss of her. Artamon's behaviour on this occasion alone, must have gained him an heart less prejudiced in his favour than poor Eudocia's had long been. Nor can you wonder

she should wish to secure by the most sacred earthly tie, the person in the world she wished to live for. She consented to marry him, so soon as her mourning was over; and he had sentiments *too* nicely delicate, *too* tender towards her, to wish she should forget what she owed to the memory of such parents, to herself, and to the world: yet he hoped she would permit him to see her often, since their engagement to each other had gained the sanction of Sir J—— and Lady D——, even before it had passed *their* lips. He could (he said) see no cause for keeping their intended marriage a secret from the world. She perfectly agreed with him, and said my brother has pressed me in the most affectionate and friendly manner to make his house my home, while I remain unmarried. I

can

can see you there without restraint, and much more frequently than prudence would allow me, was I to take the small house I once proposed taking. Besides I should have ruined myself for ever with the Countess of S——k, who you know calls me her favourite niece, had I preferred any other house than my brother's to hers. Nor could I indeed have any other reasonable motive for rejecting the repeated kind and friendly invitations her Ladyship has honoured me with, circumstanced as I now am, but the tiresome formality of her tyrannic husband, whom I abhor. How a woman of her sense, taste, and knowledge of the world, could make such a choice, has always astonished me, as well as that she can endure perpetual contradiction from a second husband, so inferior in every

every respect to the first, whose adoration she would scarce dispense with; and indeed his affection for, and opinion of her, made him believe it no more than her due. Neither did he credit a syllable of what all the world said: he thought all men born to pay her homage, and wondered not the Prince, whose court she graced, distinguished and honoured such sense, such virtue as must add lustre to it. That his M——y's ideas of her were no less partial or exalted I firmly believe, and that she, of all women, held the first place in his esteem; but that rectitude of conduct, that unaffected virtue, modesty, &c. which ever stared him in the face, awed him too much to let him dare attack it, spight of that weight of G——n pride he bore about him. That the Q——, who was
more

more immediately interested, and had more frequent opportunities of judging than any one else, believed so, is beyond a doubt, from the tender friendship she honoured my aunt with, as well as the desire her M——y expressed of having her constantly about her. Yet this brute, who owes every thing to her, dares upbraid her with what he terms the K——'s attachment to her, and the little use her superior wisdom made of it. But he is too ridiculously trifling to spend my breath upon. I love my aunt; I know her worth; and mean, so soon as I go to town, to acquaint her with the whole of our plan, and beg leave to present you to her: not that I expect a favourite of the last reign should have interest to serve you in this; but she will love you for my sake, and you will both
 admire

admire and love her for her own. She will render many melancholy hours supportable to me, in my Artamon's absence; charm me by her conversation, and improve me by her councils; enable me to form a right judgment of men and manners, by adding her experience to my own observation. She will probably read me some friendly lectures on your score, but I trust, when you are well known to her, she will deem them unnecessary. The conversation was interrupted by Sir J——'s coming to acquaint his sister, that his election was to come on the day following, and so soon as that was over he would attend her to town, and left to her to fix the day. He was chosen without opposition the evening of the election day, and she fixed that day seven-night for their jour-

ney to town. Artamon had many visits to pay, consequently was unable to spend half the time he wished with the mistress of his heart; yet not a single day passed in which he did not see her. The brilliancy of a court where there were many beauties, shook not his constancy; and all the danger she had to fear was from the old earl of C—— who either flattered Artamon to shew his own wit, and laugh at the vain credulity of youth, or did in reality admire his writings. Be that as it may, Artamon was not proof against the praises with which his Lordship overwhelmed him, and began to feel himself of consequence enough to merit even the heart of Eudocia, which *till then* he had estimated above the reach of mortals to deserve. His visits indeed were not less frequent,

but

but he seemed much more at his ease, disincumbered of that awful respect inseparable from a real passion. But both Sir J—— and Eudocia attributed this change in his manners, altogether to that gaieté de cœur the near approach of his marriage with Eudocia naturally gave him; till one, one fatal evening, Sir J—— imagining they might have some preliminaries to settle relative to her little fortune, they would not wish *he* should be a witness to, until they had first settled it between themselves, left them together. Artamon did indeed immediately begin a conversation on the subject of their marriage; but how different, alas! was every syllable he uttered to all his former sentiments. He would have descanted most elaborately on the imprudence of such marriages, had not

Eudocia stopped him in the midst of his career, by assuring him it appeared to her in the very same light; nay, perhaps the folly of it stared her in the face more glaringly, since women on those occasions are ever the greatest sufferers. Happy am I, cried she, my eyes are so seasonably opened to my own weakness and your wisdom; I have only to intreat you will throw away on me no more of that oratory, which may serve you on better occasions. Little as I know of the heart of man, I am not now to learn prudence holds no part in it, while a spark of love remains there. I wish you happy, but desire, till I want your advice, I may never more be affronted with your visits, and that you leave me this moment. He for some time stood motionless; then throwing himself at her feet, in the
height

height of distraction, cried out, what have I done, just Heaven! to merit this deadly blow; to have it dealt me by the fairest, the most perfect image of the blessed inhabitants above, who know not wrath? Oh! Eudocia, do I live to hear a second time so harsh a decree on which hangs more than life, my future peace of mind, my every good; and from those lips, whence sure, if I dream not, I might reasonably hope for softer sounds. But it cannot last; do you not yet know me? Yes, yes, Artamon (she replied) I now know you well, and am sorry you lay me under the disagreeable necessity of repeating to you my fixed resolves, and of desiring you to leave me instantly. Though hitherto it has never been my custom to take more merit to myself than was really my due, I will to

my brother assume the sole glory of putting an end to this idle affair ; therefore think it not incumbent on you to act a part *there*. He has *too* much delicacy, *too* much sensibility, to expect to see you while I am in his house. Longer than that time, I neither mean nor wish to break in upon your intimacy with him. Not a single syllable more was he able to extort from her ; and fearing his stay might encrease her rage towards him, he got into his chair, more dead than alive, wishing each moment might mercifully put a period to his wretched existence. Sir J—— could not forbear expressing much surprize at never meeting Artamon at his house with Eudocia ; she conjured him to ask no more about it, but rest satisfied it was wholly at her desire he kept away, and that her reasons for de-

siring

firing it, ought not, she hoped would not, work the least abatement in their friendship for each other; that so soon as she was gone into the country with the countess of S ——, the intimacy between him and Artamon, would subsist as usual. Her brother, greatly alarmed and surprized, pressed her in terms the most friendly and tender, to open her heart to him, to shew him the cause of her griefs. Believe, my dear brother, said she, there is not any, that by knowing, you could alleviate. The step I have taken is a prudential one, and you will one day think so; at present, I confess to you, my heart is not enough at ease to talk over the follies I would forget; besides, my dear James, you know ripping open old sores is not the way to cure them. Let us wave a topic irk-

some to us both. My aunt leaves town in three days, and expects you will immediately perform your promise to her of a visit in the country. As you have no public concerns to require your presence particularly early at ———, I trust you will; and contrive to stay with us some time. Her tyrant is going into Scotland, to make some stay at the duke of ———, therefore we shall enjoy uninterrupted ease, good sense, and good humour. My aunt loves you; your company will render her happy, and Heaven knows happiness is a good she stands much in need of. She has too much sentiment to make her friends sharers in her sorrows, yet no person living feels them with more poignancy. I own I can see no use in talking over grievances; it is cruel to do it to those we know

know

know love, and will feel for us ; idle and impertinent to do it to others. Sir James received a letter that evening from Artamon, conceived in terms of the strongest despair and wretchedness, conjuring him by all the ties of friendship to use *his* interest to get him restored to Eudocia's favour, which he solemnly swore he knew not how he had forfeited, and which he would give up the whole world to regain ; a simple sacrifice (he said) since it had no charms for him without her. Sir J—— felt for them both, and warmly pleaded the cause of his friend, but to no effect. Eudocia was inflexibly bent, on pursuing her purpose of conquering a passion, at best imprudent, and likely to end in misery and ruin to both. She entreated her brother, by all the affection he bore her, never to name

Artamon to her more : at the same time desired he would by no means withdraw his friendship from *him* ; that his behaviour to her had never deserved he should lose, what she knew he so truly valued. She said this change in her conduct, which must undoubtedly appear strange to Sir J——, owed its rise to the serious reflections, she had so much leisure to make since the death of her mother, and that the more she thought on the subject of their marriage, the more she was convinced of the impropriety of it. She went into the country, and poor Artamon not only writ volumes himself, but made use of every friend, nay every acquaintance he had in the universe to prevail on her to allow him an audience of one single hour. Vain, alas ! were all their efforts ; he had awakened apprehensions

henfions in her mind he wanted power to
 allay. The more her heart overflowed
 with tendernefs towards him, the more
 ſhe ſaw his unworthinefs, and reſolutely
 determined ſhe would not fall the dupe
 of his artifice, though it coſt her her life.
 Indeed that was of ſmall value in *her*
 wretched ſituation. His vivacity, his
 ſpirits ſoon forſook him, and a violent
 fit of illnefs enſued, during which he
 ceaſed not to talk of Eudocia with en-
 thuſiaſtic rapture, to entreat he might be
 bleſſed with one ſight of her ere his eyes
 were cloſed for ever, and leave the world
 in peace. But ſhe was inexorable, ſted-
 faſtly believing his illnefs all a farce,
 that he was acting a part, of which ſhe
 deemed him very capable. The Counteſs
 of S—— and Lady B—— were
 the only friends to whom ſhe had no re-

serve; and these ladies, (no novices in the arts of men) agreed intirely with her, and encouraged Eudocia to persevere in a conduct so worthy of her, and no more than consistent with the dignity of the sex. That Artamon's vanity was thoroughly piqued they believed; but not that his heart had the smallest share in his repentance. He wished (they said) perhaps, to leave her with an eclat, more flattering to himself, however shameful to *her* *be* cared not; or perhaps he was to have sacrificed her at the shrine of some new beauty: for it was apparent to all the world Lord C——'s distinguishing him as a wit, &c. had turned his head enough to make him take for granted no woman could have sufficient force of mind to withstand his oratory and his figure. Their friendship for
her,

ber, and that extraordinary behaviour of *his*, which had so reasonably offended her, certainly both authorised and excused the advice they gave, however harsh it may now appear, since the fatal event proved he merited a better fate, and to be better thought of. On finding Eudocia deaf to all his prayers, regardless of all his sufferings, he gave himself up to despair, very rarely went out of his house, or saw mortal in it. Never any but his nearest friends, who were often obliged to force their way into it. Unfortunately for him, Sir James, instead of going to the Countess of S——'s, was persuaded to make the grand tour. Had he been in England, he would have been a witness of his friend's sufferings, and convinced his sister of the reality of them. But to stick

to

to my text. Poor Artamon's melancholy laid such fast hold on him, as to throw him in a very short space of time into so deep a consumption as put an end to both his life and his sorrows. At this period of time Eudocia's health suffered so much from the misery of mind she had long laboured under, as to confine her to her bed. The physicians all agreed Bristol water and asses milk were the only things could give her a chance. Provided her lungs were not too far gone, her health might by these means be re-established; to such an extreme state of weakness was she reduced as to be obliged to travel in a litter. Lady B— accompanied her to Bristol, and all her trouble was more than repaid by the waters proving salutary to her friend, even beyond her most sanguine expectation.

In

In less than a month Eudocia was not only able to take the air every day in a carriage, but to walk in a garden adjoining to their house. The rooms and public walks she never would set her foot in, for fear of meeting Artamon; but a few days, alas! proved her fears were needless: an express arrived with a letter from Artamon, in which he told her, by the time that reached her hands, he should probably be no more; that his sister lent him the support his wretched state of health rendered necessary, to enable him to assure her he died, as he had ever lived, her's most unalterably. He wished her every happiness, and entreated she would suffer her picture he had so long worn next to his heart, to remain there when he was laid in his coffin; a request, he confessed, might (to a woman of her sense)

sense) found idle, but it was the last he should ever make her, and the thing in the world, next to her welfare, he felt the least solicitude about. Is it a wonder, this sudden, unexpected stroke, in the weak state of health she then laboured under, affected her nerves to such a degree as to deprive her of the use of her limbs, a calamity much harder to bear than loss of life. Indeed, in her wretched state of mind, death must have appeared an exquisite happiness. Since she could not write, she would, she said, be carried to town in the same conveyance that had brought her *thither*, and receive from poor Artamon that pardon her romantic pride and easy credulity rendered her scarce worthy of. Lady B——, who sensibly partook of her sorrow, far from attempting to dissuade

suade her from it, offered to accompany her to town, and was giving orders for every thing to be prepared with all possible expedition, when a second express arrived with the fatal news of his death and his will, addressed to Eudocia. Lady B—— was under the necessity of disclosing it to her immediately, as no other thing upon earth could have prevailed on her to defer her journey, and it would have added still greater weight to the blow, had she gone and found him dead in town. The fortitude of mind she shewed on this severe trial, far exceeded all the so much boasted philosophy ever did, or can teach; had its source in religion, and a right turn'd mind. It is some consolation to me, my dear Lady B——, said *she*, to feel I am not doomed to length of miserable days.

Heaven

Heaven mercifully deals out its punishment too quick to cause the fear I shall linger long on earth after the best, the most worthy, the most injured of mankind; injured by me, great Heaven! But reproaching myself will little avail. Return the will (my dearest friend) to that amiable sister of the *dear* testator, who *I* must ever love, though my folly has deservedly drawn on me her hatred, nay her contempt. Entreat her to accept of all the adorable Artamon bestowed on the weakest, the wretchedest of mortals. Assure her the fault was in my head, not in my heart; *that* steadily felt and acknowledged his merits; would I had listened to its honest dictates! Some little remembrance, some trifle my Artamon prized, I will receive and cherish. Wonder (my dear Lady B——) at my
 insen-

infensibility; how is it possible I am
 able to articulate a single syllable; how
 survive one moment the loss of all could
 render life dear, or rather supportable
 to me? Was it in nature to give me the
 friendship of miss H——, sure as I am
 of your Ladyship's, I might perhaps
 regain composure of mind enough to
 submit, with that resignation I ought, to
 the wise decrees of all-seeing providence,
 and die in that Christian frame of mind
 I should inherit from such parents as gave
 me being. Dismiss the messenger, my
 dear Lady B——, and intreat miss
 H—— will see every tittle of my Arta-
 mon's will most religiously observed. Oh!
 that she could make him know how ar-
 dently I wish (pardon me Heaven!) to
 join him in happier regions, where that
 curse of humanity, never enters, that
 green

green-eyed monster jealousy, distrust, and all its hateful train. She would have ran on whilst she had strength for utterance, had not Lady B— withdrawn to write her dispatches. On her return she found Eudocia sunk into that silent sorrow next to insensibility, and too oppressive to find vent. She hoped droopiness, the usual attendant on all-powerful grief, would follow; but in vain; her eyes remained unclosed, and her heart heaved sighs that would have shocked a barbarian, and seemed enough to burst its carments. But destiny had not yet signed its enlargement. Time, which alleviates other sufferings, only served to encrease hers; and twelve weary months elapsed, ere Eudocia was able to leave her bed. The physicians sent her to the Bath, where, within the space of another

another year, she recovered the use of her limbs, with some degree of bodily health; but peace of mind is still far from her, though seven or eight long years have revolved since this tragical event. The steady and tender friendship of miss H—— must (if any thing could) have afforded poor Eudocia, some little consolation for the loss of Artamon. Miss H—— spent most part of her time along with *her* at the Countess of S——'s. *There* she charmed a man of high rank, birth, and fortune, and what above all *she* prized (for she was every way Artamon's sister) a man of the strictest honour, and nicest principles of virtue. His understanding was superior to most, and inferior to none; unmixed with that pert forwardness, and desire of shewing it, so apparent in most of our travelled young men.

men. With a pleasing person, he had very pretty manners, and shewed upon every occasion that kind of politeness which has its source in the heart, and which nature only can bestow. Miss H—— had an heart susceptible of every generous, every tender sentiment, uncontaminated by any former love; therefore it was nothing strange she should become sensible to the attention constantly paid her by a young man so truly estimable as the Duke of —— was; but that modest diffidence, which strongly marked her character, made her not dare to construe it into more than meer gallantry, or to tell the momentary suspicions which sometimes assailed her thoughts, even to Eudocia, the friend of her soul, until his Grace had by a full (I will not say a formal) declaration of his

his

his passion, put it past a doubt. Both Eudocia and Lady S—— had observed their growing passion long before; were not a little pleased to find it reciprocal, or remiss in lending their councils to miss H——. She and the Duke being entirely at their own disposal, a marriage soon took place, as much from sheer love on her part as the Duke's. Notwithstanding the disparity in their fortunes will hardly let the world in general believe, what every word, every action of her Grace's life has for some years past amply proved. Indeed, the only emulation between them is to outvie each other in tenderness, in friendship, in gentleness of manners. He adores his daughters from resemblances he finds out in them to the Duchess; and she returns the compliment to his sons; at the

same time not one of their children have cause to complain of the partiality of either. Eudocia is careffed by them all, and parts her time between the duchefs and the Countefs of S——, deaf to every overture of love and marriage, though many very advantageous offers daily affail her. The Duchefs of —— is too juft to Eudocia to judge her heart capable of making a fecond choice, therefore never teazes her on a fubject irkfome to *her* to think of. At the fame time fhe neither oppofes, nor prevents any propofal being offered her. Since Lady B—— gave me her hiftory, I have feen Eudocia. She is ftill handsome, but bears her heart in her countenance, which, though full of dejection, wants neither fweetnefs nor fpirit; that fort of fpirit I mean, infeparable from a good

understanding. That my friend Lady B — laid Eudocia before me as an example, worthy to be followed, you will readily believe. But may not the dreadful catastrophe deter an heart not thoroughly healed, from pushing such a conduct too far. Most certainly it may, was its object an Artamon. But far be such fears from me ; ——— is no dying lover ; I saw him last night at the Opera, the same gallant gay Lothario as ever. He made me many bows ; soon as the Opera was over, came into our box, found much to say, and would have offered me his hand to my chair, had not the amiable man I once mentioned to you, been too quick for him. *He* was one of our party. I gave him my hand, and vanity apart (my dear sister). I have much reason to believe he would gladly

receive it for ever. Lady B—— and my sister-like friend, are sure of it. Would I had a heart to give along with it! Could I ever recover, *that*, I firmly believe I could not bestow it better. Was *I capable* (which you well know I am not) of acting a part, and bartering happiness for pomp and parade, *he* is far too worthy to fall a sacrifice to duplicity. My mother writes in better spirits than usual. I flatter myself it proceeds from a thorough re-establishment of health. Write me a full and true account of all and every thing, as well as your opinion of the enclosed, which I beg no eyes but yours may peruse. Lady B—— cannot pay either *you* or *me* a greater compliment than in suffering me to write it to you, which I think I have
 done

done in the self same terms her Lady-
ship gave it me.. My love to our sisters,
and believe ever affectionately yours, &c.

L E T T E R XIII.

My dear Morvina,

I H A V E this moment received another letter from my mother replete with wit and humour, her usual spirits and vivacity shine through every line of it ; and I begin to entertain hopes she will enjoy such a degree of health, as may render old age supportable to her : though by the Roman reckoning she has hardly arrived at that period in life. May she know many easy, nay happy years in it, (which with such self-resources, she certainly may) is my constant, ardent prayer, and after all 'tis a selfish prayer, since such a well spent life such a heavenly disposition is formed for more

exalted bliss, than this vain transitory world can give; and must so often soar above it, as to make the soul wish too eagerly for its enlargement. But I grow grave, consequently dull, and your heart *is too good* to need these kind of lectures my dear Morvina. My Mother, with great good humour drops some distant hints of ———, none of which I mean to understand, unless she seems uneasy about me: of that I am sure you will make no delay to inform me, that I may give her under my hand, as I now most sincerely do you, I never will enter into any serious, solemn engagement without first obtaining her consent. And ——— will be the very last man I shall ask it for: he is worthless, vanity and love of pleasure divide the whole man. The first makes him pursue me,

the last would make him forget, and forego every tye, every obligation, and leave the most amiable wife upon earth, wretched. To know this, and persevere in loving him, would be a madness I hope you judge *me incapable* of. He idly persists in refusing to restore my letters, which after all, are not worth much solicitude: I have determined to think no more of them, and never again either send, or receive messages about them. I hope in future I shall be able to find a more entertaining subject for my dear Morvina. To morrow I go into the country with lady B——, to a small house she has taken to breathe fresh air, two or three days in a week; longer than that she would not remain out of town; and *you* know the country is not my passion; that I am not fond of walking, or so romantically

tically inclined to strole the woods, and meads, in quest of adventures. What do *you* think of Eudocia? did you not shed tears for the ill-starred Artamon? yet sure she is more an object of pity; doomed to drag on a life of sorrow and remorse. For how upright soever our intentions, we cannot but lament errors in our judgement, above all, when they are productive of such fatal consequences. A truth the settled melancholy, the dejection of poor Eudocia's countenance amply evince. I drink tea and sup to night with lady P——, where I shall be in infinitely greater danger of being surfeited by politics than eating, and probably long before the hour of eating arrives, feel myself in the ark, with every creeping thing on the face of the earth. Astonishing! how a woman

of her sense and taste can suffer such a melange of company ; did it arise from party rage only, I could account for (perhaps you will think forgive) it. But they as widely differ from each other in principle, as in every other circumstance through life. Nevertheless I may meet some very agreeable people *there*. Should I, you will hear of them ; but no more of Reptilia, I am sick of them. Not one new book worth sending you; the beginning of the winter something may appear : should there, you may depend on having it from

Your affectionate sister,

and real friend.

You know how passionately fond I am of music ; and *such* as I hear at my dear *friend's* who gives concerts every week

week to a few select friends, or rather intimates, is fine beyond any idea that my mother *even* can form of it. It has cured my rage for operas, in short my ears can endure no other sounds, no other music, than the count de St. G——'s. His compositions breathe, they have sense in them, and are in reality the most pathetic speaking. Adio.

L E T T E R XIV.

My dear Morvina,

T H I S moment am I returned to smoke, noise, and nonsense: and too impatient to give you some idea of the sweet Domiceli, I have just left, to rest another moment without attempting it. Attempting, indeed I should say, since with the utmost exertion of my descriptive powers, I shall be able to give you but a faint view of its charms. To begin, figure to yourself a beautiful castle in miniature, situated on an eminence, on the very verge of one of the finest parks in England. In front you command a full view of the town of
Greenwich,

Greenwich, the river, the shipping, &c. and an extensive prospect of the most beautiful country beyond. The rear presents you with woods, groves, rills, dales, and such infinite variety of rural scenes, as might suffice to turn the head of any one romantically inclined. But that, thank Heaven, was never the turn of our house; and when I frequent (as I often do) these gloomy scenes, it is for far better purposes; it is to look inward, to make an acquaintance with myself, the most useful acquaintance we can acquire, -yet the least and last sought after. Self-approbation is the greatest good we can enjoy; a good the world can neither give, or take away. It arises from reason's eye, distinguishing the divinity within us. Listening to, and acting by its dictates, as far as frail humani-

ty will allow us : and if we will allow ourselves a little time for reflection, I am convinced we shall prove its salutary effects, and still have enough of the world; since it is the abuse, and not the use of it, that is denied us. If you like my ethicks you will wish me again at Sans-fouci; thanks to his Prussian majesty for lending me a name so applicable to my *friend's* chateau, and my feelings in it. She says it shall retain the name while she inhabits it; and that I shall cause her living there much more than she ever intended. Her Ladyship's reasons are *too* flattering, and expressed in terms *too* civil for me to be able to repeat them without blushing, even to you, my dear sister. I write this at home, where I expect my uncle to dine and drink tea with me. He lives a grea
dea

deal in the country : his place *there* extremely pretty, indeed elegant ; as is his whole stile of living, though his establishment is much contracted ; six lacquies instead of sixteen, two servants out of livery only ; one set of horses, where he used to have three ; indeed he has four of the prettiest bays ever seen for his chaise ; but that and much more he may and ought to have. In short every amusement suitable to his years. You ask me what is become of Jezebell : it matters not much. Well had it been for him, if *she* had never had a being : but since his second marriage I hope (and believe) he has not often seen her, and never will see her more. I have been told he allows her three hundred pounds yearly ; and that is well bestowed, to get rid of such a fiend ;

fiend ; a connection ruinous to both soul and body. The clock strikes three, and I must be dressed *you know* to receive him with the respect due to a guardian, parent, and what not. But raillery apart, I regard and love him. He has a thousand good qualities. The facility of his disposition has been his misfortune through life, and rendered him the most consummate dupe to villains whose heads and hearts were far below *his*. Adieu cara mio.

L E T.

L E T T E R . XV.

My dear Morvina,

THE evening of the day I last writ to you, I spent at Lady B——'s, with our own coterie, which makes about sixty in number; every one of whom you would admire exceedingly, for their good sense, elegance of manners, knowledge of the world, &c. We have some of the first geniuses of the age amongst us; such as must do honour to any age, or any country. The days we have no music, cards are introduced, not to destroy either time or conversation, but rather to enliven the latter, by taking off from

that form all circles insensibly fall into. Our games are in general those of chance, require little attention, and we play too low to be anxiously solicitous about winning and losing. Bonario is ever there; redoubles his attention to me: I like him so much as a friend, I tremble for fear he should declare himself a lover, and force me to give up his acquaintance. I wish he knew, though I have banished —— my heart, I can never give him a successor in it. So romantic does this sound, considering the turn of the times, I doubt I shall hardly be able to make *him* believe me. I am sure I know no other man that would, tho' I feel it most religiously true. Will you, can you pardon my vanity, if I tell you the joy that lit up every one's countenance this evening (for it was rather late) on my

my arrival surpasses all description. But why should I blush? To be flattered by the distinction and praises of the worthy is surely allowable. My uncle speaks of you as you deserve. He gave me many pressing invitations into the country, which you will not wonder I waved with all possible respect, since it would drag me from my estimable Lady B——, and her heavenly conversation, which not only delights but improves the mind, fills it with resources that will render even old age pleasant, by enabling us both to amuse and instruct those young companions we shall *then* feel necessary to support, with their vivacity, our declining spirits. My uncle talks of going abroad towards the latter end of the summer; should my *aunt* invite me, I shall have no objection to make one in
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that party. She is sensible, knows the world, and has politeness enough to make her house extremely easy and agreeable to her company. I find it to all intents and purposes my own, except the expence and trouble of it. That Lady R—— has oddities I will not deny, but her partiality to me makes them ever point another way; and as to my lord, you know there is no body more easy to live with. I write to my mother, therefore you need not mention this letter. When I receive the invitation I hope and believe I shortly shall from Lord and Lady R—— to accompany them to Paris &c. I shall certainly write for my mother's approbation. I dare say she will not object to my going; but I love not to give people too much time for reflection on a point I wish to carry;

there

there is always so much to be said for and against almost every thing we either say or do. I go in a day or two to Sans souci, from whence you shall hear from me again. En attendant, rest satisfied my best love and friendship ever follows you.

LET.

L E T T E R X V I .

My dear Morvina,

Sans souci.

WE arrived here safe, and perfectly well, last night; more owing to Heaven's kind care than our prudence. We left town late enough to have been in the dark at least three parts of the way, had not Cynthia befriended us by shining unusually bright. Her lustre redoubled every beauty I vainly attempted to describe to you before. The soft scenes this delightful country abounds in were heightened beyond all conception, when seen only by her pale, delicate light, twinkling thorough the trees. The roads

roads so near town are, you know, too good to raise fears on the score of broken necks, limbs, &c. The only thing formidable to our ideas were highwaymen which infest this road more than any other equally near the metropolis; but as we had never yet been robbed, our fears were not very alarming to each other, or any in our train; and the tranquil delight this place ever affords me, is worth hazarding much more for. I write this from my dressing-room, in which there is a large bow-window, whence your eyes may take in the whole of that great prospect I painted to you in one view. In short, the house and its environs breathe the spirit of their owner, where you meet with something to soothe, please, and improve you at all times, and in all humours. Such variety of powers rarely

rarely (if ever) meet in one and the self-same person. Partiality apart, Lady B—— shines in the circle and in the shade; in polite life and in domestick; in the drawing-room and in her nursery; in fine, wherever she is, or whatever she does, there is that sense, ease and elegance in all, you would swear she was formed to excel in that character only in which you last see her. The obligations of affection *I* owe her are not to be told. To her *I* owe not only my present ease of mind, but an happy escape from imminent dangers that threatened me. There is a charm in her conversation that has already cured me of my rage for public amusements. I have not a wish to leave her and this sweet retreat. Her Ladyship has this moment told me a thousand foreigners dine with us to-morrow, and
that

that we go to Woolwich to see the dock-yards, the ordnance, &c. that they mean to have a ball in the evening for me. As our *poco's*, and *je vous puis*, do not dance English country dances, Bonario comes on purpose to have the *honour* of dancing with your humble servant, *and all that*. What strange ideas men have of us, and in what a contemptuous light must they hold our understandings, when they think it necessary to entertain us with a jargon a sensible girl in a nursery would laugh at: yet after all, when I reflect how successful it renders them with three parts out of four of the fine ladies about town, I blame them not; and can only say, I should be infinitely more flattered with the friendship than admiration of any man; besides, that I should hope and believe I

was

was capable of meriting the first, it would convince me he looked on me as a rational (nay a companionable) being, and gave me his esteem. But I shall lose my own, if I am not dressed by dinner, for being guilty of an unpoliteness to the best bred woman in the world; therefore adieu my dear sister, God bless you!

L E T.

L E T T E R X V I I .

HOW have you accounted for my long silence ? Not fairly I will venture to say. With all your candour (my dear Morvina) you have imagined a thousand things which never have, or ever will happen. The truth is, I have not been able to command more of my time than was absolutely necessary to give to rest, in order to recover the fatigue of the day that was passed, and enable me to enjoy the approaching day. Had the party been composed of people less agreeable than every individual of them was, I should undoubtedly have wished them hanged, or any where out of my way. But to say what *they were*, I must be what

they *are*. Suffice it then to tell you, I never in my days was more thoroughly entertained for a whole week together; and I wish ten thousand times more than ever I did to go abroad. Foreigners of distinction are of all people the most pleasant to live with. As roughness of manners has upon no one occasion appeared to me a mark of sincerity, politeness never makes me suspect a want of it. I neither expect or wish to find a friend in every person I meet; and I am perfectly satisfied a sour rude disposition is incapable of friendship. An ill temper originates from an unfeeling heart, ready at all times to sacrifice every person and thing upon earth to its own whim and caprice. Besides, the benefit of friendship is the having our foibles, our *faults* even laid open to our view in such manner

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ner as may make us detest and shun them in future, and at the same time without irritating us, which requires good nature, as well as good breeding in the person who undertakes so difficult and delicate a task as that of wounding our self-love. But I see you impatient to hear of the ball. Lady B—— proclaimed me queen of it. I opened it with the Duke de M——; Madame danced a minuet inimitably well with the Duke of L——; several minuets were danced; a few cotillions. After that nine couple of us young ones danced English country dances, while the graver part of the company retired to cards in an inward room. We danced from nine till near one, when we all fate down to a supper worthy of the donor. It consisted of five courses, one and twenty covers each, and a desert of

H 2 seventy

Seventy covers, served on the most beautiful cut crystal, and lighted up by as many lamps of the same, but of every different colour imaginable. The charming effect this had, no idea can reach. I wonder it did not pain our eyes; but the lights were so well disposed, and made so delicate, they shone without glaring. In short, there was every thing to please, and not one thing to incommode us. The music, company, &c. inspired Bonario with spirits and courage enough to make the declaration I had so long dreaded, and am now glad is over, since it afforded me an opportunity of explaining the settled purpose of my soul, and sentiments too peculiar for *him* to guess at; but I soon perceived his *own* were delicate enough to admire mine, at the very time *he* would have wished them less refined,

fined, or rather less *stable*. Lady B——, who often walked amongst us, observed a settled melancholy in *his* countenance, through all the appearance of cheerfulness he put on; and something not very unlike it in mine; but attributed it to a far different cause: imagined he had been entertaining me with a passion she had long seen he felt for me; and *that* without my being absurd enough to discourage it, might naturally throw a gloom over both our countenances, for some short time at least, *she* said. I told her, I was much mortified to find her opinion of me so little just, as to leave her ladyship a moment in doubt of my acting on every occasion from the dictates of my heart; or that it was so little candid to suffer me to trifle with the happiness of a man whose worth I must not

only allow, but ever admire, and wish for his friendship; though my ill starred fate forbade me his love, from my incapacity to return it. It was true, I said, I had so far got the better of my passion for ———, to see the inevitable ruin it must have plunged me into, but not so far as ever to be able to *think* of loving another. I clearly saw his worthlessness, but never without wishing he had not been so made, feeling strongly the impossibility of my heart consenting to a second choice; the substance of which discourse I had told Bonario, assuring him at the same time, that I not only desired, but should be infinitely flattered by his friendship; a share of which I hoped ever to preserve, and in some degree to merit. That, madam, (replied *he*) you command: your conduct forces the esteem
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of all that know you ; *they* who have not had such exalted (though cruel) proofs of your integrity of heart, your nobleness of soul.—Here I stopped him short, by saying, friendship requires no such rants, such high flown epithets ; it softens the passions, is the true cardiack thrown in by Providence to render the nauseous draught of life more palatable to us. In this instant we were called to supper, and I was, I confess, as happy at having an interruption put to the conversation, as you can be at dinner, and the post forcing me to end the dullest of all dull epistles. Adieu ! God bless you.

LETTER XVIII.

WE go to town to-morrow, my dear sister. I am only glad of it, because Lady B—— and I had got into such a habit of wrangling about Bonario. Nothing but want of opportunity can ever, I believe, cure us of it. I know she means me well; but am hurt to find our sentiments so widely differ on a subject so interesting, and in which the heart bears so large a part. She is, as I have frequently told you, an excellent woman; I both love and esteem her. She married Sir —— in her very early days; more charmed with his fortune, which is indeed immense, than either his person or manners;

manners; for you meet with few less pleasing, though many plainer men. Her behaviour has notwithstanding never proved him so in her eyes; though their living so much in foreign countries, and his adopting the manners of the people there disembarraffes her from much of his company, which, notwithstanding appearances, she cannot, I am perfectly satisfied, like. To me he is exceedingly polite, but it is with violence to myself. I am able to return it. This blessed retreat is free from him, for he spends his whole summers at different water drinking places, where Lady B—— and his family are never to accompany him. To sum up his character in a very few words, he is a compound of avarice and vulgarity, affecting the most splendid elegance. In all his entertainments, (many

of which he gives to foreigners of rank) the reality appears. Thanks to Lady B——, who shines at the table, as well as in every other sphere in life. But enough of him, who, as I go abroad, I shall not see this year, unless he takes it into his head to accompany my friend to Paris, which Heaven avert. She must be happier without him, let her say what she will. From la Bienfance I write to my mother, therefore adieu; my head aches, and it is almost dark. Expect a long letter from town.

L E T.

L E T T E R X I X .

I HAD not been an hour in town yesterday, before Lord R—— arrived. He came to tell me the physicians all agree, my aunt's health requires instant change of air; that we are to embark for Calais this day week. The only regret I have is leaving Lady B—— behind, who cannot quit England these two months: but there is no pleasure without some alloy. The Duke of M—— has desired to be recalled, and the duchess (who is very good to me) tells me *they* shall be at Paris before us, as we take Spa in our way; that she

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earnestly

earnestly wishes to contribute every thing in her power towards my amusement; and *much* she has in her power; for she is not only a veritable bel esprit, but an excellent good woman; has all the politeness of her country, with the sincerity of ours; she loves play, and plays deep, but can have intimacies and friendship for them who do neither the one or the other. In short, she has the most universal benevolence of heart imaginable; she even saw and partook of Bonario's distress on my sudden departure. But it is infinitely the best thing that can happen to either of us. Absence (according to our friend Rochefoucault) may extinguish moderate passions, and such I esteem all new created passions. I may enjoy that friendship I really think valuable, and still preserve the approbation of my own mind, on
cool

cool reflection, in the most sequestered solitude. The town rings at present about our friend's daughter going off with a man of a very ungentle name, which I can neither spell nor speak. Though these things happen almost daily in this enlightened world, trust me Morvina, there is more sentiment, more real delicacy on the summit of mossy crags, than in the court and its environs. The inhabitants of the first retain their original nobleness of blood and spirit, whereas the last contaminate and mingle theirs with every wretch for gold; and often, if not always, leave a reptile (at best a mongrel) race, which lays their honours in the dust. Sentiments so natural to us all will not surprize you; neither will you wonder I am pleased at going to a country where *they* universally reign.

But

But I dwell too long on a subject we agree in. To-morrow I go to E—— to bring Lady R—— to town, on her way to Dover, from whence you may depend on receiving six lines from your fond sister and friend.

L E T.

L E T T E R XX.

My dear Morvina,

Dover, Tuesday Morning.
I have written a long
letter to my mother.
How good she is to us
all, my dear!

I Promised you six lines from this formidable place, which, with our third Edward, makes a capital figure in history. Behold then a woman of her word ; perhaps better than her word. Though I will not deign to borrow a description of Dover cliffs to fulfil it, as it would be nothing new to you, nor will indeed an account of any country we go thro', or place I shall probably see. But people of all countries differ not only from each other, but from themselves, frequently

quently enough to produce novelty, and ample matter for an abler pen. But to be serious, we embark with an extraordinary fine wind in half an hour. It is now past twelve, and *they* promise we shall drink our coffee at the Hotel Anglois, whence you may expect six lines more, as I am sure you will be anxious to know we are safe landed, of which however there is not the smallest doubt. Adieu! tous adieu! God blefs you,

L E T-

L E T T E R X X I .

Calais, Tuesday Evening

JUST arrived safe, well, and in spirits, from the first to the last of us. San-
chonia had not power of face to refrain
from laughter, when a Marquis, a good
deal resembling the knight of Mancha,
offered me his hand to lead me to the
carriage which waited for us. My aunt
was not a little struck with *his* figure,
and my good fortune, so early on our
arrival in a strange country. It will fur-
nish out conversation for this night, at
least; no bad thing for me, whose mind
is too often wandering where I would not
wish they should find it. My aunt is
really

really the most reasonable woman in the world; exceedingly good tempered, and fond of my company, yet never wishes to purchase it at the expence of my pleasure; goes out with me to the full as much as I wish to be in public, still fearing I confine myself in compliment to her. The Opera she knew was my favourite amusement in London, therefore never let me miss one, while I was with *her* in town. The hurry I was in, prevented me telling you in my last letter, we have changed our route. My uncle had a consultation of physicians immediately on Lady R——'s arrival in town, who unanimously agreed no Spa could be of service in her complaint; that exercise, change of air, asses milk, and amusement, could alone work a cure; therefore we go directly to Paris, and if
that

that fails, winter in the South of France. Should we reach Amiens (which we stedfastly purpose) to-morrow night, we shall lie at Paris the next. My Lord carries me through St. Omer's, somewhat about. I will not seal this till I get to Amiens. Just come from the Jesuits: not a jot of their cunning have I stolen. Those we have in England are a just specimen of the whole. They are exceedingly polite; presented me with a fine set of beads, a piece of St. Winefrid's little finger; I rejoiced it was not her toe. But raillery apart, I wished Lady R—— had travelled along with us, that we might have spent more time with these holy fathers, which they pressed us much to do. They appear the most happy of human race: I firmly believe many of them are so, from being
 what

what they seem, truly good religious men. I cannot pronounce destruction on the head of all who differ in opinion from me, or believe there is but one road to that haven where we would all be ; and which, if we all seek earnestly, I make no doubt we shall find in due time, whatever road we pursue towards it. Lady A—
 B—— passed through this town some time since, I'm told, to be married, and not too soon. I know something of them ; have a high opinion of both, and mind not every idle malicious tale I hear. We have seventy miles to go to-morrow ; but that is nothing in this country, you will readily believe, from the facility we now travel in our own ; a good as well as pleasure we originally owe to France. I beg leave to offer my duty to my mother through you ; as I have nothing will
 pay.

pay her Ladyship the pain of reading to send from this place. I shall satisfy myself with entreating she will believe duty and affection to her hold the first place in my heart. Say from me every thing kind and friendly to our sisters. I do not love them less from writing to them seldomer than I do to my dear Morvina, whose sincere friend I am, as well as affectionate sister.

Henrietta.

I shall not write to you again till I get to Paris, where I may probably find matter for a volume.

L E T T E R XXII.

Paris, Hotel de Yorke.

IN my last letter from Amiens I told my mother the woollen manufactory was arrived to that high perfection, as to make me almost believe it would reconcile her to it; and *there* I saw nothing else worth mentioning. We arrived here last night too late, and too much fatigued for me to think of writing. I am not yet able to give you accounts of this superb metropolis worth setting down upon paper; but the tender friendship I bear my dear Morvina makes me seize every opportunity of assuring her it can end but with my life; a truth I hope she
does

does not now need to learn. You know this town is built with fine-hewn stone, and great regularity; the houses five or six stories high; that all people of distinction have a hotel or palace in it, with courts and gardens; a magnificence which never fails raising in you an idea of the grandeur of mind of its inhabitants, strongly prejudicing you in their favour, before you know more than the meer outside of their houses. It will cost us some days before we can make ourselves up for the court; till when we shall parade about to see fights, to which I have no dislike in this country. There is very little trouble in it; besides, it does not take me from what I like better, as yet. I long to go to every convent I hear of inhabited by nuns: there are seventy-eight in Paris. We have a

most magnificent hotel, that Lord R—— has been lucky enough to get twice before, just at the time he wanted it. The Duke of —— has not left it above a week. However we do not mean to go into it till it is thoroughly well aired, which will be another week at least. We are well lodged, &c. *here*, and partiality to my own travelling bed made it necessary to put it up at Amiens, where we found every thing excellent; and I could not help reflecting on the propensity most folks have to raise difficulties, and propagate falsehoods, which I am confident frighten numbers, and prevent their travelling into France or Italy. Indeed, if monsieur le Chirurgien will travel, he is treated accordingly; for *they are* respectors of persons in this polite and truly agreeable country. They ask not,
what

what you have, but they will know who you are, before they will receive you; and a man or woman nobly born, that is to say, of a good family, though undistinguished by any mark of court favour, is as universally received, and as politely treated as any peer whatever. Indeed the common people call them all *Mi-lord Anglois*, and from knowing nothing of our manners and constitution, judge they are the same as their own, where every man of family is a count or marquis, and where their honours are not prostituted as ours are. The lower sort of people talk to you with great ease, but never fall from that respect due to their superiors. I have dwelt longer than seems necessary on a subject not very interesting; but the numberless books lately published by trifling people, of

their tour through France and Italy, I have found very erroneous thus far, and make no doubt I shall throughout. I would not have my dear Morvina's mind poisoned by them, and prejudiced against a country and people I feel already I shall be as partial to as Lord R — is. Lady R — thinks herself better already, and I believe she is so from the journey. She always charges me with many compliments to you. Dispose of mine always as you think proper. I dare not allow you the same privilege with my love, for fear you should render it back to D —, you were once so partial to him; so satisfied I could never withdraw it enough to be happy without him. Just called to supper. Farewell. God bless you.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXIII.

Paris.

THIS whole week have we rambled from morning till night, and been exceedingly entertained with the numberless beauties as well as curiosities of this superb metropolis, and its environs. My mind has known no rest; for I dream the night thorough of what I have seen the preceding day. This morning I visited St. Cyr; it has more than answered my most sanguine expectations, and is truly worthy the foundress, tho' at present neglected by the court, at least by no means patronised, and supported

answerable to her intentions. It is not near full; but the most perfect happiness appears in the countenance, and reigns in the hearts of the greatest part of the ladies who are *there*, I am convinced, as well as in every other convent I have seen. I cannot suppose, or wish you should believe, there are not restless turbulent spirits in every society; but is it not happy they are out of the way of exposing themselves, and families, and where, if example has force to reclaim such termagants, they want not the best. In *this*, as well as in the education of their daughters, the Roman Catholics have greatly the advantage over us. In these houses young ladies are educated immediately under the inspection of women of fashion; grounded in the principles of *their* religion, as well as honour, generosity,

rosity, and every sentiment natural to a noble mind; whereas our boarding-schools are seminaries of vulgarity and folly, to say no worse; and a mother finds infinitely more trouble to divest their minds of the absurd prejudices they have gained *there*, than she would have met with in teaching them every other acquirement from their cradle upwards. This sweet retreat is situated at one extremity of the park of Versailles, and is indeed an ample proof of the taste as well as goodness of heart of madame Maintenon, whose story has been very maliciously and falsely transmitted to us, owing undoubtedly to the envy her extraordinary exaltation raised in the minds of her cotemporaries. From incontestible authority I have learned, she never was in the confidence of madame

Montespan, therefore could never use it to her destruction with the King. Neither was madame Maintenon ever employed by *her*, or ever received the smallest favour at her hands. The King himself first thought of, and named madame Scarron to go with the Duke of Maine to Barége, whose birth you know was for some time kept secret, on account of a deformity in one of his feet. His Majesty likewise committed the care of his education afterwards to her. The letters necessary for her to write on that occasion were addressed immediately to the King. The sense, the elegance, the sentiment of them failed not to make its way from his head to his heart; and neither war nor gallantry had force to chase it thence: in short, he fell in love with madame Maintenon, and finding there

there was no other means of gaining her, determined to marry her. That her passion for him was equally strong and disinterested, notwithstanding the great disparity in years, as well as every thing else, between *them*, we have no room to doubt, since she never would be declared. Had *she* not considered the King's interest preferably to her own, wished him to maintain the love, the adoration of a people who had long worshipped him; seen through reason's (not passion's) eye, the consequence attending such declaration, it is impossible to suppose she could be averse to appear in her proper station: indeed there was none so exalted her abilities would not have done *honour* to. She was not to be dazzled with the empty glare of temporary greatness. She loved the man, not the monarch: wished to

detach *him* from all worldly pursuits, ambition, vanity, &c. not to share them with *him*; and really had, as she frequently says in her letters, his salvation at heart; a good must be obtained in this *present* evil world, although we reap the reward in a better. I am apt to believe the difficulty she met in bringing that about, caused those discontents of mind she so often expresses to her near friends, particularly to her brother. The King's health was, and had long been in a very precarious state, and she dared not flatter herself *he* was in that frame of mind which alone can render us resigned, and enable us to meet the king of terrors. At length her indefatigable zeal in the service of God, her constant attention to the King, her ardent endeavours to promote *his* spiritual, as well as temporal

temporal good, wrought the wished-for effect, and she had the comfort to behold him die a Christian, though the misfortune to survive the person on earth she wished to live for. With what heroism he beheld his approaching end every own knows. In the very act of dying *he* said to madame Maintenon, I believed it a much more difficult task to die. Next Heaven to you madame I owe feelings the highest pitch of earthly glory could never inspire me with for one single moment. He then called for his successor; held *him* in his arms as he lay in bed, and throwing off that ostentation which had diffused itself throughout the main part of his life, candidly confessed all *his* errors, all *his* faults, told the child, You will very soon become sovereign of a great kingdom:

what I most strongly recommend to you, is never to neglect your duty to God, or forget that to *his* divine majesty you owe all you are. Endeavour to preserve peace with your neighbours: I have been too fond of war. Imitate me neither in that, nor my extravagance. Take counsel in all things; select the best, and endeavour to follow it; comfort and relieve your people to the utmost of your power, and do all those things *I* unfortunately wanted the means to do. By setting out wrong, dazzled by military glory, I obstinately launched out into long and expensive wars, insensibly wasted the treasure, nay, the blood of *France*, not *so easily* recruited. *His* successor has this wise, this salutary advice written, and placed every night under his pillow. How much it has profited him, let his
Subjects,

subjects, his family witness. This dying advice of Louis is mentioned in divers histories, but very inaccurately. This I may venture to assure you is a veritable copy, and almost a literal translation of the original. His making no provision for the most faithful, tender friend *he* ever met with, as well as the most instructive agreeable companion appears extraordinary, till we recollect his Majesty recommended her to the Regent's care, who looking on *her* as dowager of *France*, made offers accordingly; all of which she rejected; would accept of no more than four-and-twenty thousand livres pension, which was punctually paid *her*. She retired to St. Cyr, and spent the remainder of her days in acts of piety and beneficence. I admire her character, and honour her memory. I

cannot look upon her as having acted a part. Besides, that she had no interested motives for so doing. I see nothing in the whole of her conduct unnatural to a mind rightly turned. I have been so very explicit upon convents I have hardly time or room to expatiate upon the beauties of the palace of Versailles, of which we have heard so much; and indeed, so far as it is finished, it merits all that can be said; but this, like all French plans, was too great to be completed. One wing is an absolute skeleton, and will probably remain such while it stands. The front is at least half a mile in length. This, like all the rest of the palaces, is much neglected. Adieu, my dear Morvina; love, and believe me ever yours.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXIV.

My dear Morvina,

THE French court is amazingly brilliant; the politeness of every individual which compose it pleasing (indeed flattering) beyond conception. It is impossible to feel out of humour and dissatisfied with yourself while you seem to make the happiness of all around you. They vie with each other in their attention to strangers, and at the very instant they are studying to amuse and render you happy, appear to gratify themselves only. In short, you never feel the weight of their favours; they assume no
fort

fort of superiority over those with whom they converse, however exalted their rank. They place nobility in blood, the source whence the delightful fruits of it must arise : they never look to gather grapes from brambles, &c. You cannot persuade them that either royalty or gold have power to ennoble the heart, exalt the sentiments, or refine the manners of a bourgeois. They see, or think they see, the mean original, though glossed over with court favour, peeping from behind a star of the first magnitude, consequently never contaminate their blood by such unnatural connections as are daily formed in England, and which has already spread such a quantity of vulgarity and impertinence throughout great part of the kingdom, as to render us objects of contempt, and a proverb of ferocity

city to most of our neighbours. But to return to these charming people, who after all are no more than what those of gentle blood are every where: it is the horrid melange with which all our public places, I am sorry to say even our court, is filled, that sinks us and degrades us in the eyes of all respectable rational beings. I am again strayed from my purpose, which was to tell you what I find no language can reach, the extreme goodness, politeness, nay, friendship of madame the Duchefs of M— towards us all. We are admitted of her coterie: no small mark of distinction, let me tell you. She speaks of me and to me in terms so flattering and kind, I should be ashamed to repeat them even to you, my dear sister. This lady is daughter to the Prince of C——, was first married to the
 Prince

Prince of L——, who was killed in a duel by the Duke de R——. She married secondly the Marquis, afterwards Duke of M——. At her house I frequently meet with Florentine *nobilita*; they are exceedingly civil, but their good breeding too frequently degenerates into ceremony; and I cannot say they are altogether so much adapted to my taste as the people of this country; at the same time there is a composure in the Italians to which these people seem absolute strangers. This want of serenity in the French is merely constitutional; in the English affectation, which renders it a thousand times more disgusting; and it is enough so at best. I love vivacity, but I hate riot. I admire wit, but detest pretenders to it. I have met many of the first, but not one of the last

last *here*. These people in general seem to know their forte, and act from it; are never inconsistent with themselves. Sure *this* requires more than an ordinary degree of understanding. You will conclude they have filched mine, my dear Morvina, if I add much more to this already too long dull epistle, than that my love and friendship is invariably yours.

L E T.

L E T T E R XXV.

I Believe I never told you of an intimacy I made very early on my arrival in Paris, with a co-adjutress of one of the first of the religious houses in this metropolis, not more eminent for her abilities, birth, and rank, than goodness of heart and rectitude of conduct; that Heaven within lights up her whole countenance, fills your mind at once with love and respect for her. Though not in the bloom of youth, she is still handsome, her person elegant and majestic; but the awfulness of majesty is softened by a beneficence of heart: her elegance of stile heightened by the purity

rity of it: her conversation is both improving and delightful: I never met her without feeling a peculiar pleasure, or parted from her without extreme regret. You will readily believe then our intimacy has, ere this, grown into a friendship. Yes, my dear Morvina, she honours me with her friendship, and I esteem no honour greater. I hold it one of the most valuable acquisitions I ever made. *For modes of faith we never fight.* Though each of us seem resolutely fix'd in that we profess, it has seldom made a part in our conversation, which always tends more to the great end, than the means. With a right turned heart we think we cannot stray far out of the road to that happiness, that perfect bliss, purchased for us at no less price than the shameful and painful death of our Lord and Master.

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ter, the great author and finisher of our faith. I wish you knew her; she often wishes to be acquainted with you; it is more than probable you may some time meet. En attendant, take her story from me; how singular soever it may appear to you, I will venture to answer for the truth of every syllable. My amiable friend gave it me as such, and deceit never found a place in her heart to begin. She is one of two daughters of a prince of one of the first houses (next to those of the blood) in France: indeed, some of the purest of *that* blood runs in her veins, and she does honour to the best blood in Europe. At a certain age, she, like all other women of condition, was placed in a convent for education. From a sweetness of disposition, as well as strength and quickness of parts, soon became

became the darling of the whole sisterhood, and *she* held *them* equally dear. The prince and princess, her father and mother, visited her frequently; happy in the improvement both of her mind and person, they impatiently longed for the time of taking her home. In her sixteenth year that wished-for moment arrived. Though she loved and honoured her natural parents to a degree of enthusiasm, she could not part with those by adoption, without the sorest regret; and she suffered many an heart-felt pang in the midst of the world, and all its delights, at being torn from friends her little heart had been early accustomed to love, and whom in maturer years she found had amply merited it from her. On her arrival at the chateau de ———, the whole world flocked in to welcome
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the prince and princess on the return of their fair daughter ; and fair indeed she was, in every sense of the word. Balls, masquerades, and every species of entertainment proper for her rank and years, were offered her in abundance. She enjoyed them with a vivacity natural to youth and good humour ; but far from being intoxicated with the glare and splendor of worldly greatness, they always left a vacuum in her heart, which she had never felt in retirement, and could but ill account for, therefore almost wished herself there again. Nay, she has more than once assured me, tenderness for the princess only could have restrained her from earnestly soliciting the prince to suffer her to return to that sweet society, in which she could alone hope for happiness. Charming as she

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was, you will readily believe she wanted not for admirers, on her first appearing in the world. If her beauty drew crowds about her, and those of the first rank, her merit failed not to attach all who had souls capable of attachment. Her wit was (though brilliant) of that kind, which pleases without offending, as free from satyr as from self sufficiency. Her understanding inferior to none, with a contempt of being forward in shewing it. She had but one sister, who was much older than *her*, and had been married many years to a man of high rank and great fortune, great part of which he had left entirely in her disposal. She was left a widow at five and twenty, and determined to remain such, having refused many of the most eligible and greatest marriages in France. Her riches

riches were immense; children she had none; therefore it was very natural she should wish to see her sister happily established in the world. The Prince and Princess were not more anxious on that score than the Duchefs of ———; they frequently talked together on the subject; all wished to find out who (amongst her adorers) the amiable co-adjutrefs distinguished. Before they made known their wishes to her, three long years wore away, ere they were able to form the least judgment; and had it not been for a very singular accident, many more might have rolled on in the same incertitude. The modest diffidence she had of herself made her doubt the power of her charms, and the faith of her lovers. Her delicacy of sentiment was too refined to let her endure the thought of any

any man's believing he had found the way into her heart, until she was beyond all doubt secure of his, therefore not a single glance on *the dear distinguished one* did she ever cast, that could possibly betray her sentiments towards him. If then the Argus eyes of an enamorata, whose vanity kept pace with his passion, attempted unsuccessfully to see into her heart, how vain was that hope in others; and she would probably have carried her passion undiscovered along with her to the grave, had not destiny, or, more properly speaking, chance, revealed the secret for her. The Count de —, a younger branch of the same house she was of, spent much of his time with the Prince, who was both his patron and guardian, his father being killed at the head of one of the best regiments in the service of

France, and mostly of his own disciplining. He was very early in his life honoured with the order of St. Lewis, as a reward for his singular valour at the siege of Philipsburg, and that distinguished him from the rest of the officers of his regiment, most of whom lay dead, or dying on the field of battle at Dettingen. The Count, his son, had as much as possible the loss of such a father made up to him in the parental affection and tenderness of both the Prince and Princess. He knew no mother but the latter, his own having paid the debt of nature at his entrance into the world. At the time of his father's death he was at the first academy in Paris. The Prince of —— went to him, brought him home to his own house, where every imaginable consolation was offered him.

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When the violence of his grief was a little subsided, he replaced him in the same academy to finish his studies, which happened about two years before *my dear Madame* was fetched from the convent. The Count had every requisite to form what the world calls a fine gentleman. His natural endowments were improved by an education suitable to his rank and turn of mind. He was universally beloved and admired. The Prince of — procured him a very honourable post at court, which *he* filled with honour and propriety, and was reckoned one of the handsomest men about the court. Charms enough were found in him to eclipse even the beauty of the Grand Monarch. Enchanting as his person was, his manners were a thousand times more so; his ease and elegance were unparalleled;

and if by the outward form you judge of the mind, his must have had few equals, not one superior. But the sequel will shew how erroneously we decide; how we are carried away by prejudice on the very points on which our happiness or misery throughout life depends. But to wave moralizing, and return to my story. In the midst of a ball given by the Duke of Bourbon at Chantilly, chiefly in compliment to the Prince and Princess, an express arrived of the Count's having fought a duel, and lying at the point of death. The whole room were in the utmost confusion, nay, distress; but my poor friend seemed to have gone before to receive him. She was carried home in a state of total insensibility. Every body easily divined the cause of her illness. They knew no force in medicine

dicine had power to heal it. So soon as she was a little restored, she entreated her fond and adored mother would inform her of all she knew relative to the Count, and not attempt, if he was no more, to lengthen out her days of horror. The poor Princess offered her all possible comfort, and assured her that she every instant waited the return of an express she had dispatched from Chantilly; that *she* should, if she pleased, examine him first herself. No, my amiable and dear mother, replied she, were I base and ungrateful enough to suspect you capable of duplicity, I should deserve to be made the dupe of the universe. From your lips I expect my doom, however severe; that will a little mitigate its force; and trust me, though my feeble frame was once overpowered,

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you shall not in future blush for the conduct of your daughter. Here tears interrupted further conversation, and in that instant the express returned with a billet from the Count to the Prince, filled with many acknowledgments, &c. and assurances that his wound was never of consequence enough to raise the smallest apprehension in the surgeons who attended him, and that in a very few days he hoped to be able to kiss their hands at the chateau de ———. This letter was shewn to the lovely Adelinea (for so was my friend called.) It instantly wrought a cure; and she enjoyed a good night's sleep, without having recourse to opiates. The hurry of spirits she run thro' that evening, allowed her not leisure to reflect coolly on the dreadful discovery this untoward accident had caused. But

no sooner had she collected herself, than the dreadful consequences of it stared her full in the face, with every horror, every disagreeable circumstance attending it. The moment she was satisfied of the safety of that lover she would willingly have died to save, she wished to fly to a convent, and shut herself up from him for ever. What an inconsistency! yet so unaccountably are we made. She dreaded seeing the Prince and Princess, much more the rest of the world, who had been eye-witnesses of her weakness. The bare idea of facing the Count was insupportable to her. The Prince and Princess thought he had charms enough to justify her to the world; and though in point of fortune her choice was not the most prudential, they were happy to find no other obstacle.

That they could easily surmount, and impatiently waited to hear the sound of her bell; for they would not by any means break in on that repose they well knew she stood in need of, to recover her spirits, after the uncommon agitation they had sustained for so many hours together, which accounted to them for her being later than usual. At length, with shame, fear, and trembling, she touched the bell. The Princess was the first who answered it, and found her Adeline in tears, which she endeavoured to wipe away, by telling her the amiability of the man of her choice had long struck them in its full force, and though they had both determined never to bias, (much less force) her inclinations, they were, she must confess, infinitely happy to find them fixed on the person in the world!

world they could have wished to point out to her, believing him perfectly worthy of the preference she shewed him; that the Prince had received another letter from him, and expected him there the very next day. His wound had never been more than a little scratch, and was then perfectly healed. Security often produces neglect; and the passion of the divine Adeline seemed to vanish with the danger of her lover. The facility with which her parents consented to her marrying him, shame and contempt of herself for want of fortitude sufficient to maintain a proper decorum, usurped the place of passion, and she entreated her mother would spare her the pain of seeing the Count, at least for some days. The Princess well knowing the more time she had to reflect, the more dissatisfied

fied she would be with her past conduct, consequently more averſe to ſeeing the cauſe of it, however innocent, preſſed her not to delay rendering herſelf and them happy, by ſuffering cauſeleſs abſurd ſcruples to riſe in her mind; that her whole behaviour was natural, conſiſtent with the ſenſibility of her heart, as was the ſtruggles ſhe muſt have had to conceal her paſſion, with the modeſty and delicacy of her ſex and years. She could not doubt, ſhe ſaid, the Count's having long felt and declared a paſſion the moſt tender for her: that both ſhe and the Prince had often marked how aſſiduously attentive he was to her on every occaſion, and marked it with pleaſure, as well as the unaffected politeneſs and delicacy with which ſhe received all his douceurs, that he had both a head

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and heart *too* good to presume upon a discovery in his favour he owed to accident only, therefore she intreated her to see the Count, and suffer him to make her sister his friend, to negotiate the affair with the Prince, who she could readily answer for would raise no objections, but rejoice in the opportunity of establishing his daughter happily. With a thousand blushes, sighs, nay, tears, Adelina promised to obey her adored mother. *Here, indeed,* it was no more than obeying the dictates of her own heart, though modesty had at first made her wish to decline an interview with the man on earth she loved, and still made her tremble. She feared lest her past conduct should appear in *his* eyes tinged with levity, and could much more easily have borne the loss of his person, than the smallest tittle of

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of his esteem, on the preservation of which she built her future happiness; but that fear was ill founded; every action of her life, nay, thought of her soul ever have, and justly may claim the esteem of all mankind. But to return, she left her chamber with the Princess, who led her to the Prince's apartment. She threw herself at his feet; he lifted her up, unable to articulate a syllable more than that her happiness, next to that of the Princess, was the chief point he had in view. She might depend on his performing, with the utmost punctuality, all her mother had promised for him. As she passed through the saloon to dinner, where stood a multitude of attendants on either side, whose eyes and hearts were full of joy on the speedy reestablishment of Mademoiselle's health, and the
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happy escape of the person on earth they deemed most dear to her. She did not dare look up, though the sweetness of her disposition and rectitude of manners, left no room for the most harsh ill-nature to suspect levity had found a place in her heart; and the poor servants, from the first to the last, had so amply experienced her goodness, as to raise in their minds ideas of her above mortality. Rumour, which flies swifter than lightning, had carried the whole affair of the Chantilly ball to the Count's ears. Impatient to avail himself of his good fortune, he flew on the wings of love, who, though blind, makes his way to the full as speedily as rumour, *even* when *he* is supported by slander; and with the second course the Count was served up. The joy his approach caused in the servants, made

them forget their several avocations, set down their loads, and scamper over ro-ties, patties, entremets, &c. trampling under foot the whole art of cookery to announce his arrival. Indeed, the confusion it caused in the higher powers made them very little attentive to the etiquette of the table, and the poor Princesses pressed the Count much to eat, without any one dish on the table. This luckily raised a laugh, and furnished conversation while the dinner lasted. What happened to my amiable friend after, sleep will not allow me to tell you; therefore adieu, till next post. My dear Morvina, good night.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.

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