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P.

THE LIFE

OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

INCLUDING

A JOURNAL OF A TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES.

BY JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

A NEW EDITION.

WITH NUMEROUS ADDITIONS AND NOTES,

BY

JOHN WILSON CROKER, LL. D. F. R. S.

— Quò fit ut OMNIS
Votivà pateat veluti descripta tabellà
VITA SENIS — HORAT. 1 Sat. lib. ii.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY CARTER, HENDEE AND CO.

1832.

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P R E F A C E.

It were superfluous to expatiate on the merits, at least as a source of amusement, of Boswell's LIFE OF JOHNSON. Whatever doubts may have existed as to the prudence or the propriety of the *original* publication—however naturally private confidence was alarmed, or individual vanity offended, the voices of criticism and complaint were soon drowned in the general applause. And no wonder: the work combines within itself the four most entertaining classes of writing—biography, memoirs, familiar letters, and that assemblage of literary anecdotes which the French have taught us to distinguish by the termination *Anecd.*

It was originally received with an eagerness and relished with a zest which undoubtedly were sharpened by the curiosity which the unexpected publication of the words and deeds of so many persons still living could not but excite. But this motive has gradually become weaker, and may now be said to be extinct; yet we do not find that the popularity of the work, though somewhat changed in quality, is really diminished; and as the interval which separates us from the actual time and scene increases, so appear to increase the interest and delight which we feel at being introduced, as it were, into that distinguished society of which Dr. Johnson formed the centre, and of which his biographer is the historian.

But though every year thus adds something to the interest and instruction which this work affords, something is, on the other hand, deducted from the amusement which it gives, by the gradual obscurity that time throws over the persons and incidents of private life: many circumstances known to all the world when Mr. Boswell wrote, are already obscure to the best informed, and wholly forgotten by the rest of mankind¹.

For instance, when he relates (vol. i. p. 90.) that a "great personage" called the English Divines of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries "*Giants*," we guess that George III. was the great personage; but all the editor's inquiries (and some of His Majesty's illustrious family have condescended to permit these inquiries to extend even to them) have failed to ascertain to what person or on what occasion that happy expression was used.

Again: When Mr. Boswell's capricious delicacy induced him to suppress names and to substitute such descriptions as "an eminent friend," "a young gentleman," "a distinguished orator," these were well understood by the society of the day; but it is become necessary to apprise the reader of our times, that Mr. Burke, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Fox, were respectively meant. Nor is it always easy to appropriate Mr. Boswell's circumlocutory designations. It will be seen in the course of this work, that several of them have become so obscure that even the surviving members of the Johnsonian society are unable to recollect who were meant, and it was on one of these occasions that Sir James Mackintosh told the editor that "*his work had, at least, not come too soon.*"

Mr. Boswell's delicacy is termed *capricious*, because he is on some occasions candid even to indiscretion, and on others unaccountably mysterious. In the

¹ "Dr. Johnson talked with approbation of an intended edition of the *Spectator*, with notes. He observed that all works which describe manners *require notes* in sixty or seventy years or less." *Post*, vol. i. pp. 304-5. And Dean Swift wrote to Pope on the subject of the *Dunciad*, "I could wish the notes to be very large in what relates to the persons concerned; for I have long observed, that twenty miles from London nobody understands hints, initial letters, or town facts or passages, and in a few years not even those who live in London." *Lett.* 16, July, 1723.—Ed.]

report of a conversation he will clearly designate half the interlocutors, while the other half, without any apparent reason, he casts into studied obscurity.

Considering himself to be (as he certainly has been to a greater degree than he could have contemplated) one of the distributors of fame, he has sometimes indulged his partialities or prejudices by throwing more or less light, and lights more or less favourable, on the different persons of his scene; some of whom he obtrudes into broad day, while others he only "*adumbrates*" by imperfect allusions. But many, even of those the most clearly designated and spoken of as persons familiar to every ear, have already lived their day, and are hardly to be heard of except in these volumes. Yet these volumes must be read with imperfect pleasure, without some knowledge of the history of those more than half forgotten persons.

Facts, too, fade from memory as well as names; and fashions and follies are still more transient. But, in a book mainly composed of familiar conversation, how large a portion must bear on the facts, the follies, and the fashions of the time!

To clear up these obscurities—to supply these deficiencies—to retrieve obsolete and to collect scattered circumstances—and so to restore to the work as much as possible of its original clearness and freshness, have been the main objects of the editor. He is but too well aware how unequal he is to the task, and how imperfectly he has accomplished it. But as the time was rapidly passing away in which any aid could be expected from the contemporaries of Johnson, or even of Boswell, the editor determined to undertake the work—believing that, however ill he might perform it, he should still do it better than, twenty years hence, it could be done by any diligence of research or any felicity of conjecture.

But another and more striking object of this edition is the *incorporation* with Boswell's LIFE of numerous other authentic works connected with the biography of Johnson: as this is, as far as the editor knows, a novel attempt, and as it must give his work somewhat of a confused and heterogeneous appearance, he thinks it necessary to state some of the reasons which induced him to adopt so unusual a course.

The first and most cogent is the authority of Mr. Boswell himself; who in his original edition inserted, and in his subsequent editions continued to add, letters, memoranda², notes, and anecdotes collected from every quarter; but the appearance of his work was so long delayed, that Sir John Hawkins, Mrs. Piozzi, Dr. Strahan, Mr. Tyers, Mr. Nichols, and many others, had anticipated much of what he would have been glad to tell. Some squabbles about copy-right had warned him that he must not avail himself of their publications³; and

¹ Mr. Boswell confesses that he has sometimes been influenced by the subsequent conduct of persons in exhibiting or suppressing Dr. Johnson's unfavourable opinion of them.—See the cases of Lord Monboddo, vol. i. p. 255, and of Mr. Sheridan, vol. i. p. 260; and it is to be feared he has sometimes done so without confessing, perhaps without being conscious of the prejudice. On the other hand, he is sometimes more amiably guilty of extenuation, as in the instances of Doctors Robertson and Beattie, vol. i. p. 237, 247, 299, and 314.

It is not easy to explain why Mr. Boswell was unfavourably disposed towards Sheridan and Goldsmith, though the bias is obvious; but wholly unaccountable are the frequent ridicule and censure which he delighted to provoke and to record against his inoffensive and amiable friend Mr. Langton.

Those who knew Mr. Boswell intimately, inform us (as indeed he himself involuntarily does) that his vanity was very sensitive, and there can be no doubt that personal *pique* tinged many passages of his book, which, whenever the editor could trace it, he has not failed to notice.—Ed.

² On the use of this Latinism, the editor ventures to repeat a pleasant anecdote told by the Bishop of Ferns. The late Lord Avonmore, giving evidence relative to certain certificates of degrees in the University of Dublin, called them (as they are commonly called) "*Testimonials*." As the clerk was writing down the word, one of the counsel said, "Should it not be rather *testimonia*?" "Yes," replied Lord Avonmore, "if you think it *better English!*" This pleasantry contains a just grammatical criticism; but *memoranda* has of late been so generally used as an English plural that the editor has ventured to retain it.—Ed.

³ It is a curious proof of these jealousies, that Mr. Boswell entered at Stationers' Hall as distinct

he was on such bad terms with his rival biographers that he could not expect any assistance or countenance from them. He nevertheless went as far as he thought the law would allow in making frequent quotations from the preceding publications; but as to all the rest, which he did not venture to appropriate to his own use,—*the grapes were sour*—and he took every opportunity of representing the anecdotes of his rivals as extremely inaccurate and generally undeserving of credit.

It is certain that none of them have attained—indeed they do not pretend to—that extreme verbal accuracy with which Mr. Boswell had, by great zeal and diligence, learned to record conversations; nor in the details of facts are they so precise as Mr. Boswell with good reason claims to be.

Mr. Boswell took, indeed, extraordinary and most laudable pains to attain accuracy¹. Not only did he commit to paper at night the conversation of the day, but even in general society he would occasionally take a note of any thing remarkable that occurred; and he afterwards spared no trouble in arranging and supplying the inevitable deficiencies of these hasty memoranda.

But, after all, Mr. Boswell himself is not exempt from those errors—

— quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura;

and an attentive examination and collation of the authorities (and particularly of Mr. Boswell's own) have convinced the editor that the minor biographers are entitled not merely to more credit than Mr. Boswell allows them, but to as much as any person writing from recollection, and not from notes made at the moment, can be.

As Mr. Boswell had borrowed *much* from Sir J. Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi, the editor has thought himself justified in borrowing *more*; and he has therefore (as he thinks Mr. Boswell would have done if he could) incorporated with the text nearly the whole of Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, and such passages of Hawkins' "*Life*" and "*Collection of Anecdotes*" as relate to circumstances which Mr. Boswell had either not mentioned at all, or touched upon imperfectly.

The same use has been made of several other publications, particularly Murphy's *Essay on the Life of Dr. Johnson*, Mr. Tyers' eccentric but amusing *Sketch*, and Mr. Nichols' contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a publication which, under that gentleman's superintendance, was of peculiar authority in all that relates to Dr. Johnson.

The editor had another important object in adopting this incorporation. Notwithstanding the diligence and minuteness with which Mr. Boswell detailed *what he saw* of Dr. Johnson's life, his work left large chasms. It must be recollected that they never *resided* in the same neighbourhood, and that the *detailed* account of Johnson's domestic life and conversation is limited to the opportunities afforded by Mr. Boswell's occasional visits to London—by the *Scottish Tour*—and by one meeting at Dr. Taylor's, in Derbyshire. Of above *twenty years*, therefore,

publications, *Dr. Johnson's Letter to Lord Chesterfield*, and the account of his *Conversation with George III.*, which occupy a few pages of the *LIFE*.—ED.

¹ Mr. Wordsworth has obligingly furnished the editor with the following copy of a note in a blank page of his copy of Boswell's work, dictated and signed in Mr. Wordsworth's presence by the late Sir George Beaumont, whose own accuracy was exemplary, and who lived very much in the society of Johnson's latter days.

"Rydal Mount, 12th Sept. 1826.

"Sir Joshua Reynolds told me at his table, immediately after the publication of this book, that every word of it might be depended upon as if given on oath. Boswell was in the habit of bringing the proof sheets to his house previously to their being struck off, and if any of the company happened to have been present at the conversation recorded, he requested him or them to correct any error; and not satisfied with this, he would run over all London for the sake of verifying any single word which might be disputed.

"G. H. BEAUMONT."

Although it cannot escape notice, that Sir Joshua is here reported to have drawn a somewhat wider inference than the premises warranted, the general testimony is satisfactory, and it is to a considerable extent corroborated by every kind of evidence, external and internal.—ED.

that their acquaintance lasted, periods equivalent in the whole to about three-quarters of a year only¹ fell under the personal notice of *Boswell*—and thus has been left many a long *hiatus*—*valde deflendus*, but now, alas, quite irreparable!

Mr. *Boswell* endeavoured, indeed, to fill up these chasms as well as he could with *Johnson's letters* to his absent friends; but much the largest, and, for this purpose, the most valuable part of his correspondence, was out of his reach; namely, that which Dr. *Johnson* for twenty years maintained with Mrs. *Thrale*, and which she published in 1788, in two volumes octavo. For the copyright of these, Mr. *Boswell* says, in a tone of admiring envy, “she received five hundred pounds.” The publication, however, was not very successful—it never reached a second edition, and is now almost forgotten. But through these letters are scattered almost the only information we have relative to *Johnson* during the long intervals between Mr. *Boswell's* visits; and from them he has occasionally but cautiously (having the fear of the copyright law before his eyes) made interesting extracts.

These letters being now public property, the editor has been at liberty to follow up Mr. *Boswell's* imperfect example, and he has therefore made numerous and copious selections from them, less as specimens of *Johnson's* talents for letter-writing, than as notices of his domestic and social life during the intervals of Mr. *Boswell's* narrative. Indeed, as *letters*, few of *Johnson's* can have any great charm for the common reader; they are full of good sense and good nature, but in forms too didactic and ponderous to be very amusing. If the editor could have ventured to make so great an alteration in Mr. *Boswell's* original plan, he would—instead of adding so many letters²—have been inclined to have omitted all, except those which might be remarkable for some peculiar merit, or which might tend to complete the history of *Johnson's* life. In the large extracts which have been made from Mrs. *Thrale's* correspondence, he has been guided entirely by this latter object.

The most important addition, however, which the editor has made, is one that needs no apology—he has incorporated with the *LIFE* the whole of the *TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES*, which Mr. *Boswell* published in one volume in 1785, and which, no doubt, if he could legally have done so, he would himself have incorporated in the *LIFE*—of which indeed he expressly tells us, he looks on the *TOUR* but as a *portion*. It is only wonderful, that since the copyright has expired, any edition of the *Life of Johnson* should have been published without the addition of this, the most original, curious, and amusing portion of the whole biography.

The *Prayers and Meditations*, published with rather too much haste after *Johnson's* death by Dr. *Strahan*, have also been made use of to an extent which was forbidden to Mr. *Boswell*. What Dr. *Strahan* calls *Meditations*³ are, in fact,

¹ It appears from the *LIFE*, that Mr. *Boswell* visited England a dozen times during his acquaintance with Dr. *Johnson*, and that the number of days on which they met were about 180, to which is to be added the time of the *TOUR*, during which they met daily from the 18th August, to the 22d November, 1773; in the whole about 276 days. The number of pages in the late editions of the two works is 2528, of which, 1320 are occupied by the history of these 276 days; so that little less than an hundredth part of Dr. *Johnson's* life occupies above one half of Mr. *Boswell's* works. Every one must regret that his personal intercourse with his great friend was not more frequent or more continued; but the editor could do but little towards rectifying this disproportion, except by the insertion of the correspondence with Mrs. *Thrale*.—ED.

² The number of original letters in this edition is about 100—the number of those collected from various publications (including the extracts from Mrs. *Piozzi's*) is about 200.—ED.

³ These *Meditations* have been the cause of much ridicule and some obloquy, which would be not wholly undeserved if it were true, as Dr. *Strahan* thoughtlessly gave the world to suppose, that they were arranged by Dr. *Johnson*, and delivered to Dr. *Strahan* for the express purpose of publication. An inspection of the original manuscripts (now properly and fortunately lodged in Pembroke College) has convinced the editor (and, as he is glad to find, every body else who has examined them), that the opinion derived from Dr. *Strahan's* statement echoed by Mr. *Boswell*, is wholly unfounded. In the confusion of a mind which the approach of death was beginning to affect, and in the agitation which a recent attempt to spoliat two of his note books had occasioned, Dr. *Johnson* seems to have given Dr. *Strahan* a confused bundle of loose papers—scraps, half-sheets, and a few leaves

nothing but *Diaries* of the author's moral and religious state of mind, intermixed with some notices of his bodily health and of the interior circumstances of his domestic life. Mr. Boswell had ventured to quote *some* of these: the present edition contains *all* that appear to offer any thing of interest.

The editor has also incorporated in this work a small volume, published in 1802, but now become scarce, containing an *Account of Dr. Johnson's Early Life, written by himself*, and a curious correspondence with Miss Boothby, of which Mr. Boswell had given one, and Mrs. Piozzi three or four letters¹.

Mr. Duppa published in 1806, with copious explanatory notes, a diary which Johnson had kept during a *Tour through North Wales*, made, in 1775, in company with Mr. Thrale and his family. Mr. Boswell had, it appears, inquired in vain for this diary: if he could have obtained it, he would, no doubt, have inserted it, as he did the similar notes of the *Tour in France* in the succeeding year. By the liberality of Mr. Duppa, the editor has been enabled to incorporate this volume with the present edition.

The editor will now recapitulate the *publications* which will be found, in the *whole* or in *part*, in the volumes of the present edition.

1. The whole of Mr. Malone's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, 4 vols. 8vo.
2. The whole of the first and most copious² edition of Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, 1 vol. 8vo.
3. The whole (though differently arranged) of Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes of Dr Johnson*, 1 vol. sm. 8vo.
4. The whole of Dr. Johnson's *Tour in Wales*, with notes, by R. Duppa, Esq., 1 vol. 12mo.
5. The whole of an *Account of the Early Life of Dr. Johnson, with his Correspondence with Miss Boothby*, 1 vol. 16mo.
6. A great portion of the *Letters to and from Dr. Johnson*, published by H. L. Piozzi, 2 vols. 8vo.
7. Large extracts from the *Life of Dr. Johnson*, by Sir J. Hawkins, 1 vol. 8vo.
8. All, that had not been already anticipated by Mr. Boswell or Mrs. Piozzi, of the "*Apophthegms, Sentiments, and Opinions of Dr. Johnson*," published by Sir J. Hawkins, in his edition of Johnson's works.
9. Extracts from *Sketches of Dr. Johnson*, by Thomas Tyers, Esq., a pamphlet, in 8vo.
10. Extracts from Murphy's *Essay on the Life of Dr. Johnson*, from Mr. Nichols' and Mr. Stevens' contributions to the *Gentleman's* and *London Magazines*, and from the *Lives and Memoirs* of Cumberland, Cradock, Miss Hawkins, Lord Charlemont, the Wartons, and other friends and acquaintances of Dr. Johnson.
11. The whole of a *Poetical Review of the Character of Dr. Johnson*, by John Courtenay, Esq., in 4to.

But besides these *printed* materials, the editor has been favoured with many *papers* connected with Dr. Johnson, his life, and society, hitherto unpublished. Of course, his first inquiries were directed towards the original manuscript of Mr. Boswell's Journal, which would no doubt have enabled him to fill up all the blanks and clear away much of the obscurity that exist in the printed *LIFE*. It was to be hoped that the *archives of Auchinleck*, which Mr. Boswell frequently and pompously mentions, would contain the original materials of these works, which he himself, as well as the world at large, considered as his best claims to

stitched together. The greater part of these papers were the *Prayers*, the publication of which, no doubt (*for Dr. Strahan says so*), Dr. Johnson sanctioned; but mixed with them were those *Diaries* to which it is probable that Dr. Johnson did not advert, and which there is every reason to suppose he never could have intended to submit to any human eye but his own. Well understood, as the secret confessions of his own contrite conscience, they do honour to Dr. Johnson's parity and piety; but very different would be their character, if it appeared that he had ostentatiously prepared them for the press. See more on this subject in the notes, vol. i. p. 97, and vol. ii. November 16, 1784.

—ED.

¹ This correspondence will be found in the Appendix to vol. ii.—ED.

² Mr. Boswell, in his subsequent editions, omitted some and softened down other passages, which, the reason for the alterations having gone by, are restored.—ED.

distinction. And the editor thought that he was only fulfilling the duties of courtesy in requesting from Mr. Boswell's representative any information which he might be disposed to afford on the subject. To that request the editor has never received any answer: though the same inquiry was afterwards, on his behalf, repeated by Sir Walter Scott, whose influence might have been expected to have produced a more satisfactory result¹.

But the editor was more fortunate in other quarters. The Reverend Doctor Hall, Master of Pembroke College, was so good as to collate the printed copy of the *Prayers and Meditations* with the original papers, now (most appropriately) deposited in the library of that college, and some, not unimportant, light has been thrown on that publication by the personal inspection of the papers which he permitted the editor to make.

Doctor Hall has also elucidated some facts and corrected some mistatements in Mr. Boswell's account of Johnson's earlier life, by an examination of the college records; and he has found some of Johnson's college exercises, one or two specimens of which have been selected as likely to interest the classical reader. He has also been so obliging as to select and copy several letters written by Dr. Johnson to his early and constant friends, the daughters of Sir Thomas Aston, which, having fallen into the hands of Mrs. Parker, were by her son, the Reverend S. H. Parker, presented to Pembroke College. The papers derived from this source are marked *Pemb. MSS.* Dr. Hall, feeling a fraternal interest in the most illustrious of the sons of *Pembroke*, has continued (as will appear in the course of the work), to favour the editor with his valuable assistance.

The Reverend Dr. Harwood, the historian of Lichfield, procured for the editor, through the favour of Mrs. Pearson, the widow of the legatee of Miss Lucy Porter, many letters addressed to this lady by Dr. Johnson; for which, it seems, Mr. Boswell had inquired in vain. These papers are marked *Pearson MSS.* Dr. Harwood supplied also some other papers, and much information collected by himself².

Lord Rokeby, the nephew and heir of Mrs. Montagu, has been so kind as to communicate Dr. Johnson's letters to that lady.

Mr. Langton, the grandson of Mr. Bennet Langton, has furnished the editor with some of his grandfather's papers, and several original MSS. of Dr. Johnson's Latin poetry, which have enabled the editor to explain some errors and obscurities in the published copies of those compositions.

Mr. J. F. Palmer, the grand-nephew of Sir Joshua Reynolds and of Miss Reynolds, has most liberally communicated all the papers of that lady, containing a number of letters or rather notes of Dr. Johnson to her, which, however trivial in themselves, tend to corroborate all that the biographers have stated of the charity and kindness of his private life. Mr. Palmer has also contributed a paper of more importance—a MS. of about seventy pages, written by Miss Reynolds, and entitled *Recollections of Dr. Johnson*³. The authenticity and general accuracy of these *Recollections* cannot be doubted, and the editor has therefore admitted extracts from them into the text; but as he did not receive the paper till a great portion of the work had been printed, he has given the parts which he could not incorporate with the text, in the General Appendix.

¹ Sir Walter Scott and Sir James Boswell to whom, as the grandson of Mr. Boswell, the inquiries were addressed, unfortunately missed one another in mutual calls; but the editor has heard from another quarter that the original journals do not exist at Auchinleck: perhaps to this fact the silence of Sir James Boswell may be attributed. The manuscript of the *TOUR* was, it is known, fairly transcribed, and so, probably, were *portions* of the *LIFE*; but it appears from a memorandum book and other papers in Mr. Anderdon's possession, that Mr. Boswell's materials were in a variety of forms; and it is feared that they have been irretrievably dispersed.—ED.

² Dr. Harwood has also favoured the editor with permission to engrave, for this edition, the earliest known portrait of Dr. Johnson—a miniature worn in a bracelet by his wife, which Dr. Harwood purchased from Francis Barber, Dr. Johnson's servant and legatee.—ED.]

³ A less perfect copy of these *Recollections* was also communicated by Mr. Gwatkin, who married one of Sir Joshua's nieces, for which the editor begs leave to offer his thanks.—ED.

Mr. Markland has, as the reader will, in some degree, see by the notes to which his name is affixed, contributed a great deal of zealous assistance and valuable information.

He also communicated a copy of Mrs. Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, copiously annotated, *propriâ manu*, by Mr. Malone. These notes have been of use in explaining some obscurities; they guide us also to the source of many of Mr. Boswell's charges against Mrs. Piozzi; and have had an effect that Mr. Malone could neither have expected or wished—that of tending rather to confirm than to impeach that lady's veracity.

Mr. J. L. Anderdon favoured the editor with the inspection of a portfolio bought at the sale of the library of Mr. James Boswell, junior, which contained some of the original letters, memoranda, and note books, which had been used as materials for the *LIFE*. Their chief value, now, is to show that as far as we may judge from this specimen, the printed book is a faithful transcript from the original notes, except only as to the suppression of names. Mr. Anderdon's portfolio also contains Johnson's original draft of the *Prospectus* of the Dictionary, and a fair copy of it (written by an amanuensis, but signed, *in form*, by Johnson), addressed to Lord Chesterfield, on which his lordship appears to have made a few critical notes¹.

Macleod, the son of the young gentleman who, in 1773, received Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell at his ancient castle of Dunvegan, has communicated a fragment of an autobiography of his father, which, on account as well of the mention of that visit as of the interest which the publications of both Johnson and Boswell excited about this young chieftain, the editor has preserved in the appendix to the first volume.

Through the obliging interposition of Mr. Appleyard, private secretary of Lord Spencer, Mrs. Rose, the daughter of Dr. Strahan, has favoured the editor with copies of several letters of Dr. Johnson to her father, one or two only of which Mr. Boswell had been able to obtain.

In addition to these contributions of manuscript materials, the editor has to acknowledge much and valuable assistance from numerous literary and distinguished friends.

The venerable Lord Stowel, the friend and executor of Dr. Johnson, was one of the first persons who suggested this work to the editor: he was pleased to take a great interest in it, and kindly endeavoured to explain the obscurities which were stated to him; but he confessed, at the same time, that the application had in some instances come rather *too late*, and regretted that an edition on this principle had not been undertaken when full light might have been obtained. His lordship was also so kind as to dictate, in his own happy and peculiar style, some notes of his recollections of Dr. Johnson. These, by a very unusual accident², were lost, and his lordship's great age and increasing infirmity have deterred the editor from again troubling him on the subject. A few points, however, in which the editor could trust to his recollection, will be found in the notes.

To his revered friend, Dr. Elrington, Lord Bishop of Ferns, the editor begs leave to offer his best thanks for much valuable advice and assistance, and for

¹ This attention on the part of Lord Chesterfield renders still more puzzling Johnson's conduct towards his lordship (see vol. i. p. 110, *et seq.*), and shows that there was some mistake in the statement attributed to Doctor Taylor (v. i. p. 74) that the manuscript had reached Lord Chesterfield accidentally, and without Dr. Johnson's knowledge or consent.—ED.

² They were transmitted by post, addressed to Sir Walter Scott in Edinburgh for his perusal; after a considerable lapse of time, Sir Walter was written to to return them—he had never had them. It then appeared that the post office bag which contained this packet and several others had been lost, and it has never been heard of. Some of the editor's friends have reproached him with want of due caution in having trusted this packet to the post, but he thinks unjustly. There is, perhaps, no individual now alive who has despatched and received so great a number of letters as the editor, and he can scarcely recollect an instance of a similar loss.—ED.

a continuance of that friendly interest with which his lordship has for many years, and in more important concerns, honoured him.

Sir Walter Scott, whose personal kindness to the editor and indefatigable good-nature to every body are surpassed only by his genius, found time from his higher occupations to annotate a considerable portion of this work—the *Tour to the Hebrides*—and has continued his aid to the very conclusion.

The Right Honourable Sir James Mackintosh, whose acquaintance with literary men and literary history is so extensive, and who, although not of the Johnsonian circle, became early in life acquainted with most of the survivors of that society, not only approved and encouraged the editor's design, but has, as the reader will see, been good enough to contribute to its execution. It were to be wished, that he himself could have been induced to undertake the work—too humble indeed for his powers, but which he is, of all men now living, perhaps, the fittest to execute.

Mr. Alexander Chalmers, the ingenious and learned editor of the last London edition, has, with great candour and liberality, given the present editor all the assistance in his power—regretting and wondering, like Lord Stowel and Sir James Mackintosh, that so much should be forgotten of what, at no remote period, every body must have known.

To Mr. D^rIsraeli's love and knowledge of literary history, and to his friendly assistance, the editor is very much indebted; as well as to Mr. Ellis of the British Museum, for the readiness he has on this and all other occasions shown to afford the editor every information in his power.

The Marquis Wellesley has taken an encouraging interest in the work, and has improved it by some valuable observations; and the Marquis of Lansdowne, Earl Spencer, Lord Bexley, and Lord St. Helens, the son of Dr. Johnson's early friend Mr. Fitzherbert, have been so obliging as to answer some inquiries with which it was found necessary to trouble them.

How the editor may have arranged all these materials, and availed himself of so much assistance, it is not for him to decide. Situated as he was when he began and until he had nearly completed this work, he could not have ventured to undertake a more serious task; and he fears that even this desultory and gossiping kind of employment will be found to have suffered from the weightier occupations in which he was engaged, as well as from his own deficiencies.

If unfortunately he shall be found to have failed in his attempt to improve the original work, he will still have the consolation of thinking that there is no great harm done. For, as he has retrenched *nothing* from the best editions of the *LIFE* and the *TOUR*, and has contrived to compress *all his additions* within the same number of volumes, he trusts that the purchasers of this edition can have no reasonable cause to complain. The additions are carefully discriminated¹, and hardly a syllable² of Mr. Boswell's text or of the notes in Mr. Malone's editions have been omitted. So that the worst that can happen is that all the present editor has contributed may, if the reader so pleases, be rejected as *surplusage*.

Of the value of the *notes* with which his friends have favoured him, the editor can have no doubt; of his own, he will only say, that he has endeavoured to make them at once concise and explanatory. He hopes he has cleared up some obscurities, supplied some deficiencies, and, in many cases, saved the reader the trouble of referring to dictionaries and magazines for notices of the various persons and facts which are incidentally mentioned³.

¹ By being inserted between brackets, thus []. In a few instances, one or other of these marks has been by an error of the press omitted, but it is hoped that the context will always enable the reader to rectify the mistake.—Ed.

² In two or three places an indelicate expression has been omitted; and, in half a dozen instances (always, however, stated in the notes), the insertion of new matter has occasioned the omission or alteration of a few words in the text.—Ed.

³ As some proof of diligence, the editor may be allowed to state that the *Variorum* notes to the former edition were fewer than 1100, while the number of his *additional* notes is nearly 2500.—Ed.

In some cases he has candidly confessed, and in many more he fears he will have shown, his own ignorance; but he can say, that when he has so failed, it has not been for want of diligent inquiry after the desired information.

He has not considered it any part of his duty to defend or to controvert the statements or opinions recorded in the text; but in a few instances, in which either a matter of *fact* has been evidently mistated, or an important *principle* has been heedlessly invaded or too lightly treated, he has ventured a few words towards correcting the error.

The desultory nature of the work itself, the repetitions in some instances and the contradictions in others, are perplexing to those who may seek for Dr. Johnson's final opinion on any given subject. This difficulty the editor could not hope, and has, therefore, not attempted, to remove; it is inevitable in the transcript of table-talk, so various, so loose, and so extensive; but he has endeavoured to alleviate it by occasional references to the different places where the same subject is discussed, and by a copious, and he trusts, satisfactory index.

With respect to the spirit towards Dr. JOHNSON himself by which the editor is actuated, he begs leave to say that he feels and has always felt a great, but, he hopes, not a blind admiration of Dr. Johnson. For his writings he feels that admiration undivided and uninterrupted. In his personal conduct and conversation there may be occasionally something to regret and (though rarely) something to disapprove, but less, perhaps, than there would be in those of any other man, whose words, actions, and even thoughts should be exposed to public observation so nakedly as, by a strange concurrence of circumstances, Dr. Johnson's have been.

Having no domestic ties or duties, the latter portion of his life was, as Mrs. Piozzi observes, nothing but *conversation*, and that conversation was watched and recorded from night to night and from hour to hour with zealous attention and unceasing diligence. No man, the most staid or the most guarded, is always the same in health, in spirits, in opinions. Human life is a series of inconsistencies; and when Johnson's early misfortunes, his protracted poverty, his strong passions, his violent prejudices, and, above all, his mental infirmities are considered, it is only wonderful that a portrait so laboriously minute and so painfully faithful does not exhibit more of blemish, incongruity, and error.

The life of Dr. Johnson is indeed a most curious *chapter in the history of man*; for certainly there is no instance of the life of any other human being having been exhibited in so much detail, or with so much fidelity. There are, perhaps, not many men who have practised so much self-examination as to know *themselves* as well as every reader knows Dr. Johnson.

We must recollect that it is not his *table-talk* or his literary conversations only that have been published: all his most private and most trifling correspondence—all his most common as well as his most confidential intercourses—all his most secret communion with his own conscience—and even the solemn and contrite exercises of his piety, have been divulged and exhibited to the "garish eye" of the world without reserve—I had almost said, without delicacy. Young, with gloomy candour, has said

"Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings but himself
That hideous sight, a naked human heart."

What a man must Johnson have been, whose heart, having been laid more bare than that of any other mortal ever was, has passed almost unblemished through so terrible an ordeal!

The editor confesses, that if he could have had any voice as to the original publications, he probably might have shrunk from the responsibility incurred by Mrs. Piozzi, Mr. Boswell, and, above all, Dr. Strahan—even though they appear to have had (at least, *in some degree*) Dr. Johnson's own sanction for the disclosures they have made. But such disclosures having been made, it has appeared to the editor interesting and even important to concentrate into one full and perfect view every thing that can serve to complete a history—so extraordinary—so *unique*.

But while we contemplate with such interest this admirable and perfect *portrait*, let us not forget the *painter*: pupils and imitators have added draperies and back grounds, but the *head* and *figure* are by Mr. Boswell!

Mr. Burke told Sir James Mackintosh that he thought Johnson showed more powers of mind in company than in his writings; and on another occasion said, that he thought Johnson appeared greater in Mr. Boswell's volumes than even in his own.

It was a strange and fortunate concurrence, that one so prone to talk and who talked so well, should be brought into such close contact and confidence with one so zealous and so able to record. Dr. Johnson was a man of extraordinary powers, but Mr. Boswell had qualities, in their own way, almost as rare. He united lively manners with indefatigable diligence, and the volatile curiosity of a *man about town* with the drudging patience of a *chronicler*. With a very good opinion of himself, he was quick in discerning, and frank in applauding, the excellencies of others. Though proud of his own name and lineage, and ambitious of the countenance of the great, he was yet so cordial an admirer of *merit*, wherever found, that much public ridicule, and something like contempt, were excited by the *modest assurance* with which he pressed his acquaintance on all the *notorieties* of his time, and by the ostentatious (but, in the main, laudable) assiduity with which he attended the exile Paoli and the low-born Johnson! These were amiable, and, for us, fortunate inconsistencies. His contemporaries indeed, not without some colour of reason, occasionally complained of him as vain, inquisitive, troublesome, and giddy; but his vanity was inoffensive—his curiosity was commonly directed towards laudable objects—when he meddled, he did so, generally, from good-natured motives—and his giddiness was only an exuberant gaiety, which never failed in the respect and reverence due to literature, morals, and religion: and posterity gratefully acknowledges the taste, temper, and talents with which he selected, enjoyed, and described that polished and intellectual society which still lives in his work, and without his work had perished!

“ Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi: sed omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.”

Such imperfect though interesting sketches as Ben Jonson's visit to Drummond, Selden's Table Talk, Swift's Journal, and Spence's Anecdotes, only tantalise our curiosity and excite our regret that there was no *Boswell* to preserve the conversation and illustrate the life and times of Addison, of Swift himself, of Milton, and, above all, of Shakspeare! We can hardly refrain from indulging ourselves with the imagination of works so instructive and delightful; but that were idle, except as it may tend to increase our obligation to the faithful and fortunate biographer of Dr. Johnson.

Mr. Boswell's birth and education familiarized him with the highest of his acquaintance, and his good-nature and conviviality with the lowest. He describes society of all classes with the happiest discrimination. Even his foibles assisted his curiosity; he was sometimes laughed at, but always well received; he excited no envy, he imposed no restraint. It was well known that he made notes of every conversation, yet no timidity was alarmed, no delicacy demurred; and we are perhaps indebted to the lighter parts of his character for the patient indulgence with which every body submitted to sit for their pictures.

Nor were his talents inconsiderable. He had looked a good deal into books, and more into the world. The narrative portion of his works is written with good sense, in an easy and perspicuous style, and without (which seems odd enough) any palpable imitation of Johnson. But in recording conversations he is unrivalled: that he was eminently accurate in substance, we have the evidence of all his contemporaries; but he is also in a high degree characteristic—dramatic. The incidental observations with which he explains or enlivens

the dialogue, are terse, appropriate, and picturesque—we not merely hear his company, *we see them!*

Yet his *father* was, we are told, by no means satisfied¹ with the life he led, nor his *eldest son* with the kind of reputation he attained; neither liked to hear of his connexion even with Paoli or Johnson; and both would have been better pleased if he had contented himself with a domestic life of sober respectability.

The public, however, the dispenser of fame, has judged differently, and considers the biographer of Johnson as the most eminent branch of the family pedigree. With less activity, less indiscretion, less curiosity, less enthusiasm, he might, perhaps, have been what the old lord would, no doubt, have thought more respectable; and have been pictured on the walls of Auchinleck (the very name of which we never should have heard) by some stiff provincial painter in a lawyer's wig or a squire's hunting cap; but his portrait, by Reynolds², would not have been ten times engraved; his name could never have become—as it is likely to be—as far spread and as lasting as the English language; and “the world had wanted” a work to which it refers as a manual of amusement, a repository of wit, wisdom, and morals, and a lively and faithful history of the manners and literature of England, during a period hardly second in brilliancy, and superior in importance, even to the Augustan age of Anne.

1st May, 1831.

J. W. C.

¹ See vol. i. p. 458, n. This feeling is less surprising in old Lord Auchinleck than in Sir Alexander, who was himself a man of the world, clever, literary, and social.—ED.

² The following letter (in the *Reynolds papers*) from Mr. Boswell to Sir Joshua, on the subject of this portrait, ought not to be lost.

“London, 7th June, 1785.

“MY DEAR SIR,—The debts which I contracted in my father's lifetime will not be cleared off by me for some years. I therefore think it unconscientious to indulge myself in any expensive article of elegant luxury. But in the mean time, you may die, or I may die; and I should regret very much that there should not be at Auchinleck my portrait painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, with whom I have the felicity of living in social intercourse.

“I have a proposal to make to you. I am for certain to be called to the English bar next February. Will you now do my picture, and the price shall be paid out of the first fees which I receive as a barrister in Westminster Hall. Or if that fund should fail, it shall be paid at any rate in five years hence, by myself or my representatives.

“If you are pleased to approve of this proposal, your signifying your concurrence underneath, upon two duplicates, one of which shall be kept by each of us, will be a sufficient voucher of the obligation. I ever am, with very sincere regard, my dear sir, your faithful and affectionate humble servant,

“JAMES BOSWELL.”

“I agree to the above conditions.

“J. Reynolds.”

“London, 10th Sept. 1785.”

An engraving from Sir Joshua's portrait is prefixed to one of these volumes: but the editor has been favoured by Mrs. Denham with a pencil sketch of Mr. Boswell in later life, by Sir Thomas Lawrence, which, although bordering on caricature, is so evidently characteristic, and (as the editor is assured) so identically *like*, that he has had it copied, and thinks it will be acceptable as a lively illustration of both the mind and manners of Mr. Boswell—busy self-importance and dogmatical good-nature were never more strongly expressed.—ED.



[ORIGINAL TITLE-PAGE.]

THE
L I F E
OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL, D,

COMPREHENDING
AN ACCOUNT OF HIS STUDIES,
AND NUMEROUS WORKS,
IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER ;
A SERIES OF HIS EPISTOLARY CORRESPONDENCE
AND CONVERSATIONS WITH MANY EMINENT PERSONS ;
AND
VARIOUS ORIGINAL PIECES OF HIS COMPOSITION,
NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.

THE WHOLE EXHIBITING A VIEW OF LITERATURE AND LITERARY
MEN IN GREAT-BRITAIN, FOR NEAR HALF A CENTURY
DURING WHICH HE FLOURISHED.

BY JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

——— Quò fit ut OMNIS
Votivà pateat veluti descripta tabellà
VITA SENIS ———

HORAT.

LONDON :
PRINTED BY HENRY BALDWIN,
FOR CHARLES DILLY, IN THE POULTRY.

M DCC XCI.

“ After my death I wish no other herald,
No other speaker of my living actions,
To keep mine honour from corruption,
But such an honest chronicler as Griffith ¹.”

SHAKSPEARE, *Henry VIII.*

¹ See Dr. Johnson's letter to Mrs. Thrale, dated Ostick in Skie, September 30, 1773: " Boswell writes a regular Journal of our travels, which I think contains as much of what I say and do, as of all other occurrences together; '*for such a faithful chronicler is Griffith.*' "—BOSWELL.

DEDICATION.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

MY DEAR SIR,—Every liberal motive that can actuate an authour in the dedication of his labours concurs in directing me to you, as the person to whom the following work should be inscribed.

If there be a pleasure in celebrating the distinguished merit of a contemporary, mixed with a certain degree of vanity, not altogether inexcusable, in appearing fully sensible of it, where can I find one, in complimenting whom I can with more general approbation gratify those feelings? Your excellence not only in the art over which you have long presided with unrivalled fame, but also in philosophy and elegant literature, is well known to the present, and will continue to be the admiration of future ages. Your equal and placid temper, your variety of conversation, your true politeness, by which you are so amiable in private society, and that enlarged hospitality which has long made your house a common centre of union for the great, the accomplished, the learned, and the ingenious; all these qualities I can, in perfect confidence of not being accused of flattery, ascribe to you.

If a man may indulge an honest pride, in having it known to the world that he has been thought worthy of particular attention by a person of the first eminence in the age in which he lived, whose company has been universally courted, I am justified in availing myself of the usual privilege of a dedication, when I mention that there has been a long and uninterrupted friendship between us.

If gratitude should be acknowledged for favours received, I have this opportunity, my dear sir, most sincerely to thank you for the many happy hours which I owe to your kindness,—for the cordiality with which you have at all times been pleased to welcome me,—for the number of valuable acquaintances to whom you have introduced me,—for the *noctes cœnæque Deum*, which I have enjoyed under your roof.

If a work should be inscribed to one who is master of the subject of it, and whose approbation, therefore, must ensure it credit and success, the *Life of Dr. Johnson* is,

with the greatest propriety, dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was the intimate and beloved friend of that great man; the friend whom he declared to be “the most invulnerable man he knew; whom, if he should quarrel with him, he should find the most difficulty how to abuse.” You, my dear sir, studied him, and knew him well; you venerated and admired him. Yet luminous as he was upon the whole, you perceived all the shades which mingled in the grand composition, all the little peculiarities and slight blemishes which marked the literary Colossus. Your very warm commendation of the specimen which I gave in my “*Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*,” of my being able to preserve his conversation in an authentick and lively manner, which opinion the publick has confirmed, was the best encouragement for me to persevere in my purpose of producing the whole of my stores.

In one respect, this work will in some passages be different from the former. In my “*Tour*,” I was almost unboundedly open in my communications; and from my eagerness to display the wonderful fertility and readiness of Johnson’s wit, freely showed to the world its dexterity, even when I was myself the object of it. I trusted that I should be liberally understood, as knowing very well what I was about, and by no means as simply unconscious of the pointed effects of the satire. I own, indeed, that I was arrogant enough to suppose that the tenour of the rest of the book would sufficiently guard me against such a strange imputation. But it seems I judged too well of the world; for, though I could scarcely believe it, I have been undoubtedly informed, that many persons, especially in distant quarters, not penetrating enough into Johnson’s character, so as to understand his mode of treating his friends, have arraigned my judgment, instead of seeing that I was sensible of all that they could observe.

It is related of the great Dr. Clarke, that when in one of his leisure hours he was un-

bending himself with a few friends in the most playful and frolicsome manner, he observed Beau Nash approaching; upon which he suddenly stopped. "My boys," said he, "let us be grave—here comes a fool." The world, my friend, I have found to be a great fool as to that particular on which it has become necessary to speak very plainly. I have therefore in this work been more

reserved; and though I tell nothing but the truth, I have still kept in my mind that the whole truth is not always to be exposed. This, however, I have managed so as to occasion no diminution of the pleasure which my book should afford, though malignity may sometimes be disappointed of its gratifications. I am, my dear sir, your much obliged friend and faithful humble servant,

JAMES BOSWELL.

London, 20th April, 1791.

MR. BOSWELL'S ADVERTISEMENTS.

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

I AT last deliver to the world a work which I have long promised, and of which, I am afraid, too high expectations have been raised. The delay of its publication must be imputed, in a considerable degree, to the extraordinary zeal which has been shown by distinguished persons in all quarters to supply me with additional information concerning its illustrious subject; resembling in this the grateful tribes of ancient nations, of which every individual was eager to throw a stone upon the grave of a departed hero, and thus to share in the pious office of erecting an honourable monument to his memory.

The labour and anxious attention with which I have collected and arranged the materials of which these volumes are composed, will hardly be conceived by those who read them with careless facility. The stretch of mind and prompt assiduity by which so many conversations were preserved, I myself, at some distance of time, contemplate with wonder; and I must be allowed to suggest, that the nature of the work, in other respects, as it consists of innumerable detached particulars, all which, even the most minute, I have spared no pains to ascertain with a scrupulous authenticity, has occasioned a degree of trouble far beyond that of any other species of composition. Were I to detail the books which I have consulted, and the inquiries which I have found it necessary to make by various channels, I should probably be thought ridiculously ostentatious. Let me only observe, as a specimen of my trouble, that I have sometimes been obliged to run half over London, in order to fix a date correctly; which, when I had accomplished, I well knew would obtain me no praise, though a failure would have been to my discredit. And after all, perhaps, hard as it may be, I shall not be surprised if omissions or mistakes be pointed out with invidious

severity. I have also been extremely careful as to the exactness of my quotations; holding that there is a respect due to the publick, which should oblige every author to attend to this, and never to presume to introduce them with, "I think I have read," or "If I remember right," when the originals may be examined.

I beg leave to express my warmest thanks to those who have been pleased to favour me with communications and advice in the conduct of my work. But I cannot sufficiently acknowledge my obligations to my friend Mr. Malone, who was so good as to allow me to read to him almost the whole of my manuscript, and made such remarks as were greatly for the advantage of the work; though it is but fair to him to mention, that upon many occasions I differed from him, and followed my own judgment. I regret exceedingly that I was deprived of the benefit of his revision, when not more than one half of the book had passed through the press; but after having completed his very laborious and admirable edition of Shakspeare, for which he generously would accept of no other reward but that fame which he has so deservedly obtained, he fulfilled his promise of a long-wished-for visit to his relations in Ireland; from whence his safe return *finibus Alticis* is desired by his friends here, with all the classical ardour of *Sic te Diva potens Cypri*; for there is no man in whom more elegant and worthy qualities are united; and whose society, therefore, is more valued by those who know him.

It is painful to me to think, that while I was carrying on this work, several of those to whom it would have been most interesting have died. Such melancholy disappointments we know to be incident to humanity; but we do not feel them the less. Let me particularly lament the Reverend Thomas Warton and the Reverend Dr.

Adams. Mr. Warton, amidst his variety of genius and learning, was an excellent biographer. His contributions to my collection are highly estimable; and as he had a true relish of my "Tour to the Hebrides," I trust I should now have been gratified with a larger share of his kind approbation. Dr. Adams, eminent as the head of a college, as a writer, and as a most amiable man, had known Johnson from his early years, and was his friend through life. What reason I had to hope for the countenance of that venerable gentleman to this work will appear from what he wrote to me upon a former occasion from Oxford, November 17, 1785:—"Dear sir, I hazard this letter, not knowing where it will find you, to thank you for your very agreeable 'Tour,' which I found here on my return from the country, and in which you have depicted our friend so perfectly to my fancy, in every attitude, every scene and situation, that I

have thought myself in the company and of the party almost throughout. It has given very general satisfaction; and those who have found most fault with a passage here and there, have agreed that they could not help going through, and being entertained with the whole. I wish, indeed, some few gross expressions had been softened, and a few of our hero's foibles had been a little more shaded; but it is useful to see the weaknesses incident to great minds; and you have given us Dr. Johnson's authority that in history all ought to be told."

Such a sanction to my faculty of giving a just representation of Dr. Johnson I could not conceal. Nor will I suppress my satisfaction in the consciousness, that by recording so considerable a portion of the wisdom and wit of "the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century¹," I have largely provided for the instruction and entertainment of mankind.

J. BOSWELL.

London, 20th April, 1791.

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

That I was anxious for the success of a work which had employed much of my time and labour, I do not wish to conceal; but whatever doubts I at any time entertained, have been entirely removed by the very favourable reception with which it has been honoured. That reception has excited my best exertions to render my book more perfect; and in this endeavour I have had the assistance not only of some of my particular friends, but of many other learned and ingenious men, by which I have been enabled to rectify some mistakes, and to enrich the work with many valuable additions. These I have ordered to be printed separately in quarto, for the accommodation of the purchasers of the first edition. May I be permitted to say that the typography of both editions does honour to the press of Mr. Henry Baldwin, now Master of the Worshipful Company of Stationers, whom I have long known as a worthy man and an obliging friend.

In the strangely mixed scenes of human existence, our feelings are often at once pleasing and painful. Of this truth, the progress of the present work furnishes a striking instance. It was highly gratifying to me that my friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom it is inscribed, lived to peruse it, and to give the strongest testimony to its fidelity; but before a second edition, which he contributed to improve, could be finished, the world has been deprived of that most valuable man; a loss of which the regret will be deep and lasting, and extensive, proportionate to the felicity which he diffused through a wide circle of admirers and friends.

In reflecting that the illustrious subject of this work, by being more extensively and intimately known, however elevated before, has risen in the veneration and love of mankind, I feel a satisfaction beyond what fame can afford. We cannot, indeed, too much or too often admire his wonderful powers of mind, when we consider that the principal store of wit and wisdom which this work contains was not a particular selection from his general conversation, but was merely his occasional talk at such times as I had the good fortune to be in his company; and, without doubt, if his discourse at other periods had been collected with the same attention, the whole tenour of what he uttered would have been found equally excellent.

His strong, clear, and animated enforcement of religion, morality, loyalty, and subordination, while it delights and improves the wise and the good, will, I trust, prove an effectual antidote to that detestable sophistry which has been lately imported from France, under the false name of philosophy, and with a malignant industry has been employed against the peace, good order, and happiness of society, in our free and prosperous country: but, thanks be to God, without producing the pernicious effects which were hoped for by its propagators.

It seems to me, in my moments of self-complacency, that this extensive biographical work, however inferior in its nature, may in one respect be assimilated to the

¹ See Mr. Malone's Preface to his edition of Shakspeare.—BOSWELL.

Odyssey. Amidst a thousand entertaining and instructive episodes, the hero is never long out of sight; for they are all in some degree connected with him; and he, in the whole course of the history, is exhibited by the authour for the best advantage of his readers:

—Quid virtus et quid sapientia possit,
Utile proposuit nobis exemplar Ulyssen.

Should there be any cold-blooded and morose mortals who really dislike this book, I will give them a story to apply. When the great Duke of Marlborough, accompanied by Lord Cadogan, was one day reconnoitring the army in Flanders, a heavy rain came on, and they both called for their cloaks. Lord Cadogan's servant, a good-humoured alert lad, brought his lordship's in a minute. The duke's servant, a lazy sulky dog, was so sluggish, that his grace being wet to the skin, reproved him, and had for answer, with a grunt, "I came as fast as I could;" upon which the duke calmly said, "Cadogan, I would not for a thousand pounds have that fellow's temper."

There are some men, I believe, who have, or think they have, a very small share of vanity. Such may speak of their literary fame in a decorous style of diffidence. But I confess, that I am so formed by nature and by habit, that to restrain the effusion of delight, on having obtained such fame,

1st July, 1793.

to me would be truly painful. Why then should I suppress it? Why "out of the abundance of the heart" should I not speak? Let me then mention with a warm, but no insolent exultation, that I have been regaled with spontaneous praise of my work by many and various persons, eminent for their rank, learning, talents, and accomplishments; much of which praise I have under their hands to be repositied in my archives at Auchinleck. An honourable and reverend friend speaking of the favourable reception of my volumes, even in the circles of fashion and elegance, said to me, "you have made them all talk Johnson." Yes, I may add, I have *Johnsonised* the land; and I trust they will not only talk but think Johnson.

To enumerate those to whom I have been thus indebted would be tediously ostentatious. I cannot however but name one, whose praise is truly valuable, not only on account of his knowledge and abilities, but on account of the magnificent, yet dangerous embassy, in which he is now employed, which makes every thing that relates to him peculiarly interesting. Lord Macartney favoured me with his own copy of my book, with a number of notes, of which I have availed myself. On the first leaf I found, in his lordship's hand-writing, an inscription of such high commendation, that even I, vain as I am, cannot prevail on myself to publish it.

J. BOSWELL.

MR. MALONE'S ADVERTISEMENTS.

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

SEVERAL valuable letters, and other curious matter, having been communicated to the authour too late to be arranged in that chronological order, which he had endeavoured uniformly to observe in his work, he was obliged to introduce them in his second edition, by way of Addenda, as commodiously as he could. In the present edition, they have been distributed in their proper places. In revising his volumes for a new edition, he had pointed out where some of these materials should be inserted; but unfortunately, in the midst of his labours, he was seized with a fever, of which, to the great regret of all his friends, he died on the 19th of May, 1795. All the notes that he had written in the margin of the copy, which he had in part revised, are here faithfully preserved; and a few new notes have been added, principally by some of those friends to whom the authour, in the former editions, acknowledged his obligations. Those subscribed with the letter B. were communicated by Dr. Burney; those

to which the letters J. B. are annexed, by the Rev. J. B. Blakeway, of Shrewsbury, to whom Mr. Boswell acknowledged himself indebted for some judicious remarks on the first edition of his work; and the letters J. B.—O. are annexed to some remarks furnished by the authour's second son, a student of Brazen-Nose College in Oxford. Some valuable observations were communicated by James Bindley, Esq. first commissioner in the stamp-office, which have been acknowledged in their proper places. For all those without any signature, Mr. Malone is answerable. Every new remark, not written by the authour, for the sake of distinction has been enclosed within crotchets; in one instance, however, the printer, by mistake, has affixed this mark to a note relative to the Rev. Thomas Fyche Palmer, (see vol. iv. p. 129), which was written by Mr. Boswell, and therefore ought not to have been thus distinguished.

I have only to add, that the proof-sheets of the present edition not having passed

through my hands, I am not answerable for any typographical errors that may be found in it. Having, however, been printed at the very accurate press of Mr. Baldwin, I make no doubt it will be found not less per-

fect than the former edition; the greatest care having been taken, by correctness and elegance, to do justice to one of the most instructive and entertaining works in the English language.

EDM. MALONE.

8th April, 1799.

TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

In this edition are inserted some new letters, of which the greater part has been obligingly communicated by the Rev. Dr. Vyse, Rector of Lambeth. Those written by Dr. Johnson, concerning his mother in her last illness, furnish a new proof of his great piety and tenderness of heart, and therefore cannot but be acceptable to the readers of this very popular work. Some new notes also have been added, which, as well as the observations inserted in the third edition, and the letters now introduced, are carefully included within crotchets, that the authour may not be answerable for any thing which had not the sanction of his approbation. The remarks of his friends are distinguished as formerly, except those of Mr. Malone, to which the letter M. is now subjoined. Those to which the letter K. is affixed were communicated by my learned friend, the Rev. Dr. Kearney, formerly senior Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and now beneficed in the diocess of Raphoe, in Ireland, of which he is archdeacon.

Of a work which has been before the publick for thirteen years with increasing approbation, and of which near four thou-

sand copies have been dispersed, it is not necessary to say more; yet I cannot refrain from adding, that, highly as it is now estimated, it will, I am confident, be still more valued by posterity a century hence, when all the actors in the scene shall be numbered with the dead; when the excellent and extraordinary man, whose wit and wisdom are here recorded, shall be viewed at a still greater distance; and the instruction and entertainment they afford will at once produce reverential gratitude, admiration, and delight¹.

E. M.

20th June, 1804.

¹ [Mr. Malone published a fifth edition in 1807, and a sixth in 1811; Mr. Chalmers a seventh in 1822; and an anonymous editor another, in Oxford, in 1826. Of publications so recent, the editor would not have felt justified in making an unpermitted use; but in fact there was little to be borrowed from any of them, except that of Mr. Chalmers; and his liberality, by pointing out such of the original sources of information as the editor had not himself previously discovered, has enabled him to complete this edition with all the information which Mr. Chalmers could afford.—Ed.]

MR. BOSWELL'S INTRODUCTION.

To write the Life of him who excelled all mankind in writing the lives of others, and who, whether we consider his extraordinary endowments, or his various works, has been equalled by few in any age, is an arduous, and may be reckoned in me a presumptuous task.

Had Dr. Johnson written his own Life, in conformity with the opinion which he has given², that every man's life may be best written by himself; had he employed in the preservation of his own history, that clearness of narration and elegance of language in which he has embalmed so many eminent persons, the world would probably have had the most perfect example of biography that was ever exhibited. But al-

though he at different times, in a desultory manner, committed to writing many particulars of the progress of his mind and fortunes, he never had persevering diligence enough to form them into a regular composition. Of these memorials a few have been preserved; but the greater part was consigned by him to the flames, a few days before his death.

As I had the honour and happiness of enjoying his friendship for upwards of twenty years; as I had the scheme of writing his life constantly in view; as he was well apprised of this circumstance, and from time to time obligingly satisfied my inquiries, by communicating to me the incidents of his early years; as I acquired a facility in recollecting, and was very assiduous in recording, his conversation, of which the extraor-

² Idler, No. 84.—BOSWELL.

dinary vigour and vivacity constituted one of the first features of his character; and as I have spared no pains in obtaining materials concerning him, from every quarter where I could discover that they were to be found, and have been favoured with the most liberal communications by his friends; I flatter myself that few biographers have entered upon such a work as this with more advantages; independent of literary abilities, in which I am not vain enough to compare myself with some great names who have gone before me in this kind of writing.

Since my work was announced, several Lives and Memoirs of Dr. Johnson have been published, the most voluminous of which is one compiled for the booksellers of London, by Sir John Hawkins, Knt.¹, a man, whom, during my long intimacy with Dr. Johnson, I never saw in his company, I think, but once, and I am sure not above twice. Johnson might have esteemed him for his decent, religious demeanour, and his knowledge of books and literary history; but from the rigid formality of his manners, it is evident that they never could have lived together with companionable ease and familiarity; nor had Sir John Hawkins that nice perception which was necessary to mark the finer and less obvious parts of Johnson's character. His being appointed one of his executors gave him an opportunity of taking possession of such fragments of a diary and other papers as were left; of which, before delivering them up to the residuary legatee, whose property they were, he endeavoured to extract the substance. In this he has not been very successful, as I have found upon a perusal of those papers, which have been since transferred to me. Sir John Hawkins's ponderous labours, I must acknowledge, exhibit a *farrago*, of which a considerable portion is not devoid of entertainment to the lovers of literary

¹ The greatest part of this book was written while Sir John Hawkins was alive; and I avow, that one object of my strictures was to make him feel some compunction for his illiberal treatment of Dr. Johnson. Since his decease, I have suppressed several of my remarks upon his work. But though I would not "war with the dead" *offensively*, I think it necessary to be strenuous in *defence* of my illustrious friend, which I cannot be, without strong animadversions upon a writer who has greatly injured him. Let me add, that though I doubt I should not have been very prompt to gratify Sir John Hawkins with any compliment in his lifetime, I do now frankly acknowledge, that, in my opinion, his volume, however inadequate and improper as a life of Dr. Johnson, and however discredited by unpardonable inaccuracies in other respects, contains a collection of curious anecdotes and observations, which few men but its author could have brought together.—BOSWELL.

gossiping; but besides its being swelled out with long unnecessary extracts from various works (even one of several leaves from Osborne's Harleian Catalogue, and those not compiled by Johnson, but by Oldys), a very small part of it relates to the person who is the subject of the book; and in that there is such an inaccuracy in the statement of facts, as in so solemn an authour is hardly excusable, and certainly makes his narrative very unsatisfactory. But what is still worse, there is throughout the whole of it a dark uncharitable cast, by which the most unfavourable construction is put upon almost every circumstance in the character and conduct of my illustrious friend; who, I trust, will, by a true and fair delineation, be vindicated both from the injurious misrepresentations of this authour, and from the slighter aspersions of a lady who once lived in great intimacy with him.

There is, in the British Museum, a letter from Bishop Warburton to Dr. Birch, on the subject of biography; which, though I am aware it may expose me to a charge of artfully raising the value of my own work, by contrasting it with that of which I have spoken, is so well conceived and expressed, that I cannot refrain from here inserting it.

"24th Nov. 1737.

"I shall endeavour," says Dr. Warburton, "to give you what satisfaction I can in any thing you want to be satisfied in any subject of Milton, and am extremely glad you intend to write his life. Almost all the life-writers we have had before Toland and Desmaiseaux, are indeed strange insipid creatures; and yet I had rather read the worst of them, than be obliged to go through with this of Milton's, or the other's life of Boileau, where there is such a dull, heavy succession of long quotations of disinteresting passages, that it makes their method quite nauseous. But the verbose, tasteless Frenchman, seems to lay it down as a principle, that every life must be a book; and what's worse, it proves a book without a life; for what do we know of Boileau, after all his tedious stuff? You are the only one (and I speak it without a compliment), that by the vigour of your style and sentiments, and the real importance of your materials, have the art (which one would imagine no one could have missed) of adding the agreements to the most agreeable subject in the world, which is literary history²."

Instead of melting down my materials into one mass, and constantly speaking in my own person, by which I might have appeared to have more merit in the execution of the work, I have resolved to adopt and

² British Museum, 4320, Ayscough's Catal. Sloane MSS.—BOSWELL.

enlarge upon the excellent plan of Mr. Mason, in his Memoirs of Gray. Wherever narrative is necessary to explain, connect and supply, I furnish it to the best of my abilities; but in the chronological series of Johnson's life, which I trace as distinctly as I can, year by year, I produce, wherever it is in my power, his own minutes, letters, or conversation, being convinced that this mode is more lively, and will make my readers better acquainted with him than even most of those were who actually knew him, but could know him only partially; whereas there is here an accumulation of intelligence from various points, by which his character is more fully understood and illustrated.

Indeed I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man's life, than not only relating all the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought; by which mankind are enabled as it were to see him live, and to "live o'er each scene" with him, as he actually advanced through the several stages of his life. Had his other friends been as diligent and ardent as I was, he might have been almost entirely preserved. As it is, I will venture to say that he will be seen in this work more completely than any man who has ever yet lived.

And he will be seen as he really was; for I profess to write not his panegyrick, which must be all praise, but his life, which, great and good as he was, must not be supposed to be entirely perfect. To be as he was, is indeed subject of panegyrick enough to any man in this state of being; but in every picture there should be shade as well as light, and when I delineate him without reserve, I do what he himself recommended, both by his precept and his example.

"If the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publick curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness, overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection; we therefore see whole ranks of characters adorned with uniform panegyrick, and not to be known from one another but by extrinsick and casual circumstances. 'Let me remember,' says Hale, 'when I find myself inclined to pity a criminal, that there is likewise a pity due to the country.' If we owe regard to the memory of the dead, there is yet more respect to be paid to knowledge, to virtue, and to truth¹."

What I consider as the peculiar value of the following work, is the quantity it con-

tains of Johnson's conversation, which is universally acknowledged to have been eminently instructive and entertaining; and of which the specimens that I have given upon a former occasion have been received with so much approbation, that I have good grounds for supposing that the world will not be indifferent to more ample communications of a similar nature.

That the conversation of a celebrated man, if his talents have been exerted in conversation, will best display his character, is, I trust, too well established in the judgment of mankind to be at all shaken by a sneering observation of Mr. Mason, in his memoirs of Mr. William Whitehead, in which there is literally no *life*, but a mere dry narrative of facts. I do not think it was quite necessary to attempt a depreciation of what is universally esteemed, because it was not to be found in the immediate object of the ingenious writer's pen; for in truth, from a man so still and so tame, as to be contented to pass many years as the domestick companion of a superannuated lord and lady, conversation could no more be expected than from a Chinese mandarin on a chimney-piece, or the fantastick figures on a gilt leather skreen.

If authority be required, let us appeal to Plutarch, the prince of ancient biographers.

Ουτε ταις επιφανωσιταις προξησι παντως ενωσι δηλασι αρετις η κακιας, αλλα πραγμα βραχυ πολλακις, και ρημα, και παιδια τις εμφασιν ηβους εποικτην μαλλον η μαχη μυριονοκρη, παραταξεις αι μερισται, και πολιεμια πολων. "Nor is it always in the most distinguished achievements that men's virtues or vices may be best discerned; but very often an action of small note, a short saying, or a jest, shall distinguish a person's real character more than the greatest sieges or the most important battles²."

To this may be added the sentiments of the very man whose life I am about to exhibit. "The business of the biographer is often to pass slightly over those performances and incidents which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue. The account of Thuanus is with great propriety said by its authour to have been written, that it might lay open to posterity the private and familiar character of that man, *cujus ingenium et candorem ex ipsius scriptis sunt olim semper miraturi*, whose candour and genius will to the end of time be by his writings preserved in admiration.

"There are many invisible circumstances

¹ Rambler, No. 60.—BOSWELL.

² Plutarch's Life of Alexander—Langhorne's translation.—BOSWELL.

which, whether we read as inquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science or increase our virtue, are more important than publick occurrences. Thus Sallust, the great master of nature, has not forgotten, in his account of Catiline, to remark, that his walk was now quick, and again slow, as an indication of a mind revolving with violent commotion. Thus the story of Melancthon affords a striking lecture on the value of time, by informing us, that when he had made an appointment, he expected not only the hour, but the minute to be fixed, that the day might not run out in the idleness of suspense; and all the plans and enterprises of De Wit are now of less importance to the world than that part of his personal character, which represents him as careful of his health, and negligent of his life.

“But biography has often been allotted to writers, who seem very little acquainted with the nature of their task, or very negligent about the performance. They rarely afford any other account than might be collected from publick papers, but imagine themselves writing a life, when they exhibit a chronological series of actions or preferences; and have so little regard to the manners or behaviour of their heroes, that more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants, than from a formal and studied narrative, begun with his pedigree, and ended with his funeral.—

“There are, indeed, some natural reasons why these narratives are often written by such as were not likely to give much instruction or delight, and why most accounts of particular persons are barren and useless. If a life be delayed till interest and envy are at an end, we may hope for impartiality, but must expect little intelligence; for the incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition. We know how few can pourtray a living acquaintance, except by his most prominent and observable particularities, and the grosser features of his mind; and it may be easily imagined how much of this little knowledge may be lost in imparting it, and how soon a succession of copies will lose all resemblance of the original¹.”

I am fully aware of the objections which may be made to the minuteness on some occasions of my detail of Johnson's conver-

sation, and how happily it is adapted for the petty exercise of ridicule, by men of superficial understanding, and ludicrous fancy; but I remain firm and confident in my opinion, that minute particulars are frequently characteristic, and always amusing, when they relate to a distinguished man. I am therefore exceedingly unwilling that any thing, however slight, which my illustrious friend thought it worth his while to express, with any degree of point, should perish. For this almost superstitious reverence, I have found very old and venerable authority, quoted by our great modern prelate, Secker, in whose tenth sermon there is the following passage:

“*Rabbi David Kimchi*, a noted Jewish commentator, who lived about five hundred years ago, explains that passage in the first psalm, ‘His leaf also shall not wither;’ from Rabbins yet older than himself, thus: ‘That *even the idle talk*, so he expresses it, *of a good man ought to be regarded*; the most superfluous things he saith are always of some value. And other ancient authours have the same phrase, nearly in the same sense.”

Of one thing I am certain, that considering how highly the small portion which we have of the table-talk and other anecdotes of our celebrated writers is valued, and how earnestly it is regretted that we have not more, I am justified in preserving rather too many of Johnson's sayings, than too few; especially as from the diversity of dispositions it cannot be known with certainty beforehand, whether what may seem trifling to some, and perhaps to the collector himself, may not be most agreeable to many; and the greater number that an authour can please in any degree, the more pleasure does there arise to a benevolent mind.

To those who are weak enough to think this a degrading task, and the time and labour which have been devoted to it misemployed, I shall content myself with opposing the authority of the greatest man of any age, Julius Cæsar, of whom Bacon observes, that “in his book of apophthegms which he collected, we see that he esteemed it more honour to make himself but a pair of tables, to take the wise and pithy words of others, than to have every word of his own to be made an apophthegm or an oracle².”

Having said thus much by way of introduction, I commit the following pages to the candour of the publick.

¹ Rambler, No. 60.—BOSWELL.

² Bacon's “Advancement of Learning,” Book I.—BOSWELL.

THE
L I F E
OF
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL. D.

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield, in Staffordshire, on the 18th of September, N. S. 1709, [as he himself states, adding, "that his mother had a very difficult and dangerous labour, and was assisted by George Hector, a man-midwife of great reputation. He was born almost dead¹, and could not cry for some time."] His initiation into the Christian church was not delayed; for his baptism is recorded, in the register of St. Mary's parish in that city, to have been performed on the day of his birth: his father is there styled *Gentleman*, a circumstance of which an ignorant panegyrist has praised him for not being proud; when the truth is, that the appellation of *Gentleman*, though now lost in the indiscriminate assumption of *Esquire*, was commonly taken by those who could not boast of gentility². His father was Michael Johnson, a native of Derbyshire, of obscure extraction, who settled in Lichfield as a bookseller and stationer³. [He—being that year sheriff of

Lichfield, and to ride the circuit of the county the day after his son's birth, which was a ceremony then performed with great pomp, was asked

Account of Life, p. 2.

¹ [To have been born *almost dead* has been related of many eminent men, amongst others of Addison, Lord Lyttelton, and Voltaire.—ED.]

² [The title *Gentleman* had still, in 1709, some degree of its original meaning, and as Mr. Johnson served the office of sheriff of Lichfield in that year, he seems to have been fully entitled to it. The Doctor, at his entry on the books of Pembroke college, and at his matriculation, designated himself as *filius generosi*.—ED.]

³ [There seems some difficulty in arriving at a satisfactory opinion as to Michael Johnson's real condition and circumstances. That in the latter years of his life he was poor, is certain; and Doctor Johnson (in the "Account of his early Life,") not only admits the general fact of *poverty*, but gives several instances of what may be called *indigence*: yet, on the other hand, there is evidence that for near fifty years he occupied a respectable rank amongst his fellow-citizens, and appears in the annals of Lichfield on occasions not bespeaking poverty. In 1687, a subscription for recasting the cathedral bells was set on foot, headed by

the bishop, dean, &c. aided by the neighbouring gentry: Michael Johnson's name stands the twelfth in the list; and his contribution, though only 10*s.*, was not comparatively contemptible; for no one, except the bishop and dean, gave so much as 10*l.* Baronets and knights gave a guinea or two, and the great body of the contributors gave less than Johnson. (*Harwood's Lichfield*, p. 69.) In 1694, we find him burying in the cathedral, and placing a marble stone over a young woman in whose fate he was interested. His house, a handsome one, and in one of the best situations in the town, was his own freehold; and he appears to have added to it, for we find in the books of the corporation the following entry: "1708, July 13. Agreed, that Mr. Michael Johnson, bookseller, have a lease of his encroachment of his house in Sadler's-street, for forty years, at 2*s.* 6*d.* per an." And this lease, at the expiration of the forty years, was renewed to the Doctor, as a mark of the respect of his fellow-citizens. In 1709, Michael Johnson served the office of sheriff of the county of the city of Lichfield. In 1718, he was elected junior bailiff; and in 1725, senior bailiff, or chief magistrate. Thus respected and apparently thriving in Lichfield, the following extract of a letter, written by the Rev. George Plaxton, chaplain to Lord Gower, will show the high estimation in which the father of our great moralist was held in the neighbouring country: "Trentham, St. Peter's day, 1716. Johnson, the Lichfield librarian, is now here; he propagates learning all over this diocese, and advanceth knowledge to its just height; all the clergy here are his pupils, and suck all they have from him; Allen cannot make a warrant without his precedent, nor our quondam John Evans draw a recognizance *sine directione Michaelis*." (*Gentleman's Magazine*, October, 1791.) On the whole, it seems probable that the growing expenses of a family, and losses in trade, had in his latter years reduced Mr. Johnson, from the state of competency which he had before enjoyed, to very narrow circumstances.—ED.]

by Mrs. Johnson, "whom he would invite to the *Riding*?" and answered, "all the town *now*." He feasted the citizens with uncommon magnificence, and was the last but one that maintained the splendour of the *Riding*.] His mother was Sarah Ford, descended of an ancient race of substantial yeomanry in Warwickshire; [Mrs. Piozzi states her to

Piozzi, p. 9. have been the daughter of a gentleman in the country, such as there were many of in those days, who possessing, perhaps, one or two hundred pounds a year in land, lived on the profits, and sought not to increase their income.] They were well advanced in years when they married, [he past fifty, and she above forty,] and never had more than two children, both sons; Samuel, their first-born, who lived to be the illustrious character whose various excellence I am to endeavour to record, and Nathanael, who died in his

Piozzi, p. 5, 6. twenty-fifth year¹, [and of whose manly spirit Mrs. Piozzi heard his brother speak with pride and pleasure. The two brothers did not, however, much delight in each other's company, being always rivals for their mother's fondness; and many of the severe reflections on domestic life in *Rasselas* took their source from its authour's keen recollections of his early years.]

Mr. Michael Johnson was a man of a large and robust body, and of a strong and active mind; yet, as in the most solid rocks veins of unsound substance are often discovered, there was in him a mixture of that disease, the nature of which eludes the most minute inquiry, though the effects are well known to be a weariness of life, an unconcern about those things which agitate the greater part of mankind, and a general sensation of gloomy wretchedness. From him then his son inherited, with some other qualities, "a vile melancholy," which in his too strong expression of any disturbance of the mind, "made him mad all his life, at least not sober²."

Sept. 16,
1773.

¹ Nathanael was born in 1712, and died in 1737. Their father, Michael Johnson, was born at Cubley in Derbyshire, in 1656, and died at Lichfield, in 1731, at the age of seventy-six. Sarah Ford, his wife, was born at King's Norton, in the county of Worcester, in 1669, and died at Lichfield in January, 1759, in her ninetieth year.—King's Norton Dr. Johnson supposed to be in Warwickshire (see his inscription for his mother's tomb), but it is in Worcestershire, probably on the confines of the county of Warwick.—MALONE.

² [One of the most curious and important chapters in the history of the human mind is still to be written, that of hereditary insanity. The symptomatic facts by which the disease might be traced are generally either disregarded from ignorance of their real cause and character, or when

[The elder Johnson was, as his Piozzi, p. 2, 5. son informed Mrs. Piozzi, a very pious and worthy man, but wrong-headed, positive, and afflicted with melancholy: his business, however, leading him to be much on horseback, contributed to the preservation of his bodily health, and mental sanity; which, when he stayed long at home, would sometimes be about to give way; and Dr. Johnson said, that when his workshop, a detached building, had fallen half down for want of money to repair it, his father was not less diligent to lock the door every night, though he saw that any body might walk in at the back part, and knew that there was no security obtained by barring the front door. "This (said his son) was madness, you may see, and would have been discoverable in other instances of the prevalence of imagination, but that poverty prevented it from playing such tricks as riches and leisure encourage." Michael was a man of still larger size and greater strength than his son, who was reckoned very like him, but did not delight in talking much of his family—"One has (says he) so little pleasure in reciting the anecdotes of beggary!" One day, however, hearing Mrs. Piozzi praise a favourite friend: "Why do you like that man's acquaintance so?" said he. "Because," replied she, "he is open and confiding, and tells me stories of his uncles and cousins: I love the

observed, carefully suppressed by domestic or professional delicacy. This is natural and even laudable; yet there are several important reasons why the obscurity in which such facts are usually buried may be regretted. *Morally*, we should wish to know, as far as may be permitted to us, the nature of our own intellect, its powers and its weaknesses;—*medically*, it might be possible, by early and systematic treatment, to avert or mitigate the disease which, there is reason to suppose, is now often unknown or mistaken;—*legally*, it would be desirable to have any additional means of discriminating between guilt and misfortune, and of ascertaining with more precision the nice bounds which divide moral guilt from what may be called physical errors;—and in the highest and most important of all the springs of human thought or action, it would be consolatory and edifying to be able to distinguish with greater certainty rational faith and judicious piety, from the enthusiastic confidence or the gloomy despondence of disordered imaginations. The memory of every man who has lived, not inattentively, in society, will furnish him with instances to which these considerations might have been usefully applied. But in reading the life of Doctor Johnson (who was conscious of the disease and of its cause, and of whose blood there remains no one whose feelings can be now offended), they should be kept constantly in view; not merely as a subject of general interest, but as elucidating and explaining many of the errors, peculiarities, and weaknesses of that extraordinary man.—ED.]

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light parts of a solid character." "Nay, if you are for family history (said Dr. Johnson, good-humouredly), I can fit you: I had an uncle, Cornelius Ford, who, upon a journey, stopped and read an inscription written on a stone he saw standing by the way-side, set up, as it proved, in honour of a man who had leaped a certain leap thereabouts, the extent of which was specified upon the stone: Why now, said my uncle, I could leap it in my boots; and he did leap it in his boots. I had likewise another uncle, Andrew (continued he), my father's brother, who kept the ring in Smithfield, where they wrestled and boxed, for a whole year, and never was thrown or conquered. Here now are¹ uncles for you, *mistress*², if that's the way to your heart."]

¹ [Miss Seward, who latterly showed a great deal of malevolence towards Johnson, delighted to repeat a story that one of his uncles had suffered the last penalty of the law. "Shortly after Mr. Porter's death, Johnson asked his mother's consent to marry the old widow. After expressing her surprise at a request so extraordinary—'No, Sam, my willing consent you will never have to so preposterous a union. You are not twenty-five, and she is turned fifty. If she had any prudence, this request had never been made to me. Where are your means of subsistence? Porter has died poor, in consequence of his wife's expensive habits. You have great talents, but as yet have turned them into no profitable channel.'—'Mother, I have not deceived Mrs. Porter; I have told her the worst of me; that I am of mean extraction; that I have no money; and that I have had an uncle hanged.' She replied, 'that she valued no one more or less for his descent; that she had no more money than myself; and that, though she had not had a relation hanged, she had fifty who deserved hanging.'"]—(*Seward's Letters*, vol. i, p. 45.) This account was given to Mr. Boswell, who, as Miss Seward could not have known it of her own knowledge, asked the lady for her authority. Miss Seward, in reply, quoted Mrs. Cobb, an old friend of Johnson's, who resided at Lichfield. To her, then, Boswell addressed himself; and, to his equal satisfaction and surprise, was answered that Mrs. Cobb had not only never told such a story, but that she had not even ever heard of it.—(*Gent. Mag.* vol. 63, p. 1009.) It is painful to have to add, that notwithstanding this denial, Miss Seward persisted in her story to the last. The report as to the *hanging* was probably derived from a coarse passage in the Rev. Donald M'Nicol's Remarks on Dr. Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides. "But whatever the Doctor may insinuate about the present scarcity of trees in Scotland, we are much deceived by fame if a very near ancestor of his, who was a native of that country, did not find to his cost that a *tree* was not quite such a rarity in his days." (P. 18. ed. 1779.) That some Scotchman, of the name of *Johnston*, may have been hanged in the seventeenth century, is very likely; but there seems no reason whatsoever to believe that any of Dr. Johnson's family were natives of Scotland.—ED.]

[Of some other members of his family he gave the following account:

"This Whitsuntide (1719), I and my brother were sent to pass some time at Birmingham; I believe a fortnight. Why such boys were sent to trouble other homes, I cannot tell. My mother had some opinion that much improvement was to be had by changing the mode of life. My uncle, Harrison, was a widower; and his house was kept by Sally Ford, a young woman of such sweetness of temper, that I used to say she had no fault. We lived most at uncle Ford's, being much caressed by my aunt, a good-natured, coarse woman, easy of converse, but willing to find something to censure in the absent. My uncle, Harrison, did not much like us, nor did we like him. He was a very mean and vulgar man, drunk every night, but drunk with little drink; very peevish, very proud, very ostentatious, but, luckily, not rich. At my aunt Ford's I eat so much of a boiled leg of mutton³, that she used to talk of it. My mother, who had lived in a narrow sphere, and was then affected by little things, told me seriously that it would be hardly ever forgotten. Her mind, I think, was afterwards very much enlarged, or greater evils wore out the care of less.

"I staid after the vacation was over some days; and remember, when I wrote home, that I desired the horses to come on Thursday of the first school week; and not till then. I was much pleased with a rattle to my whip, and wrote of it to my mother.

"When my father came to fetch us home, he told the ostler that he had twelve miles home, and two boys under his care. This offended me. He had then a watch⁴, which he returned when he was to pay for it." Michael Johnson was, however, forced by the narrowness of his circumstances to be very diligent in business, not only in his shop, but by occasionally resorting to several towns in the neighbourhood, some of which were at a considerable

² [The reader is requested to observe, that Dr. Johnson used familiarly to designate Mrs. Thrale (Piozzi) as his "*mistress*."—ED.]

³ [All these trifles—since Dr. Johnson in the height of his fame (for the *Account* must have been written subsequent to 1768) thought them worth recording—appear worth quoting. It will be seen hereafter that his voracious love of a *leg of mutton* adhered to him through life; and the prophesy of his mother, that it *never would be forgotten*, is realised in a way the good woman could not have anticipated.—ED.]

⁴ [The convenience of a watch, now so general, Doctor Johnson himself, as Sir J. Hawkins reports (p. 460), did not possess till 1768.—ED.]

distance from Lichfield. At that time booksellers' shops in the provincial towns of England were very rare, so that there was not one even in Birmingham, in which town old Mr. Johnson used to open a shop every market-day. He was a pretty good Latin scholar, and a citizen so creditable as to be made [as has been stated] one of the magistrates of Lichfield; and, being a man of good sense, and skill in his trade, he acquired a reasonable share of wealth, of which however he afterwards lost the greatest part, by engaging unsuccessfully in a manufacture of parchment. [In this undertaking, nothing prospered; they had no sooner bought a large stock of skins, than a heavy duty was laid upon that article, and from Michael's absence by his many avocations as a bookseller, the parchment business was committed to a faithless servant, and thence they gradually declined into strait circumstances¹.] He was a zealous high-church man and royalist, and retained his attachment to the unfortunate house of Stuart, though he reconciled himself by casuistical arguments of expediency and necessity, to take the oaths imposed by the prevailing power.

There is a circumstance in his life somewhat² romantick, but so well authenticated

¹ [Johnson, in his Dictionary, defines "EXCISE, a hateful tax, levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the *common judges* of property, but by *wretches* hired by those to whom excise is paid;" and in the Idler (No. 65), he calls a *Commissioner of Excise* "one of the *lowest* of all human beings." This violence of language seems so little reasonable, that the Editor was induced to suspect some cause of *personal animosity*; this mention of the trade in parchment (an *exciseable* article) afforded a clue, which has led to the confirmation of that suspicion. In the records of the Excise Board is to be found the following letter, addressed to the supervisor of excise at Lichfield: "July 27, 1725.—The Commissioners received yours of the 22d instant, and since the justices would not give judgment against Mr. Michael Johnson, the *tanner*, notwithstanding the facts were fairly against him, the Board direct that the next time he offends, you do not lay an information against him, but send an affidavit of the fact, that he may be prosecuted in the Exchequer." It does not appear whether he offended again, but here is a sufficient cause of his son's animosity against Commissioners of Excise, and of the allusion in the Dictionary to the *special jurisdiction* under which that revenue is administered. The reluctance of the justices to convict will appear not unnatural, when it is recollected that M. Johnson was, *this very year*, chief magistrate of the city.—E.D.]

² [The *romantic* part of this story does not seem otherwise *authenticated* than by an assertion in the Gentleman's Magazine, vol. 55, p. 100, on, as it would seem, the doubtful authority of

that I shall not omit it. A young woman of Leek, in Staffordshire, while he served his apprenticeship there, conceived a violent passion for him; and though it met with no favourable return, followed him to Lichfield, where she took lodgings opposite to the house in which he lived, and indulged her hopeless flame. When he was informed that it so preyed upon her mind that her life was in danger, he, with a generous humanity, went to her and offered to marry her, but it was then too late: her vital power was exhausted; and she actually exhibited one of the very rare instances of dying for love. She was buried in the cathedral of Lichfield; and he, with a tender regard, placed a stone over her grave with this inscription:

Here lies the body of
Mrs. ELIZABETH BLANEY, a stranger :
She departed this life
20 of September, 1694.

Johnson's mother [was slight in her person, and rather below than above the common size. So excellent was her character, and so blameless her life, that when an oppressive neighbour once endeavoured to take from her a little field she possessed, he could persuade no attorney to undertake the cause against a woman so beloved in her narrow circle: and it is this incident he alludes to in the line of his *Vanity of Human Wishes*, calling her

The general favourite as the general friend.

Nor could any one pay more willing homage to such a character, though she had not been related to him, than did Dr. Johnson on every occasion that offered: his disquisition on Pope's epitaph placed over Mrs. Corbet, is a proof of that preference always given by him to a noiseless life over a bustling one.] She was a woman of distinguished understanding. [It was not, however, Mr. Malone observes, much cultivated, as may be collected from Dr. Johnson's own account. "My father and mother (said he) had not much happiness for each other. She had no value for his relations; those indeed whom we knew of were much lower than hers. This contempt began, I know not on which

Miss Seward, that Doctor Johnson had told it. Admitting that he did so, it is to be observed that the fact happened *fifteen years* before his birth; and his father may be excused if he gave to his wife and son a *romantic* account of an affair of this nature. Such delicacy of sentiment and conduct as is here ascribed to these young and humble lovers is, it is to be feared, very rare in persons of any age or station, and would seem to require better *authentication* than can be found for the *details* of this story.—E.D.]

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side, very early; but as my father was little at home it had not much effect. They seldom conversed; for my father could not bear to talk of his affairs; and my mother, *being unacquainted with books*, cared not to talk of any thing else. Had my mother been more literate, they had been better companions. She might have sometimes introduced her unwelcome topick with more success, if she could have diversified her conversation. Of business she had no distinct conception; and therefore her discourse was composed only of complaint, fear, and suspicion. Neither of them ever tried to calculate the profits of trade, or the expenses of living. My mother concluded that we were poor, because we lost by some of our trades; but the truth was, that my father, having in the early part of his life contracted debts, never had trade sufficient to enable him to pay them, and to maintain his family: he got something, but not enough. My father considered tea as very expensive, and discouraged my mother from keeping company with the neighbours, and from paying visits and receiving them. She lived to say, many years after, that if the time were to pass again, she would not comply with such unsocial injunctions. It was not till about 1768, that I thought to calculate the returns of my father's trade, and by that estimate his probable profits. This, I believe, my parents never did." I asked his old school-fellow, Mr. Hector, surgeon of Birmingham, if she was not vain of her son. He said, "she had too much good sense to be vain, but she knew her son's value." Her piety was not inferior to her understanding; and to her must be inscribed those early impressions of religion upon the mind of her son, from which the world afterwards derived so much benefit. He told me¹, that he remembered distinctly having had the first notice of heaven, "a place to which good people went," and hell, "a place to which bad people went," communicated to him by her, when a little child in bed with her; and that it might be the better fixed in his memory, she sent him to repeat it to Thomas Jackson, their man-servant²; he not being in the way, this was not done; but there was no occasion for any artificial aid for its preservation. [When he related this circumstance to Mrs. Piozzi, he added, that little people should be en-

couraged always to tell whatever ^{Piozzi, p. 21, 22.} they hear particularly striking, to some brother, sister, or servant, immediately before the impression is erased by the intervention of newer occurrences.]

In following so very eminent a man from his cradle to his grave, every minute particular, which can throw light on the progress of his mind, is interesting. That he was remarkable, even in his earliest years, may easily be supposed; for to use his own words in his *Life of Sydenham*, "That the strength of his understanding, the accuracy of his discernment, and the ardour of his curiosity, might have been remarked from his infancy, by a diligent observer, there is no reason to doubt. For there is no instance of any man, whose history has been minutely related, that did not in every part of life discover the same proportion of intellectual vigour."

In all such investigations it is certainly unwise to pay too much attention to incidents which the credulous relate with eager satisfaction, and the more scrupulous or witty inquirer considers only as topicks of ridicule: yet there is a traditional story of the infant Hercules of Toryism, so curiously characteristic, that I shall not withhold it. It was communicated to me in a letter from Miss Mary Adye, of Lichfield.

"When Dr. Sacheverel was at Lichfield, Johnson was not quite three years old. My grandfather Hammond observed him at the cathedral perched upon his father's shoulders, listening and gaping at the much celebrated preacher. Mr. Hammond asked Mr. Johnson how he could possibly think of bringing such an infant to church, and in the midst of so great a crowd. He answered, because it was impossible to keep him at home; for, young as he was, he believed he had caught the publick spirit and zeal for Sacheverel, and would have stayed for ever in the church, satisfied with beholding him³."

Nor can I omit a little instance of that jealous independence of spirit, and impetuosity of temper, which never forsook him. The fact was acknowledged to me by him-

³ [The gossiping anecdotes of the Lichfield ladies are all apocryphal. Sacheverel, by his sentence pronounced in Feb. 1710, was interdicted for three years from preaching; so that he could not have preached at Lichfield while Johnson was under three years of age. But what decides the falsehood of Miss Adye's story is, that Sacheverel's triumphal progress through the midland counties was in 1710; and it appears by the books of the corporation of Lichfield, that he was received in that town and complimented by the attendance of the corporation, "and a present of three dozen of wine," on the 16th June, 1710; when the "*infant Hercules of toryism*" was just *nine months old*.—ED.]

¹ [This is told nearly in the same words in the *Account of the Life*, and is an additional proof of the authenticity of that little work.—ED.]

² [Mrs. Piozzi says a *workman*, and, in this instance, her account is more likely to be accurate than Boswell's. This trifle is observed to justify thus early the editor's opinion, that even in the small matters in which Boswell delights to accuse Mrs. Piozzi of inaccuracy, she is sometimes probably as correct as he is.—ED.]

self, upon the authority of his mother. One day, when the servant who used to be sent to school to conduct him home had not come in time, he set out by himself, though he was then so near-sighted, that he was obliged to stoop down on his hands and knees to take a view of the kennel before he ventured to step over it. His school-mistress, afraid that he might miss his way, or fall into the kennel, or be run over by a cart, followed him at some distance. He happened to turn about and perceive her. Feeling her careful attention as an insult to his manliness, he ran back to her in a rage, and beat her, as well as his strength would permit¹.

Of the power of his memory, for which he was all his life eminent to a degree almost incredible, the following early instance was told me in his presence at Lichfield, in 1776, by his step-daughter, Mrs. Lucy Porter, as related to her by his mother. When he was a child in petticoats, and had learnt to read, Mrs. Johnson one morning put the common prayer-book into his hands, pointed to the collect for the day, and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went up stairs, leaving him to study it: but by the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him follow her. "What's the matter?" said she. "I can say it," he replied, and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

There has been another story of his infant precocity generally circulated, and generally believed, the truth of which I am to refute upon his own authority. It is told, that, when a child of three years old, he chanced to tread upon a duckling, the eleventh of a brood, and killed it; upon which, it is said, he dictated to his mother the following epitaph:

"Here lies good master duck,
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on;
If it had lived, it had been good luck,
For then we'd had an odd one."

There is surely internal evidence that this little composition combines in it, what no child of three years old could produce, without an extension of its faculties by immediate inspiration; yet Mrs. Lucy Porter, Dr. Johnson's step-daughter, positively maintained to me, in his presence, that there could be no doubt of the truth of this anecdote, for she had heard it from his mother. So difficult is it to obtain an authentick relation of facts, and such authority may there be for error; for he assured me, that his father made the verses, and wished to pass

¹ [This story seems also disproved by internal evidence, for if Johnson was so blind as not to be able to see a kennel without stooping on his hands and knees, how could he distinguish a person following him at some distance?—Ed.]

them for his child's. He added, "my father was a foolish old man; that is to say, foolish in talking of his children²."

[He always seemed more mortified at the recollection of the bustle his parents made with his wit, than pleased with the thoughts of possessing it. "That (said he one day to Mrs. Piozzi) is the great misery of late marriages: the unhappy produce of them becomes the plaything of dotage: an old man's child (continued he) leads much such a life, I think, as a little boy's dog, teased with awkward fondness, and forced, perhaps, to sit up and beg, as we call it, to divert a company, who at last go away complaining of their disagreeable entertainment." In consequence of these maxims, and full of indignation against such parents as delight to produce their young ones early into the talking world, I have known Dr. Johnson give a good deal of pain by refusing to hear the verses that children could recite, or the songs they could sing; particularly to one friend who told him that his two sons should repeat Gray's Elegy to him alternately, that he might judge who had the happiest cadence. "No, pray, sir (said he), let the little dears both speak it at once; more noise will by that means be made, and the noise will be sooner over."]

Young Johnson had the misfortune to be much afflicted with the scrophula, or king's-evil, which disfigured a countenance naturally well formed, and hurt his visual nerves so much, that he did not see at all with one of his eyes, though its appearance was little different from that of the other. There is amongst his prayers, one inscribed "When my EYE was restored to its use," which ascertains a defect that many of his friends knew he had, though I never perceived it³. I supposed him to be only near-sighted; and indeed I must observe, that in no other respect could I discern any defect in his vision; on the contrary, the force of his attention and perceptive quickness made him see and distinguish all manner of objects, whether of nature or of art, with a nicety that is rarely to be found. When he and I were travelling in the Highlands of Scotland, and I pointed out to him a mountain, which I observed resembled a cone, he corrected my inaccuracy, by show-

² [This anecdote of the duck, though disproved by internal and external evidence, is one of those the authenticity of which Miss Seward persisted in asserting; and she maintained a very wrongheaded hostility and paper war with Boswell on this and a similar subject (*The verses on a sprig of myrtle*), in which, as we shall see more fully hereafter, she was wrong every way.—Ed.]

³ Speaking himself of the imperfection of one of his eyes, he said to Dr. Burney, "the dog was never good for much."—BURNLEY.

ing me, that it was indeed pointed at the top, but that one side of it was larger than the other. And the ladies with whom he was acquainted agree, that no man was more nicely and minutely critical in the elegance of female dress. When I found that he saw the romantick beauties of Ilam, in Derbyshire, much better than I did, I told him that he resembled an able performer upon a bad instrument. How false and contemptible then are all the remarks which have been made to the prejudice either of his candour or of his philosophy, founded upon a supposition that he was almost blind. It has been said that he contracted this grievous malady from his nurse. [His own account was, that Dr. Swinfen¹ told him, that the scrofulous sores which afflicted him proceeded from the bad

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humours of his nurse, whose son had the same distemper, and was likewise shortsighted, but both in a less degree (than he). His mother thought his diseases derived from her family². She visited him every day, and used to go different ways, that her assiduity might not expose her to ridicule, and often left her fan or glove behind, that she might have a pretence for coming back unexpected, but she never discovered any token of neglect. In ten weeks he was taken home a poor diseased infant, almost blind. Dr. Swinfen used to say, that he never knew any child reared with so much difficulty.] His mother,—yielding to the superstitious notion which, it is wonderful to think, prevailed so long in this country, as to the virtue of the regal touch; a notion which our kings encouraged,

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and to which a man of such inquiry and such judgment as Carte could give credit—carried him to London [in Lent, 1712], where he was actually touched by queen Anne. Mrs. Johnson indeed, as Mr. Hector informed me, acted by the advice of the celebrated Sir John Floyer, then a physician in Lichfield. Johnson used to talk of this very frankly; and Mrs. Piozzi has preserved his very picturesque description of the scene, as it remained upon his fancy. Being asked if

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he could remember queen Anne,—“He had (he said) a confused, but somehow a sort of solemn recollection of a lady in diamonds, and a long black hood.” This touch, however, was without any effect. I ventured to say to him,

¹ [Samuel Swinfen, who took a degree of doctor of medicine from Pembroke College in 1712.—HALL.]

² [His mother and Dr. Swinfen were both perhaps wrong in their conjecture as to the origin of the disease; he more probably inherited it from his father, with the *morbid melancholy* which is so commonly an attendant on scrofulous habits.—Ed.]

in allusion to the political principles in which he was educated, and of which he ever retained some odour, that “his mother had not carried him far enough; she should have taken him to ROME³.”

[The following is his own recollection of this journey.—“I was taken to London to be touched for the evil by queen Anne. I always retained some memory of this journey, though I was then but thirty months old. I remember a boy crying at the palace when I went to be touched. My mother was at Nicholson’s, the famous bookseller in Little Britain. I remember a little dark room behind the kitchen, where the jack-weight fell through a hole in the floor, into which I once slipped my leg.

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“Being asked, ‘on which side of the shop was the counter?’ I answered, ‘on the left from the entrance,’ many years after, and spoke not by guess but by memory. We went in the stage-coach, and returned in the waggon, as my mother said, because my cough was violent. The hope of saving a few shillings was no slight motive; for she, not having been accustomed to money, was afraid of such expenses as now seem very small. She sewed two guineas in her petticoat, lest she should be robbed.

“We were troublesome to the passengers; but to suffer such inconveniences in the stage-coach was common in these days, to persons in much higher rank. She bought me a small silver cup and spoon, marked SAM. J., lest if they had been marked S. J., (Sarah being her name), they should, upon her death, have been taken from me. She bought me a speckled linen frock, which I knew afterwards by the name of my London frock. The cup was one of the last pieces of plate which dear⁴ Tetty sold in our distress. I have now the spoon. She bought at the same time two teaspoons, and till my manhood she had no more⁵.”]

He was first taught to read English by Dame Oliver, a widow, who kept a school for young children in Lichfield. He told

³ [To the *Pretender*.—Ed.]

⁴ [His wife, whom he called by this familiar contraction of Elizabeth.—Ed.]

⁵ [When Dr. Johnson, at an advanced age, recorded all these minute circumstances, he contemplated, we are told, writing the history of his own life, and probably intended to develop, from his own infant recollections, the growth and powers of the faculty of memory, which he possessed in so remarkable a degree. From the little details of his domestic history he perhaps meant also to trace the progressive change in the habits of the middle classes of society. But whatever may have been his motive, the Editor could not properly omit what Johnson thought worth preserving.—Ed.]

me she could read the black letter, and asked him to borrow for her, from his father, a bible in that character. When he was going to Oxford, she came to take leave of him, brought him, in the simplicity of her kindness, a present of gingerbread, and said he was the best scholar she ever had. He delighted in mentioning this early compliment; adding, with a smile, that "this was as high a proof of his merit as he could conceive." His next instructor in English was a master, whom when he spoke of him to me, he familiarly called Tom Brown, who, said he, "published a spelling-book, and dedicated it to the UNIVERSE; but, I fear, no copy of it can now be had."

He began to learn Latin with Mr. Hawkins, usher or under-master of Lichfield school, "a man (said he) very skilful in his little way." With him he continued two years, and [perhaps, four months.

"The time," he added, "till I had computed it, appeared much longer by the multitude of incidents and of novelties which it supplied, than many important thoughts which it produced. Perhaps it is not possible that any other period can make the same impression on the memory." In the spring of 1719, his class was removed to the upper school, and put under Holbrook, a peevish and ill-tempered man. They were removed sooner than had been the custom, for the head-master, intent on his boarders, generally left the town-boys too long in the lower school; the earlier removal of Johnson's class was caused by a reproof of the town-clerk; and Hawkins complained that he had lost half his profit. At this removal Johnson says that *he* cried, but the rest were indifferent. He] then rose to be under the care of Mr. Hunter¹, the head-master, who, according to his account, "was very severe, and wrong-headedly severe. He used (said he) to beat us unmercifully; and he did not distinguish between ignorance and negligence; for he would beat a boy equally for not knowing a thing, as for neglecting to know it. He

¹ ["Mr. Hunter was an odd mixture of the pedant and the sportsman; he was a very severe disciplinarian and a great setter of game. Happy was the boy who could inform his offended master where a covey of partridges was to be found; this notice was a certain pledge of his pardon." *Davies' Life of Garrick*, vol. i. p. 3. He was a prebendary in the Cathedral of Lichfield, and grandfather to Miss Seward. One of this lady's complaints against Johnson was, that he, in all his works, never expressed any *gratitude* to his preceptor. It does not appear that he owed him much; for besides the severity of his discipline, it seems that he was inattentive to that class of boys to which Johnson belonged, and it also appears, that he refused to readmit him after one of the vacations, on some pretence now forgotten.—ED.]

would ask a boy a question, and if he did not answer it, he would beat him, without considering whether he had an opportunity of knowing how to answer it. For instance, he would call up a boy and ask him Latin for a candlestick, which the boy could not expect to be asked. Now, sir, if a boy could answer every question, there would be no need of a master to teach him."

It is, however, but justice to the memory of Mr. Hunter to mention, that though he might err in being too severe, the school of Lichfield was very respectable in his time. The late Dr. Taylor, Prebendary of Westminster, who was educated under him, told me that "he was an excellent master, and that his ushers were most of them men of eminence; that Holdbrook, one of the most ingenious men, best scholars, and best preachers of his age, was usher during the greatest part of the time that Johnson was at school. Then came Hague, of whom as much might be said, with the addition that he was an elegant poet. Hague was succeeded by Green, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, whose character in the learned world is well known. In the same form with Johnson was Congreve, who afterwards became chaplain to Archbishop Boulter, and by that connexion obtained good preferment in Ireland. He was a younger son of the ancient family of Congreve, in Staffordshire, of which the poet was a branch. His brother sold the estate. There was also Lowe, afterwards Canon of Windsor.

Indeed Johnson was very sensible how much he owed to Mr. Hunter. Mr. Langton one day asked him how he had acquired so accurate a knowledge of Latin, in which, I believe, he was exceeded by no man of his time: he said, "My master whipt me very well. Without that, sir, I should have done nothing." He told Mr. Langton, that while Hunter was flogging his boys unmercifully, he used to say, "And this I do to save you from the gallows." Johnson, upon all occasions, expressed his approbation of enforcing instruction by means of the rod². "I would rather (said he) have the rod to be the general terror to all, to make them learn, than tell a child, if you do thus or thus, you will be more esteemed than your brothers or sisters. The rod produces an effect which terminates in itself. A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets his task, and there's an end on't; whereas, by exciting emulation and comparisons of superiority, you lay the foundation of lasting mischief: you make brothers and sisters hate each other."

² Johnson's observations to Dr. Rose, on this subject, may be found in a subsequent part of this work, near the end of the year 1775.—BURNBY.

When Johnson saw some young ladies in Lincolnshire who were remarkably well behaved, owing to their mother's strict discipline and severe correction, he exclaimed, in one of Shakspeare's lines, a little varied ¹,

“*Rod*, I will honour thee for this thy duty.”

[Yet when talking of a young fellow, who used to come often to Mr. Piozzi,

p. 21. Thrale's house, who was about fifteen years old or less, and had a manner at once sullen and sheepish—“That lad (said Johnson) looks like the son of a schoolmaster; which (added he) is one of the very worst conditions of childhood; such a boy has no father, or worse than none; he never can reflect on his parent but the reflection brings to his mind some idea of pain inflicted, or of sorrow suffered.”

He was, indeed, himself exceedingly disposed to the general indulgence of children, and was even scrupulously and ceremoniously attentive not to offend them: he had strongly persuaded himself of the difficulty people always find to erase early impressions, either of kindness or resentment, and said, “he should never have so loved his mother when a man, had she not given him coffee she could ill afford, to gratify his appetite when a boy.” “If you had had children, sir,” said Mrs. Piozzi, “would you have taught them any thing?” “I hope (replied he) that I should have willingly lived on bread and water to obtain instruction for them; but I would not have set their future friendship to hazard for the sake of thrusting into their heads knowledge of things for which they might not perhaps have either taste or necessity. You teach your daughters the diameters of the planets, and wonder when you have done that they do not delight in your company. No science can be communicated by mortal creatures without attention from the scholar; no attention can be obtained from children without the infliction of pain, and pain is never remembered without resentment.” That something should be learned was, however, so certainly his opinion, that Mrs. Piozzi heard him say, that education had been often compared to agriculture, yet that it resembled it chiefly in this: “that if nothing is sown, no crop can be obtained.”]

That superiority over his fellows, which

¹ More than a little. The line is in KING HENRY VI. Part ii. act iv. sc. last :

“*Sword*, I will hallow thee for this thy deed.”

MALONE.

[It is to be hoped that Mr. Boswell was mistaken as to the sex and age of the children: the idea of disciplining *young ladies* by the rod is absurd and disgusting.—ED.]

he maintained with so much dignity in his march through life, was not assumed from vanity and ostentation, but was the natural and constant effect of those extraordinary powers of mind, of which he could not but be conscious by comparison; the intellectual difference, which in other cases of comparison of characters, is often a matter of undecided contest, being as clear in his case as the superiority of stature in some men above others. Johnson did not strut or stand on tip-toe; he only did not stoop. From his earliest years, his superiority was perceived and acknowledged. He was from the beginning *Αντξ ανδρα*, a king of men. His schoolfellow, Mr. Hector, has obligingly furnished me² with many particulars of his boyish days; and assured me that he never knew him corrected³ at school, but for talking and diverting other boys from their business. He seemed to learn by intuition; for though indolence and procrastination were inherent in his constitution, whenever he made an exertion he did more than any one else. In short, he is a memorable instance of what has been often observed, that the boy is the man in miniature; and that the distinguishing characteristics of each individual are the same, through the whole course of life. His favourites used to receive very liberal assistance from him; and such was the submission and deference with which he was treated, such the desire to obtain his regard, that three of the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was sometimes one, used to come in the morning as his humble attendants, and carry him to school. One in the middle stooped, while he sat upon his back, and one on each side supported him; and thus he was borne triumphant. Such a proof of the early predominance of intellectual vigour is very remarkable, and does honour to human nature⁴. Talking to me once himself of his being much distinguished at school, he told me, “they never thought to raise me by comparing me to any one; they never said, Johnson is as good a scholar as such a one, but such a one is as good

² [This is not quite candid on the part of Mr. Boswell. All these particulars are found in a paper furnished (it would seem) by Mr. Hector to Sir J. Hawkins, and published *in extenso* by him.—ED.]

³ [This is not consistent with Johnson's own statement, *ante*, p. 16.—ED.]

⁴ [“This ovation Mr. Boswell believed to have been an honour paid to the early predominance of his intellectual powers alone; but they who remember what boys are, and who consider that Johnson's corporeal prowess was by no means despicable, will be apt to suspect that the homage was enforced, at least as much by awe of the one as by admiration of the other.”—*Anderson's Life of Johnson*.—ED.]

a scholar as Johnson; and this was said but of one—but of Lowe¹; and I do not think he was as good a scholar.”

He discovered a great ambition to excel, which roused him to counteract his indolence. He was uncommonly inquisitive; and his memory was so tenacious, that he never forgot any thing that he either heard or read. Mr. Hector remembers having recited to him eighteen verses, which, after a little pause, he repeated *verbatim*, varying only one epithet, by which he improved the line.

He never joined with the other boys in their ordinary diversions: his only amusement² was in winter, when he took a pleasure in being drawn upon the ice by a boy barefooted, who pulled him along by a garter fixed round him; no very easy operation, as his size was remarkably large. His defective sight, indeed, prevented him from enjoying the common sports; and he once pleasantly remarked to me, “how wonderfully well he had contrived to be idle without them.” Lord Chesterfield, however, has justly observed in one of his letters, when earnestly cautioning a friend against the pernicious effects of idleness, that active sports are not to be reckoned idleness in young people; and that the listless torpor of doing nothing alone deserves that name. Of this dismal inertness of disposition, Johnson had all his life too great a share. Mr. Hector relates, that “he could not oblige him more than by sauntering away the hours of vacation in the fields, during which he was more engaged in talking to himself than to his companion.” [Mr. Hector

Hawk. p. 8. concludes by saying, “After a long absence from Lichfield, when he returned I was apprehensive of something wrong in his constitution, which might either impair his intellect or endanger his life, but, thanks to Almighty God, my fears have proved false.”]

Dr. Percy, the Bishop of Dromore, who was long intimately acquainted with him, and has preserved a few anecdotes concerning him, regretting that he was not a more diligent collector, informs me, that “when a boy he was immoderately fond of reading romances of chivalry, and he retained his fondness for them through life³; so that

(adds his lordship) spending part of a summer at my parsonage-house in the country, he chose for his regular reading the old Spanish romance of FELIXMARTE OF HIRCANIA, in folio, which he read quite through. Yet I have heard him attribute to these extravagant fictions that unsettled turn of mind which prevented his ever fixing in any profession.”

[In the autumn of the year 1725, he received an invitation from his uncle⁴, Cornelius Ford, to spend a few days with him at his house, which I conjecture to have been on a living of his in one of the counties bordering upon Staffordshire; but it seems that the uncle, discovering that the boy was possessed of uncommon parts, was unwilling to let him return, and to make up for the loss he might sustain by his absence from school, became his instructor in the classics, and farther assisted him in his studies; so that it was not till the Whitsuntide following, that Johnson went back to Lichfield. Whether Mr. Hunter was displeased to find a visit of a few days protracted into a vacation of many months, or that he resented the interference of another person in the tuition of one of his scholars, and he one of the most promising of any under his care, cannot now be known; but, it seems, that at Johnson's return to Lichfield, he was not received into the school of that city;] and he was, at the age of fifteen, removed to the school of Stourbridge, in Worcestershire, of which Mr. Wentworth was then master.

This step was taken by the advice of his cousin, the Rev. Mr. Ford, a man in whom both talents and good dispositions were disgraced by licentiousness—(he is said to be the original of the parson in Hogarth's *Modern Midnight Conversation*⁵)—but who

was for exercise in the *language*, and he took no pleasure in the work itself.—Ed.]

⁴ Cornelius Ford, according to Sir John Hawkins, was his cousin-german, being the son of Dr. Joseph [Q. Nathanael?] Ford, an eminent physician, who was brother to Johnson's mother.—MALONE. [Sir John Hawkins, in this passage of his first edition, distinctly calls *Cornelius* Ford his *uncle*, as Boswell also does, but it was probably an error, as Hawkins corrected it in the second edition to *cousin*.—Ed.]

⁵ [This fact has been doubted; but the blameable levity of his character, Johnson himself admits. In his *Life of Fenton*, he mentions “Ford, a clergyman at that time too well known, whose abilities, instead of furnishing convivial merriment to the voluptuous and dissolute, might have enabled him to excel among the virtuous and the wise.” In the *Historical Register* for 1731, we find, “Died Aug. 22, the Rev. Mr. Ford, well known to the world for his great wit and abilities.” And the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the same date states that he was “esteemed for his polite and agreeable conversation.” Mr. Murphy asserts

¹ [See *ante*, p. 16.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Hector, in the paper printed by Hawkins, only says, “He never associated with any of us in our diversions, except in winter, when the ice was firm enough to be drawn along by a boy barefooted;” but this does not justify the absurd assertion that Johnson had *no* amusement whatsoever except in winter, and then only this *one*: other amusements he doubtless had, though probably not of a gregarious nature.—Ed.]

³ [In one of his journeys we shall see (27th March, 1776), that he took with him “*Il Palmerino d'Inghilterra*” in *Italian*, but then it

was a very able judge of what was right.

[Johnson always spoke of his cousin Piozzi, p. 10. to Mrs. Piozzi with tenderness, praising his acquaintance with life and manners, and recollecting one piece of advice that no man surely ever followed more exactly: "Obtain (says Ford) some general principles of every science; he who can talk only on one subject, or act only in one department, is seldom wanted and perhaps never wished for; while the man of general knowledge can often benefit and always please." He used to relate, however, another story less to the credit of his cousin's penetration, how Ford on some occasion said to him, "You will make your way more easily in the world, I see, as you are contented to dispute no man's claim to conversation excellence; they will, therefore, more willingly allow your pretensions as a writer."]

At the school of Stourbridge he did not receive so much benefit as was expected. It has been said, that he acted in the capacity of an assistant to Mr. Wentworth in teaching the younger boys. "Mr. Wentworth (he told me) was a very able man, but an idle man, and to me very severe; but I cannot blame him much. I was then a big boy; he saw I did not reverence him; and that he should get no honour by me. I had brought enough with me, to carry me through; and all I should get at his school would be ascribed to my own labour, or to my former master. Yet he taught me a great deal."

He thus discriminated, to Dr. Percy, Bishop of Dromore, his progress at his two grammar-schools. "At one [Lichfield], I learned much in the school, but little from the master; in the other [Stourbridge], I learnt much from the master, but little in the school."

The bishop also informs me that "Dr. Johnson's father, before he was received at Stourbridge, applied to have him admitted as a scholar and assistant to the Rev. Samuel Lea, M. A., head-master of Newport school, in Shropshire (a very diligent good teacher, at that time in high reputation, under whom Mr. Hollis is said, in the *Memoirs of his Life*, to have been also educated)¹. This application to Mr. Lea was not successful; but Johnson had afterwards the gratification to hear that the old gentleman, who lived to a very advanced age, mentioned it as one of the most memorable events of his life, that he was *very near* having that great man for his scholar."

He remained at Stourbridge little more than a year, and then he returned home, where he may be said to have loitered, for

that he was chaplain to Lord Chesterfield, but gives no authority.—ED.]

¹As was likewise the Bishop of Dromore many years afterwards.—BOSWELL.

two years, in a state very unworthy his uncommon abilities. [His father was for some time at a loss how to dispose of him: he probably had a view to bring him up to his own trade; for Sir J. Hawkins heard Johnson say, that he himself was able to bind a book.] He had already given several proofs of his poetical genius, both in his school-exercises and in other occasional compositions. Of these I have obtained a considerable collection, by the favour of Mr. Wentworth, son of one of his masters, and of Mr. Hector, his schoolfellow and friend; from which I select some specimens [which will be found in the Appendix].

The two years which he spent at home, after his return from Stourbridge, he passed in what he thought idleness, and was scolded by his father for his want of steady application. He had no settled plan of life, nor looked forward at all, but merely lived from day to day. Yet he read a great deal in a desultory manner, without any scheme of study, as chance threw books in his way, and inclination directed him through them. He used to mention one curious instance of his casual reading, when but a boy. Having imagined that his brother had hid some apples behind a large folio upon an upper shelf in his father's shop, he climbed up to search for them. There were no apples; but the large folio proved to be Petrarch², whom he had seen mentioned, in some preface, as one of the restorers of learning. His curiosity having been thus excited, he sat down with avidity, and read a great part of the book. What he read during these two years, he told me, was not works of mere amusement, "not voyages and travels, but all literature, sir, all ancient writers, all manly: though but little Greek, only some of Anacreon and Hesiod: but in this irregular manner (added he) I had looked into a great many books, which were not commonly known at the Universities, where they seldom read any books but what are put into their hands by their tutors; so that when I came to Oxford, Dr. Adams, now master of Pembroke College, told me, I was the best qualified for the University that he had ever known come there."

In estimating the progress of his mind during these two years, as well as in future periods of his life, we must not regard his own hasty confession of idleness; for we see, when he explains himself, that he was acquiring various stores; and, indeed, he himself concluded the account, with saying,

² [This was probably the folio edition of Petrarch's *Opera Omnia quæ extant*, Bas. 1554. It could have been only the *Latin* works that Johnson read, as there is no reason to suppose that he was, at this period, able to read Italian.—ED.]

"I would not have you think I was doing nothing then." He might, perhaps, have studied more assiduously; but it may be doubted, whether such a mind as his was not more enriched by roaming at large in the fields of literature, than if it had been confined to any single spot. The analogy between body and mind is very general, and the parallel will hold as to their food, as well as any other particular. The flesh of animals who feed excursively is allowed to have a higher flavour than that of those who are cooped up. May there not be the same difference between men who read as their taste prompts, and men who are confined in cells and colleges to stated tasks?

That a man in Mr. Michael Johnson's circumstances should think of sending his son to the expensive university of Oxford, at his own charge, seems very improbable. The subject was too delicate to question Johnson upon; but I have been assured by Dr. Taylor, that the scheme never would have taken place, had not a gentleman of Shropshire, one of his schoolfellows, spontaneously undertaken to support him at Oxford, in the character of his companion: though, in fact, he never received any assistance whatever from that gentleman.

[Sir John Hawkins, thus states this circumstance: A neighbouring gentleman, Mr. Andrew Corbett, having a son, who had been educated in the same school with Johnson, whom he was about to send to Pembroke College in Oxford, a proposal was made and accepted, that Johnson should attend this son thither, in quality of assistant in his studies; and accordingly, on the 31st day of October, 1728, they were both entered, Corbett as a gentleman commoner, and Johnson as a commoner. Whether it was discouragement in the outset of their studies, or any other ground of disinclination that moved him to it, is not known, but this is certain, that young Corbett could not brook submission to a man who seemed to be little more learned than himself, and that having a father living, who was able to dispose of him in various other ways, he, after about two years' stay, left the college, and went home. But the case of Johnson was far different; his fortunes were at sea; his title to a stipend was gone, and all that he could obtain from the father of Mr. Corbett was

¹ [Dr. Johnson's prodigious memory and talents enabled him to collect from desultory reading a vast mass of general information; but he was in no science, and indeed we might almost say in no branch of literature, what is usually called a *profound scholar*—that character is only to be earned by laborious study; and Mr. Boswell's fanciful allusion to the flavour of the flesh of animals seems fallacious, not to say foolish.—E.D.]

an agreement, during his continuance at college, to pay for his commons.²]

He, however, went to Oxford, and was entered a commoner of Pembroke College, on the 31st of October, 1728, being then in his nineteenth year.

The Reverend Dr. Adams, who afterwards presided over Pembroke College with universal esteem, told me he was present, and gave me some account of what passed on the night of Johnson's arrival at Oxford. On that evening, his father, who had anxiously accompanied him, found means to have him introduced to Mr. Jorden, who was to be his tutor. His being put under any tutor, reminds us of what Wood says of Robert Burton, author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy," when elected student of Christ-church; "for form's sake, *though he wanted not a tutor*, he was put under the tuition of Dr. John Bancroft, afterwards Bishop of Oxon³."

His father seemed very full of the merits of his son, and told the company he was a good scholar, and a poet, and wrote Latin verses. His figure and manner appeared strange to them; but he behaved modestly, and sat silent, till upon something which occurred in the course of conversation, he suddenly struck in and quoted Macrobius; and thus he gave the first impression of that more extensive reading in which he had indulged himself.

His tutor⁴, Mr. Jorden, fellow of Pembroke,

² [Mr. Murphy, in his Life of Johnson, follows Hawkins; but the date of Mr. Corbett's entry into and retirement from college does not tally with either Boswell's or Hawkins's account. Andrew Corbett appears, from the books of Pembroke College (as Dr. Hall informs me), to have been admitted 24th February, 1727, and his name was removed from the books February 21, 1732: so that, as Johnson entered in Oct. 1728, and does not appear to have returned after Christmas, 1729, Corbett was of the University twenty months *before*, and twelve or thirteen months *after* Johnson. And, on reference to the college books, it appears that Corbett's residence was so irregular, and so little coincident with Johnson's, that there is no reason to suppose that Johnson was employed either as the *private tutor* of Corbett, as Hawkins states, or his *companion*, as Boswell suggests.—E.D.]

³ Athen. Oxon. edit. 1721, i. 627.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [There are, as Dr. Hall observes to me, many small errors in Mr. Boswell's account of Johnson's college life, and particularly as to the relation between him and Mr. Jorden. It is not the custom at Pembroke to assign particular tutors to individual students. There are two college tutors appointed for the whole. Mr. Jorden was therefore no more the tutor of Johnson than of any other student, and Johnson was equally the pupil of the other college tutor; though, as the latter was probably the tutor in mathematics, it seems likely that Johnson did not pay him much atten-

was not, it seems, a man of such abilities as we should conceive requisite for the instructor of Samuel Johnson, who [would

Hawk. p. 9. oftener risk the payment of a small fine than attend his lectures; nor was he studious to conceal the reason of his absence. Upon occasion of one such imposition, he said to Jorden, "Sir, you have sconded me two-pence for non-attendance at a lecture not worth a penny¹." He gave me the following account of him: "He was a very worthy man, but a heavy man, and I did not profit much by his instructions. Indeed, I did not attend him much. The first day after I came to college, I waited upon him, and then staid away four. On the sixth, Mr. Jorden asked me why I had not attended. I answered I had been sliding in Christ-church meadow. And this I said with as much *nonchalance* as I am now talking to you. I

Oxford,
20 Mar.
1776.

had no notion that I was wrong or irreverent to my tutor." BOSWELL. "That, sir, was great fortitude of mind." JOHNSON. "No, sir; stark insensibility²."

Piozzi, p. 23. [When he told this anecdote to Mrs. Piozzi, he laughed very heartily at the recollection of his own insolence, and said they endured it from him with wonderful acquiescence, and a gentleness that, whenever he thought of it, astonished himself. He said, too, that when he made his first declamation, he wrote over but one copy, and that coarsely; and having given it into the hand of the tutor who stood to receive it as he passed, was obliged to begin by chance and continue on how he could, for he had got but little of it by heart; so, fairly trusting to his present powers for immediate supply, he finished by adding astonishment to the applause of all who knew how little was owing to study. A prodigious risk, however, said some one: "Not at all (exclaims Johnson): no man, I suppose, leaps at once into deep water who does not know how to swim."]

The fifth of November was at that time kept with great solemnity at Pembroke College, and exercises upon the subject of the day were required. Johnson neglected to perform his, which is much to be regretted; for his vivacity of imagination, and force of

tion. Mr. Boswell either did not consult Dr. Adams, or did not remember accurately what the Doctor must have told him on these points.—Ed.]

¹ [It has been thought worth while to preserve this anecdote, as an early specimen of the *antithetical* style of Johnson's conversation.—Ed.]

² It ought to be remembered, that Dr. Johnson was apt, in his literary as well as moral exercises, to overcharge his defects. Dr. Adams informed me, that he attended his tutor's lectures, and also the lectures in the College Hall, very regularly.—BOSWELL.

language, would probably have produced something sublime upon the Gunpowder Plot. To apologise for his neglect, he gave in a short copy of verses, entitled *Somnium*, containing a common thought: "that the Muse had come to him in his sleep, and whispered, that it did not become him to write on such subjects as politics; he should confine himself to humbler themes:" but the versification was truly Virgilian.

He had a love and respect for Jorden, not for his literature, but for his worth. "Whenever (said he) a young man becomes Jorden's pupil, he becomes his son."

Having given such a specimen of his poetical powers, he was asked by Mr. Jorden, to translate Pope's *Messiah* into Latin verse, as a Christmas exercise³. He performed it with uncommon rapidity, and in so masterly a manner, that he obtained great applause from it, which ever after kept him high in the estimation of his college, and, indeed, of all the university.

It is said, that Mr. Pope expressed himself concerning it in terms of strong approbation. [The poem having been shown to him by a son of Dr. Arbuthnot, then a gentleman commoner of Christ-church, was read, and returned with this encomium: "The writer of this poem will leave it a question for posterity, whether his or mine be the original."] Dr. Taylor told me, that it was first printed for old Mr. Johnson, without the knowledge of his son, who was very angry when he heard of it. A Miscellany of Poems collected by a person of the name of Husbands⁴, was published at Oxford in 1731. In that Miscellany, Johnson's Translation of the *Messiah* appeared, with this modest motto from Scaliger's *Poeticks*, "*Ex alieno ingenio Poeta, ex suo tantum versificator.*"

I am not ignorant that critical objections have been made to this and other specimens of Johnson's Latin poetry. I acknowledge myself not competent to decide on a question of such extreme nicety. But I am satisfied with the just and discriminative eulogy pronounced upon it by my friend Mr. Courtenay, [in his *Poetical Review of the Literary and Moral Character of Dr. Johnson.*]

"And with like ease, his vivid lines assume
The garb and dignity of ancient Rome.—
Let college *verse-men* trite conceits express,
Trick'd out in splendid shreds of Virgil's dress:

³ [If Dr. Hall's inferences from the dates in the college books be correct, this must have been the Christmas immediately following his entry into college.—Ed.]

⁴ [John Husbands, the editor of this Miscellany, was a cotemporary of Johnson at Pembroke College, having been admitted a fellow and A. M. in 1728.—HALL.]

From playful Ovid cull the tinsel phrase,
 And vapid notions hitch in pilfer'd lays;
 Then with mosaic art the piece combine,
 And boast the glitter of each dulcet line:
 Johnson adventur'd boldly to transfuse
 His vigorous sense into the Latin muse;
 Aspir'd to shine by unreflected light,
 And with a Roman's ardor *think* and write.
 He felt the tuneful Nine his breast inspire,
 And, like a master, wak'd the soothing lyre:
 Horatian strains a grateful heart proclaim,
 While Sky's wild rocks resound his *Thralia's*
 name¹—

Hesperia's plant, in some less skilful hands,
 To bloom a while, factitious heat demands:
 Though glowing Maro a faint warmth supplies,
 The sickly blossom in the hot-house dies:
 By Johnson's genial culture, art, and toil,
 Its root strikes deep, and owns the fost'ring soil;
 Imbibes our sun through all its swelling veins,
 And grows a native of Britannia's plains."

The "morbid melancholy," which was lurking in his constitution, and to which we may ascribe those particularities, and that aversion to regular life, which, at a very early period, marked his character, gathered such strength in his twentieth year, as to afflict him in a dreadful manner. While he was at Lichfield, in the college vacation of the year 1729², he felt himself overwhelmed with a horrible hypochondria, with perpetual irritation, fretfulness, and impatience; and with a dejection, gloom, and despair, which made existence misery. From this dismal malady he never afterwards was perfectly relieved; and all his labours, and all his enjoyments, were but temporary interruptions of its baleful influence. How wonderful, how unsearchable are the ways of God! Johnson, who was blest with all the powers of genius and understanding in a degree far above the ordinary state of human nature, was at the same time visited with a disorder so afflictive, that they who know it by dire experience, will not envy his exalted endowments. That it was, in some degree, occasioned by a defect in his nervous system, that inexplicable part of our frame, appears highly probable. He told Mr. Paradise³ that he was sometimes so languid

and inefficient, that he could not distinguish the hour upon the town-clock.

Johnson, upon the first violent attack of this disorder, strove to overcome it by forcible exertions⁴. He frequently walked to Birmingham and back again, and tried many other expedients, but all in vain. His expression concerning it to me was, "I did not then know how to manage it." His distress became so intolerable, that he applied to Dr. Swinfen, physician in Lichfield, his godfather⁵, and put into his hands a state of his case, written in Latin. Dr. Swinfen was so much struck with the extraordinary acuteness, research, and eloquence of this paper, that in his zeal for his godson he showed it to several people. His daughter, Mrs. Desmoulins, who was many years humanely supported in Dr. Johnson's house in London, told me, that upon his discovering that Dr. Swinfen had communicated his case, he was so much offended, that he was never afterwards fully reconciled to him. He indeed had good reason to be offended; for though Dr. Swinfen's motive was good, he inconsiderately betrayed a matter deeply interesting and of great delicacy, which had been intrusted to him in confidence; and exposed a complaint of his young friend and patient, which in the superficial opinion of the generality of mankind, is attended with contempt and disgrace.

But let not little men triumph upon knowing that Johnson was an *HYPOCHONDRIACK*, was subject to what the learned, philosophical, and pious Dr. Cheyne has so well treated under the title of "The English Malady." Though he suffered severely from it, he was not therefore degraded. The powers of his great mind might be

part of his life in London; in the literary circles of which he was generally known and highly esteemed. He seems to have been a good classical scholar, and certainly spoke most European languages (amongst the rest, modern Greek and Turkish) with great facility. This unusual accomplishment was probably the cause of his intimacy with Sir William Jones, to whom we learn (*Teignmouth's Life of Jones*, p. 221.) that he addressed a distich in ancient Greek, which had the singular honour of being copied by the hand of the celebrated Duchess of Devonshire. Mr. Paradise became intimate with Johnson in the latter portion of the Doctor's life; was a member of his Essex-street club; and attended his funeral. Mr. Paradise died, at his house in Titchfield-street, 12 Dec. 1795.—Ed.]

⁴ [It appears, from his own account of his father (*ante*, p. 10), that he thought exercise and change of place alleviated this disease, which he inherited from him. It seems that he did not, in his own mind, connect this disease with the scrofula, which he derived, as he thought, from his mother, or, as Dr. Swinfen believed, from his nurse.—Ed.]

⁵ [See *ante*, p. 15.—Ed.]

¹ [This refers to a Latin ode addressed to Mrs. Thrale from the Isle of Skie, which will be mentioned in its proper place, under 6th September, 1773.—Ed.]

² [It seems, as Dr. Hall suggests, probable, that this is a mistake for 1730: Johnson appears to have remained in college during the vacation of 1729, and we have no trace of him in the year 1730, during which he was, possibly, labouring under this malady, and, on that account, absent from college.—Ed.]

³ [John Paradise, Esq. D. C. L. of Oxford, and F. R. S., was of Greek extraction, the son of the English Consul at Salonica, where he was born: he was educated at Padua, but resided the greater



GEORGE CHEYNE M.D.

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troubled, and their full exercise suspended at times; but the mind itself was ever entire. As a proof of this, it is only necessary to consider, that when he was at the very worst, he composed that state of his own case, which showed an uncommon vigour, not only of fancy and taste, but of judgement. I am aware that he himself was too ready to call such a complaint by the name of *madness*; in conformity with which notion, he has traced its gradations, with exquisite nicety, in one of the chapters¹ of his *RASSELAS*. But there is surely a clear distinction between a disorder which affects only the imagination and spirits, while the judgement is sound, and a disorder by which the judgement itself is impaired. This distinction was made to me by the late Professor Gaubius of Leyden, physician to the Prince of Orange, in a conversation which I had with him several years ago, and he expanded it thus: "If (said he) a man tell me that he is grievously disturbed, for that he *imagines* he sees a ruffian coming against him with a drawn sword, though at the same time he is *conscious* it is a delusion, I pronounce him to have a disordered imagination; but if a man tell me that he *sees* this, and in consternation calls to me to look at it, I pronounce him to be *mad*."

It is a common effect of low spirits or melancholy, to make those who are afflicted with it imagine that they are actually suffering those evils which happen to be most strongly presented to their minds. Some have fancied themselves to be deprived of the use of their limbs, some to labour under acute diseases, others to be in extreme poverty; when, in truth, there was not the least reality in any of the suppositions; so that when the vapours were dispelled, they were convinced of the delusion. To Johnson, whose supreme enjoyment was the exercise of his reason, the disturbance or obscuration of that faculty was the evil most to be dreaded. Insanity, therefore, was the object of his most dismal apprehension; and he fancied himself seized by it, or approaching to it, at the very time when he was giving proofs of a more than ordinary soundness and vigour of judgement. That his own diseased imagination should have so far deceived him is strange; but it is stranger still that some of his friends should have given credit to his groundless opinion, when they had such undoubted proofs that it was totally fallacious; though it is by no means surprising that those who wish to depreciate him should, since his death, have laid hold of this circumstance, and insisted upon it with very unfair aggravation².

Amidst the oppression and distraction of a disease which very few have felt in its full extent, but many³ have experienced in a lighter degree, Johnson, in his writings, and in his conversation, never failed to display all the varieties of intellectual excellence. In his march through this world to a better, his mind still appeared grand and brilliant, and impressed all around him with the truth of Virgil's noble sentiment—

"*Igneus est ollis vigor et caelestis origo.*"

The history of his mind as to religion is an important article. I have mentioned the early impressions made upon his tender imagination by his mother, who continued her pious cares with assiduity, but, in his opinion, not with judgement. "Sunday (said he) was a heavy day to me when I was a boy. My mother confined me on that day, and made me read 'The Whole Duty of Man,' from a great part of which I could derive no instruction. When, for instance, I had read the chapter on theft, which from my infancy I had been taught was wrong, I was no more convinced that theft was wrong than before; so there was no accession of knowledge. A boy should be introduced to such books, by having his attention directed to the arrangement, to the style, and other excellencies of composition; that the mind being thus engaged by an amusing variety of objects may not grow weary."

He communicated to me the following particulars upon the subject of his religious progress. "I fell into an inattention to religion, or an indifference about it, in my ninth year. The church at Lichfield, in which we had a seat, wanted reparation, so I was to go and find a seat in other churches; and having bad eyes, and being awkward about this, I used to go and read in the fields on Sunday. This habit continued till my fourteenth year; and still I find a great

reason for concealing that passage of Mr. Hector's paper which is restored in p. 18, but Johnson himself was not so scrupulous. He says, in a letter to Dr. Warton (which will be found under 24 Dec. 1754), "Poor dear Collins! I have been often *near his state*, and therefore have it in great commiseration." It is wonderful, that Boswell does not see the inconsistency of blaming others for repeating what Johnson himself frequently avowed, and what Boswell himself *first* told the world. See *ante*, p. 10.—ED.]

³ [Mr. Boswell himself, as will be seen by his own complaints, and as was well known to his friends, was himself occasionally afflicted with this morbid depression of spirits, and was, at intervals, equally liable to paroxysms of what may be called *morbid vivacity*. He wrote, as Mr. D'Israeli observes, a Series of Essays in the London Magazine, under the title of the "Hypochondriac," commencing in 1777, and carried on till 1782.—ED.]

¹ [Ch. 53. on the Dangerous Prevalence of Imagination.—ED.]

² [This, it is to be presumed, was Boswell's

reluctance to go to church. I then became a sort of *lax talker* against religion, for I did not much *think* against it; and this lasted till I went to Oxford, where it would not be *suffered*. When at Oxford, I took up 'Law's Serious Call to a Holy Life,' expecting to find it a dull book (as such books generally are), and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found Law quite an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion, after I became capable of rational inquiry¹. From this time forward religion was the predominant object of his thoughts; though, with the just sentiments of a conscientious Christian, he lamented that his practice of its duties fell far short of what it ought to be.

This instance of a mind such as that of Johnson being first disposed, by an unexpected incident, to think with anxiety of the momentous concerns of eternity, and of "what he should do to be saved," may for ever be produced in opposition to the superficial and sometimes profane contempt that has been thrown upon those occasional impressions which it is certain many Christians have experienced; though it must be acknowledged that weak minds, from an erroneous supposition, that no man is in a state of grace who has not felt a particular conversion, have, in some cases, brought a degree of ridicule upon them; a ridicule, of which it is inconsiderate or unfair to make a general application.

How seriously Johnson was impressed with a sense of religion, even in the vigour of his youth, appears from the following passage in his minutes kept by way of diary:

"Sept. 7, 1736². I have this day entered upon my 28th year. Mayest thou, O God, enable me, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake, to spend this in such a manner, that I may receive comfort from it at the hour of death, and in the day of judgement! Amen."

¹ [Mr. Boswell here adds a note, complaining that Mrs. Piozzi had, in her *Anecdotes*, misrepresented this matter: the misrepresentation, after all, is not great, and the editor therefore omits a long controversial note.—ED.]

² [This Boswell has borrowed, without acknowledgement, from Sir J. Hawkins (p. 163). But it is to be observed, that after a prayer on his birthday in 1738, Johnson (on transcribing it in 1768) adds, "This is the first solemn prayer of which I have a copy; whether I composed any before this, I question." Pr. and Med. p. 3. He had either forgotten the prayer of 1736, or considered it only an occasional ejaculation, and not a *solemn* prayer. But serious and pious meditations and resolutions had been early familiar to his mind. He writes, in 1764, that "from almost the earliest time that he could remember, he had been forming schemes for a *better life*." Pr. and Med. p. 57.—ED.]

The particular course of his reading while at Oxford, and during the time of vacation which he passed at home, cannot be traced. [He had but little relish for mathematical learning, and was content with such a degree of knowledge in physicks, as he could not but acquire in the ordinary exercises of the place: his fortunes and circumstances had determined him to no particular course of study, and were such as seemed to exclude him from every one of the learned professions.] Enough has been said of his irregular mode of study. He told me, that from his earliest years he loved to read poetry, but hardly ever read any poem to an end; that he read Shakspeare at a period so early, that the speech of the Ghost in Hamlet terrified him when he was alone; that Horace's Odes were the compositions in which he took most delight³, and it was long before he liked his Epistles and Satires. He told me what he read *solidly* at Oxford was Greek; not the Grecian historians, but Homer and Euripides, and now and then a little Epigram; that the study of which he was the most fond was Metaphysicks, but he had not read much, even in that way. I always thought that he did himself injustice in his account of what he had read, and that he must have been speaking with reference to the vast portion of study which is possible, and to which a few scholars in the whole history of literature have attained; for when I once asked him whether a person, whose name I have now forgotten, studied hard, he answered, "No, sir. I do not believe he studied hard. I never knew a man who studied hard. I conclude, indeed, from the effects, that some men have studied hard, as Bentley and Clarke." Trying him upon that criterion upon which he formed his judgement of others, we may be absolutely certain, both from his writings and his conversation, that his reading was very extensive. Dr. Adam Smith,⁴ than whom few were

³ [Though some of his odes are easy, and in what he no doubt thought the Horatian style, we shall see that to Miss Carter he confessed a fondness for Martial, and his epigrams certainly were influenced by that partiality. Dr. Hall has a small volume of Hendecasyllabic poetry, entitled "Poetæ Rusticantis Literatum Otium sive Carmina Andree Francisci Landesii. Lond. 1713;" which belonged to Johnson, and some peculiarities of the style of these verses may be traced in his college compositions.—ED.]

⁴ [Boswell might have selected, if not a better judge, at least better authority, for Adam Smith had comparatively little intercourse with Johnson, and the sentence pronounced is one which could only be justified by an intimate literary acquaintance. But Boswell's *nationality* (though he fancied he had quite subdued it) inclined him to quote the eminent *Scottish* professor.

better judges on this subject, once observed to me, that "Johnson knew more books than any man alive." He had a peculiar facility in seizing at once what was valuable in any book, without submitting to the labour of perusing it from beginning to end. He had, from the irritability of his constitution, at all times, an impatience and hurry when he either read or wrote. A certain apprehension arising from novelty, made him write his first exercise at college twice over; but he never took that trouble with any other composition: and we shall see that his most excellent works were struck off at a heat, with rapid exertion¹.

Yet he appears, from his early notes or memorandums in my possession, to have at various times attempted, or at least planned, a methodical course of study, according to computation, of which he was all his life fond, as it fixed his attention steadily upon something without, and prevented his mind from preying upon itself. Thus I find in his hand-writing the number of lines in each of two of Euripides's Tragedies, of the Georgicks of Virgil, of the first six books of the Æneid, of Horace's Art of Poetry, of three of the books of Ovid's Metamorphoses, of some parts of Theocritus, and of the tenth Satire of Juvenal; and a table, showing at the rate of various numbers a day (I suppose, verses to be read), what would be, in each case, the total amount in a week, month and year. [In his Prayers and Meditations there are frequent computations of this kind applied to the Scriptures.

"I resolve to study the Scriptures; I hope in the original languages. Six hundred and forty verses every Sunday will nearly comprise the Scriptures in a year.

"The plan which I formed for reading the Scriptures was to read six hundred verses in the Old Testament, and two hundred in the New, every week."²

No man had a more ardent love of literature, or a higher respect for it, than Johnson. His apartment in Pembroke College was that upon the second floor over the gateway. The enthusiast of learning will ever contemplate it with veneration. One day, while he was sitting in it quite alone, Dr. Panting³, then master of the College, whom he called "a fine Jacobite fellow," over-

heard him uttering this soliloquy in his strong emphatic voice: "Well, I have a mind to see what is done in other places of learning. I'll go and visit the Universities abroad. I'll go to France and Italy. I'll go to Padua. And I'll mind my business. For an *Athenian* blockhead is the worst of all blockheads³."

Dr. Adams told me that Johnson, while he was at Pembroke College, "was caressed and loved by all about him, was a gay and frolicsome fellow, and passed there the happiest part of his life." But this is a striking proof of the fallacy of appearances, and how little any of us know of the real internal state even of those whom we see most frequently; for the truth is, that he was then depressed by poverty, and irritated by disease. When I mentioned to him this account as given me by Dr. Adams, he said "Ah, sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolick. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by my literature and my wit; so I disregarded all power and all authority."

The Bishop of Dromore [Percy] observes in a letter to me, "The pleasure he took in vexing the tutors and fellows has been often mentioned. But I have heard him say, what ought to be recorded to the honour of the present venerable master of that college, the Reverend William Adams, D. D. who was then very young⁴, and one of the junior fellows; that the mild but judicious expostulations of this worthy man, whose virtue awed him, and whose learning he revered, made him really ashamed of himself, 'though I fear (said he) I was too proud to own it.'

"I have heard from some of his contemporaries that he was generally seen lounging at the college gate, with a circle of young students round him, whom he was entertaining with wit, and keeping from their studies, if not spiring them up to rebellion against the college discipline, which in his maturer years he so much extolled."

[There are preserved in Pembroke College some of these themes, or exer- Ed.

³ I had this anecdote from Dr. Adams, and Dr. Johnson confirmed it. Bramston, in his "Man of Taste," has the same thought:

"Sure, of all blockheads, scholars are the worst."—
BOSWELL.

Johnson's meaning, however, is, that a scholar who is a blockhead, must be the worst of all blockheads, because he is without excuse. But Bramston, in the assumed character of an ignorant coxcomb, maintains, that *all* scholars are blockheads, on account of their scholarship.—J. BOSWELL.

⁴ [Dr. Adams was about two years older than Johnson, having been born in 1707. He became a Fellow of Pembroke in 1723, D. D. in 1756, and Master of the College in 1775.—HALL.]

We shall see many instances of a similar (not illaudable) disposition.—Ed.]

¹ He told Dr. Burney, that he never wrote any of his works that were printed twice over. Dr. Burney's wonder at seeing several pages of his "Lives of the Poets" in manuscript, with scarce a blot or erasure, drew this observation from him.—MALONE.

² [Dr. Matthew Panting, Master of Pembroke, is stated, in the *Historical Register*, to have died 26th Nov. 1729; but Dr. Hall informs me that his death was *certainly* in Feb. 1738.—Ed.]

cises, both in prose and verse: the following, though the two first lines are awkward, has more point and pleasantry than his epigrams usually have. It may be surmised that the college beer was at this time indifferent.

“*Mea nec Falerna
Temperant vites, neque Formiani
Pocula colles.*”

“*Quid mirum Maro quod dignè canit arma vi-
rumque,*

*Quid quod putidulum nostra Camæna sonat?
Limosum nobis Promus dat callidus haustum,
Virgilio vires uva Falerna dedit.*

*Carmina vis nostri scribant meliora Poetæ?
Ingenium jubeas purior haustus alat!*”

Another, is in a graver and better style.

“*Adjecere bonæ paulo plus artis Athenæ.*”

“*Quas natura dedit dotes, Academiâ promit;
Dat menti propriis Musa nitere bonis.
Materiam statûe sic præbet marmora tellus,
Saxea Phidiacâ spirat imago manu!*”

He very early began to attempt keeping notes or memorandums, by way of a diary of his life. I find, in a parcel of loose leaves, the following spirited resolution, to contend against his natural indolence:

“*Oet. 1729. Desidiæ valedixi; syrenis
istiis cantibus surdam posthac aurem ob-
versurus.*—I bid farewell to Sloth, being resolved henceforth not to listen to her siren strains.”

I have also in my possession a few leaves of another *Libellus*, or little book, entitled *ANNALES*, in which some of the early particulars of his history are registered in Latin.

I do not find that he formed any close intimacies with his fellow-collegians. But Dr. Adams told me that he contracted a love and regard for Pembroke College, which he retained to the last. A short time before his death he sent to that college a present of all² his works, to be deposited in their library; and he had thoughts of leaving to it his house at Lichfield; but his friends who were about him very properly dissuaded him from it, and he bequeathed it to some poor relations. He took a pleasure in boast-

¹ [Johnson repeated this idea in the Latin verses on the termination of his Dictionary, entitled ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, but not, as the editor thinks, so elegantly as in the epigram. These themes, with much other information (which is distinguished by the addition of his name), have been supplied by the Rev. George William Hall, D. D. now Master of Pembroke College, who has felt a generous anxiety to contribute as much as was in his power to the history of him whom Pembroke must reckon as one of her most illustrious sons.—ED.]

² [Certainly not *all*, and those which we have are not *all* marked as presented by him.—HALL.]

ing of the many eminent men who had been educated at Pembroke. In this list are found the names of Mr. Hawkins the Poetry Professor, Mr. Shenstone, Sir William Blackstone, and others³: not forgetting the celebrated popular preacher, Mr. George Whitefield, of whom, though Dr. Johnson did not think very highly, it must be acknowledged that his eloquence was powerful, his views pious and charitable, his assiduity almost incredible; and that, since his death, the integrity of his character has been fully vindicated. Being himself a poet, Johnson was peculiarly happy in mentioning how many of the sons of Pembroke were poets; adding, with a smile of sportive triumph, “*Sir, we are a nest of singing birds.*”

He was not, however, blind to what he thought the defects of his own college: and I have, from the information of Dr. Taylor, a very strong instance of that rigid honesty which he ever inflexibly preserved. Taylor had obtained his father’s consent to be entered of Pembroke, that he might be with his schoolfellow Johnson, with whom, though some years older than himself, he was very intimate. This would have been a great comfort to Johnson. But he fairly told Taylor that he could not, in conscience, suffer him to enter where he knew he could not have an able tutor. He then made inquiry all round the University, and having found that Mr. Bateman of Christchurch was the tutor of highest reputation, Taylor was entered of that college⁴. Mr. Bateman’s lectures were so excellent, that Johnson used to come and get them at second-hand from Taylor, till his poverty being so extreme, that his shoes were worn out, and his feet appeared through them, he saw that this humiliating circumstance was perceived by the Christchurch men, and he came no more. He was too proud to accept of money, and somebody having set a pair of new shoes at his door, he threw them away with indignation. How must we feel when we read such an anecdote of Samuel Johnson!

His spirited refusal of an eleemosynary supply of shoes arose, no doubt, from a proper pride. But, considering his ascetic disposition at times, as acknowledged by himself in his Meditations, and the exaggeration with which some have treated the peculiarities of his character, I should not wonder to hear it ascribed to a principle of superstitious mortification; as we are told by

³ See Nash’s History of Worcestershire, vol. i. p. 529.

⁴ [Authoritatively and circumstantially as this story is told, there is good reason for disbelieving it altogether. Taylor was admitted commoner of Christchurch, June 27, 1730: but it will be seen in the notes in the next page, that Johnson left Oxford six months before.—ED.]

Tursellinus, in his *Life of St. Ignatius Loyola*, that this intrepid founder of the order of Jesuits, when he arrived at Goa, after having made a severe pilgrimage through the eastern deserts, persisted in wearing his miserable shattered shoes, and when new ones were offered him, rejected them as an unsuitable indulgence.

The *res angusta domi*¹ prevented him from having the advantage of a complete academical education. The friend to whom he had trusted for support had deceived him. His debts in college, though not great, were increasing; and his scanty remittances from Lichfield, which had all along been made with great difficulty, could be supplied no longer, his father having fallen into a state of insolvency. Compelled, therefore, by irresistible necessity, he left the college in autumn, 1731, without a degree, having been a member of it little more than three years².

Dr. Adams, the worthy and respectable master of Pembroke College, has generally had the reputation of being Johnson's tutor. The fact, however, is, that, in 1731, Mr. Jorden quitted the college, and his pupils were transferred to Dr. Adams; so

¹ [Notwithstanding what has been said on this subject, as far as we can judge from a cursory view of the weekly account in the buttery books, Johnson appears to have lived as well as the other commoners and scholars, and he left no college debts.—HALL.]

² [He was not quite three years a member of the college, having been entered Oct. 31, 1728, and his name having been finally removed Oct. 8, 1731. It would appear by temporary suspensions of his name, and replacements of it, as if he had contemplated an earlier departure from college, and had been induced to continue on with the hope of returning: this, however, he never did after his absence, Dec. 1729, having kept a continuous residence of sixty weeks.—HALL.]

[It will be observed, that Mr. Boswell slurs over the years 1729, 1730, and 1731, under the general inference that they were all spent at Oxford; but Dr. Hall's accurate statement of dates from the college books, proves that Johnson *personally* left college 12th Dec. 1729, though his *name* remained on the-books near two years longer, viz. till 8th Oct. 1731. Here then are two important years, the 21st and 22d of his age, to be accounted for; and Mr. Boswell's assertion (a little farther on), that he could not have been assistant to Anthony Blackwell, *because* Blackwell died in 1730, before Johnson had left college, falls to the ground. That these two years were not pleasantly or profitably spent, may be inferred from the silence of Johnson and all his friends about them. It is due to Pembroke to note particularly this absence, because that institution possesses (on the foundation of Sir J. Bennett, Lord Ossulston), two scholarships, to one of which Johnson would have been eligible, and probably (considering his claims) elected in 1730, had he been a candidate.—ED.]

that had Johnson returned, Dr. Adams *would have been his tutor*. It is to be wished that this connexion had taken place. His equal temper, mild disposition, and politeness of manners, might have insensibly softened the harshness of Johnson, and infused into him those more delicate charities, those *petites morales*, in which, it must be confessed, our great moralist was more deficient than his best friends could fully justify. Dr. Adams paid Johnson this high compliment. He said to me at Oxford, in 1776, "I was his nominal tutor; but he was above my mark." When I repeated it to Johnson, his eyes flashed with grateful satisfaction, and he exclaimed, "That was liberal and noble³."

And now (I had almost said *poor*) Samuel Johnson returned to his native city, destitute, and not knowing how he should gain even a decent livelihood. His father's misfortunes in trade rendered him unable to support his son: [he had become insolvent, if not, as Dr. Johnson ^{Hawk.} told Sir J. Hawkins, an actual ^{o. 17.} bankrupt]; and for some time there appeared no means by which he could maintain himself. In December of this year his father died⁴.

The state of poverty in which he died, appears from a note in one of Johnson's little diaries of the following year, which strongly displays his spirit and virtuous dignity of mind.

"1732, Julii 15. *Undecim aureos de-*

³ [This seems hardly consistent with the preceding facts. If Adams called himself his *nominal* tutor, *only* because the pupil was above his mark, the expression would be *liberal and noble*; but if he was his nominal tutor, *only* because he *would have been* his tutor if Johnson had returned, the case is different, and Boswell is, either way, guilty of an inaccuracy, which (however trifling) he would not have forgiven in Hawkins or Mrs. Piozzi. Nor does there seem any reason for the regret (disparaging towards Mr. Jorden) which Boswell expresses, that "this connexion between Johnson and Dr. Adams had not taken place;" for Johnson, as we have seen (*ante*, p. 21), gave Jorden the highest moral praise, by saying, that "when a young man became his *pupil*, he became his *son*." Of the regard which his pupils felt for Mr. Jorden, Dr. Hall has pointed out a remarkable instance in the *Monthly Chronicle* for November, 1729. "About this time, the Rev. Mr. Jorden, B. D., Fellow of Pembroke College, in Oxford, was presented, by Mr. Vyse, a young gentleman, his pupil, to the rectory of Standon, in Staffordshire, vacant by the death of the Rev. Mr. Jarvis."—ED.]

⁴ [Among the MSS. of Pembroke College are a few little bills for books had by Mr. Walmesley of Michael Johnson, with letters from the widow, the son Nathanael, and others about payment, which declare the state of poverty she was left in.—HALL.]

posui, quo die quicquid ante matris funus (quod serum sit precor) de paternis bonis sperari licet, viginti scilicet libras accepi. Usque adeo mihi fortuna fingenda est. Interea, ne paupertate vires animi languescant, nec in flagitia egestas abigat, cavendum. I layed by eleven guineas on this day, when I received twenty pounds, being all that I have reason to hope for out of my father's effects, previous to the death of my mother; an event which, I pray God, may be very remote. I now, therefore, see that I must make my own fortune. Meanwhile, let me take care that the powers of my mind be not debilitated by poverty, and that indigence do not force me into any criminal act."

Johnson was so far fortunate, that the respectable character of his parents, and his own merit, had, from his earliest years, secured him a kind reception in the best families in Lichfield. Among these I can mention Mr. Howard, Dr. Swinfen, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Levett, Captain Garrick, father of the great ornament of the British stage; but above all, Mr. Gilbert Walmsley¹, Registrar of the Ecclesiastical Court of Lichfield, whose character, long after his decease, Dr. Johnson has, in his life of Edmund Smith, thus drawn in the glowing colours of gratitude:

"Of Gilbert Walmsley, thus presented to my mind, let me indulge myself in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the first friends that literature procured me, and I hope that, at least, my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

"He was of an advanced age, and I was only not a boy, yet he never received my notions with contempt. He was a whig, with all the virulence and malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion did not keep us apart. I honoured him, and he endured me.

"He had mingled with the gay world without exemption from its vices or its fol-

¹ Mr. Warton informs me, "that this early friend of Johnson was entered a commoner of Trinity College, Oxford, aged 17, in 1698; and is the author of many Latin verse translations in the *Gentleman's Magazine*. One of them is a translation (*Gent. Mag.* vol. 15, p. 102) of "My time, O ye Muses, was happily spent," &c. He [was born in 1680, and] died August 3, 1751. A monument to his memory has been erected in the cathedral of Lichfield, with an inscription written by Mr. Seward, one of the prebendaries.—BOSWELL. [He was the son of W. Walmsley, LL. D. chancellor of the diocese of Lichfield from 1698 to 1713, who was elected M. P. for that city in 1701, and brother of Dr. Walmsley, Dean of Lichfield, who died in Sept. 1730. Johnson, and Boswell after him, spell this name Walmsley, but the true spelling is that which has been adopted in this note.—Ed.]

lies; but had never neglected the cultivation of his mind. His belief of revelation was unshaken; his learning preserved his principles; he grew first regular, and then pious.

"His studies had been so various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great, and what he did not immediately know, he could, at least, tell where to find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and such his copiousness of communication, that it may be doubted whether a day now passes, in which I have not some advantage from his friendship.

"At this man's table² I enjoyed many cheerful and instructive hours, with companions, such as are not often found—with one who has lengthened, and one who has gladdened life—with Dr. James, whose skill in physick will be long remembered; and with David Garrick, whom I hoped to have gratified with this character of our common friend. But what are the hopes of man! I am disappointed by that stroke of death, which has eclipsed the gaiety of nations, and impoverished the publick stock of harmless pleasure."

In these families he passed much time in his early years. In most of them he was in the company of ladies, particularly at Mr. Walmsley's, whose wife and sisters-in-law, of the name of Aston, and daughters of a baronet, were remarkable for good breeding; so that the notion which has been industriously circulated and believed, that he never was in good company till late in life, and, consequently, had been confirmed in coarse and ferocious manners by long habits, is wholly without foundation. Some of the ladies have assured me, they recollected him well when a young man, as distinguished for his complaisance.

And that his politeness³ was not merely occasional and temporary, or confined to the circles of Lichfield, is ascertained by the testimony of a lady⁴, who, in a paper with which I have been favoured by a daughter of his intimate friend and physician, Dr. Lawrence, thus describes Dr. Johnson some years afterwards:

"As the particulars of the former part of

² [This acknowledgement does not seem quite adequate to Johnson's obligations to Mr. Walmsley, who certainly gave him more active proofs of his benevolence than the mere admission to his table and society.—Ed.]

³ [There is, it will be observed, in all this, no testimony to Johnson's personal *politeness*, but only to his having been admitted to polite company.—Ed.]

⁴ [It were to be wished that Boswell had stated the name of this lady, as he has given us so much reason to distrust the information derived from "the circles of Lichfield."—Ed.]

Dr. Johnson's life do not seem to be very accurately known, a lady hopes that the following information may not be unacceptable.

"She remembers Dr. Johnson on a visit to Dr. Taylor¹, at Ashbourn, some time between the end of the year 37, and the middle of the year 40; she rather thinks it to have been after he and his wife were removed to London. During his stay at Ashbourn, he made frequent visits to Mr. Meynell, at Bradley, where his company was much desired by the ladies of the family, who were, perhaps, in point of elegance and accomplishments, inferior to few of those with whom he was afterwards acquainted. Mr. Meynell's eldest daughter was afterwards married to Mr. Fitzherbert, father to Mr. Alleyne Fitzherbert, lately minister to the court of Russia [and since Lord St. Helens.] Of her, Dr. Johnson said, in Dr. Lawrence's study, that she had the best understanding he ever met with in any human being. At Mr. Meynell's he also commenced that friendship with Mrs. Hill Boothby, sister to the present Sir Brook Boothby, which continued till her death².

Hawk. p. 316. *The young woman whom he used to call Molly Aston*, was sister to Sir Thomas Aston, and daughter to a baronet; she was also sister to the wife of his friend, Mr. Gilbert Walmsley³. Be-

¹ [Dr. Taylor must have been at this time a very young man. His residence at Ashbourn was patrimonial, and not ecclesiastical, as has been supposed. The house and grounds which Dr. Johnson's visits have rendered remarkable are now the property of Mr. Webster, Dr. Taylor's legatee.—Ed.]

² [For the last few years of her life this lady corresponded with Dr. Johnson, and some of her letters are appended to the *Account of his early Life*, so often quoted. Indeed, they occupy 126 pages of the 144 of which that little publication consists. Miss Seward hints that there was an early attachment between Johnson and Miss Boothby. Miss Seward's anecdotes are so justly discredited, that it is hardly worth observing, that there appears no ground whatsoever for this story; and the published letters, which are of a very serious and pious cast, not only negative Miss Seward's gossiping fancies, but throw some doubt on the accuracy of Mr. Boswell's informant, for they seem to prove that there had not been any intimate or even early acquaintance between the parties. Miss Boothby was born in 1708, and died in 1756.—Ed.]

³ Sir Thomas Aston, Bart., who died in January, 1724-5, left one son, named Thomas also, and eight daughters. Of the daughters, Catherine married Johnson's friend, the Hon. Henry Hervey; Margaret, Gilbert Walmsley. Another of these ladies [Jane] married the Rev. Mr. Gastrell [the clergyman who cut down Shakespeare's mulberry-tree]. Mary, or *Molly* Aston, as she was usually called, became the wife of Captain Brodie

sides his intimacy with the above-mentioned persons, who were surely people of rank and education, while he was yet at Lichfield he used to be frequently at the house of Dr. Swinfen, a gentleman of very ancient family in Staffordshire, from which, after the death of his elder brother, he inherited a good estate. He was, beside, a physician of very extensive practice; but for want of due attention to the management of his domestic concerns, left a very large family in indigence. One of his daughters, Mrs. Desmoulins, afterwards found an asylum in the house of her old friend, whose doors were always open to the unfortunate, and who well observed the precept of the Gospel, for he 'was kind to the unthankful and to the evil⁴.'"

In the forlorn state of his circumstances, he accepted of an offer to be employed as usher in the school of Market-Bosworth, in Leicestershire, to which it appears, from one of his little fragments of a diary, that he went on foot, on the 16th of July.—

"*Julii 16. Bosvortiam pedes petii.*" But it is not true, as Gent. Mag. liv. 957. has been erroneously related, that

he was assistant to the famous Anthony Blackwall, whose merit has been honoured by the testimony of Bishop Hurd⁵, who was his scholar; for Mr. Blackwall died on the 8th of April, 1730⁶, more than a year before Johnson left the University.

This employment was very irksome to him in every respect, and he complained

of the Navy. Another sister, who was unmarried, was living at Lichfield in 1776.—MALONE. [Of the latter, whose name was Elizabeth, Miss Seward has put an injurious character into the mouth of Dr. Johnson (in a dialogue which she reports herself to have had with him). She died in 1785, in the 78th year of her age.—Ed.]

⁴ [Here Mr. Boswell has admitted the insinuation of an anonymous informant against poor Mrs. Desmoulins, as bitter, surely, as any thing which can be charged against any of his rival biographers; and, strange to say, this scandal is conveyed in a quotation from the *book of Charity*. Mrs. Desmoulins was probably not popular with "the ladies of Lichfield." She is supposed to have forfeited the protection of her own family by, what they thought, a derogatory marriage. Her husband, it is said, was a writing-master.—Ed.]

⁵ There is here (as Mr. James Boswell observes to me) a slight inaccuracy. Bishop Hurd, in the Epistle Dedicatory prefixed to his *Commentary on Horace's Art of Poetry*, &c., does not praise Blackwall, but the Rev. Mr. Budworth, headmaster of the grammar-school at Brewood, in Staffordshire, who had himself been bred under Blackwall.—MALONE. [We shall see presently, on the authority of Mr. Nichols, that Johnson proposed himself to Mr. Budworth as an assistant.—Ed.]

⁶ [See *ante*, p. 27.—Ed.]

grievously of it in his letters to his friend, Mr. Hector, who was now settled as a surgeon at Birmingham. The letters are lost; but Mr. Hector recollects his writing "that the poet had described the dull sameness of his existence in these words, '*Vitam continet una dies*' (one day contains the whole of my life); that it was unvaried as the note of the cuckoo; and that he did not know whether it was more disagreeable for him to teach, or the boys to learn, the grammar rules." His general aversion to this painful drudgery was greatly enhanced by a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school, in whose house, I have been told, he officiated as a kind of domestic chaplain, so far, at least, as to say grace at table, but was treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness; and, after suffering for a few months such complicated misery¹, he relinquished a situation which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest aversion, and even a degree of horror.²

¹ [Mr. Malone, in a note on this passage, states that he had read a letter of Johnson's to a friend, dated 27th July, 1732, saying that he had then recently left Sir Wolstan Dixie's house, and that he had some hopes of succeeding, either as master or usher, in the school of Ashbourn.

If Mr. Malone be correct in the date of this letter, and Mr. Boswell be also right in placing the extract from the diary under the year 1732, Johnson's sojourn at Bosworth could have been not more than *ten* days, a time too short to be characterized as "a period of complicated misery," and to be remembered during a long life "with the strongest aversion and horror." It must also be observed, that according to the statement of Messrs. Boswell and Malone compared with the College books, Johnson's life, from December, 1729, to the beginning of 1733, is wholly unaccounted for, except the ten days supposed to have been so lamentably spent at Bosworth. The only probable solution of these difficulties is, that the walk to Bosworth on the 16th July, 1732, was not his first appearance there; but that having been called to Lichfield, to receive his share of his father's property, which, we have seen, p. 27, that he did on the 15th July, he returned to Bosworth on the 16th, perhaps for the purpose of making arrangements for finally leaving it, which he did within ten days. It seems very extraordinary, that the laborious diligence, and the lively curiosity of Hawkins, Boswell, Murphy, and Malone, were able to discover so little of the history of Johnson's life from December, 1729, to his marriage in July, 1736, and that what they have told should be liable to so much doubt. It may be inferred, that it was a period to which Johnson looked back with little satisfaction, and of which he did not love to talk; though it cannot be doubted that, during these five or six important years, he must have collected a large portion of that vast stock of information, with which he afterwards surprised and delighted the world.—Ed.]

² [There seems reason to suspect that Sir Wol-

But it is probable that at this period, whatever uneasiness he may have endured, he laid the foundation of much future eminence by application to his studies.

Being now again totally unoccupied, he was invited by Mr. Hector to pass some time with him at Birmingham, as his guest, at the house of Mr. Warren, with whom Mr. Hector lodged and boarded. Mr. Warren was the first established bookseller in Birmingham, and was very attentive to Johnson, who he soon found could be of much service to him in his trade, by his knowledge of literature; and he even obtained the assistance of his pen in furnishing some numbers of a periodical Essay, printed in the newspaper of which Warren was proprietor. After very diligent inquiry, I have not been able to recover those early specimens of that particular mode of writing by which Johnson afterwards so greatly distinguished himself.

He continued to live as Mr. Hector's guest for about six months, and then hired lodgings in another part of the town³, finding himself as well situated at Birmingham as he supposed he could be any where, while he had no settled plan of life, and very scanty means of subsistence. He made some valuable acquaintances there, amongst whom were Mr. Porter, a mercer, whose widow he afterwards married, and Mr. Taylor, who, by his ingenuity in mechanical inventions and his success in trade acquired an immense fortune. But the comfort of being near Mr. Hector, his old school-fellow and intimate friend, was Johnson's chief inducement to continue here.

In what manner he employed his pen at this period, or whether he derived from it any pecuniary advantage, I have not been able to ascertain. He probably got a little money from Mr. Warren; and we are certain, that he executed here one piece of literary labour, of which Mr. Hector has favoured me with a minute account. Having mentioned that he had read at Pembroke College a Voyage to Abyssinia, by Lobo (a Portuguese Jesuit), and that he thought an Abridgement and translation of it from the French into English might be an useful and profitable publication, Mr. Warren and Mr. Hector joined in urging him to undertake it. He accordingly agreed; and the book not being to be found in Birmingham

stan Dixie's temper was, to say the least of it *irregular* and violent; but it must also be recollected, that Johnson's own mind had recently been in a state of morbid disturbance.—Ed.]

³ Sir John Hawkins states, from one of Johnson's diaries, that he lodged, in June, 1733, in Birmingham, at the house of a person named Jervis, probably a relation of Mrs. Porter, whom he afterwards married, and whose maiden name was Jervis.—MALONE.

ham, he borrowed it of Pembroke College. A part of the work being very soon done, one Osborn, who was Mr. Warren's printer, was set to work with what was ready, and Johnson engaged to supply the press with copy as it should be wanted; but his constitutional indolence soon prevailed, and the work was at a stand. Mr. Hector, who knew that a motive of humanity would be the most prevailing argument with his friend, went to Johnson, and represented to him that the printer could have no other employment till this undertaking was finished, and that the poor man and his family were suffering. Johnson, upon this, exerted the powers of his mind, though his body was relaxed. He lay in bed with the book, which was a quarto, before him, and dictated while Hector wrote. Mr. Hector carried the sheets to the press, and corrected almost all the proof sheets, very few of which were even seen by Johnson. In this manner, with the aid of Mr. Hector's active friendship, the book was completed, and was published in 1735, with London upon the title-page, though it was in reality printed at Birmingham, a device too common with provincial publishers. For this work he had from Mr. Warren only the sum of five guineas.

This being the first prose work of Johnson, it is a curious object of inquiry how much may be traced in it of that style which marks his subsequent writings with such peculiar excellence—with so happy an union of force, vivacity, and perspicuity. I have perused the book with this view, and have found that here, as I believe in every other translation, there is in the work itself no vestige of the translator's own style; for the language of translation being adapted to the thoughts of another person, insensibly follows their cast, and, as it were, runs into a mould that is ready prepared.

Thus, for instance, taking the first sentence that occurs at the opening of the book, p. 4:

"I lived here above a year, and completed my studies in divinity; in which time some letters were received from the fathers of Ethiopia, with an account that Sultan Segned, Emperour of Abyssinia, was converted to the church of Rome; that many of his subjects had followed his example, and that there was a great want of missionaries to improve these prosperous beginnings. Every body was very desirous of seconding the zeal of our fathers, and of sending them the assistance they requested; to which we were the more encouraged, because the emperour's letter informed our provincial that we might easily enter his dominions by the way of Dancala; but, unhappily, the secretary wrote Geila for Dan-

cala, which cost two of our fathers their lives."

Every one acquainted with Johnson's manner will be sensible that there is nothing of it here; but that this sentence might have been composed by any other man.

But, in the Preface, the Johnsonian style begins to appear; and though use had not yet taught his wing a permanent and equitable flight, there are parts of it which exhibit his best manner in full vigour. I had once the pleasure of examining it with Mr. Edmund Burke, who confirmed me in this opinion by his superiour critical sagacity, and was, I remember, much delighted with the following specimen:

"The Portuguese traveller, contrary to the general vein of his countrymen, has amused his reader with no romantick absurdity, or incredible fictions; whatever he relates, whether true or not, is at least probable; and he who tells nothing exceeding the bounds of probability, has a right to demand that they should believe him who cannot contradict him.

"He appears, by his modest and unaffected narration, to have described things as he saw them, to have copied nature from the life, and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks that destroy with their eyes, his crocodiles devour their prey without tears, and his cataracts fall from the rocks without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants.

"The reader will here find no regions cursed with irremediable barrenness, or blest with spontaneous fecundity; no perpetual gloom, or unceasing sunshine; nor are the nations here described, either devoid of all sense of humanity, or consummate in all private or social virtues. Here are no Hottentots without religious policy or articulate language; no Chinese perfectly polite and completely skilled in all sciences; he will discover, what will always be discovered by a diligent and impartial inquirer, that wherever human nature is to be found, there is a mixture of vice and virtue, a contest of passion and reason; and that the Creator doth not appear partial in his distributions, but has balanced, in most countries, their particular inconveniences by particular favours."

Here we have an early example of that brilliant and energetick expression, which, upon innumerable occasions in his subsequent life, justly impressed the world with the highest admiration.

Nor can any one, conversant with the writings of Johnson, fail to discern his hand in this passage of the Dedication to John Warren, Esq. of Pembrookshire, though it is ascribed to Warren the bookseller.

"A generous and elevated mind is distin-

guished by nothing more certainly than an eminent degree of curiosity¹; nor is that curiosity ever more agreeably or usefully employed, than in examining the laws and customs of foreign nations. I hope, therefore, the present I now presume to make, will not be thought improper; which, however, it is not my business as a dedicatory to commend, nor as a bookseller to depreciate."

It is reasonable to suppose, that his having been thus accidentally led to a particular study of the history and manners of Abyssinia, was the remote occasion of his writing, many years afterwards, his admirable philosophical tale, the principal scene of which is laid in that country.

Johnson returned to Lichfield early in 1734, and in August that year he made an attempt to procure some little subsistence by his pen; for he published proposals for printing by subscription the Latin Poems of Politian²:

"*Angeli Politiani Poemata Latina, quibus, Notas cum historiâ Latine poeseos à Petrarchæ ævo ad Politiani tempora deductâ, et vitâ Politiani fusius quam antehac enarratâ, addidit* SAM. JOHNSON³."

It appears that his brother Nathanael had taken up his father's trade⁴; for it is

¹ See *Rambler*, No. 103. [Curiosity is the thirst of the soul, &c.—Ed.]

² May we not trace a fanciful similarity between Politian and Johnson? Huetius, speaking of Paulus Pelissonius Fontanerius, says "—in quo Natura, ut olim in Angelo Politiano, deformitatem oris excellentis ingenii præstantia compensavit."—Comment. de reb. ad eum pertin. Edit. Amstel. 1718. p. 200.—BOSWELL. [In this learned masquerade of *Paulus Pelissonius Fontanerius*, we have some difficulty in detecting Madame de Sevigné's friend, *M. Pelisson*, of whom another of that lady's friends, M. de Guilleragues, used the phrase, which has since grown into a proverb, "qu'il abusait de la permission qu'ont les hommes d'être laids."—See *Madame de Sevigné's letter*, 5th Jan. 1674.—Huet, Bishop of Avranches, wrote Memoirs of his own time, in Latin, from which Boswell has extracted this scrap of pedantry.—Ed.]

³ The book was to contain more than thirty sheets; the price to be two shillings and sixpence at the time of subscribing, and two shillings and sixpence at the delivery of a perfect book in quires.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [Nathanael kept the shop as long as he lived, as did his mother, after him, till her death, though on somewhat, it is to be presumed, of a lowered scale. Miss Seward, who, in such a matter as this, may perhaps be trusted, tells us that Miss Lucy Porter, from the age of twenty to her fortieth year (when she was raised to a state of competency by the death of her eldest brother), "had boarded in Lichfield with Dr. Johnson's mother, who still kept that little bookseller's shop by which her husband had supplied the scanty means of subsistence; meantime Lucy Porter kept the best com-

mentioned that "subscriptions are taken in by the Editor, or N. Johnson, bookseller, of Lichfield." Notwithstanding the merit of Johnson, and the cheap price at which this book was offered, there were not subscribers enough to ensure a sufficient sale; so the work never appeared, and, probably, never was executed.

We find him again this year at Birmingham, and there is preserved the following letter from him to Mr. Edward Cave⁵, the original compiler and editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*:

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Nov. 25, 1734

"SIR,—As you appear no less sensible than your readers of the defects of your poetical article, you will not be displeased, if, in order to the improvement of it, I communicate to you the sentiments of a person, who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

"His opinion is, that the publick would not give you a bad reception, if, beside the current wit of the month, which a critical examination would generally reduce to a narrow compass, you admitted not only poems, inscriptions, &c. never printed before, which he will sometimes supply you with; but likewise short literary dissertations in Latin or English, critical remarks on authours ancient or modern, forgotten poems that deserve revival, or loose pieces, like Floyer's⁶, worth preserving. By this method, your literary article, for so it might be called, will, he thinks, be better recommended to the publick than by low jests, awkward buffoonery, or the dull scurrilities of either party.

"If such a correspondence will⁷ be agree-

pany in our little city, but would make no engagement on market-days, lest *Grammy*, as she called Mrs. Johnson, should catch cold by serving in the shop. There Lucy Porter took her place, standing behind the counter, nor thought it a disgrace to thank a poor person who purchased from her a penny battle-door."—*Lett.* 1. 117.—Ed.]

⁵ Miss Cave, the grand-niece of Mr. Edw. Cave, has obligingly shown me the originals of this and the other letters of Dr. Johnson to him, which were first published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, with notes by Mr. John Nichols, the worthy and indefatigable editor of that valuable miscellany, signed N.; some of which I shall occasionally transcribe in the course of this work.—BOSWELL.

[The present editor has felt justified by this and many other testimonies to the accuracy of Mr. Nichols, to admit into his notes and even into the text the information supplied by him.—Ed.]

⁶ Sir John Floyer's *Treatise on Cold Baths*. *Gent. Mag.* 1734, p. 197.

⁷ [Is the use of *will* and *shall* in this sentence quite grammatical? Dr. Johnson seems sometimes to have used the word *shall* where it is now

able to you, be pleased to inform me in two posts, what the conditions are on which you shall expect it. Your late offer¹ gives me no reason to distrust your generosity. If you engage in any literary projects besides this paper, I have other designs to impart, if I could be secure from having others reap the advantage of what I should hint.

“Your letter by being directed to S. Smith, to be left at the Castle in Birmingham, Warwickshire, will reach

“Your humble servant.”

Mr. Cave has put a note on this letter, “Answered Dec. 2.” But whether any thing was done in consequence of it we are not informed².

[In the year 1735, Mr. Walmesley’s kindness endeavoured to procure him the mastership of the grammar school at Solihull in Warwickshire: this and the cause of failure appear by the following curious and characteristical letter, addressed to Mr. Walmesley, and preserved in the records of Pembroke College:

“Solihull ye 30 August, 1735.

“SIR,—I was favoured with yours of ye 15th inst. in due time, but deferred answering it til now, it taking up some time to informe the flæofees [of the school] of the contents thereof; and before they would return an Answer, desired some

more customary to employ *may*: for instance, speaking of one dead, he said, “I trust he *shall* find mercy;”—and again, in his “Prayers and Meditations” (see extract, *post*, p. 35), Dr. Hall (who has examined the original in the Pembroke MSS.), informs me, that “no rational wish is now left but that we *may* meet at last,” &c. was at first written that we *shall* meet, and afterwards altered to *may*. It may seem presumptuous to differ from Dr. Johnson on a grammatical point, but the *norma loquendi* of the present day would hardly tolerate the use of the word *shall* in any of the foregoing cases.—ED.]

¹ A prize of fifty pounds for the best poem on “Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.” See *Gentleman’s Magazine*, vol. iv. p. 560.—

NICHOLS. [A second prize of forty pounds, and some others of inferior value, were offered by Cave, at subsequent periods, for poems on similar subjects. It seems extraordinary that Johnson, whose wants were urgent, and who was glad, so soon after, to sell his LONDON for ten pounds, did not endeavour to obtain Cave’s prize. Did his dignity of mind reject such a Mæcenas as Cave? or did he make the attempt and afterwards conceal his failure in prudential silence?—ED.]

² [Sir J. Hawkins, who gives us to understand that he had seen Cave’s answer, says, that “he therein accepted the services of Johnson, and retained him as a correspondent and contributor to his Magazine” (p. 29), but his subsequent correspondence with Cave seems to negative this early connexion.—ED.]

time to make enquiry of ye carактер of Mr. Johnson, who all agree that he is an excellent scholar, and upon that account deserves much better than to be schoolmaster of Solihull. But then he has the carактер of being a very haughty ill-natured gent, and y^e he has such a way of distorting his flæce (wh^h though he caⁿt help) y^e gent. think it may affect some young ladds; for these two reasons he is not approved on, y^e late master Mr. Crompton’s huffing the flæofees being stil in their memory. However we are all exstreanly obliged to you for thinking of us, and for proposeing so good a schollar, but more especially is, dear sir, your very humble servant,

HENRY GRESWOLD.”

It was probably prior to this that a more humble attempt to obtain the situation of assistant in Mr. Budworth’s school, at Brewood, had also failed, and for the same reasons. Mr. Budworth was certainly no stranger to the learning and abilities of Johnson, as he more than once lamented his having been under the necessity of declining the engagement from an apprehension that the paralytic affection under which Johnson laboured through life might become the object of imitation or ridicule amongst his pupils. [This anecdote Captain Budworth, his grandson, confirmed to Mr. Nichols.]

Johnson had, from his early youth, been sensible to the influence of female charms. When at Stourbridge school, he was much enamoured of Olivia Lloyd, a young quaker, to whom he wrote a copy of verses, which I have not been able to recover³; but with what facility and elegance he could warble the amorous lay will appear from the following lines which he wrote for his friend Mr. Edmund Hector.

Verses to a Lady, on receiving from her a Sprig of Myrtle.

“What hopes, what terrors does thy gift create,
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate!”

³ He also wrote some amatory verses, before he left Staffordshire, which our author appears not to have seen. They were addressed “to Miss Hickman, playing on the spinet.” At the back of this early poetical effusion, of which the original copy, in Johnson’s handwriting, was obligingly communicated to me [as it also was to the present editor] by Mr. John Taylor, is the following attestation:

“Written by the late Dr. Samuel Johnson, on my mother, then Miss Hickman, playing on the Spinet. J. Turton.”

Dr. Turton, the physician, writer of this certificate, who died in April, 1806, in his 71st year, was born in 1735. The verses in question, therefore, which have been printed in some late editions of Johnson’s poems, must have been written before that year.—Miss Hickman, it is believed, was a lady of Staffordshire.—MALONE.

The myrtle, ensign of supreme command,
 Consign'd by Venns to Melissa's hand;
 Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
 Now grants, and now rejects a lover's prayer.
 In myrtle shades oft sings the happy swain,
 In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain:
 The myrtle crowns the happy lovers' heads,
 The unhappy lover's grave the myrtle spreads;
 O then the meaning of thy gift impart,
 And ease the throbbings of an anxious heart!
 Soon must this bough, as you shall fix his doom,
 Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb!"

¹ Mrs. Piozzi gives the following account of this little composition from Dr. Johnson's own relation to her, on her inquiring whether it was rightly attributed to him.—"I think it is now just forty years ago, that a young fellow had a sprig of myrtle given him by a girl he courted, and asked me to write him some verses that he might present her in return. I promised, but forgot; and when he called for his lines at the time agreed on.—Sit still a moment, (says I) dear *Mund*, and I'll fetch them thee—so stepped aside for five minutes, and wrote the nonsense you now keep such a stir about."—*Anecdotes*, p. 34.

In my first edition I was induced to doubt the authenticity of this account, by the following circumstantial statement in a letter to me from Miss Seward of Lichfield:—"I know those verses were addressed to Lucy Porter, when he was enamoured of her in his boyish days, two or three years before he had seen her mother, his future wife. He wrote them at my grandfather's [Mr. Hunter, the schoolmaster], and gave them to Lucy in the presence of my mother, to whom he showed them on the instant. She used to repeat them to me, when I asked her for *the Verses Dr. Johnson gave her on a Sprig of Myrtle, which he had stolen or begged from her bosom*. We all know honest Lucy Porter to have been incapable of the mean vanity of applying to herself a compliment not intended for her." Such was this lady's statement, which I make no doubt she supposed to be correct; but it shows how dangerous it is to trust too implicitly to traditional testimony and ingenious inference; for Mr. Hector has lately assured me that Mrs. Piozzi's account is in this instance accurate, and that he was the person [as his name *Edmund* additionally proves] for whom Johnson wrote those verses, which have been erroneously ascribed to Mr. Hammond.

I am obliged in so many instances to notice Mrs. Piozzi's incorrectness of relation, that I gladly seize this opportunity of acknowledging, that however often, she is not always inaccurate.

The authour having been drawn into a controversy with Miss Anna Seward, in consequence of the preceding statement (which may be found in "the *Gentleman's Magazine*," vol. lxiii. and lxiv.), received the following letter from Mr. Hector, on the subject:

"DEAR SIR,—I am sorry to see you are engaged in altercation with a lady, who seems unwilling to be convinced of her errors. Surely it would be more ingenuous to acknowledge than to persevere.

"Lately, in looking over some papers I meant to burn, I found the original manuscript of the

His juvenile attachments to the fair sex were, however, very transient: and it is certain, that he formed no criminal connexion whatsoever. Mr. Hector, who lived with him in his younger days in the utmost intimacy and social freedom, has assured me, that even at that ardent season his conduct was strictly virtuous in that respect; and that though he loved to exhilarate himself with wine, he never knew him intoxicated but once.

In a man whom religious education has secured from licentious indulgences, the passion of love, when once it has seized him, is exceedingly strong; being unimpaired by dissipation, and totally concentrated in one object. This was experienced by Johnson, when he became the fervent admirer of Mrs. Porter, after her first husband's death. Miss Porter told me, that when he was first introduced to her mother, his appearance was very forbidding; he was then lean and lank, so that his immense structure of bones was hideously striking to the eye, and the scars of the scrofula were deeply visible. He also wore his hair, which was straight and stiff, and separated behind; and he often had, seemingly, convulsive starts and odd gesticulations, which tended to excite at once surprise and ridicule. Mrs. Porter was so

myrtle, with the date on it, 1731, which I have enclosed.

"The true history (which I could swear to) is as follows: Mr. Morgan Graves, the elder brother of a worthy clergyman near Bath, with whom I was acquainted, waited upon a lady in this neighbourhood, who at parting presented him the branch. He showed it me, and wished much to return the compliment in verse. I applied to Johnson, who was with me, and in about half an hour dictated the verses which I sent to my friend.

"I most solemnly declare, at that time, Johnson was an entire stranger to the Porter family; and it was almost two years after that I introduced him to the acquaintance of Porter, whom I bought my clothes of.

"If you intend to convince this obstinate woman, and to exhibit to the publick the truth of your narrative, you are at liberty to make what use you please of this statement.

"I hope you will pardon me for taking up so much of your time. Wishing you *multos et felices annos*, I shall subscribe myself your obliged humble servant, E. HECTOR.—Birmingham, Jan. 9th, 1794."—BOSWELL. [Of the supposed attachment of Dr. Johnson to the daughter of his wife there is no evidence whatsoever, but the assertion of Miss Seward, whose anecdotes have turned out to be in almost every instance worse than nothing; and, in this case, if it were worth while to seek for any evidence beyond Mr. Hector's, the dates would disprove Miss Seward's statement, which it is but too evident that she made with the view of disparaging and ridiculing Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

much engaged by his conversation that she overlooked all these external disadvantages, and said to her daughter, "this is the most sensible man that I ever saw in my life."

Though Mrs. Porter was double the age of Johnson¹, and her person and manner, as described to me by the late Mr. Garrick, were by no means pleasing to others², she must have had a superiority of understanding and talents, as she certainly inspired him with more than ordinary passion; and she having signified her willingness to accept of his hand, he went to Lichfield to ask his mother's consent to the marriage; which he could not but be conscious was a very imprudent scheme, both on account of their disparity of years, and her want of fortune. But Mrs. Johnson knew too well the ardour of her son's temper, and was too tender a parent to oppose his inclinations³.

I know not for what reason the marriage ceremony was not performed at Birmingham; but a resolution was taken that it should be at Derby, for which place the bride and bridegroom set out on horseback, I suppose in very good humour. But though Mr. Topham Beauclerk used archly to mention Johnson's having told him with much gravity, "Sir, it was a love-marriage on both sides," I have had from my illustrious friend the following curious account of their journey to church upon the nuptial morn: (9th July)—"Sir, she had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should use her lover like a dog. So, sir, at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me; and, when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was

¹ Though there was a great disparity of years between her and Dr. Johnson, she was not quite so old as she is here represented, having only completed her forty-eighth year in the month of February preceding her marriage, as appears by the following extract from the parish-register of Great Peatling, in Leicestershire, which was obligingly made at my request, by the Hon. and Rev. Mr. Ryder, rector of Lutterworth, in that county:

"Anno Dom. 1688-9, Elizabeth, daughter of William Jervis, Esq. and Mrs. Anne, his wife, was born the 4th day of February and *manè*, baptized 16th day of the same month by Mr. Smith, curate of Little Peatling.

"John Allen, Vicar."—MALONE.

[Johnson's size, hard features, and decided manners, probably made him look older than he really was, and diminished the apparent disproportion.—Ed.]

² That in Johnson's eyes she was handsome, appears from the epitaph which he caused to be inscribed on her tomb-stone not long before his own death, and which may be found in a subsequent page, under the year 1752.—MALONE.

³ [See *ante*, p. 11, n.—Ed.]

not to be made the slave of caprice; and I resolved to begin as I meant to end. I therefore pushed on briskly, till I was fairly out of her sight. The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not miss it; and I contrived that she should soon come up with me. When she did, I observed her to be in tears."

This, it must be allowed, was a singular beginning of connubial felicity; but there is no doubt that Johnson, though he thus showed a manly firmness, proved a most affectionate and indulgent husband to the last moment of Mrs. Johnson's life: and in his "Prayers and Meditations," we find very remarkable evidence that his regard and fondness for her never ceased, even after her death.

[For instance:

"Wednesday, March 28, 1770.

"This is the day on which, in 1752, I was deprived of poor dear Tetty. Having left off the practice of thinking on her with some particular combinations, I have recalled her to my mind of late less frequently; but when I recollect the time in which we lived together, my grief for her departure is not abated; and I have less pleasure in any good that befalls me, because she does not partake it. On many occasions, I think what she would have said or done. When I saw the sea at Brighthelmstone, I wished for her to have seen it with me. But with respect to her, no rational wish is now left, but that we may meet at last where the mercy of God shall make us happy, and perhaps make us instrumental to the happiness of each other. It is now eighteen years."

He now set up a private academy, for which purpose he hired a large house, well situated near his native city. In the Gentleman's Magazine for 1736⁴, there is the following advertisement:

"At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by SAMUEL JOHNSON⁵."

But the only pupils that were put under his care were the celebrated David Garrick and his brother George, and a Mr. Offely,

⁴ [This project must have been formed before his marriage, for the advertisement appears in the Magazine for June and July, 1736. Is it not possible, that the obvious advantage of having a woman of experience to superintend an establishment of this kind may have contributed to a match so disproportionate in point of age?—Ed.]

⁵ [It may be observed, as an additional proof of the public respect for, and curiosity about, Dr. Johnson, that one of the few plates in Harwood's History of Lichfield is a view of "Edial Hall, the residence of Dr. Samuel Johnson;" and Mr. Harwood adds, "the house has undergone no material alteration since it was inhabited by this illustrious tenant."—*Har. Hist. Lich.* p. 564.—Ed.]

a young gentleman of good fortune who died early. As yet, his name had nothing of that celebrity which afterwards commanded the highest attention and respect of mankind. Had such an advertisement appeared after the publication of his *London*, or his *Rambler*, or his *Dictionary*, how would it have burst upon the world! with what eagerness would the great and the wealthy have embraced an opportunity of putting their sons under the learned tuition of Samuel Johnson! The truth, however, is, that he was not so well qualified for being a teacher of elements, and a conductor in learning by regular gradations, as men of inferior powers of mind. His own acquisitions had been made by fits and starts, by violent irruptions into the regions of knowledge; and it could not be expected that his impatience would be subdued, and his impetuosity restrained, so as to fit him for a quiet guide to novices. The art of communicating instruction, of whatever kind, is much to be valued; and I have ever thought that those who devote themselves to this employment, and do their duty with diligence and success, are entitled to very high respect from the community, as Johnson himself often maintained. Yet I am of opinion, that the greatest abilities are not only not required for this office, but render a man less fit for it.

While we acknowledge the justness of Thomson's beautiful remark,

“Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
And teach the young idea how to shoot!”

we must consider¹ that this delight is perceptible only by “a mind at ease,” a mind at once calm and clear; but that a mind gloomy and impetuous, like that of Johnson, cannot be fixed for any length of time in minute attention, and must be so frequently irritated by unavoidable slowness and error in the advances of scholars, as to perform the duty, with little pleasure to the teacher, and no great advantage to the pupils. Good temper is a most essential requisite in a preceptor. Horace paints the character as *bland*:

“—*Ut pueris olim dant crustula blandi
Doctores, elementa velint ut discere prima.*”

Johnson was not more satisfied with his situation as the master of an academy, than with that of the usher of a school; we need not wonder, therefore, that he did not keep his academy above a year and a half. From Mr. Garrick's account he did not appear to

¹ [Thomson's beautiful remark is just, only because the poet applies it to the first education of a child by its own fond parents, and not to the drudgery of hired instruction in the advanced stages of learning.—ED.]

have been profoundly revered by his pupils. His oddities of manner, and uncouth gesticulations, could not but be the subject of merriment to them; and in particular, the young rogues used to listen at the door of his bedchamber, and peep through the key-hole, that they might turn into ridicule his tumultuous and awkward fondness for Mrs. Johnson, whom he used to name by the familiar appellation of *Tetty* or *Tetsey*, which, like *Betty* or *Betsey*, is provincially used as a contraction for *Elizabeth*, her christian name, but which to us seems ludicrous, when applied to a woman of her age and appearance. Mr. Garrick described her to me as very fat, with a bosom of more than ordinary protuberance, with swelled cheeks, of a florid red, produced by thick painting, and increased by the liberal use of cordials; flaring and fantastick in her dress, and affected both in her speech and her general behaviour². I have seen Garrick exhibit her, by his exquisite talent of mimicry, so as to excite the heartiest bursts of laughter; but he, probably, as is the case in all such representations, considerably aggravated the picture.

That Johnson well knew the most proper course to be pursued in the instruction of youth³, is authentically ascertained by the following paper in his own hand-writing, given about this period to a relation, and now in possession of Mr. John Nichols:

“*Scheme for the Classes of a Grammar School.*”

“When the introduction, or formation of nouns and verbs, is perfectly mastered, let them learn

“*Corderius* by Mr. Clarke, beginning at

² [In Loggan's drawing of the company at Tonbridge Wells, in 1748, engraved and published in Richardson's Correspondence, vol. 3, Mrs. Johnson's figure is not inferior to that of the other ladies (some of whom were fashionable beauties) either in shape or dress; but it is a slight sketch, and too small and indistinct to be relied upon for details; but she must have been a silly woman to have contracted so disproportionate an alliance.—ED.]

³ [That this crude sketch, for the arrangement of the lower classes of a grammar school “*authentically ascertains* that Johnson well knew the *most proper* course to be pursued in the *instruction* of youth,” is a bold and illogical assertion. It may even be doubted whether it is good as far as it goes, and whether the beginning with authors of *inferior latinity*, and allowing the assistance of *translations*, be indeed the *most proper* course of classical instruction; nor are we, while ignorant of the peculiar circumstances for which the paper was drawn up, entitled to conclude that it contains Dr. Johnson's mature and general sentiments, on even the narrow branch of education to which it refers. Indeed, in the second paper, Johnson advises his friend not to read “the *latter* authors till you are well versed in those of the *purser* ages.”—ED.]

the same time to translate out of the introduction, that by this means they may learn the syntax. Then let them proceed to

“Erasmus, with an English translation, by the same authour.

“Class II. learns Eutropius and Cornelius Nepos, or Justin, with the translation.

“N. B. The first class gets for their part every morning the rules which they have learned before, and in the afternoon learns the Latin rules of the nouns and verbs.

“They are examined in the rules which they have learned, every Thursday and Saturday.

“The second class does the same whilst they are in Eutropius; afterwards their part is in the irregular nouns and verbs, and in the rules for making and scanning verses. They are examined as the first.

“Class III. Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* in the morning, and *Cæsar’s Commentaries* in the afternoon.

“Practise in the Latin rules till they are perfect in them; afterwards in Mr. Leeds’ *Greek Grammar*. Examined as before.

“Afterwards they proceed to *Virgil*, beginning at the same time to write themes and verses, and to learn Greek; from thence passing on to *Horace*, &c. as shall seem most proper¹.

“I know not well what books to direct you to, because you have not informed me what study you will apply yourself to. I believe it will be most for your advantage to apply yourself wholly to the languages, till you go to the university. The Greek authours I think it best for you to read are these:

“Cebes.

“Ælian.

“Lucian by Leeds. } Attick.

“Xenophon.

“Homer. } Ionick.

“Theocritus. } Dorick.

“Euripides. } Attick and Dorick.

“Thus you will be tolerably skilled in all the dialects, beginning with the Attick, to which the rest must be referred.

“In the study of Latin, it is proper not to read the latter authours, till you are well versed in those of the purest ages; as *Terence*, *Tully*, *Cæsar*, *Sallust*, *Nepos*, *Velleius Paterculus*, *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Phædrus*.

“The greatest and most necessary task still remains, to attain a habit of expression, without which knowledge is of little use. This is necessary in Latin, and more necessary in English; and can only be acquired by a daily imitation of the best and correctest authours.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

¹ [Mr. Boswell and all subsequent editors have printed these as *one* paper; but it seems clear that they are *two* separate schemes, the first for a school, the second for the individual studies of some young friend.—Ed.]

While Johnson kept his academy, there can be no doubt that he was insensibly furnishing his mind with various knowledge; but I have not discovered that he wrote any thing except a great part of his tragedy of *IRENE*. Mr. Peter Garrick, the elder brother of David, told me that he remembered Johnson’s borrowing the *Turkish History* of him, in order to form his play from it. When he had finished some part of it, he read what he had done to Mr. Walmsley, who objected to his having already brought his heroine into great distress, and asked him, “how can you possibly contrive to plunge her into deeper calamity!” Johnson, in sly allusion to the supposed oppressive proceedings of the courts of which Mr. Walmsley was registrar, replied, “Sir, I can put her into the *Spiritual Court*!”

Mr. Walmsley, however, was well pleased with this proof of Johnson’s abilities as a dramattick writer, and advised him to finish the tragedy, and produce it on the stage.

Johnson now thought of trying his fortune in London, the great field of genius and exertion, where talents of every kind have the fullest scope, and the highest encouragement. It is a memorable circumstance that his pupil David Garrick went thither at the same time², with intent to complete his education, and follow the profession of the law, from which he was soon diverted by his decided preference for the stage.

This joint expedition of these two eminent men to the metropolis, was many years afterwards noticed in an allegorical poem on *Shakspeare’s Mulberry-tree*, by Mr. Lovibond³, the ingenious authour of “*the Tears of Old May-day*.”

² Both of them used to talk pleasantly of this their first journey to London. Garrick, evidently meaning to embellish a little, said one day in my hearing, “We rode and tied.” And the Bishop of Killaloe (Dr. Barnard) informed me, that at another time, when Johnson and Garrick were dining together in a pretty large company, Johnson humorously ascertaining the chronology of something, expressed himself thus: “That was the year when I came to London with twopence halfpenny in my pocket.” Garrick, overhearing him, exclaimed, “Eh? what do you say? with twopence halfpenny in your pocket?”—JOHNSON: “Why, yes; when I came with twopence halfpenny in *my* pocket, and thou, Davy, with three halfpence in thine.”—BOSWELL. [This *may* have been said in raillery, but could not have been true. Indeed Boswell, in the next page, acknowledges that Johnson had a little money at his arrival; but, however that may be, Garrick, a young gentleman coming to town, not as an adventurer, but to complete his education and prepare for the bar, could not have been in such indigent circumstances.—Ed.]

³ [Edward Lovibond, esq. was a gentleman residing at Hampton, who wrote, it seems, for *his own* amusement (and probably succeeded

They were recommended to Mr. Colson¹, an eminent mathematician and master of an

in *that* object), but whose works were little known in his own day, and are now quite neglected, though Doctor Anderson has introduced him into the Scotch edition of the *British Poets*, and noticed the two productions mentioned in the text in the following hyperbolic strain:

“The English language, probably, cannot boast a finer example of the power of poetry than the ‘*Tears of Old May-day*,’ the happy union which it exhibits of *genius* and of *art* is so truly admirable, that it may be pronounced inimitable. His ‘*Mulberry-tree*,’ an allegorical tale, is equally remarkable for fertility of invention, facility of expression, and propriety of application. Garrick and Dr. Johnson are characterised with equal happiness and skill!!!”—*Life of Lovibond*. To the editor this boasted allegory seems little better than rhymed nonsense; the meaning (if it has any) seems to be, that Shakspeare’s works are a *mulberry-tree*, which Garrick climbs to gather the fruit, while Johnson, “less frolic,” puts his “mighty haunches” to the trunk and shakes down

“Wither’d leaves, wither’d limbs, blighted fruits, blighted flowers;”

and when “rubbish enough” has been shaken down, poor, *withered, blighted, rubbishy* Shakspeare is dismissed with the following elegant and complimentary salvo:

“Yet mistake me not, rabble, this tree’s a good tree;
Does honour, Dame Nature, to Britain and thee.
And the fruit on the top, take its merit in brief,
Makes a noble dessert, when the dinner’s *roast beef*.”

Mr. Lovibond leaves us to guess what the *roast beef* is, compared to which SHAKSPEARE is but a *plate of mulberries*.—ED.]

¹ The reverend John Colson was bred at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, and in 1728, when George the Second visited that university, was created master of arts. About that time he became first master of the free school at Rochester, founded by Sir Joseph Williamson. In 1759, he was appointed Lucasian Professor of Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, on the death of Professor Sanderson, and held that office till 1751, when he died. He published *Lectures on Experimental Philosophy*, translated from the French of l’Abbé Nodet, 8vo. 1732, and some other tracts. Our author, it is believed, was mistaken in stating him to have been master of an academy. Garrick, probably, during his short residence at Rochester, lived in his house as a private pupil.—MALONE.

[Mr. Malone’s note is not quite accurate. Mr. Colson was elected to Rochester school, not about 1728, but June 1, 1709; and the Abbé whose lectures Mr. Colson translated was *Nollet*, and not *Nodet*, and his lectures were not published in Paris till 1742. Mrs. Piozzi, and after her Mr. Malone, and, of course, all subsequent editors, have stated that the character of *Gelidus*, in the 24th Rambler, was meant to represent Mr. Colson; but this may be doubted, for, as Mr. Colson resided constantly at Rochester till his removal to Cambridge, it is not likely that Mr. Walmsley’s letter could produce any intercourse or acquaint-

ance, by the following letter from Mr. Walmsley:

“TO THE REVEREND MR. COLSON.

“Lichfield, March 2, 1737.

“DEAR SIR,—I had the favour of yours, and am extremely obliged to you; but I cannot say I had a greater affection for you upon it than I had before, being long since so much endeared to you, as well by an early friendship, as by your many excellent and valuable qualifications; and, had I a son of my own, it would be my ambition, instead of sending him to the university, to dispose of him as this young gentleman is.

“He, and another neighbour of mine, one Mr. Samuel Johnson, set out this morning for London together. David Garrick is to be with you early the next week, and Mr. Johnson to try his fate with a tragedy, and to get himself employed in some translation, either from the Latin or the French. Johnson is a very good scholar and poet, and I have great hopes will turn out a fine tragedy-writer. If it should any way lie in your way, doubt not but you would be ready to recommend and assist your countryman,

“G. WALMSLEY.”

How he employed himself upon his first coming to London is not particularly known². I never heard that he found any protection or encouragement by the means of Mr. Colson, to whose academy David Garrick went. Mrs. Lucy Porter told me, that Mr. Walmsley gave him a letter of introduction to Lintot his bookseller, and that Johnson wrote some things for him; but I imagine this to be a mistake, for I have discovered no trace of it, and I am pretty sure he told me, that Mr. Cave was the first publisher³ by whom his pen was engaged in London.

ance between him and Johnson: and it appears, from Davies’s *Life of Garrick* (vol. i. p. 14), a work revised by Johnson, that Mr. Colson’s character could have no resemblance to the absurdities of *Gelidus*. This gentleman, commonly called *Professor Colson*, must not be confounded with Mr. Colson, Fellow of University College, Oxford, who was, as Lord Stowell informs me, an intimate friend of Dr. Johnson’s, and not a little eccentric in his habits and manners.—ED.]

² One curious anecdote was communicated by himself to Mr. John Nichols. Mr. Wilcox, the bookseller, on being informed by him that his intention was to get his livelihood as an authour, eyed his robust frame attentively, and with a significant look, said, “You had better buy a porter’s knot.” He, however, added, “Wilcox was one of my best friends.”—BOSWELL.

[Wilcox could only have been *one of his best friends* by affording him employment; perhaps this observation may lead to a discovery of some of Johnson’s earlier publications.—ED.]

³ [Perhaps he meant that Cave was the first to whom he was regularly and constantly engaged; but Wilcox and Lintot may have employed him

He had a little money when he came to town, and he knew how he could live in the cheapest manner. His first lodgings were at the house of Mr. Norris, a staymaker, in Exeter-Street, adjoining Catherine-street, in the Strand. "I dined (said he) very well for eightpence, with very good company, at the Pine-Apple in New-street, just by. Several of them had travelled. They expected to meet every day; but did not know one another's names. It used to cost the rest a shilling, for they drank wine; but I had a cut of meat for sixpence, and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny; so that I was quite well served, nay, better than the rest, for they gave the waiter nothing¹."

He at this time, I believe, abstained entirely from fermented liquors: a practice to which he rigidly conformed for many years together, at different periods of his life².

occasionally; and Dodsley certainly printed his *London* before Cave had printed any thing of his but two or three trifles in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.—ED.]

¹ [But if we may trust Mr. Cumberland's recollection, he was about this time, or very soon after, reduced still lower; "for painful as it is to relate" (says that gentleman in his *Memoirs*, vol. 1. p. 355), "I have heard that illustrious scholar, Dr. Johnson, assert, and he never varied from the truth of fact, that he subsisted himself for a considerable space of time upon the scanty pittance of fourpence halfpenny per day." When we find Dr. Johnson tell unpleasant truths to, or of, other men, let us recollect that he does not appear to have spared himself on occasions in which he might be forgiven for having done so.—ED.]

² [At this time his abstinence from wine may, perhaps, be attributed to poverty, but in his subsequent life he was restrained from that indulgence by, as it appears, moral or rather medical considerations. He probably found by experience that wine, though it dissipated for a moment, yet eventually aggravated the hereditary disease under which he suffered; and perhaps it may have been owing to a long course of abstinence that his mental health seems to have been better in the latter than in the earlier portion of his life. He says, in his *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 73, "By abstinence from wine and suppers, I obtained sudden and great relief, and had freedom of mind restored to me; which I have wanted for all this year, without being able to find any means of obtaining it."—See also 16th September, 1773.—Selden had the same notions; for being consulted by a person of quality whose imagination was strangely disturbed, he advised him "not to disorder himself with eating or drinking; to eat very little supper, and say his prayers duly when he went to bed; and I (Selden) made but little question but he would be well in three or four days."—*Table Talk*, p. 17.

These remarks are important, because *depression of spirits* is too often treated on a contrary system, from ignorance of, or inattention to, what may be its *real cause*.—ED.]

His OFELLUS in the *Art of Living in London*, I have heard him relate, was an Irish painter, whom he knew at Birmingham, and who had practised his own precepts of economy for several years in the British capital. He assured Johnson, who, I suppose, was then meditating to try his fortune in London, but was apprehensive of the expense, "that thirty pounds a year was enough to enable a man to live there without being contemptible. He allowed ten pounds for clothes and linen. He said a man might live in a garret at eighteenpence a week; few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, 'Sir, I am to be found at such a place.' By spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, breakfast on bread and milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt-day* he went abroad, and paid visits." I have heard him more than once talk of his frugal friend, whom he recollected with esteem and kindness, and did not like to have one smile at the recital. "This man (said he, gravely) was a very sensible man, who perfectly understood common affairs: a man of a great deal of knowledge of the world, fresh from life, not strained through books. He borrowed a horse and ten pounds at Birmingham. Finding himself master of so much money, he set off for West Chester, in order to get to Ireland. He returned the horse, and probably the ten pounds too, after he got home."

Considering Johnson's narrow circumstances in the early part of his life, and particularly at the interesting æra of his launching into the ocean of London, it is not to be wondered at, that an actual instance, proved by experience, of the possibility of enjoying the intellectual luxury of social life upon a very small income, should deeply engage his attention, and be ever recollected by him as a circumstance of much importance. He amused himself, I remember, by computing how much more expense was absolutely necessary to live upon the same scale with that which his friend described, when the value of money was diminished by the progress of commerce. It may be estimated that double the money might now with difficulty be sufficient.

Amidst this cold obscurity, there was one brilliant circumstance to cheer him; he was well acquainted with Mr. Henry Hervey¹, one of the branches of the noble fam-

¹ The Honourable Henry Hervey, third son of the first Earl of Bristol, quitted the army and took orders. He married a sister of Sir Thomas Aston, by whom he got the Aston estate, and assumed the name and arms of that family.—Vide *Collins's Peerage*.—BOSWELL.

ily of that name, who had been quartered at Litchfield as an officer of the army, and had at this time a house in London, where Johnson was frequently entertained, and had an opportunity of meeting genteel company. Not very long before his death, he mentioned this, among other particulars of his life, which he was kindly communicating to me; and he described this early friend, "Harry Hervey," thus: "He was a very vicious¹ man, but very kind to me. If you call a dog HERVEY, I shall love him."

He told me he had now written only three acts of his *IRENE*, and that he retired for some time to lodgings at Greenwich, where he proceeded in it somewhat further, and used to compose, walking in the Park; but did not stay long enough at that place to finish it.

At this period we find the following letter from him to Mr. Edward Cave, which, as a link in the chain of his literary history, it is proper to insert:

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Greenwich, next door to the Golden Heart, Church-street, July 12, 1737.

"SIR,—Having observed in your papers very uncommon offers of encouragement to men of letters, I have chosen, being a stranger in London, to communicate to you the following design, which, I hope, if you join in it, will be of advantage to both of us.

"The History of the Council of Trent having been lately translated into French, and published with large notes by Dr. Le Courayer, the reputation of that book is so much revived in England, that, it is presumed, a new translation of it from the Italian², together with Le Courayer's notes from the French, could not fail of a favourable reception.

"If it be answered, that the History is

The Honourable Henry Hervey was nearly of the same age with Johnson, having been born about nine months before him, in the year 1709. He married Catherine, the sister of Sir Thomas Aston, in 1739; and as that lady had seven sisters, she probably succeeded to the Aston estate on the death of her brother under his will. Mr. Hervey took the degree of master of arts at Cambridge, at the late age of thirty-five, in 1744; about which time, it is believed, he entered into holy orders.—MALONE. [Mr. Hervey's acquaintance and kindness Johnson probably owed to his friend Mr. Walmsley.—Walmsley and Hervey, it will be recollected, married sisters.—ED.]

¹ [For the excesses which Dr. Johnson characterises as *vicious*, Mr Hervey was, probably, as much to be *pitied* as blamed. He was very *eccentric*.—ED.]

² [This proves that Johnson had now acquired Italian—probably directed to that study by the volume of Petrarch (mentioned *ante*, p. 19), the latter part of which contained his Italian poems.—ED.]

already in English, it must be remembered, that there was the same objection against Le Courayer's undertaking, with this disadvantage, that the French had a version by one of their best translators, whereas you cannot read three pages of the English history without discovering that the style is capable of great improvements; but whether those improvements are to be expected from this attempt, you must judge from the specimen, which, if you approve the proposal, I shall submit to your examination.

"Suppose the merit of the versions equal, we may hope that the addition of the notes will turn the balance in our favour, considering the reputation of the annotator.

"Be pleased to favour me with a speedy answer, if you are not willing to engage in this scheme; and appoint me a day to wait upon you, if you are.—I am, sir, your humble servant. SAM. JOHNSON."

It should seem from this letter, though subscribed with his own name, that he had not yet been introduced to Mr. Cave. We shall presently see what was done in consequence of the proposal which it contains.

In the course of the summer he returned to Lichfield, where he had left Mrs. Johnson, and there he at last finished his tragedy, which was not executed with his rapidity of composition upon other occasions, but was slowly and painfully elaborated. A few days before his death, while burning a great mass of papers, he picked out from among them the original unformed sketch of this tragedy, in his own hand-writing, and gave it to Mr. Langton, by whose favour a copy of it is now in my possession. It contains fragments of the intended plot and speeches for the different persons of the drama, partly in the raw materials of prose, partly worked up into verse; as also a variety of hints for illustration, borrowed from the Greek, Roman, and modern writers. The hand-writing is very difficult to be read, even by those who were best acquainted with Johnson's mode of penmanship, which at all times was very particular. The king having graciously accepted of this manuscript as a literary curiosity, Mr. Langton made a fair and distinct copy of it, which he ordered to be bound up with the original and the printed tragedy; and the volume is deposited in the king's library. His majesty was pleased to permit Mr. Langton to take a copy of it for himself.

The whole of it is rich in thought and imagery, and happy expressions; and of the *disjecta membra* scattered throughout, and as yet unarranged, a good dramatick poet might avail himself with considerable advantage. I shall give my readers some

³ [Disjecti membra poetæ. Hor.—ED.]

specimens of different kinds, distinguishing them by the Italic character.

“Nor think to say, here will I stop,
Here will I fix the limits of transgression,
Nor further tempt the avenging rage of heaven.
When guilt like this once harbours in the
breast,

Those holy beings, whose unseen direction
Guides through the maze of life the steps of
man,

Fly the detested mansions of impiety,
And quit their charge to horror and to ruin.”

A small part only of this interesting admonition is preserved in the play, and is varied, I think, not to advantage:

“The soul once tainted with so foul a crime,
No more shall glow with friendship’s hallow’d ar-
dour:

Those holy beings whose superior care
Guides erring mortals to the paths of virtue,
Alfrighted at impiety like thine,
Resign their charge to baseness and to ruin.”

“I feel the soft infection
Flush in my cheek, and wander in my veins.
Teach me the Grecian arts of soft persua-
sion.”

“Sure this is love, which heretofore I
conceived the dream of idle maids, and
wanton poets.”

“Though no comets or prodigies fore-
told the ruin of Greece, signs which heaven
must by another miracle enable us to un-
derstand, yet might it be foreshown, by
tokens no less certain, by the vices which
always bring it on.”

This last passage is worked up in the tragedy itself, as follows:

LEONTIUS.

“——That power that kindly spreads
The clouds, a signal of impending showers,
To warn the wand’ring linnet to the shade,
Beheld, without concern, expiring Greece,
And not one prodigy foretold our fate.

DEMETRIUS.

A thousand horrid prodigies foretold it;
A feeble government, eluded laws,
A factious populace, luxurious nobles,
And all the maladies of sinking states.
When public villany, too strong for justice,
Shows his bold front, the harbinger of ruin,
Can brave Leontius call for airy wonders,
Which cheats interpret, and which fools regard?
When some neglected fabrick nods beneath
The weight of years, and totters to the tempest,
Must heaven despatch the messengers of light,
Or wake the dead, to warn us of its fall?”

MAHOMET (TO IRENE). “I have tried
thee, and joy to find that thou deservest
to be loved by Mahomet,—with a mind great
as his own. Sure, thou art an error of na-
ture, and an exception to the rest of thy sex,

and art immortal; for sentiments like thine
were never to sink into nothing. I thought
all the thoughts of the fair had been to se-
lect the graces of the day, dispose the col-
ours of the flaunting (flowing) robe, tune
the voice and roll the eye, place the gem,
choose the dress, and add new roses to the
fading cheek, but—sparkling.”

Thus in the tragedy:

“Illustrious maid, new wonders fix me thine;
Thy soul completes the triumphs of thy face;
I thought, forgive my fair, the noblest aim,
The strongest effort of a female soul,
Was but to choose the graces of the day,
To tune the tongue, to teach the eyes to roll,
Dispose the colors of the flowing robe,
And add new roses to the faded cheek.”

I shall select one other passage, on ac-
count of the doctrine which it illustrates.

IRENE OBSERVES, “that the Supreme Be-
ing will accept of virtue, whatever outward
circumstances it may be accompanied with,
and may be delighted with varieties of wor-
ship: but is answered, That variety cannot
affect that Being, who, infinitely happy in
his own perfections, wants no external gra-
tifications; nor can infinite truth be delight-
ed with falsehood; that though he may
guide or pity those he leaves in darkness,
he abandons those who shut their eyes
against the beams of day.”

Johnson’s residence at Lichfield, on his
return to it at this time, was only for three
months; and as he had as yet seen but a
small part of the wonders of the metropolis,
he had little to tell his townsmen¹. He
related to me the following minute
anecdote of this period: “In the ²⁰ Sept.
last age, when my mother lived in ^{1773.}
London, there were two sets of people,
those who gave the wall, and those who
took it: the peaceable and the quarrelsome.
When I returned to Lichfield, after having
been in London, my mother asked me
whether I was one of those who gave the
wall, or those who took it. Now it is fix-
ed that every man keeps to the right; or,
if one is taking the wall, another yields it;
and it is never a dispute.”

He now removed to London with Mrs.
Johnson; but her daughter, who had lived
with them at Edial, was left with her rela-
tions² in the country. His lodgings were
for some time in Woodstock-street, near
Hanover-square, and afterwards in Castle-

¹ [On the contrary, if he lived after the man-
ner of his Ofellus, he probably saw more of com-
mon life than when he was, in his subsequent
residence, constrained by the presence of Mrs.
Johnson to more domestic and regular habits.—
Ed.]

² [She very soon, it appears, resided with old
Mrs. Johnson. See, ante p. 32. Ed.]

street, near Cavendish-square. As there is something pleasingly interesting, to many, in tracing so great a man through all his different habitations, I shall present my readers with an exact list of his lodgings and houses, in order of time, which, in placid condescension to my respectful curiosity, he one evening dictated to me, but without specifying how long he lived at each¹.

¹⁰ Oct
1779.

1. Exeter-street, off Catherine-street, Strand [1737].
2. Greenwich [1737].
3. Woodstock-street, near Hanover-square [1737].
4. Castle-street, Cavendish-square, No. 6 [1738].
5. Boswell-court.
6. Strand.
7. Strand again.
8. Bow-street.
9. Holborn.
10. Fetter-lane.
11. Holborn again [at the Golden Anchor, Holborn-bars, 1748].
12. Gough-square [1748].
13. Staple-inn [1758].
14. Gray's-inn.
15. Inner Temple-lane, No. 1 [1760].
16. Johnson-court, Fleet street, No. 7 [1765].
17. Bolt-court, Fleet-street, No. 8 [1777].

In the progress of his life I shall have occasion to mention some of them as connected with particular incidents, or with the writing of particular parts of his works. To some, this minute attention may appear trifling; but when we consider the punctilious exactness with which the different houses in which Milton resided have been traced by the writers of his life, a similar enthusiasm may be pardoned in the biographer of Johnson.

His tragedy being by this time, as he thought, completely finished and fit for the stage, he was very desirous that it should be brought forward. Mr. Peter Garrick told me, that Johnson and he went together to the Fountain tavern, and read it over, and that he afterwards solicited Mr. Fleetwood, the patentee of Drury-lane theatre, to have it acted at his house; but Mr. Fleetwood would not accept it, probably because it was not patronized by some man of high rank; and it was not acted till 1749, when his friend David Garrick was manager of that theatre.

¹ [This list Mr. Boswell placed under the date at which it was dictated to him. It seems more conveniently introduced here, and the editor has added, as far as he has discovered, the year in which Johnson *first* appears in any of these residences.—Ed.]

The Gentleman's Magazine, begun and carried on by Mr. Edward Cave, under the name of Sylvanus Urban, had attracted the notice and esteem of Johnson, in an eminent degree, before he came to London as an adventurer in literature. He told me, that when he first saw *St. John's Gate* the place where that deservedly popular miscellany was originally printed, he "beheld it with² reverence." I suppose, indeed, that every young author has had the same kind of feeling for the magazine or periodical publication which has first entertained him, and in which he has first had an opportunity to see himself in print, without the risk of exposing his name. I myself recollect such impressions from "The Scots Magazine," which was begun at Edinburgh in the year 1739, and has been ever conducted with judgment, accuracy, and propriety. I yet cannot help thinking of it with an affectionate regard. Johnson has dignified the Gentleman's Magazine by the importance with which he invests the life of Cave; but he has given it still greater lustre by the various admirable Essays which he wrote for it.

Though Johnson was often solicited by his friends to make a complete list of his writings, and talked of doing it, I believe with a serious intention that they should all be collected on his own account, he put it off from year to year, and at last died without having done it perfectly. I have one in his own hand-writing, which contains a certain number; I indeed doubt if he could have remembered every one of them, as they were so numerous, so various, and scattered in such a multiplicity of unconnected publications; nay, several of them published under the names of other persons, to whom he liberally contributed from the abundance of his mind. We must, therefore, be content to discover them, partly from occasional information given by him

² [If, as Mr. Boswell supposes, Johnson looked at *St. John's Gate* as the printing office of Cave, surely a less emphatical term than *reverence* would have been more just. The *Gentleman's Magazine* had been at this time but six years before the publick, and its contents were, until Johnson himself contributed to improve it, entitled to any thing rather than *reverence*; but it is much more probable that Johnson's *reverence* was excited by the recollections connected with the ancient gate itself, the last relique of the once extensive and magnificent priory of the heroic knights of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, suppressed at the dissolution, and destroyed by successive dilapidations. Its last prior, Sir William Weston, though compensated with the annual pension (enormous in those days) of 1000*l.* died of a broken heart, on Ascension-day, 1540, the very day the house was suppressed.—Ed.]

to his friends, and partly from internal evidence¹.

His first performance in the Gentleman's Magazine, which for many years was his principal resource for employment and support, was a copy of Latin verses, in March, 1738, addressed to the editor in so happy a style of compliment, that Cave must have been destitute both of taste and sensibility², had he not felt himself highly gratified.

“*Ad URBANUM**.

URBANE, nullis fesse laboribus,
URBANE, nullis victæ calunniiis,
Cui fronte sertum in eruditâ
Perpetuò viret et virebit;

Quid moliaturs gens imitantium,
Quid et minetur, sollicitus parùm,
Vacare solis perge Musis,
Juxta animo studiisque felix.

Lingua procacis plumbea spicula,
Fidens, superbo frange silentio;
Victrix per obstantes catervas
Sedulitas animosa tendet.

Intende nervos, fortis, inanibus
Risurus olim visibus æmuli;
Intende jam nervos, habebis
Participes operæ Camænas.

Non ulla Musis pagina gratior,
Quam quæ severis ludicra Jungere
Novit, fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

¹ While in the course of my narrative I enumerate his writings, I shall take care that my readers shall not be left to waver in doubt, between certainty and conjecture, with regard to their authenticity, and, for that purpose, shall mark with an *asterisk* (*) those which he acknowledged to his friends, and with a *dagger* (†) those which are ascertained to be his by internal evidence. When any other pieces are ascribed to him, I shall give my reasons.—BOSWELL.

² [Taste and sensibility were very certainly not the distinguishing qualities of Cave; but was this ode, indeed, “*a happy style of compliment?*” Are “*fronte sertum in eruditâ?*”—“*Lingua plumbea, spicula?*”—“*Victrix per obstantes catervas?*”—*Lycoris* and *Iris*—the *rose*—the *violet*—and the *rainbow*—in any way appropriate to the printer of St. John's Gate, his magazine, or his antagonists? How Johnson would in later life have derided, in *another*, such misapplied pedantry! Mr. Murphy surmises that “this ode may have been suggested to the mind of Johnson, who had meditated a history of the modern Latin poets (see *ante*, p. 58), by Casimir's ode to Pope Urban,

‘Urbane regum maxime, maxime
Urbane vatum.’—ED.]

A translation of this Ode, by an unknown correspondent, appeared in the Magazine for the month of May following—BOSWELL. [As did, in 1784, another, attributed by Mr. Nichols to Mr. Jackson, of Canterbury.—ED.]

*Texente Nymphis sertâ Lycoride,
Rosæ ruborem sic viola adjuvat
Immista, sic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis.*

S. J.”

It appears that he was now enlisted by Mr. Cave as a regular coadjutor in his magazine, by which he probably obtained a tolerable livelihood.

[Thus drew Johnson into a close intimacy with Cave: he was much Hawk. p. 50. at St. John's Gate, and taught Garrick the way thither. Cave had no great relish for mirth, but he could bear it; and having been told by Johnson, that his friend had talents for the theatre, and was come to London with a view to the profession of an actor, expressed a wish to see him in some comic character: Garrick readily complied; and, as Cave himself told me, with a little preparation of the room over the great arch of St. John's Gate, and with the assistance of a few journeymen printers, who were called together for the purpose of reading the other parts, represented, with all the graces of comic humour, the principal character in Fielding's farce of the Mock-Doctor.

Cave's temper was phlegmatic: and though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities that constitute the character of urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an author: “Mr.———³, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it, upon the subject of music: did you write that yourself?” His discernment was also slow; and as he had already at his command some writers of prose and verse, who, in the language of booksellers, are called *good hands*, he was the backwarder in making advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnson. Upon the first approach of a stranger, his practice was to continue sitting, a posture in which he was ever to be found, and, for a few minutes, to continue silent: if at any time he was inclined to begin the discourse, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the press, into the hand of his visitor, and asking his opinion of it. Sir John Hawkins remembered that, calling in on him once, he gave him to read the beautiful poem of Collins, written for Shakspeare's Cymbeline, “To fair Fidele's grassy tomb,” which, though adapted to a particular circumstance in the play, Cave was for inserting in his Magazine, without any reference to the subject: Hawkins told him it would lose of its beauty if it were so published: this he could not see; nor could he be convinced of

³ [Perhaps Hawkins himself.—ED.]

the propriety of the name *Fidele*: he thought *Pastor* a better, and so printed it.

He was so incompetent a judge of Johnson's abilities, that, meaning at one time to dazzle him with the splendour of some of those luminaries in literature who favoured him with their correspondence, he told him that, if he would, in the evening, be at a certain ale-house in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of seeing¹ Mr. Browne, and one or two other of the persons employed in the Magazine. Johnson accepted the invitation; and was introduced by Cave, dressed in a loose horseman's coat², and such a great bushy uncombed wig as he constantly wore, to the sight of Mr. Browne, whom he found sitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, and had his curiosity gratified.

Johnson saw very clearly those offensive particulars that made a part of Cave's character; but, as he was one of the most quick-sighted men in discovering the good and amiable qualities of others, a faculty which he has displayed, as well in the life of Cave, as in that of Savage, printed among his works, so was he ever inclined to palliate their defects; and though he was above courting the patronage of a man, whom, for many reasons, he could not but hold cheap, he disdained not to accept it, when tendered with any degree of complacency.]

At what time, or by what means, he had acquired a competent knowledge both of³ French and Italian, I do not know; but he was so well skilled in them, as to be sufficiently qualified for a translator. That part of his labour which consisted in emendation and improvement of the productions of other contributors, like that employed in leveling ground, can be perceived only by those who had an opportunity of comparing the original with the altered copy. What we certainly know to have been done by him in this way was the Debates in both houses of Parliament, under the name of "The

¹ [About this period we find Mr. M. Browne a constant but feeble contributor to the Magazine.—Ed.]

² [This is a good description of the figure Johnson makes in the earliest portrait of him (if it can be so called) which we have, in the drawing by Loggan, in 1748. See *ante*, p. 36.—Ed.]

³ [French evidently early, as he translated Lobo in 1733, and, though he appears never to have attained ease and fluency in *speaking* that language, we see by his communication with General Paoli (10th Oct. 1769), and by a letter to a French lady (probably Madame de Boufflers), preserved by Mrs. Piozzi, that he could write it with idiomatic ease. We find that he proposed to translate Father Paul from the Italian, and in his letter to Cave, undated but prior to 1744, he gave an opinion on some Italian production.—Ed.]

Senate of Lilliput," sometimes with feigned denominations of the several speakers, sometimes with denominations formed of the letters of their real names, in the manner of what is called anagram, so that they might easily be deciphered. Parliament then kept the press in a kind of mysterious awe, which made it necessary to have recourse to such devices. In our time it has acquired an unrestrained freedom, so that the people in all parts of the kingdom have a fair, open, and exact report of the actual proceedings of their representatives and legislators, which in our constitution is highly to be valued; though, unquestionably, there has of late been too much reason to complain of the petulance with which obscure scribblers have presumed to treat men of the most respectable character and situation.

This important article of the Gentleman's Magazine was, for several years, executed by Mr. William Guthrie, a man who deserves to be respectably recorded in the literary annals of this country. He was descended of an ancient family in Scotland; but having a small patrimony, and being an adherent of the unfortunate house of Stuart, he could not accept of any office in the state; he therefore came to London, and employed his talents and learning as an "author by profession." His writings in history, criticism, and politics, had considerable merit⁴. He was the first English historian who had recourse to that authentic source of information, the Parliamentary Journals; and such was the power of his political pen, that, at an early period, government thought it worth their while to keep it quiet by a pension, which he enjoyed till his death⁵. Johnson esteemed him enough to wish that his life should be written. The debates in Parliament, which were brought home and digested by Guthrie, whose memory, though surpassed by others who have since followed him in the same department, was yet very quick and tenacious, were sent by Cave to Johnson for his revision; and, after some time, when Guthrie had attained to greater variety of employment, and the speeches were more and more enriched by the accession of Johnson's genius, it was resolved that he should do the whole himself, from the scanty notes furnished by persons employed to attend in

⁴ How much poetry he wrote, I know not; but he informed me that he was the author of the beautiful little piece, "The Eagle and Robin Redbreast," in the collection of poems entitled "The Union," though it is there said to be written by Archibald Scott, before the year 1600.—Boswell.

⁵ [See a letter, from Guthrie to the minister, offering his services, and fixing on "the quarterly payments," in Mr. D'Israeli's interesting work, "*The Calamities of Authors*," p. 5.—Ed.]

both houses of Parliament. Sometimes, however, as he himself told me, he had nothing more communicated to him than the names of the several speakers, and the part which they had taken in the debate.

Thus was Johnson employed during some of the best years of his life, as a mere literary labourer "for gain not glory," solely to obtain an honest support. He however indulged himself in occasional little sallies, which the French so happily express by the term *jeux d'esprit*, and which will be noticed in their order, in the progress of this work.

But what first displayed his transcendent powers, and "gave the world assurance of the MAN," was his "LONDON, a Poem, in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal;" which came out in May this year, and burst forth with a splendour, the rays of which will for ever encircle his name. Boileau had imitated the same satire with great success, applying it to Paris: but an attentive comparison will satisfy every reader, that he is much excelled¹ by the English Juvenal. Oldham had also imitated it, and applied it to London; all which performances concur to prove, that great cities, in every age, and in every country, will furnish similar topics of satire. Whether Johnson had previously read Oldham's imitation, I do not know; but it is not a little remarkable, that there is scarcely any coincidence found between the two performances, though upon the very same subject. The only instances are, in describing London as the *sink* of foreign worthlessness:

"——— the common shore,
Where France does all her filth and ordure pour."

OLDHAM.

"The common shore of Paris and of Rome."

JOHNSON.

and

"No calling or profession comes amiss:

A *needy monsieur* can be what he please."

OLDHAM.

"All sciences a *fasting monsieur* knows."

JOHNSON.

The particulars which Oldham has collected, both as exhibiting the horrors of London, and of the times contrasted with better days, are different from those of Johnson, and in general well chosen, and well expressed².

¹ [It is hardly fair to compare the poems in this hostile way: Boileau's was a mere *badinage*, complaining of, or laughing at, the *personal* dangers and inconveniences of Paris. Johnson's object was to satirise the *moral* depravity of a great city.—ED.]

² I own it pleased me to find amongst them one trait of the manners of the age in London, in the last century, to shield from the sneer of En-

There are, in Oldham's imitation, many prosaick verses and bad rhymes, and his poem sets out with a strange inadvertent blunder:

"Tho' much concern'd to *leave* my dear old friend,

I must, however, *his* design commend
Of fixing in the country——."

It is plain he was not going to leave his *friend*; his friend was going to leave *him*. A young lady at once corrected this with good critical sagacity, to

"Tho' much concern'd to *lose* my old dear friend."

There is one passage in the original better transfused by Oldham than by Johnson:

"*Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,
Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.*"

which is an exquisite remark on the galling meanness and contempt annexed to poverty. Johnson's imitation is,

"Of all the griefs that harass the distrest,
Sure the most bitter is a scornful jest."

Oldham's, though less elegant, is more just:

"Nothing in poverty so ill is borne,
As its exposing men to grinning scorn."

Where, or in what manner this poem was composed, I am sorry that I neglected to ascertain with precision from Johnson's own authority. He has marked upon his corrected copy of the first edition of it "Written in 1738;" and, as it was published in the month of May in that year, it is evident that much time was not employed in preparing it for the press. The history of its publication I am enabled to give in a very satisfactory manner; and judging from myself, and many of my friends, I trust that it will not be uninteresting to my readers.

We may be certain, though it is not expressly named in the following letters to Mr. Cave, in 1738, that they all relate to it.

"TO MR. CAVE.

"Castle-street, Wednesday Morning, [March, 1738 3.]

"SIR,—When I took the liberty of writing to you a few days ago, I did not ex-

glish ridicule, what was some time ago too common a practice in my native city of Edinburgh!

"If what I've said can't from the town affright,
Consider other *dangers of the night*;
When brickbats are from upper stories thrown,
And emptied chamberpots came pouring down
From garret windows."—BOSWELL.

³ [The editor has ventured, from internal evidence, compared with the respective publications

pect a repetition of this same pleasure so soon; for a pleasure I shall always think it, to converse in any manner with an ingenious and candid man; but having the enclosed poem in my hands to dispose of for the benefit of the authour (of whose abilities I shall say nothing, since I send you his performance), I believe I could not procure more advantageous terms from any person than from you, who have so much distinguished yourself by your generous encouragement of poetry; and whose judgement of that art nothing but your commendation of *my trifle* can give me any occasion to call in question. I do not doubt but you will look over this poem with another eye, and reward it in a different manner from a mercenary bookseller, who counts the lines he is to purchase, and considers nothing but the bulk. I cannot help taking notice, that besides what the authour may hope for on account of his abilities, he has likewise another claim to your regard, as he lies at present under very disadvantageous circumstances of fortune. I beg, therefore, that you will favour me with a letter to-morrow, that I may know what you can afford to allow him, that he may either part with it to you, or find out (which I do not expect) some other way more to his satisfaction.

“I have only to add, that as I am sensible I have transcribed it very coarsely, which, after having altered it, I was obliged to do, I will, if you please to transmit the sheets from the press, correct it for you; and take the trouble of altering any stroke of satire which you may dislike.

“By exerting on this occasion your usual generosity, you will not only encourage learning, and relieve distress, but (though it be in comparison of the other motives of very small account) oblige in a very sensible manner, sir, your very humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. CAVE.

Monday, No. 6, Castle-street, [March, 1738.]

“SIR,—I am to return you thanks for the present¹ you were so kind as to send by me, and to intreat that you will be pleased to inform me by the penny-post, whether you resolve to print the poem. If you please to send it me by the post, with a note to Dodsley, I will go and read the lines to

of the Ode *Ad Urbanum* (which was no doubt the *trifle* referred to in the first letter), of the *Epigram to Eliza*, and of *London* itself, to assign the dates of March and April, 1738, to these letters.—ED.]

¹ [Though Cave had not taste enough to be struck with the value of the poem, he had, we see, charity enough to relieve the pressing wants of the author in the shape of a present.—ED.]

him, that we may have his consent to put his name in the title-page. As to the printing, if it can be set immediately about, I will be so much the authour's friend, as not to content myself with mere solicitations in his favour. I propose, if my calculation be near the truth, to engage for the reimbursement of all that you shall lose by an impression of five hundred; provided, as you very generously propose, that the profit, if any, be set aside for the authour's use, excepting the present you made, which, if he be a gainer, it is fit he should repay. I beg that you will let one of your servants write an exact account of the expense of such an impression, and send it with the poem, that I may know what I engage for. I am very sensible, from your generosity on this occasion, of your regard to learning, even in its unhappiest state; and cannot but think such a temper deserving of the gratitude of those who suffer so often from a contrary disposition—I am, sir, your most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. CAVE.

[April, 1738.]

“SIR,—I waited on you to take the copy to Dodsley's: as I remember the number of lines which it contains, it will be no longer than *Eugenio*², with the quotations, which must be subjoined at the bottom of the page; part of the beauty of the performance (if any beauty be allowed it) consisting in adapting *Juvenal's* sentiments to modern facts and persons. It will, with those additions, very conveniently make five sheets. And since the expense will be no more, I shall contentedly ensure it, as I mentioned in my last. If it be not therefore gone to Dodsley's, I beg it may be sent me by the penny-post, that I may have it in the evening. I have composed a Greek *Epigram* to *Eliza*³, and think she ought to

² A poem, published in 1737, of which see an account, *post*, under April 30, 1773.—BOSWELL.

³ The learned Mrs. Elizabeth Carter. This lady, of whom frequent mention will be found in these *Memoirs*, was daughter of Nicholas Carter, D. D. She [was born at Deal on the 14th December, 1717, and] died in Clarges-street, February 19, 1806—MALONE—[in the eighty-ninth year “of a life” (as the editor had the pleasure of saying on a former occasion) “sweetened and adorned by learning and by piety; by the friendship of those who approached her, and the respect of the world at large.” Her early acquaintance with Johnson is thus noticed by her nephew and biographer: “Mr. Cave was much connected with the literary world, and his friendship for Mrs. Carter was the means of introducing her to many authours and scholars of note; among those was Mr. afterwards Dr. Johnson. This was early in his life, and his name was then but begin-

be celebrated in as many different languages as Lewis le Grand. Pray send me word when you will begin upon the poem, for it is a long way to walk. I would leave my Epigram, but have not daylight to transcribe it.—I am, sir, yours, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. CAVE.

[April, 1738.]

“SIR,—I am extremely obliged by your kind letter, and will not fail to attend you to-morrow with Irene, who looks upon you as one of her best friends.

“I was to-day with Mr. Dodsley, who declares very warmly in favour of the paper you sent him, which he desires to have a share in, it being, as he says, *a creditable thing to be concerned in*. I knew not what answer to make till I had consulted you, nor what to demand on the author’s part, but am very willing that, if you please, he should have a part in it, as he will undoubtedly be more diligent to disperse and promote it. If you can send me word to-morrow what I shall say to him, I will settle matters, and bring the poem with me for the press, which, as the town empties,¹ we cannot be too quick with.—I am, sir, yours, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

To us who have long known the manly force, bold spirit, and masterly versification of this poem, it is a matter of curiosity to observe the diffidence with which its author brought it forward into public notice, while he is so cautious as not to avow it to be his own production; and with what humility he offers to allow the printer to “alter any stroke of satire

ning to be known, having just published his celebrated Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal, under the name of *London*. Neither this work nor his general character were as yet much known in the country; for Dr. Carter, in a letter to his daughter, dated June 25, 1738, says: ‘You mention Johnson; but that is a name with which I am utterly unacquainted. Neither his scholastic, critical, nor poetical character ever reached my ears. I a little suspect his judgement, *if he is very fond of Martial*.’ This was evidently in answer to what his daughter had said of him; and it shows her high opinion of him before the judgement of the world could have had any considerable influence upon it. Their friendship continued as long as Johnson lived, and he always expressed the greatest esteem and regard for her. Notwithstanding the rudeness of his manners occasionally, even to women, I have frequently heard her say that he never treated her but with civility, attention, and respect.” *Life of Mrs. Carter*, p. 39.—Ed.]

¹ [The publishing season was then in October, when the fashionable world were returning to the metropolis for the winter.—D’ISRAELI.]

which he might dislike.” That any such alteration was made, we do not know. If we did, we could not but feel an indignant regret; but how painful is it to see that a writer of such vigorous powers of mind was actually in such distress, that the small profit which so short a poem, however excellent, could yield, was courted as a “relief.”

It has been generally said, I know not with what truth, that Johnson offered his “London” to several booksellers, none of whom would purchase it. To this circumstance Mr. Derrick alludes in the following lines of his “Fortune, a Rhapsody:”

“Will no kind patron Johnson own?
Shall Johnson friendless range the town?
And every publisher refuse
The offspring of his happy Muse?”

But we have seen that the worthy, modest, and ingenious Mr. Robert Dodsley, had taste enough to perceive its uncommon merit, and thought it creditable to have a share in it. The fact is, that, at a future conference, he bargained for the whole property of it, for which he gave Johnson ten guineas; who told me, “I might perhaps have accepted of less; but that Paul Whitehead had a little before got ten guineas for a poem; and I would not take less than Paul Whitehead².”

I may here observe, that Johnson appeared to me to undervalue Paul Whitehead upon every occasion when he was mentioned, and, in my opinion, did not do him justice; but when it is considered that Paul Whitehead was a member of a riotous and profane club, we may account for Johnson’s having a prejudice against him. Paul Whitehead was, indeed, unfortunate in being not only slighted by Johnson, but violently attacked by Churchill, who utters the following imprecation:

“May I (can worse disgrace on manhood fall?)
Be born a Whitehead, and baptized a Paul!”

yet I shall never be persuaded to think meanly of the author of so brilliant and pointed a satire as “MANNERS.”

Johnson’s *London* was published in May, “1738³”; and it is remarkable, that it came

² [The reader will have observed that in his letter to Cave, Johnson, so far from insisting on ten guineas, or any other price, humbly desires to consult him as to what he ought to ask.—Ed.]

³ Sir John Hawkins, p. 86, tells us, “The event (Savage’s retirement) is *antedated*, in the poem of ‘London;’ but in every particular, except the difference of a year, what is there said of the departure of Thales, must be understood of Savage, and looked upon as *true history*.” This conjecture is, I believe, entirely groundless. I have been assured that Johnson said he was not so much as acquainted with Savage, when he wrote his “London.” If the departure mentioned in

out on the same morning with Pope's satire, entitled "1738;" so that England had at once its Juvenal and Horace as poetical monitors. The Reverend Dr. Douglas¹, now Bishop of Salisbury, to whom I am indebted for some obliging communications, was then a student at Oxford, and remembers well the effect which "London" produced. Every body was delighted with it; and there being no name to it, the first

it was the departure of Savage, the event was not *antedated* but *forseen*; for "London" was published in May, 1738, and Savage did not set out for Wales till July, 1739. However well Johnson could defend the credibility of *second sight*, he did not pretend that he himself was possessed of that faculty.—BOSWELL.

[Notwithstanding Mr. Boswell's proofs, and Dr. Johnson's own assertions, the identity of Savage and Thales has been repeated by all the biographers, and has obtained general vogue. It may, therefore, be worth while to add, that Johnson's residence at Greenwich (which as it was the scene of his *fancied* parting from Thales, is currently taken to have been that of his *real* separation from Savage) occurred two years before the latter event; and at that time it does not appear that Johnson was so much as acquainted with Savage, or even with Cave, at whose house he first met Savage:—again; Johnson distinctly tells us, in his *Life of Savage*, that the latter took his departure for Wales, not by embarking at Greenwich, but by the Bristol stage coach; and, finally and *decisively*, Johnson, if Thales had been Savage, could never have admitted into his poem two lines which seem to point so forcibly at the drunken fray when Savage stabbed a Mr. Sinclair, for which he was convicted of *murder*.

"Some frolic drunkard, reeling from a feast,
Provokes a broil, and stabs you in a jest."

There is, certainly, a curious coincidence between some points of the characters of Thales and Savage; but it seems equally certain that the coincidence was fortuitous. Mr. Murphy endeavours to reconcile the difficulties by supposing that Savage's retirement was in contemplation eighteen months before it was carried into effect; but even if this were true (which may well be doubted), it would not alter the *facts*, that *London* was written before Johnson knew Savage; and that one of the severest strokes in the satire touched Savage's sorest point.—ED.]

¹ [He was a Scotchman by birth, but educated at St. Mary-Hall and Balliol College, Oxford, (M. A. 1743, D. D. 1758), and owed his first promotions to Lord Bath (to whose son he had been tutor), and his literary reputation to his detection of Lauder. He wrote several political and party pamphlets, and prepared Captain Cook's third journal for publication. But his most valuable work is *The Criterion*, a refutation of the objections of Hume and others to the miracles recorded in the New Testament. He was made Bishop of Carlisle in 1788, and translated to Salisbury in 1791. in which see he died in 1807.—ED.]

buzz of the literary circles was, "Here is an unknown poet, greater even than Pope." And it is recorded in the Gentleman's Magazine of that year (p. 269), that it "got to the second edition in the course of a week."

One of the warmest patrons of this poem on its first appearance was General Oglethorpe², whose "strong benevolence of

² [James Edward Oglethorpe, born in 1698, admitted of C. C. C. Oxford in 1714; but he soon after entered the army, and served under Prince Eugene against the Turks. Dr. Warton, (who calls Oglethorpe "a *great hero* and a *great legislator*,"³) informs us that "neither he (Oglethorpe!) nor Prince Eugene loved Marlborough;" and that Oglethorpe related that Eugene said, sneeringly, of his illustrious colleague, "there is a great difference between making war *en maitre* or *en avocat*." The fame of the Duke of Marlborough will not be much impaired by wanting the *love* of Oglethorpe, who did not leave school till after that great man had terminated his public career; and even Oglethorpe's authority would not induce us to believe that Prince Eugene (supposing him to have wished to depreciate Marlborough) would have talked such absurd nonsense as that above quoted. Oglethorpe's activity in settling the colony of Georgia obtained for him the immortality of Pope's celebrated panegyrick quoted in the text:

"One, driven by strong benevolence of soul,
Shall fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole."

In 1745, Oglethorpe was promoted to the rank of major-general, and had a command during the Scotch rebellion. His corps, consisting of light cavalry, was the van of the Duke of Cumberland's army, and was ordered to press on the rear of the rebels when retreating through Westmoreland. Oglethorpe, arriving in front of a little village called Shap, (where the enemy's rear was supposed to be), just before nightfall, in very bad weather, held a consultation with his officers, in which it was decided, that the lateness of the hour, and the exhaustion of the troops, rendered it inexpedient to attack that night; and Oglethorpe therefore marched off to a neighbouring village to forage and refresh. Meanwhile the Duke of Cumberland pressed on; and next morning when he came to Shap, found that it had been abandoned by the rebels, but H. R. H. was surprised by seeing, on his right towards the rear, an unexpected body of troops; it turned out to be Oglethorpe's corps, which, from being the *ran* guard of his army, had thus unaccountably become the *rear*. The duke caused Oglethorpe to be brought to a court martial (from the original minutes of which the foregoing particulars are taken), and though acquitted, he was never again employed. It is by no means surprising that this "*neglect*" should have mortified a man of Oglethorpe's sensibility; and it is to be inferred from Mr. Boswell's expressions, that late in life he had in vain solicited for some "*mark of distinction*" to heal his wounded feelings. General Oglethorpe sat in five or six parliaments, and was in general politics a tory, and even suspected of being a jacobite: to this may, perhaps be referred most of the

soul" was unabated during the course of a very long life; though it is painful to think, that he had but too much reason to become cold and callous, and discontented with the world, from the neglect which he experienced of his publick and private worth, by those in whose power it was to gratify so gallant a veteran with marks of distinction. This extraordinary person was as remarkable for his learning and taste, as for his other eminent qualities; and no man was more prompt, active, and generous, in encouraging merit. I have heard Johnson gratefully acknowledge, in his presence, the kind and effectual support which he gave to his "London," though unacquainted with its authour.

Pope, who then filled the poetical throne without a rival, it may reasonably be presumed, must have been particularly struck by the sudden appearance of such a poet; and, to his credit, let it be remembered, that his feelings and conduct on the occasion were candid and liberal. He requested Mr. Richardson¹, son of the painter, to endeavour to find out who this new authour was. Mr. Richardson, after some inquiry, having informed him that he had discovered only that his name was Johnson, and that he was some obscure man, Pope said, "He will soon be *déterré*²." We shall presently see, from a note written by Pope, that he was himself afterwards more successful in his inquiries than his friend.

That in this justly celebrated poem may be found a few rhymes which the critical precision of English prosody at this day would disallow, cannot be denied; but with this small imperfection, which in the general blaze of its excellence is not perceived, till the mind has subsided into cool attention, it is, undoubtedly, one of the noblest productions in our language both for sentiment and expression. The nation was

particulars of his history—his dislike of the Duke of Marlborough—the praises of Pope—his partiality towards Johnson's political poetry—the suspicion of not having done his best against the rebels—and the "neglect" of the court. He died 30th June, 1785.—Ed.]

¹ [There were three Richardsons known at this period in the literary world: 1st. Jonathan Richardson the elder, usually called the Painter, though he was an author as well as a painter; he died in 1745, aged 80. 2d. Jonathan the younger, who is the person mentioned in the text, who also painted, though not as a profession, and who published several works; he died in 1771, aged 77. 3d. Samuel Richardson, the author of the celebrated novels. He was by trade a printer, and had the good sense to continue, during the height of his fame, his attention to his business. He died in 1761, aged 72.—Ed.]

² Sir Joshua Reynolds, from the information of the younger Richardson.—BOSWELL.

then in that ferment against the court and the ministry, which some years after ended in the downfall of Sir Robert Walpole; and as it has been said, that tories are whigs when out of place; and whigs tories when in place; so, as a whig administration ruled with what force it could, a tory opposition had all the animation and all the eloquence of resistance to power, aided by the common topics of patriotism, liberty, and independence! Accordingly, we find in Johnson's "London" the most spirited invectives against tyranny and oppression, the warmest predilection for his own country, and the purest love and virtue; interspersed with traits of his own particular character and situation, not omitting his prejudices as a "true-born Englishman³," not only against foreign countries, but against Ireland and Scotland. On some of these topicks I shall quote a few passages:

"The cheated nation's happy fav'rites see;
Mark whom the great caress, who frown on
me."

"Has heaven reserv'd, in pity to the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscover'd shore?
No secret island in the boundless main?
No peaceful desert yet unclaim'd by Spain?
Quick let us rise, the happy seats explore,
And bear Oppression's insolence no more."

"How, when competitors like these contend,
Can *surlly* *Virtue* hope to find a friend?"

"This mournful truth is every where confess'd,
SLOW RISES WORTH, BY POVERTY DE-
PRESS'D!"

We may easily conceive with what feeling a great mind like his, cramped and galled by narrow circumstances, uttered this last line, which he marked by capitals. The whole of the poem is eminently excellent, and there are in it such proofs of a knowledge of the world, and of a mature acquaintance with life⁴, as cannot be con-

³ It is, however, remarkable, that he uses the epithet, which undoubtedly, since the union between England and Scotland, ought to denominate the natives of both parts of our island.

"Was early taught a *BRITON*'s rights to prize."—
BOSWELL.

[This is not quite correct. The union of the crowns gave the whole island the title of *Great Britain*, but the term *Briton* had been always used in contradistinction to *Caledonian*.—Ed.]

⁴ [What follows will show that Boswell himself was of opinion; that London was dictated rather by youthful *feeling*, inflamed by the political frenzy of the times, than by any "knowledge of the world," or any "mature acquaintance with life." Nor is it the least remarkable of the inconsistencies between Johnson's early precepts and subsequent practice, that he, who was in all his latter age the most constant and enthusiastic admirer of London, should have begun life with this

templated without wonder, when we consider that he was then only in his twenty-ninth year, and had yet been so little in the "busy haunts of men."

Yet while we admire the poetical excellence of this poem, candour obliges us to allow, that the flame of patriotism and zeal for popular resistance with which it is fraught had no just cause. There was, in truth, no "oppression;" the "nation" was not "cheated." Sir Robert Walpole was a wise and a benevolent minister, who thought that the happiness and prosperity of a commercial country like ours would be best promoted by peace, which he accordingly maintained with credit, during a very long period. Johnson himself afterwards acknowledged the merit of Walpole, whom he called "a fixed star;" while he characterised his opponent, Pitt, as a "meteor." But Johnson's juvenile poem was naturally impregnated with the fire of opposition, and upon every account was universally admired.

Though thus elevated into fame, and conscious of uncommon powers, he had not that bustling confidence, or I may rather say, that animated ambition, which one might have supposed would have urged him to endeavour at rising in life. But such was his inflexible dignity of character, that he could not stoop to court the great; without which, hardly any man has made his way to a high station¹. He could not expect to produce many such works as his "London," and he felt the hardships of writing for bread; he was therefore willing to resume the office of a schoolmaster, so as to have a sure, though moderate income for his life; and an offer being made to him of the mastership of a school² [at

vigorous and bitter invective against it. The truth is, he was now writing for bread, cared comparatively little about the real merits or defects of the minister or the metropolis, and only thought how best to make his poem sell.—ED.]

¹ [This seems to be an erroneous and mischievous assertion. If Mr. Boswell, by *stooping to court the great*, means *base flatteries and unworthy compliances*, then it may be safely asserted that such arts, (whatever small successes they may have had), are not those by which men have risen to *high stations*. Look at the instances of elevation to be found in Mr. Boswell's own work—Lord Chatham, Lord Mansfield, Mr. Burke, Mr. Hamilton, Lord Loughborough, Lord Thurlow, Lord Stowell, and so many dignitaries of the law and the church, in whose society Dr. Johnson passed his latter days—with what can *they* be charged which would have disgraced Johnson? Boswell, it may be suspected, wrote this under some little personal disappointment in his own courtship of the great, which he more than once hints at. Johnson's opinions on this point will be found under Feb. 1766, and Sept. 1777.—ED.]

² [Mr. Boswell had here inserted a long note to

Appleby, in Leicestershire,] provided he could obtain the degree of ^{Hawk p. 62.} Master of Arts, Dr. Adams was applied to, by a common friend, to know whether that could be granted him as a favour from the university of Oxford. But though he had made such a figure in the literary world, it was then thought too great a favour to be asked.

Pope, without any knowledge of him but from his "London," recommended³ him to Earl Gower, who endeavoured to procure for him a degree from Dublin, by the following letter to a friend of Dean Swift:

"SIR,—MR. Samuel Johnson (author of LONDON, a satire, and some other poetical pieces) is a native of this country, and much respected by some worthy gentlemen in this neighbourhood, who are trustees of a charity-school now vacant; the certain salary is sixty pounds a year, of which they are desirous to make him master; but, unfortunately he is not capable of receiving their bounty, which *would make him happy for life*, by not being a *master of arts*; which, by the statutes of this school, the master of it must be.

"Now these gentlemen do me the honour to think that I have interest enough in you, to prevail upon you to write to Dean Swift, to persuade the university of Dublin to send a diploma to me, constituting this poor man master of arts in their university. They highly extol the man's learning and probity; and will not be persuaded, that the university will make any difficulty of conferring such a favour upon a stranger, if he is recommended by the dean. They say, he is not afraid of the strictest

prove, first, that the school in question was Newport in Shropshire; and secondly, on the evidence of a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine (May, 1793), that it was Appleby in Leicestershire, though Mr. Pope, by mistake, had said Shropshire; but as Sir J. Hawkins had already stated Appleby to be the school in question, Mr. Boswell took a great deal of unnecessary trouble, and his note is therefore omitted.—ED.]

³ [It seems not easy to reconcile Lord Gower's and Pope's letters, and Mr. Boswell's account of this transaction. Lord Gower's letter says that it is written at the request of some *Staffordshire neighbours*. Nothing more natural. He does not even allude to Pope; and certainly it would have been most extraordinary that Pope, the dearest friend of Swift, should solicit Lord Gower to ask a favour of the Dean. Pope says (see *post*, p. 56.) that he wrote unsolicited to Lord Gower in Johnson's favour; but did not succeed. He makes no allusion to Swift, or the master's degree. Perhaps Pope's application to Lord Gower related, as his letter says, to a school in *Shropshire*, and, failing there, the school of Appleby was thought of afterwards. This supposition would remove all difficulties.—ED.]



Robert [unclear]

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examination, though he is of so long a journey; and will venture it, if the dean thinks it necessary; choosing rather to die upon the road, *than be starved to death in translating for booksellers*; which has been his only subsistence for some time past.

"I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than those good-natured gentlemen apprehend; especially as their election cannot be delayed longer than the 11th of next month. If you see this matter in the same light that it appears to me, I hope you will burn this, and pardon me for giving you so much trouble about an impracticable thing; but, if you think there is a probability of obtaining the favour asked, I am sure your humanity and propensity to relieve merit in distress will incline you to serve the poor man, without my adding any more to the trouble I have already given you, than assuring you that I am, with great truth, sir, your faithful servant,

"GOWER.

"Trentham, Aug. 1, 1739."

It was, perhaps, no small disappointment¹ to Johnson that this respectable application had not the desired effect; yet how much reason has there been, both for himself and his country, to rejoice that it did not succeed, as he might probably have wasted in obscurity those hours in which he afterwards produced his incomparable works.

About this time he made one other effort to emancipate himself from the drudgery of authorship. He applied to Dr. Adams, to consult Dr. Smalbroke² of the Commons,

¹ [We shall hereafter see strong instances of Johnson's dislike both of Lord Gower and Dean Swift; and, considering how Johnson was influenced by personal prejudices, it seems not unreasonable to suppose, that this *disappointment* had soured him against both Swift and Lord Gower. It does not appear that Johnson ever saw his lordship's letter; nor, if he had, would he be much pleased at the terms in which he is mentioned. As to Swift, his mind was certainly, at this time, in no condition to exert itself on any remote object; and if his friends ventured to mention the subject to him, it is likely the Dean gave a peevish answer, particularly as he happened to be at this period on very bad terms with the heads of the university. Johnson probably knew no more than that an *unsuccessful* application on his behalf had been made both to Lord Gower and to Dean Swift, and resented the failure without being very scrupulous in apportioning the blame.—Ed.]

² [Richard Smalbroke, LL. D., second son of Bishop Smalbroke, succeeded his brother Thomas as chancellor of the diocese of Lichfield in 1778, and died the senior member of the College of Advocates. The long connexion of the Smalbroke family with Lichfield, probably pointed him out to Johnson as a person able and willing to advise him.—Ed.]

whether a person might be permitted to practise as an advocate there, without a doctor's degree in civil law. "I am (said he) a total stranger to these studies; but whatever is a profession, and maintains numbers, must be within the reach of common abilities, and some degree of industry." Dr. Adams was much pleased with Johnson's design to employ his talents in that manner, being confident he would have attained to great eminence. And, indeed, I cannot conceive a man better qualified to make a distinguished figure as a lawyer; for he would have brought to his profession a rich store of various knowledge, an uncommon acuteness, and a command of language, in which few could have equalled, and none have surpassed him. He who could display eloquence and wit in defence of the decision of the House of Commons upon Mr. Wilkes's election for Middlesex, and of the unconstitutional taxation of our fellow-subjects in America, must have been a powerful advocate in any cause. But here, also, the want of a degree was an insurmountable bar.

He was, therefore, under the necessity of persevering in that course into which he had been forced; and we find that his proposal from Greenwich to Mr. Cave, for a translation of Father Paul Sarpi's History, was accepted³.

Some sheets of this translation were printed off, but the design was dropt; for it happened, oddly enough, that another person of the name of Samuel Johnson, librarian of St. Martin's in the Fields, and curate of that parish, engaged in the same undertaking, and was patronised by the clergy, par-

³ In the Weekly Miscellany, October 21, 1738, there appeared the following advertisement: "Just published, Proposals for printing the History of the Council of Trent, translated from the Italian of Father Paul Sarpi; with the Authour's Life, and Notes theological, historical, and critical, from the French edition of Dr. Le Courayer. To which are added, Observations on the History, and Notes and Illustrations from various Authours, both printed and manuscript. By S. Johnson. 1. The work will consist of two hundred sheets, and be two volumes in quarto, printed on good paper and letter. 2. The price will be 18s. each volume, to be paid, half a guinea at the delivery of the first volume, and the rest at the delivery of the second volume in sheets. 3. Twopence to be abated for every sheet less than two hundred. It may be had on a large paper, in three volumes, at the price of three guineas; one to be paid at the time of subscribing, another at the delivery of the first, and the rest at the delivery of the other volumes. The work is now in the press, and will be diligently prosecuted. Subscriptions are taken in by Mr. Dodsley in Pall-Mall, Mr. Rivington in St. Paul's Church-yard, by E. Cave at St. John's Gate, and the Translator, at No. 6, in Castle-street, by Cavendish-square."—BOSWELL.

ticularly by Dr. Pearce, afterwards Bishop of Rochester. Several light skirmishes passed between the rival translators, in the newspapers of the day; and the consequence was that they destroyed each other, for neither of them went on with the work. It is much to be regretted, that the able performance of that celebrated genius FRA PAOLO lost the advantage of being incorporated into British literature by the masterly hand of Johnson.

I have in my possession, by the favour of Mr. John Nichols, a paper in Johnson's hand-writing, entitled "Account between Mr. Edward Cave and Sam. Johnson, in relation to a version of Father Paul, &c. begun August the 2d, 1738;" by which it appears, that from that day to the 21st of April, 1739, Johnson received for this work 49l. 7s. in sums of one, two, three, and sometimes four guineas at a time, most frequently two. And it is curious to observe the minute and scrupulous accuracy with which Johnson had pasted upon it a slip of paper, which he has entitled "Small account," and which contains one article, "Sept. 9th, Mr. Cave laid down 2s. 6d.¹" There is subjoined to this account, a list of some subscribers to the work, partly in Johnson's hand-writing, partly in that of another person; and there follows a leaf or two on which are written a number of characters which have the appearance of a short hand, which, perhaps, Johnson was then trying to learn.

" TO MR. CAVE.

" Wednesday, [August or Sept. 1738.]

" SIR,—I did not care to detain your servant while I wrote an answer to your letter, in which you seem to insinuate that I had promised more than I am ready to perform. If I have raised your expectations by any thing that may have escaped my memory, I am sorry; and if you remind me of it, shall thank you for the favour. If I made fewer alterations than usual in the debates, it was only because there appeared, and still appears to be, less need of alteration. The verses to Lady Firebrace² may be had when you please, for you know that such a subject neither deserves much thought, nor requires it.

¹ [Probably a tavern reckoning.—Ed.]

² [They afterwards appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (for Sept. 1738), with this title: "Verses to lady F——, at Bury Assizes." It seems quite unintelligible how these six silly lines (at best, only excusable if written *in promptu* on the occasion) should be the production of Johnson, and made to the order (to use the tradesman's phrase) of Cave. These considerations, and some stupid lines in praise of *Suffolk beauties* in the same volume, lead to a conjecture that

"The Chinese Stories³ may be had folded down when you please to send, in which I do not recollect that you desired any alterations to be made.

"An answer to another query I am very willing to write, and had consulted with you about it last night, if there had been time; for I think it the most proper way of inviting such a correspondence as may be an advantage to the paper, not a load upon it.

"As to the Prize Verses, a backwardness to determine their degrees of merit is not peculiar to me. You may, if you please, still have what I can say; but I shall engage with little spirit in an affair, which I shall *hardly* end to my own satisfaction, and *certainly* not to the satisfaction of the parties concerned⁴.

"As to Father Paul, I have not yet been just to my proposal, but have met with impediments, which, I hope, are now at an end; and if you find the progress hereafter not such as you have a right to expect, you can easily stimulate a negligent translator.

"If any or all of these have contributed to your discontent, I will endeavour to remove it; and desire you to propose the question to which you wish for an answer.

"I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

" TO MR. CAVE.

[Sept. 1738.]

"SIR,—I am pretty much of your opinion, that the Commentary cannot be prosecuted with any appearance of success; for as the names of the authours concerned are of more weight in the performance than its own intrinsic merit, the publick will be soon satisfied with it. And I think the Examen should be pushed forward with the utmost expedition. Thus, 'This day, &c. An Examen of Mr. Pope's Essay, &c. containing a succinct Account of the Philosophy of Mr. Leibnitz on the System of the Fatalists, with a Confutation of their Opinions, and an Illustration of the Doctrine of Free-will;' (with what else you think proper).

Cave may have sent some verses of another correspondent, on Lady Firebrace, to Johnson to correct or curtail. It is next to impossible that they could be originally Johnson's own; and it may also be observed, that Poswell does not afterwards mention them in his list of Johnson's contributions to the magazine.—Ed.]

³ Du Halde's Description of China was then publishing by Mr. Cave in weekly numbers, whence Johnson was to select pieces for the embellishment of the magazine.—NICHOLS.

⁴ A premium of forty pounds proposed for the best poem on the divine attributes is here alluded to.—NICHOLS. [See note p. 33, as to a similar premium.—Ed.]

“It will, above all, be necessary to take notice, that it is a thing distinct from the Commentary.

“I was so far from imagining they¹ stood still, that I conceived them to have a good deal beforehand, and therefore was less anxious in providing them more. But if ever they stand still on my account, it must doubtless be charged to me; and whatever else shall be reasonable, I shall not oppose; but beg a suspension of judgement till morning, when I must entreat you to send me a dozen proposals², and you shall then have copy to spare. I am, sir, yours, *impransus*,

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“Pray muster up the Proposals, if you can, or let the boy recal them from the booksellers.”

But although he corresponded with Mr. Cave concerning a translation of Crousaz's Examen of Pope's Essay on Man, and gave advice as one anxious for its success, I was long ago convinced by a perusal of the Preface, that this translation was erroneously ascribed to him; and I have found this point ascertained beyond all doubt, by the following article in Dr. Birch's Manuscripts in the British Museum.

“ELISE CARTERÆ, S. P. D. THOMAS BIRCH.

“*Versionem tuam Examinis Crousaziani jam perlegi. Summam styli et elegantiam, et in re diffieillimâ proprietatem, admiratus.*

“*Dabam Novemb. 27^o, 1738.*”

Indeed Mrs. Carter has lately acknowledged to Mr. Seward, that she was the translator of the “Examen³.”

¹ The compositors in Mr. Cave's printing-office, who appear by this letter to have then waited for copy.—NICHOLS.

² [These were, no doubt, the *proposals* for the translation of Father Paul; and as Johnson seems to ask for them as affording him a pecuniary resource, they must have been the proposals for the large paper, for which, as we see by the preceding note, (p. 51.) one guinea was payable at the time of subscribing; and it may be concluded that Cave was more ready to make advances to his author in this *paper* than in *cash*.—ED.]

³ [There is no doubt that Miss Carter was the translator of the *Examination*, &c., but it is not so certain that Johnson was not himself, at the date of this letter, employed on a similar work, in which he preferred keeping the Latin title of an *Examen*. The work Johnson alludes to, was no doubt to have been printed by *Cave*—Miss Carter's was printed by *A. Dodd*. So that unless Dodd was a *prête-nom* to Cave, it might be inferred that Johnson was employed on a translation which gave way to Miss Carter's; but, as I find in Cave's Magazine for September Miss Carter's *Examination* announced by an anticipatory advertisement (very unusual in that magazine), as “being in the press, and speedily to be publish-

It is remarkable, that Johnson's last quoted letter to Mr. Cave concludes with a fair confession that he had not a dinner; and it is no less remarkable, that though in this state of want himself, his benevolent heart was not insensible to the necessities of an humble labourer in literature, as appears from the very next letter.

“TO MR. CAVE.

[No date.]

“DEAR SIR,—You may remember I have formerly talked with you about a Military Dictionary. The eldest Mr. Macbean, who was with Mr. Chambers, has very good materials for such a work, which I have seen, and will do it at a very low rate⁴. I think the terms of war and navigation might be comprised, with good explanations, in one 8vo. pica, which he is willing to do for twelve shillings a sheet, to be made up a guinea at the second impression. If you think on it, I will wait on you with him. I am, sir, your humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“Pray lend me *Topsel on Animals*.”

I must not omit to mention, that this Mr. Macbean was a native of Scotland⁵.

In the Gentleman's Magazine of this year, Johnson gave a *Life of Father Paul** (p. 583); and he wrote the Preface to the Volume †, which, though prefixed to it when bound, is always published with the Appendix, and is therefore the last composition belonging to it. The ability and nice adaptation with which he could draw up a prefatory address, was one of his peculiar excellencies.

It appears too, that he paid a friendly attention to Mrs. Elizabeth Carter: [and besides the interest which it seems probable that he took in her translation of the Examen,] I find, in a letter from Ed. Mr. Cave to Dr. Birch, November 28, this year,

“Mr. Johnson advises Miss C. to undertake a translation of *Boethius de Cons.* because there is prose and verse, and to put her name to it when published.”

This advice was not followed: probably from an apprehension that the work was not sufficiently popular for an extensive sale. How well Johnson himself could have executed a translation of this philoso-

ed,” I conclude, that Dodd was employed by Cave; that the above letter refers to Miss Carter's translation; and that the anticipatory advertisement (though not in the words furnished by Johnson) was published in pursuance of the suggestion in his letter to Cave.—ED.]

⁴ This book was published.—BOSWELL.

⁵ [Mr. Boswell's nationality delights in showing that Johnson's prejudices did not prevent his employing and recommending *Scotchmen*.—ED.]

phic poet, we may judge from the following specimen which he has given in the Rambler: (*Motto to No. 7.*)

“O qui perpetuâ mundum ratione gubernas,
Terrarum cœlique sator!——
Disjice terrenæ nebulas et pondera molis,
Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum,
Tu requies tranquilla piis. Te cernere finis,
Principium, vector, dux, semita, terminus, idem.”

“O THOU whose power o'er moving worlds pre-
sides,
Whose voice created, and whose wisdom guides,
On darkling man in pure effulgence shine,
And cheer the clouded mind with light divine.
'Tis thine alone to calm the pious breast,
With silent confidence and holy rest;
From thee, great God! we spring, to thee we tend,
Path, motive, guide, original, and end!”

[He addressed to her, in the Magazine for April, 1738¹, an epigram to *Eliza**, both in Greek and Latin (p. 210); and probably, also, the following Latin epigram in that for July (p. 372):

“Elysios Popi dum ludit læta per hortos,
En avida lauros carpit *Elisa* manu.
Nil opus furto. Lauros tibi, dulcis *Elisa*,
Si neget optata *Popus*, *Apollo* dabit.”

This year's Magazine also contains the celebrated Latin epigram “To a lady (*Miss Maria Aston*) who spoke in Defence of Liberty” (p. 211); and a Greek epigram to “*Doctor Birch*” (p. 654.)

In 1739, besides the assistance which he gave to the Parliamentary Debates, his writings in the Gentleman's Magazine were, “*The Life of Boerhaave*” (p. 37), in which it is to be observed, that he discovers that love of chymistry which never forsook him; “An appeal to the Publick in behalf of the Editor†” (p. 111); “An Address to the Reader‡” (p. 223);

Ed. “English verses to *Eliza**;” [and

¹ [It seems extraordinary that Mr. Boswell, with all his research and accuracy, should have stated that the epigrams to *Eliza* and *Dr. Birch* are to be found in the volume for 1739, instead of that for 1738, and should have omitted the acknowledged epigram on *Maria*, and not even noticed the epigram on *Eliza* gathering laurels in Pope's garden, which there is every reason for supposing to be his. Johnson might even have accompanied his young friend to visit Pope's villa, and been a witness to the incident.—Ed.]

² [I have permitted this statement to remain in the text, though I can find in the Magazine for 1739 but one copy of English verses to *Eliza*. They are in December, and signed *Anasius*, which is the signature of some other pieces now known to have been written by *Collins*; but as Boswell erroneously attributed the Greek and Latin verses to *Eliza* to this year, the English verses may, like the others, have belonged to 1738; though even in that volume I can find nothing ad-

probably³ the following Latin Epigram to *Dr. Birch** (p. 2):

“IN BIRCHIIUM.

Arte novâ rarâque fide perscripserat ausus
Birchius egregios claraque gesta virum.
Hunc oculis veri Fautrix lustravit acutis,
Et placido tandem hæc edidit ore, Dea:
‘Perge modo, atque tuas olim post funera laudes
Qui scribat meritas *Birchius* alter erit.’”

It has been erroneously supposed, that an Essay published in that Magazine this year, entitled “*The Apotheosis of Milton*,” was written by Johnson; and on that supposition it has been improperly inserted in the edition of his works by the booksellers, after his decease. Were there no positive testimony as to this point, the style of the performance, and the name of Shakspeare not being mentioned in an Essay professedly reviewing the principal English poets, would ascertain it not to be the production of Johnson. But there is here no occasion to resort to internal evidence; for my Lord Bishop of Salisbury (*Dr. Douglas*) has assured me that it was written by *Guthrie*. He also published, separately, “*A Complete Vindication of the Licensers of the Stage, from the malicious and scandalous Aspersions of Mr. Brooke, Authour of Gustavus Vasa**;” being an ironical attack upon them for their suppression of that tragedy. [This interposition of legal authority was looked upon by Mr. Brooke's friends, in which number were included all the Jacobites in the kingdom, as an infraction of a natural right, and as affecting the cause of liberty. To express their resentment of this injury, they advised him to send it to the press⁴, and by a subscription to the publication, of near a thousand persons, encouraged others to the like attempts. Upon occasion of this publication, Johnson was employed by one *Corbet*, a bookseller of small note, to take up the cause of this injured author, and he did it in this pamphlet. In the course of this mock vindication of power, Johnson has taken a wide

Ed. dressed to *Eliza* in English which could be Johnson's, except a translation of his own (as I conceive) Latin epigram on the gathering Pope's laurels. It is not easy to account for the inaccuracy with which Mr. Boswell confounds these two years.—Ed.]

³ [My chief reasons for supposing this Latin epigram to be Johnson's are, that it is a version of his own acknowledged Greek epigram which appeared in the preceding Magazine, and that he had followed his Greek epigram on *Eliza* with a Latin paraphrase in the same style as this.—Ed.]

⁴ [Mr. Brooke appears to have circulated MS. copies of *Gustavus Vasa* before it was completed.—I have one of these presentation copies.—D'ISRAËLI.]

scope, and adopted all the vulgar topicks of complaint.]

He also published "Marmor Norfolciense; or an Essay on an ancient prophetic Inscription, in monkish Rhyme, lately discovered near Lynne, in Norfolk, by Probus Britannicus*." In this latter performance, he, in a feigned inscription, supposed to have been found in Norfolk, the county of Sir Robert Walpole, then the obnoxious prime minister of this country, inveighs against the Brunswick succession, and the measures of government consequent upon it. To this supposed prophecy he added a Commentary, making each expression apply to the times, with warm Anti-Hanoverian zeal.

This anonymous pamphlet, I believe, did not make so much noise as was expected, and, therefore, had not a very extensive circulation. Sir John Hawkins relates that "warrants were issued, and messengers employed to apprehend the author; who, though he had forborne to subscribe his name to the pamphlet, the vigilance of those in pursuit of him had discovered;" and we are informed that he lay concealed in Lambeth-marsh till the scent after him grew cold. This, however, is altogether without foundation, for Mr. Steele, one of the secretaries of the treasury, who, amidst a variety of important business, politely obliged me with his attention to my inquiry, informed me that "he directed every possible search to be made in the records of the treasury and secretary of state's office, but could find no trace whatever of any warrant having been issued to apprehend the authour of this pamphlet."

"Marmor Norfolciense" became exceedingly scarce, so that I for many years endeavoured in vain to procure a copy of it. At last I was indebted to the malice of one of Johnson's numerous petty adversaries, who, in 1775, published a new edition of it, "with Notes and a Dedication to Samuel Johnson, LL. D. by Tribunus;" in which some puny scribbler invidiously attempted to found upon it a charge of inconsistency against its authour, because he had accepted of a pension from his present majesty, and had written in support of the measures of government. As a mortification to such impotent malice, of which there are so many instances towards men of eminence, I am happy to relate, that this *telum imbelles* did not reach its exalted object till about a year after it thus appeared, when I mentioned it to him, supposing that he knew of the re-publication. To my surprise he had not yet heard of it. He requested me to go directly and get it for him, which I did. He looked at it and laughed, and seemed to be much diverted with the feeble efforts of his unknown adversary, who, I hope, is alive to read this account. "Now (said he)

here is somebody who thinks he has vexed me sadly: yet if it had not been for you, you rogue, I should probably never have seen it."

[These two satirical pamphlets were, Sir J. Hawkins thinks, in some ^{Hawk.} degree prompted by the principle ^{p. 84, 85.} which Johnson frequently declared to be the only true genuine motive to writing, namely, pecuniary profit. This principle was not only avowed by Johnson, but seems to have been wrought by him into a habit. He was never greedy of money, but without money could not be stimulated to write.

Yet was he not so indifferent to the subjects that he was requested to write on, as at any time to abandon either his religious or political principles. He would no more have put his name to an Arian or Socinian tract than to a defence of Atheism. At the time when "Faction Detected" came out, a pamphlet of which the late Lord Egmont is now generally understood to have been the authour, Osborne, the bookseller, held out to him a strong temptation to answer it, which he refused, being convinced, as he assured Sir J. Hawkins, that the charge contained in it was made good, and that the argument grounded thereon was unanswerable.

The truth is, that Johnson's political prejudices were a mist that ^{Hawk.} the eye of his judgement could not ^{p. 80, 81.} penetrate: in all the measures of Walpole's government he could see nothing right; nor could he be convinced, in his invectives against a standing army, as the Jacobites affected to call it, that the peasantry of a country was not an adequate defence against an invasion of it by an armed force. He almost asserted in terms, that the succession to the crown had been illegally interrupted, and that from whig-politicks none of the benefits of government could be expected. From hence it appears, and to his honour be it said, that his principles co-operated with his necessities, and that *prostitution* of his talents could not, in justice, be imputed to him.]

As Mr. Pope's note concerning Johnson, alluded to in a former page, refers both to his "London," and his "Marmor Norfolciense," I have deferred inserting it till now. I am indebted for it to Dr. Percy, the bishop of Dromore, who permitted me to copy it from the original in his possession. It was presented to his lordship by Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom it was given by the son of Mr. Richardson the painter, the person to whom it is addressed. I have transcribed it with minute exactness, that the peculiar mode of writing, and imperfect spelling of that celebrated poet, may be exhibited to the curious in literature. It justifies Swift's epithet of "paper-sparing Pope," for it is

written on a slip no larger than a common message-card, and was sent to Mr Richardson, along with the imitation of Juvenal.

“This is imitated by one Johnson who put in for a Publick-school in Shropshire¹, but was disappointed. He has an infirmity of the convulsive kind, that attacks him sometimes, so as to make Him a sad Spectacle². Mr. P. from the Merit of This Work which was all the knowledge he had of Him³ endeavoured to serve Him without his own application; & wrote to my L^d. Gore, but he did not succeed. Mr. Johnson published afterwards, another Poem in Latin with Notes the whole very Humorous call'd the Norfolk Prophecy. “P.”

Johnson had been told of this note; and Sir Joshua Reynolds informed him of the compliment which it contained, but, from delicacy, avoided showing him the paper itself. When Sir Joshua observed to Johnson that he seemed very desirous to see Pope's note, he answered, “Who would not be proud to have such a man as Pope so solicitous in inquiring about him?”

The infirmity to which Mr. Pope alludes, appeared to me also, as will be here-
 Aug. after observed, to be of the convul-
 1773. sive kind, and of the nature of that distemper called St. Vitus's dance; and in this opinion I am confirmed by the description which Sydenham gives of that disease.

“This disorder is a kind of convulsion. It manifests itself by halting or unsteadiness of one of the legs, which the patient draws after him like an idiot. If the hand of the same side be applied to the breast, or any other part of the body, he cannot keep it a moment in the same posture, but it will be drawn into a different one by a convulsion, notwithstanding all his efforts to the contrary.” Sir Joshua Reynolds, however, was of a different opinion, and favoured me with the following paper:

“Those motions or tricks of Dr. Johnson are improperly called convulsions. He could sit motionless when he was told so to do, as well as any other man. My opinion is, that it proceeded from a habit⁴ which he

¹ [This has been supposed to be an error, as Appleby is in Leicester: but see *ante*, p. 50, where it is suggested that Johnson may have “put in” for a school in Shropshire, as well as for the school in Leicestershire.—ED.]

² [It is clear that, as Johnson advanced in life, these convulsive infirmities, though never entirely absent, were so far subdued that he could not be called a *sad spectacle*. We have seen that he was rejected from two schools on account of these distortions, which in his latter years were certainly not violent enough to excite disgust.—ED.]

³ [This seems hardly consistent with the story (told *ante*, p. 21.) of Pope's approbation of Johnson's translation of his Messiah.—ED.]

⁴ Sir Joshua Reynold's notion on this subject

had indulged himself in, of accompanying his thoughts with certain untoward actions, and those actions always appeared to me as if they were meant to reprobate some part of his past conduct. Whenever he was not engaged in conversation, such thoughts were sure to rush into his mind; and, for this reason, any company, any employment whatever, he preferred to being alone. The great business of his life (he said) was to escape from himself. This disposition he considered as the disease of his mind, which nothing cured but company.

“One instance of his absence of mind and particularity, as it is characteristic of the man, may be worth relating. When he and I took a journey together into the west, we visited the late Mr. Bankes, of Dorsetshire; the conversation turning upon pictures, which Johnson could not well see, he retired to a corner of the room, stretching out his right leg as far as he could reach before him, then bringing up his left leg, and stretching his right still further on. The old gentleman observing him, went up to him, and in a very courteous manner assured him, though it was not a new house, the flooring was perfectly safe. The Doctor started from his reverie, like a person waked out of his sleep, but spoke not a word.”

While we are on this subject, my readers may not be displeas'd with another anecdote, communicated to me by the same friend, from the relation of Mr. Hogarth.

Johnson used to be a pretty frequent visitor at the house of Mr. Richardson⁵, author of *Clarissa*, and other novels of extensive reputation. Mr. Hogarth came one day to see Richardson, soon after the execution of Dr. Cameron, for having taken arms for the house of Stuart in 1745-6; and being a warm partisan of George the Second, he observed to Richardson, that certainly there must have been some very unfavourable circumstances lately discovered in this particular case, which had induced the king to approve of an execution for rebellion so long after the time when it was committed, as this had the appearance of putting a man to death in cold blood⁶, and

is confirmed by what Johnson himself said to a young lady, the niece of his friend Christopher Smart. See a note by Mr. Boswell on some particulars communicated by Reynolds, under March 30, 1783.—MALONE.

⁵ [See *ante*, p. 49.—ED.]

⁶ Impartial posterity may, perhaps, be as little inclined as Dr. Johnson was to justify the uncommon rigour exercised in the case of Dr. Archibald Cameron. He was an amiable and truly honest man; and his offence was owing to a generous, though mistaken principle of duty. Being obliged, after 1746, to give up his profession as a

was very unlike his majesty's usual clemency. While he was talking, he perceived a person standing at a window in the room, shaking his head, and rolling himself about in a strange ridiculous manner. He concluded that he was an idiot, whom his relations had put under the care of Mr. Richardson, as a very good man. To his great surprise, however, this figure stalked forwards to where he and Mr. Richardson were sitting, and all at once took up the argument, and burst out into an invective against George the Second, as one who, upon all occasions, was unrelenting and barbarous; mentioning many instances, particularly, that when an officer of high rank had been acquitted by a court-martial, George the Second had with his own hand struck his name off the list¹. In short, he displayed such a power of eloquence, that Hogarth looked at him with astonishment, and actually imagined that this idiot had been at the moment inspired. Neither Hogarth nor Johnson were made known to each other at this interview. [They

Piozzi, afterwards, as we learn from Mrs. Piozzi, became better acquainted.

"Johnson," she adds, "made four lines on the death of poor Hogarth, which were equally true and pleasing: I know not why Garrick's were preferred to them.

"The hand of him here torpid lies,
That drew the essential form of grace;
Here clos'd in death the attentive eyes,
That saw the manners in the face."

Mr. Hogarth, among a variety of kindnesses shown to Mrs. Piozzi, was used to be very earnest that she should obtain the acquaintance, and if possible, the friendship,

physician, and to go into foreign parts, he was honoured with the rank of colonel, both in the French and Spanish service. He was a son of the ancient and respectable family of Cameron, of Lochiel; and his brother, who was the chief of that brave clan, distinguished himself by moderation and humanity, while the Highland army marched victorious through Scotland. It is remarkable of this chief, that though he had earnestly remonstrated against the attempt as hopeless, he was of too heroic a spirit not to venture his life and fortune in the cause, when personally asked by him whom he thought his prince.—BOSWELL.

¹ [Dr. Cameron was executed on the 7th June, 1753. No instance can be traced in the War or Admiralty Offices of any officer of high rank being struck out of the list about that period, after acquittal by a court-martial. It may be surmised that Mr. Hogarth's statement, or Sir Joshua's report of it, was not quite accurate in details, and that Johnson alluded to the case of his friend General Oglethorpe, who, after acquittal by a court-martial, was (to use a vulgar but expressive phrase) put upon the shelf.—See ante, p. 48.—ED.]

of Dr. Johnson, whose conversation was (he said) to the talk of other men, like Titian's painting compared to Hudson's. Of Dr. Johnson, when that lady's father and Hogarth were talking together about him one day, the latter said, "That man is not contented with believing the Bible, but he fairly resolves, I think, to believe nothing but the Bible." Johnson (added he), though so wise a fellow, is more like king David than king Solomon; for he says, in his haste, that all men are liars.]

In 1740 he wrote for the Gentleman's Magazine "the Preface †²;" "the Life of Admiral Blake*" (p. 301); and the first parts of those of "Sir Francis Drake* (p. 389), and Philip Barretier*" ³ (p. 612); both which he finished the following year. He also wrote an "Essay on Epitaphs*" (p. 593); and an "Epitaph on Philips, a musician*" (p. 464); which was afterwards published; with some other pieces of his, in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies. This epitaph is so exquisitely beautiful, that I remember even Lord Kames⁴, strangely prejudiced as he was against Dr. Johnson, was compelled to allow it very high praise. It has been ascribed to Mr. Garrick, from its appearing at first with the signature G; but I have heard Mr. Garrick declare, that it was written by Dr. Johnson, and give the following account of the manner in which it was composed. Johnson and he were sitting together; when, amongst other things, Garrick repeated an epitaph upon this Philips by a Dr. Wilkes, in these words:

² [This Preface is, in fact, a learned essay "on the Acta Diurna" of the old Romans, and has little of Johnson's manner.—ED.]

³ [His attention was probably drawn to Barretier, by his friend Miss Carter, with whom that ingenious young man corresponded.—He died in 1740; and Johnson begins the life in the magazine of that year by stating that "he had few materials for his work but the letters of Barretier's father," which, probably, were communicated by Miss Carter. In 1742, however, Mr. Barretier, senior, transmitted to that lady a life of his son, printed, as it seems, by his friends; and, in 1742, we find Dr. Johnson re-writing his life, with large additions. Not having seen the foreign life, the Editor cannot say how far Dr. Johnson may have borrowed from it; but if we were to form an opinion of the extent of Barretier's learning, the force of his mind, or the goodness of his taste, from what has been preserved of his correspondence in the life of Miss Carter (p. 70—94), the praises lavished on him by his biographer would appear very extravagant, and the extraordinary accounts given of him seem rather those of parental partiality than of credible history.—ED.]

⁴ [Henry Home, one of the Lords of Session in Scotland, author of the *Elements of Criticism*, *Sketches of the History of Man*, and several other less celebrated but valuable works.—ED.]

“Exalted soul! whose harmony could please
The love-sick virgin, and the gouty ease:
Could jarring discord, like Amphion, move
To beauteous order and harmonious love;
Rest here in peace, till angels bid thee rise,
And meet thy blessed Saviour in the skies.”

Johnson shook his head at these commonplace funeral lines, and said to Garrick, “I think, Davy, I can make a better.” Then, stirring about his tea for a little while, in a state of meditation, he almost extempore produced the following verses:

“Philips, whose touch harmonious could remove
The pangs of guilty power or hapless love;
Rest here, distress’d by poverty no more,
Here find the calm thou gav’st so oft before;
Sleep undisturb’d, within this peaceful shrine,
Till angels wake thee with a note like thine!”

At the same time that Mr. Garrick favoured me with this anecdote, he repeated a very pointed epigram by Johnson, on George the Second and Colley Cibber, which has never yet appeared, and of which I know not the exact date. Dr. Johnson afterwards gave it to me himself:

“Augustus still survives in Maro’s strain,
And Spenser’s verse prolongs Eliza’s reign;
Great George’s acts let tuneful Cibber sing;
For Nature form’d the Poet for the King.”

In 1741 he wrote for the Gentleman’s Magazine “the Preface†;” “Conclusion of his Lives of Drake* (p. 38) and Barretier” (p. 87); “a free Translation of the Jest of Hierocles, with an Introduction†” (p. 477); and, I think, the following pieces: “Debate on the Proposal of Parliament to Cromwell; to assume the Title of King, abridged, modified, and digested‡” (p. 94); “Translation of Abbé Guyon’s Dissertation on the Amazons†” (p. 202); “Translation of Fontenelle’s Panegyrick on Dr. Morin†” (p. 375). Two notes upon this appear to me undoubtedly his. He this year, and the two following, wrote the Par-

¹ The epitaph of Philips is in the porch of Wolverhampton church. Mr. Garrick appears not to have recited the verses correctly; and one of the various readings is remarkable, as it is the germ of Johnson’s concluding line,

“And meet thy Saviour’s consort in the skies.”—
BOSWELL.

[By *consort*, I suppose *concert* is meant; but still I do not see the germ of Johnson’s thought. That music may be among the joys of heaven has been sometimes suggested; but that the dead were to be “awakened by *harmonious* notes,” seems quite new, and not quite orthodox.—Ed.]

² [This is only a reprint, better arranged, of a debate, published in 1660, with a few introductory sentences (which *may* be by Johnson), stating that the editor had reduced the confusion and intricacies of the original report into a more intelligible order.—Ed.]

liamentary Debates. He told me himself, that he was the sole composer of them for those three years only. He was not, however, precisely exact in his statement, which he mentioned from hasty recollection; for it is sufficiently evident that his composition of them began November 19, 1740, and ended February 23, 1742-3.

It appears from some of Cave’s letters to Dr. Birch, that Cave had better assistance for that branch of his Magazine than has been generally supposed; and that he was indefatigable in getting it made as perfect as he could.

Thus 21st July, 1735,

“I trouble you with the enclosed, because you said you could easily correct what is here given for Lord C——d’s speech. I beg you will do so as soon as you can for me, because the month is far advanced.”

And 15th July, 1737,

“As you remember the debates so far as to perceive the speeches already printed are not exact, I beg the favour that you will peruse the enclosed, and, in the best manner your memory will serve, correct the mistaken passages, or add any thing that is omitted. I should be very glad to have something of the Duke of N——le’s speech, which would be particularly of service.

“A gentleman has Lord Bathurst’s speech to add something to.”

And July 3, 1744,

“You will see what stupid, low, abominable stuff is put³ upon your noble and learned friend’s⁴ character, such as I should quite reject, and endeavour to do something better towards doing justice to the character. But as I cannot expect to attain my desire in that respect, it would be a great satisfaction, as well as an honour to our work, to have the favour of the genuine speech. It is a method that several have been pleased to take, as I could show, but I think myself under a restraint. I shall say so far, that I have had some by a third hand, which I understood well enough to come from the first; others by penny-post, and others by the speakers themselves, who have been pleased to visit St. John’s-gate, and show particular marks of their being pleased.⁵”

There is no reason, I believe, to doubt the veracity of Cave. It is, however, remarkable that none of these letters are in the years during which Johnson alone furnished the Debates, and one of them is in the very year after he ceased from that labour. [That Johnson was the authour of the

³ I suppose in another compilation of the same kind.—BOSWELL.

⁴ Doubtless, Lord P’ardwick.—BOSWELL.

⁵ Birch’s MSS. in the British Museum, 4302.—BOSWELL.

Murphy, debates during that period was not generally known; but the secret P. 43-5. transpired several years afterwards, and was avowed by himself on the following occasion. Mr. Wedderburne (afterwards Lord Loughborough and Earl of Rosslyn), Dr. Johnson, Dr. Francis (the translator of Horace), Mr. Murphy, who relates the anecdote, and others, dined with the late Mr. Foote. An important debate towards the end of Sir Robert Walpole's administration being mentioned, Dr. Francis observed, "that Mr. Pitt's speech¹ on that occasion was the best he had ever read." He added, "that he had employed eight years of his life in the study of Demosthenes, and finished a translation of that celebrated orator, with all the decorations of style and language within the reach of his capacity; but he had met with nothing equal to the speech above-mentioned." Many of the company remembered the debate; and some passages were cited, with the approbation and applause of all present. During the ardour of conversation, Johnson remained silent. As soon as the warmth of praise subsided, he opened with these words: "That speech I wrote in a garret in Exeter-street." The company was struck with astonishment. After staring at each other in silent amaze, Dr. Francis asked "how that speech could be written by him?" "Sir," said Johnson, "I wrote it in Exeter-street². I never had been in the gallery of the House of Commons but once. Cave had interest with the door-keepers. He, and the persons employed under him, gained admittance: they brought away the subject of discussion, the names of the speakers, the sides they took, and the order in which they rose, together with notes of the arguments advanced in the course of the debate. The whole was afterwards communicated to me, and I composed the speeches in the form which they now have in the parliamentary debates." To this discovery Dr. Francis made answer: "Then, sir, you have exceeded Demosthenes himself; for to say that you have exceeded Francis's Demosthenes, would be saying nothing." The rest of the company bestowed lavish encomiums on Johnson: one, in particular, praised his impartiality; observing that he dealt out reason and eloquence with an equal hand to both parties. "That is not quite true," said Johnson; "I saved appearances tolerably well, but I took care

that the **WHIG DOGS** should not have the best of it."³

[In the perusal of these debates, we cannot but wonder at the powers that produced them. The authour had never passed those gradations that lead to the knowledge of men and business: born to a narrow fortune, of no profession, conversant chiefly with books, unacquainted with the style of any other than academical disputation, and so great a stranger to senatorial manners, that he never was within the walls of either house of parliament. That a man, under these disadvantages, should be able to frame a system of debate, to compose speeches of such excellence, both in matter⁴ and form, as scarcely to be equalled by those of the most able and experienced statesmen, is, I say, matter of astonishment, and a proof of talents that qualified him for a speaker in the most august assembly on earth.

Cave, who had no idea of the powers of eloquence over the human mind, became sensible of its effects in the profits it brought him: he had long thought that the success of his Magazine proceeded from those parts of it that were conducted by himself, which were the abridgement of weekly papers written against the ministry, such as the Craftsman, Fog's Journal, Common Sense, the Weekly Miscellany, the Westminster Journal, and others, and also marshalling the pastorals, the elegies, and the songs, the epigrams, and the rebuses that were sent him by various correspondents, and was scarcely able to see the causes that at this time increased the sale of his pamphlet from ten to fifteen thousand copies a month. But if he saw not, he felt them, and manifested his good fortune by buying an old coach and a pair of older horses; and, that he might avoid the suspicion of pride in setting up an equipage, he displayed to the world the source of his affluence, by a representation of St. John's Gate, instead of his arms, on the door-panel. This he himself told Sir J. Hawkins was the reason of distinguishing his carriage from others, by what some might think a whimsical device, and also for causing it to be engraven on all his plate.

Johnson had his reward, over and above the pecuniary recompense vouchsafed him by Cave, in the general applause of his labours, which the increased demand for the Magazine implied⁴; but this, as his perform-

¹ [No doubt that celebrated reply to old Horace Walpole, which begins "The atrocious crime of being a young man," 10th March, 1741.—Ed.]

² [There is here some inaccuracy; the debate in question was written in 1741. In Mr. Boswell's list of Johnson's residences, he appears not to have resided in Exeter-street after his return to London, in 1737.—Ed.]

³ With the *matter* he was supplied, though probably imperfectly.—Ed.]

⁴ [Sir J. Hawkins seems (as well as the other biographers) to have overrated the value, to Cave and the public, of Johnson's Parliamentary Debates. It is shown in the preface to the Parliamentary History for 1738 (ed. 1812), that one of Cave's rivals, the *London Magazine*, often

ances fell short of his powers, gratified him but little; on the contrary, he disapproved the deceit he was compelled to practice; his notions of morality were so strict, that he would scarcely allow the violation of truth in the most trivial instances, and saw, in falsehood of all kinds, a turpitude that he could never be thoroughly reconciled to; and though the fraud was perhaps not greater than the fictitious relations in Sir Thomas More's Utopia, Lord Bacon's Nova Atlantis, and Bishop Hall's Mundus alter et idem, Johnson was not easy till he had disclosed the deception.

In the mean time it was curious to observe how the deceit operated. It has above been remarked, that Johnson had the art to give different colours to the several speeches, so that some appear to be declamatory and energetic, resembling the orations of Demosthenes; others like those of Cicero, calm, persuasive; others, more particularly those attributed to such country gentlemen, merchants, and seamen as had seats in parliament, bear the characteristic of plainness, bluntness, and unaffected honesty as opposed to the plausibility of such as were understood or suspected to be courtiers: the artifice had its effect; Voltaire was betrayed by it into a declaration, that the eloquence of ancient Greece and Rome was revived in the British senate, and a speech of the late Earl of Chatham when Mr. Pitt, in opposition to one of Mr. Horatio Walpole, received the highest applause, and was by all that read it taken for genuine.

It must be owned, that with respect to the general principles avowed in the speeches, and the sentiments therein contained, they agree with the characters of the persons to whom they are ascribed. Thus, to instance in those of the upper house, the speeches of the Duke of Newcastle, the Lords Carteret and Hay, are calm, temperate, and persuasive; those of the Duke of Argyle and Lord Talbot furious and declamatory, and Lord Chesterfield's¹ and Lord Hervey's florid but flimsy. In the other house the speeches may be thus characterised: the minister's mild and conciliatory: Mr. Pulteney's ner-

excelled the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in the priority and accuracy of its parliamentary reports, which were contributed by Gordon, the translator of Tacitus.—Ed.]

¹ [It is very remarkable that Dr. Maty, who wrote the life and edited the works of Lord Chesterfield, with the use of his lordship's papers, under the eye of his surviving friends, and in the lifetime of Johnson, should have published, as "specimens of his lordship's eloquence, in the strong nervous style of Demosthenes, as well as in the witty ironical manner of Tully," three speeches, which are certainly the composition of Dr. Johnson. See *Chesterfield's Works*, vol. ii. p. 319.—Ed.]

vous, methodical, and weighty; Mr. Shio-pen's blunt and dogmatical; Sir John Barnard's clear, especially on commercial subjects; Lyttelton's stiff and imitative of the Roman oratory; and Pitt's void of argument, but rhapsodically and diffusively eloquent.

The confession of Johnson above-mentioned was the first that revealed the secret that the debates inserted in the *Gentleman's Magazine* were fictitious, and composed by himself. After that, he was free, and indeed industrious, in the communication of it, for being informed that Dr. Smollet was writing a history of England, and had brought it down to the last reign, he cautioned him not to rely on the debates as given in the *Magazine*, for that they were not authentic, but, excepting as to their general import, the work of his own imagination.]

Johnson told me that as soon as he found that the speeches were thought genuine, he determined that he would write no more of them; "for he would not be accessory to the propagation of falsehood." And such was the tenderness of his conscience, that a short time before his death he expressed his regret for his having been the author of fictions, which had passed for realities.

He nevertheless agreed with me in thinking, that the debates which he had framed were to be valued as orations upon questions of publick importance. They have accordingly been collected in volumes, properly arranged, and recommended to the notice of parliamentary speakers by a preface, written by no inferior hand². I must, however, observe, that although there is in those debates a wonderful store of political information, and very powerful eloquence, I cannot agree that they exhibit the manner of each particular speaker, as Sir John Hawkins seems to think. But, indeed, what opinion can we have of his judgment, and taste in public speaking, who presumes to give, as the characteristic of two celebrated orators, "the deep-mouthed rancour of Pulteney, and the yelp-
Hawk.
p. 100.

ing pertinacity of Pitt?" This year I find that his tragedy of Irene had been for some time ready for the stage, and that his necessities made him desirous of getting as much as he could for it with-

² I am assured that the editor is Mr. George Chalmers, whose commercial works are well known and esteemed.—BOSWELL. [This collection is stated in the preface to the *Parliamentary History*, vol. ii. to be very incomplete—of thirty-two debates, twelve are given under wrong dates, and several of Johnson's best compositions are wholly omitted; amongst others, the important debate of the 13th February, 1741, on Mr. Sandys's motion for the removal of Sir Robert Walpole; other omissions, equally striking, are complained of.—Ed.]

out delay; for there is the following letter from Mr. Cave to Dr. Birch in the same volume of manuscripts in the British Museum, from which I copied those above quoted. They were most obligingly pointed out to me by Sir William Musgrave, one of the curators of that noble repository.

“Sept. 9, 1741.

“I have put Mr. Johnson’s play into Mr. Gray’s¹ hands, in order to sell it to him, if he is inclined to buy it; but I doubt whether he will or not. He would dispose of the copy, and whatever advantage may be made by acting it. Would your society², or any gentleman, or body of men that you know, take such a bargain? He and I are very unfit to deal with theatrical persons. Fleetwood was to have acted it last season, but Johnson’s diffidence or³ prevented it.”

I have already mentioned that “Irene” was not brought into public notice till Garrick was manager of Drury-lane theatre.

In 1742⁴ he wrote for the Gentleman’s Magazine the “Preface,” the “Parliamentary Debates*,” “Essay on the Account of the Conduct of the Duchess of Marlborough (p. 128)*,” then the popular topick of conversation. This Essay is a short but masterly performance. We find him, in No. 13 of his Rambler, censuring a profligate sentiment in that “Account;” and again insisting upon it strenuously in conversation. “An Account of the Life of Peter Burman (p. 206)*,” I believe chiefly taken from a foreign publication; as, indeed, he could not himself know much about Burman; “Additions to his Life of Barretier⁵ (p. 242)*;” “The Life of Sy-

denham (p. 633)*,” afterwards prefixed to Dr. Swan’s edition of his works; “Proposals for printing Bibliotheca Harleiana, or a Catalogue of the Library of the Earl of Oxford (p. 636)*.” His account of that celebrated collection of books, in which he displays the importance to literature, of what the French call a *catalogue raisonné*, when the subjects of it are extensive and various, and it is executed with ability, cannot fail to impress all his readers with admiration of his philological attainments. It was afterwards prefixed to the first volume of the Catalogue, in which the Latin accounts of books were written by him. He was employed in this business by Mr. Thomas Osborne, the bookseller, who purchased the library for 13,000*l.*, a sum which Mr. Oldys says, in one of his manuscripts, was not more than the binding of the books had cost; yet, as Dr. Johnson assured me, the slowness of the sale was such, that there was not much gained by it. It has been confidently related, with many embellishments, that Johnson one day knocked Osborne down in his shop with a folio, and put his foot upon his neck. The simple truth I had from Johnson himself. “Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him. But it was not in his shop it was in my own chamber.”

A very diligent observer may trace him where we should not easily suppose him to be found. I have no doubt that he wrote the little abridgement entitled “Foreign History,” in the Magazine for December (p. 660). To prove it, I shall quote the introduction.

“As this is that season of the year in which Nature may be said to command a suspension of hostilities, and which seems intended, by putting a short stop to violence and slaughter, to afford time for malice to relent, and animosity to subside; we can scarce expect any other account than of plans, negotiations, and treaties, of proposals for peace, and preparations for war.”

As also this passage:

“Let those who despise the capacity of the Swiss tell us by what wonderful policy, or by what happy conciliation of interests, it is brought to pass, that in a body made up of different communities and different religions, there should be no civil commotions, though the people are so warlike, that to nominate and raise an army is the same.”

I would also ascribe to him an “Essay on the Description of China, from the French of Du Halde (p. 320)†.”

I am obliged to Mr. Astle for his ready permission to copy the two following letters, of which the originals are in his pos-

session of this year, and from it no doubt Johnson made these additions.—Ed.

¹ A bookseller of London.

² Not the Royal Society: [as Boswell in his first and second editions had strangely supposed.—Ed.] but a society for the encouragement of learning, of which Dr. Birch was a leading member. Their object was, to assist authours in printing expensive works. It existed from about 1735 to 1746, when, having incurred a considerable debt, it was dissolved.—BOSWELL.

³ There is no erasure here, but a mere blank: to fill up which may be an exercise for ingenious conjecture.—BOSWELL. [Probably *pride*. Such, at least, is the common-place antithesis.—Ed.]

⁴ From one of his letters to a friend, written in June, 1742, it should seem that he then purposed to write a play on the subject of Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, and have it ready for the ensuing winter. The passage alluded to, however, is somewhat ambiguous; and the work which he then had in contemplation may have been a history of that monarch.—MALONE.

⁵ [See *ante*, p. 57. Miss Carter received Barretier’s life from his family in March or April

session. Their contents show that they were written about this time, and that Johnson was now engaged in preparing an historical account of the British Parliament.

“TO MR. CAVE.

[Aug. 1743].

“SIR,—I believe I am going to write a long letter, and have therefore taken a whole sheet of paper. The first thing to be written about is our historical design.

“You mentioned the proposal of printing in numbers as an alteration in the scheme, but I believe you mistook, some way or other, my meaning; I had no other view than that you might rather print too many of five sheets than of five and thirty.

“With regard to what I shall say on the manner of proceeding, I would have it understood as wholly indifferent to me, and my opinion only, not my resolution. *Emp-toris sit eligeret.*

“I think the insertion of the exact dates of the most important events in the margin, or of so many events as may enable the reader to regulate the order of facts with sufficient exactness, the proper medium between a journal, which has regard only to time, and a history which ranges facts according to their dependence on each other, and postpones or anticipates according to the convenience of narration. I think the work ought to partake of the spirit of history, which is contrary to minute exactness, and of the regularity of a journal, which is inconsistent with spirit. For this reason I neither admit numbers or dates, nor reject them.

“I am of your opinion with regard to placing most of the resolutions, &c. in the margin, and think we shall give the most complete account of parliamentary proceedings that can be contrived. The naked papers, without an historical treatise interwoven, require some other book to make them understood. I will date the succeeding facts with some exactness, but I think in the margin.

“You told me on Saturday that I had received money on this work, and found set down 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* reckoning the half guinea of last Saturday. As you hinted to me that you had many calls for money, I would not press you too hard, and therefore shall desire only, as I send it in, two guineas for a sheet of copy; the rest you may pay me when it may be more convenient; and even by this sheet payment I shall, for some time, be very expensive.

“The Life of Savage I am ready to go upon; and in Great Primer, and Pica notes, I reckon on sending in half a sheet a day; but the money for that shall likewise lie by in your hands till it is done. With the de-

bates, shall not I have business enough? if I had but good pens.

“Towards Mr. Savage’s Life what more have you got? I would willingly have his trial, &c. and know whether his defence be at Bristol, and would have his collection of Poems, on account of the Preface;—‘The Plain Dealer;’—all the magazines that have any thing of his or relating to him.

“I thought my letter would be long, but it is now ended; and I am, sir, yours, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“The boy found me writing this almost in the dark, when I could not quite easily read yours.

“I have read the Italian:—nothing in it is well.

“I had no notion of having any thing for the inscription². I hope you don’t think I kept it to extort a price. I could think of nothing till to-day. If you could spare me another guinea for the history, I should take it very kindly, to-night; but if you do not, I shall not think it an injury.—I am almost well again.”

“TO MR. CAVE.

“SIR,—You did not tell me your determination about the *Soldier’s Letter*,³ which I am confident was never printed. I think it will not do by itself, or in any other place, so well as the Mag. Extraordinary. If you will have it at all, I believe you do not think I set it high, and I will be glad if what you give you will give quickly.

“You need not be in care about something to print, for I have got the State Trials, and shall extract Layer Atterbury and Macclesfield from them, and shall bring them to you in a fortnight; after which I will try to get the South Sea Report.”

[No date nor signature.]

His writings in the Gentleman’s Magazine in 1743, are, the “Preface;” “the Parliamentary Debates †;” “Considerations on the Dispute between Crousaz and War-

¹ “The Plain Dealer” was published in 1724, and contained some account of Savage.

² Perhaps the Runic Inscription, *Gent. Mag.* vol. xii. p. 132.—MALONE.

[Certainly not—that was published in March, 1742, at least seventeen months before this letter was written; nor does there appear in the Magazine any inscription to which this can refer. It seemed at first sight probable that it might allude to the translation of Pope’s Inscription on his Grotto, which appeared (with an apology for haste) in the next Magazine; but the expression “I could think of nothing till to-day,” negatives that supposition. The inscription, then, was probably one which Cave requested Johnson to devise, and which, when Johnson after a long delay produced it, Cave surprised him by paying.—ED.]

³ I have not discovered what this was.

burton, on Pope's Essay on Man (p. 151. 587)†; in which, while he defends Crou-saz, he shows an admirable metaphysical acuteness and temperance in controversy; "Ad Lauram parituram Epigramma¹ (p. 378)*;" "A Latin Translation of Pope's Verses on his Grotto (p. 558)*."

And as he could employ his pen with equal success upon a small matter as a great, I suppose him to be the authour of an advertisement for Osborne, concerning the great Harleian Catalogue [at the end of the volume].

[The following elegant Latin ode, as Mr. Malone states, was many years ago pointed out to James Bindley, Esq. as written by Johnson, and may safely be attributed to him:

“AD ORNATISSIMAM PUELLAM.

Vanæ sit arti, sit studio modus,
Formosa virgo: sit speculo quis,
Curamque quaerendi decoris
Mitte, supervacuosque cultus.

Ut fortuitis verna coloribus
Depicta vulgo rura magis placent,
Nec invidet horto nitenti
Divitias operosiores:

Lenique fons cum murmure pulchrior
Obliquat ultro præcipitem fugam
Inter reluctantes lapillos, et
Ducit aquas temerè sequentes:

Utque inter undas, inter et arbores,
Jam vere primo dulcè strépunt aves,
Et arte nullà gratiores
Ingeminant sine lege cantus:

Nativa sic te gratia, te nitor
Simplex decebit, te veneres tuæ;
Nudus Cupido suspicatur
Artifices nimis apparatus.

¹ Angliacas inter pulcherrima Laura puellas,
Mox uteri pondus depositura grave,
Adsit, Laura, tibi facilis Lucina dolenti,
Neve tibi noceat prænituisse Deæ.

Mr. Hector was present when this epigram was made *improptu*. The first line was proposed by Dr. James, and Johnson was called upon by the company to finish it, which he instantly did.—BOSWELL.

[This epigram seems hardly worth the distinction of being specially quoted. If the first line was proposed as a *thesis*, we cannot much admire the style in which it was followed up: the designation, surely, of the lady as *puella* would lead us to expect any thing rather than the turn which the epigram takes. Is not the second line gross and awkward; the third pedantic; and the conceit of the fourth not even classical—for Lucina was never famed for her beauty; and does not the whole seem a very strange subject for poetical compliment?—ED.]

Ergo fluentem tu malè sedula,
Ne sæva inuras semper acu comam;
Nec sparsa odorato nitentes
Pulvere dedecores capillos;

Quales nec olim vel Ptolemæia
Jactabat uxor, sidere in choro
Utunque devotæ refulgent
Verticis exuvia decori;

Nec diva mater, cum similem tuæ
Mentita formam, et pulchrior aspici,
Permisit incomptas protervis
Fusa comas agitare ventis².”

But I should think myself much wanting, both to my illustrious friend and my readers, did I not introduce here, with more than ordinary respect, an exquisitely beautiful Ode, which has not been inserted in any of the collections of Johnson's poetry, written by him at a very early period, as Mr. Hector informs me, and inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine of this year (p. 375.)

“FRIENDSHIP, AN ODE*.

Friendship, peculiar boon of heav'n,
The noble mind's delight and pride,
To men and angels only giv'n,
To all the lower world denied.

While love, unknown among the blest,
Parent of thousand wild desires,
The savage and the human breast
Torments alike with raging fires;

With bright, but oft destructive, gleam,
Alike o'er all his lightnings fly;
Thy lambent glories only beam
Around the fav'rites of the sky.

Thy gentle flows of guiltless joys
On fools and villains ne'er descend;
In vain for thee the tyrant sighs,
And hugs a flatterer for a friend.

Directress of the brave and just,
O guide us through life's darksome way!

² In vol. xiv. p. 46, of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, an elegant epigram was inserted, in answer to the above Ode, which was written by Dr. Inyon of Pulham, in Norfolk, a physician, and an excellent classical scholar:

“Ad Authorem Carminis AD ORNATISSIMAM PUELLAM.

“O cui non potuit, quia culta, placere puella,
Quis speras Musam posse placere tuam?”—MALONE.

[Out of deference to Mr. Malone and Mr. Bindley, whose assertion has been so long before the publick *uncontradicted*, the editor has inserted the foregoing ode; but it appears to him to be in a different and (may he venture to add?) *better* style than Johnson's; and he finds, in the *New Foundling Hospital for Wit*, that it is attributed to Bishop Lowth.—ED.]

And let the tortures of mistrust
On selfish bosoms only prey.

Nor shall thine ardour cease to glow,
When souls to blissful climes remove:
What raised our virtue here below,
Shall aid our happiness above."

Johnson had now an opportunity of obliging his schoolfellow Dr. James, of whom he once observed, "no man brings more mind to his profession." James published this year his "Medicinal Dictionary," in three volumes folio. Johnson, as I understood from him, had written, or assisted in writing, the proposals for this work; and being very fond of the study of physick, in which James was his master, he furnished some of the articles. He, however, certainly wrote for it the Dedication to Dr. Mead†, which is conceived with great address, to conciliate the patronage of that very eminent man.

It has been circulated, I know not with what authenticity¹, that Johnson considered Dr. Birch as a dull writer, and said of him, "Tom Birch is as brisk as a bee in conversation; but no sooner does he take a pen in his hand, than it becomes a torpedo to him, and benumbs all his faculties." That the literature of this country is much indebted to Birch's activity and diligence must certainly be acknowledged. We have seen that Johnson honoured² him with a Greek Epigram; and his correspondence with him, during many years, proves that he had no mean opinion of him.

"TO DR. BIRCH.

Thursday, Sept. 29, 1743.

"SIR,—I hope you will excuse me for troubling you on an occasion on which I know not whom else I can apply to; I am at a loss for the lives and characters of Earl Stanhope, the two Craggs, and the minister Sunderland³; and beg that you will in-

¹ [It is stated by Hawkins: we shall see all through this work, the very peculiar value which Johnson set on conversational powers; and there seems no reason to doubt that Dr. Birch's conversation exceeded his writings in vivacity. The editor has seen a MS. letter of Bishop Warburton's, in which he insists, in his usual decisive tone, on the poor use which Birch made in his writings of the materials which he possessed.—ED.]

² [No doubt, as the case has turned out, Birch is honoured by Johnson's compliment; but at the time when it was written, Birch was of eminence in the literary world, and (what affected Johnson more nearly), high in the estimation of Cave; and Johnson's learned flatteries of him, Mess Carter, and Mr. Urban, were all probably prompted by the same motive, a desire to propitiate Cave.—ED.]

³ [Wanted, probably, for the Parliamentary

form (me) where I may find them, and send any pamphlets, &c. relating to them to Mr. Cave, to be perused for a few days by, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

His circumstances were at this time embarrassed; yet his affection for his mother was so warm, and so liberal⁴, that he took upon himself a debt of hers, which, though small in itself, was then considerable to him. This appears from the following letter which he wrote to Mr. Levett, of Lichfield, the original of which lies now before me.

"TO MR. LEVETT, IN LICHFIELD.

December 1, 1743.

"SIR,—I am extremely sorry that we have encroached so much upon your forbearance with respect to the interest, which a great perplexity of affairs hindered me from thinking of with that attention that I ought, and which I am not immediately able to remit to you, but will pay it (I think twelve pounds), in two months. I look upon this, and on the future interest of that mortgage, as my own debt; and beg that you will be pleased to give me directions how to pay it, and not to mention it to my dear mother. If it be necessary to pay this in less time, I believe I can do it; but I take two months for certainty, and beg an answer whether you can allow me so much time. I think myself very much obliged to your forbearance, and shall esteem it a great happiness to be able to serve you. I have great opportunities of dispersing any thing that you may think it proper to make publick. I will give a note for the money, payable at the time mentioned, to any one here that you shall appoint.—I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM JOHNSON.

"At Mr. Osborne's, bookseller, in Gray's Inn"

⁵ It does not appear that he wrote any

History mentioned in the preceding letter of August.—ED.]

⁴ [Dr. Johnson was a good son, and even to indifferent persons the most charitable of men; but the praises which Boswell lavishes on this particular affair are uncalled for, as the debt was hardly so much Johnson's mother's as his own. It has already appeared that he had something of his father's property to expect after his mother's death (p. 27); this was the house in Lichfield, which was, it seems, mortgaged to Mr. Levett: by the nonpayment of the interest Levett would have been entitled to get possession of the property; and in that case Johnson would have lost his reversion, so that he very justly says, that "he looks upon this and the future interest on the mortgage as *his own debt*."—ED.]

⁵ [In this and the two next years, Mr. Poswell has not assigned to Johnson any contributions to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, yet there seems

thing in 1744 for the Gentleman's Magazine but the Preface†. His life of Barretier was now re-published in a pamphlet by itself. But he produced one work this year, fully sufficient to maintain the high reputation which he had acquired. This was "THE LIFE OF RICHARD SAVAGE*," a man of whom it is difficult to speak impartially, without wondering that he was for some time the intimate companion of Johnson; for his character¹ was marked by profligacy, insolence, and ingratitude: yet, as he undoubtedly had a warm and vigorous, though unregulated mind, had seen life in all its varieties, had been much in the company of the statesmen and wits of his time, he could communicate to Johnson an abundant supply of such materials as his philosophical curiosity most eagerly desired; and as Savage's misfortunes and misconduct had reduced him to the lowest state of wretchedness as a writer for bread, his visits to St. John's Gate naturally brought Johnson and him together².

little doubt that from his connexion with that work he derived for some years the chief and almost the only means of subsistence for himself and his wife: perhaps he may have acted as general editor with an annual allowance, and he no doubt employed himself on more literary works than have been acknowledged. In this point the public loss is perhaps not great. What he was unwilling to avow we need not be very solicitous to discover. Indeed his personal history is about this period a blank, hidden, it is to be feared, in the obscurity of indigence; and we cannot but think with a tender commiseration of the "distress" of such a man, rendered more poignant by being shared with a woman whom he so tenderly loved.—Ed.]

¹ As a specimen of Savage's temper, I insert the following letter from him to a noble lord [Tyconnell], to whom he was under great obligations, but who, on account of his bad conduct, was obliged to discard him. The original was in the hands of the late Francis Cockayne Cust, Esq. one of his majesty's counsel learned in the law:

"Right Honourable BRUTE and BOOBY.

"I find you want (as Mr. ——— is pleased to hint) to swear away my life, that is, the life of your creditor, because he asks you for a debt. The publick shall soon be acquainted with this, to judge whether you are not fitter to be an Irish evidence, than to be an Irish peer.—I defy and despise you.—I am, your determined adversary, R. S."—BOSWELL.

² Sir John Hawkins gives the world to understand, that Johnson, "being an admirer of genteel manners, was captivated by the address and demeanour of Savage, who, as to his exterior, was to a remarkable degree accomplished."—*Hawkins's Life*, p. 52. But Sir John's notions of gentility must appear somewhat ludicrous, from his stating the following circumstance as presumptive evidence that Savage was a good swordsman: "That he understood the exercise of a gentleman's

It is melancholy to reflect, that Johnson and Savage were sometimes in such extreme indigence³, that they could not pay for a lodging; so that they have wandered together whole nights in the streets⁴. Yet

weapon, may be inferred from the use made of it in that rash encounter which is related in his Life." The dexterity here alluded to was, that Savage, in a nocturnal fit of drunkenness, stabbed a man at a coffee-house, and killed him: for which he was tried at the Old Bailey, and found guilty of murder.

Johnson, indeed, describes him as having "a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien; but which, upon a nearer acquaintance, softened into an engaging easiness of manners." How highly Johnson admired him for that knowledge which he himself so much cultivated, and what kindness he entertained for him, appears from the following lines in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1738, which I am assured were written by Johnson:

"Ad RICARDUM SAVAGE.

"*Humani studium generis cui pectore fervet
O cotat humanum te fovcatque genus.*"—BOSWELL.

[Boswell should have stated his authority for attributing this poor, obscure, and harsh couplet to Johnson. The absurd title prefixed to it in the Magazine (which Boswell, more prudently than candidly, sinks) is still less in Johnson's manner, and reminds us of *Marat* and *Anacharsis Clootz*.

"Ad Ricardum Savage,
Humani generis Amatorem!!!"

If Johnson wrote this sad stuff, it was probably before he knew much of Savage. They were not, as he himself said, acquainted till after *London* was written. Now *London* was written in 1738, and finished, probably in March, certainly in April; and Johnson was in negotiation with Cave and Dodsley for the sale of it when this epigram was published. Perhaps, at this time, Johnson supposed Savage to stand high in the opinion of Cave, and may have hoped to propitiate the latter by praise of the former, as there is reason to suspect he did, about the same time, in the cases of Miss Carter and Dr Birch. (See *ante*, p. 64. note.)—Ed.]

³ The following striking proof of Johnson's extreme indigence, when he published the *Life of Savage*, was communicated to Mr. Boswell, by Mr. Richard Stowe of Apsley, in Bedfordshire, from the information of Mr. Walter Harte, author of the *Life of Gustavus Adolphus*:

"Soon after Savage's *Life* was published, Mr. Harte dined with Edward Cave, and occasionally praised it. Soon after meeting him, Cave said, 'you made a man very happy t'other day.'—'How could that be?' says Harte; 'nobody was there but ourselves.' Cave answered, by reminding him that a plate of victuals was sent behind a screen, which was to Johnson, dressed so shabbily, that he did not choose to appear; but on hearing the conversation, he was highly delighted with the encomiums on his book."—MALONE.

⁴ As Johnson was married before he settled in London, and must have always had a habitation for his wife, some readers have wondered how he

in these almost incredible scenes of distress, we may suppose that Savage mentioned many of the anecdotes with which Johnson afterwards enriched the life of his unhappy companion, and those of other poets.

He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that one night in particular, when Savage and he walked round St. James's-square for want of a lodging, they were not at all depressed by their situation; but, in high spirits and brimful of patriotism, traversed the square for several hours, inveighed against the minister, and "resolved they would *stand by their country.*"

I am afraid, however, that by associating with Savage, who was habituated to the dissipation and licentiousness of the town, Johnson, though his good principles remained steady, did not entirely preserve that conduct, for which, in days of greater simplicity, he was remarked by his friend Mr. Hector; but was imperceptibly led into some indulgences which occasioned much distress to his virtuous mind¹.

ever could have been driven to stroll about with Savage, all night, for want of a lodging. But it should be remembered, that Johnson, at different periods, had lodgings in the vicinity of London; and his finances certainly would not admit of a double establishment. When, therefore, he spent a convivial day in London, and found it too late to return to any country residence he may occasionally have had, having no lodging in town, he was obliged to pass the night in the manner described above; for though, at that period, it was not uncommon for two men to sleep together, Savage, it appears, could accommodate him with nothing but his company in the open air.—The epigram given above, which doubtless was written by Johnson, shows, that their acquaintance commenced before April, 1738. See p. 103, n.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone appears to have forgotten that Sir J. Hawkins relates, that about this period of Johnson's intimacy with Savage, a kind of separation took place between him and his wife, who went to reside with some relations near the Tower: this was, probably, part of the period which Johnson calls their *distress*; which, if Mr. Malone's anecdote of the plate of victuals sent behind the screen be correct, must have extended to, at least, 1744, and may, it is feared, have lasted a few years later. As to the inference Mr. Malone draws from the epigram, it may be observed, that it by no means proves any *intimacy*, and it has been shown in the last note that if *any* acquaintance existed at the time the epigram was written, it must have been very recent.—ED.]

¹ [Sir John Hawkins very uncharitably attributes to the influence of Savage a separation which took place (as he alone asserts), between Johnson and his wife about this period, "when she was harboured," as he expresses it, "by a friend near the Tower." This separation (if Hawkins be even so far correct) may be explained without any reference to Savage. The whole course of Johnson's life and conduct warrants us in sup-

That Johnson was anxious that an authentic and favourable account of his extraordinary friend should first get possession of the publick attention, is evident from a letter which he wrote in the Gentleman's Magazine for August of the year preceding its publication.

"MR. URBAN,—As your collections show how often you have owed the ornaments of your poetical pages to the correspondence of the unfortunate and ingenious Mr. Savage, I doubt not but you have so much regard to his memory as to encourage any design that may have a tendency to the preservation of it from insults or calumnies; and therefore with some degree of assurance, entreat you to inform the publick, that his life will speedily be published by a person who was favoured with his confidence, and received from himself an account of most of the transactions which he proposes to mention, to the time of his retirement to Swansea in Wales.

"From that period, to his death in the prison of Bristol, the account will be continued from materials still less liable to objection; his own letters, and those of his friends, some of which will be inserted in the work, and abstracts of others subjoined in the margin.

"It may be reasonably imagined, that others may have the same design; but as it is not credible that they can obtain the same materials, it must be expected they will supply from invention the want of intelligence; and that under the title of 'The Life of Savage,' they will publish only a novel, filled with romantick adventures and imaginary amours. You may therefore, perhaps, gratify the lovers of truth and wit, by giving me leave to inform them in your Magazine, that my account will be published in 8vo. by Mr. Roberts, in Warwick-lane."

[No Signature.]

posing that this temporary separation was produced by pecuniary distress, and not by an interruption of affection. Johnson would be naturally solicitous that his wife should find in her own family a temporary refuge from the want with which he was struggling. There never has existed any human being, all the details of whose life, all the motives of whose actions, all the thoughts of whose mind, have been so unreservedly brought before the publick; even his prayers, his most secret meditations, and his most scrupulous self reproaches, have been laid before the world; and there is not to be found, in all the unparalleled mass of information thus exposed to us, a single trace to justify the accusation which Hawkins so wantonly and so odiously, and it may be assumed, so falsely makes. Johnson's fate in this particular is a little hard; he is at once ridiculed for being extravagantly uxorious, and censured for a profligate disregard of his wife.—ED.]

In February, 1744, it accordingly came forth from the shop of Roberts, between whom and Johnson I have not traced any connexion, except the casual one of this publication¹. In Johnson's "Life of Savage," although it must be allowed that its moral is the reverse of—"Respicere exemplar vite morumque jubebo," a very useful lesson is inculcated, to guard men of warm passions from a too free indulgence of them; and the various incidents are related in so clear and animated a manner, and illuminated throughout with so much philosophy, that it is one of the most interesting narratives in the English language². Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that upon his return from Italy he met with it in Devonshire, knowing nothing of its authour, and began to read it while he was standing with his arm leaning against a chimney-piece. It seized his attention so strongly, that, not being able to lay down the book till he had finished it, when he attempted to move, he found his arm totally benumbed. The rapidity with which this work was composed is a wonderful circumstance. Johnson has been heard to say, "I wrote forty-eight of the printed octavo pages of the Life of Savage at a sitting; but then I sat up all night."

He exhibits the genius of Savage to the best advantage, in the specimens of his poetry which he has selected, some of which are of uncommon merit. We, indeed, occasionally find such vigour and such point, as might make us suppose that the generous aid of Johnson had been imparted to his friend. Mr. Thomas Warton made this remark to me; and, in support of it, quoted from the poem entitled "The Bastard," a line in which the fancied superiority of one "stamped in Nature's mint with ecstasy" is contrasted with a regular lawful descendant of some great and ancient family:

¹ [There seems reason to suppose that Cave sometimes permitted the name of another printer to appear on the title pages of books of which he was in fact the publisher; see *ante*, p. 53. In this case the fact is certain; as it appears from the letter to Cave, August, 1738 (*ante*, p. 62), that Johnson sold the work to him even before it was written.—Ed.]

² [It gives, like Raphael's Lazarus or Murillo's Beggar, pleasure as a work of art, while the original could only excite disgust. Johnson has spread over Savage's character the varnish, or rather the veil, of stately diction and extenuatory phrases, but cannot prevent the observant reader from seeing that the subject of this biographical essay was, as Mr. Boswell calls him, "an ungrateful and insolent profligate;" and so little do his works show of that poetical talent for which he has been celebrated, that if it had not been for Johnson's embalming partiality, his works would probably be now as *unheard of* as they are *unread*.—Ed.]

"No tenth transmitter of a foolish face."

But the fact is, that this poem was published some years before Johnson and Savage were acquainted.

It no where appears when they became acquainted³, and in the whole of Johnson's life of his profligate friend there is no kind of date.

It is remarkable, that in this biographical disquisition there appears a very strong symptom of Johnson's prejudice against players⁴; a prejudice which may be attributed to the following causes: first, the imperfection of his organs, which were so defective that he was not susceptible of the fine impressions which theatrical excellence produces upon the generality of mankind; secondly, the cold rejections of his tragedy; and, lastly, the brilliant success of Garrick, who had been his pupil, who had come to London at the same time with him, not in a much more prosperous state than himself, and whose talents he undoubtedly rated low, compared with his own. His being outstripped by his pupil in the race of immediate fame, as well as of fortune, probably made him feel some indignation, as thinking whatever might be Garrick's merits in his art, the reward was too great when compared with what the most successful efforts of literary labour could attain. At all periods of his life Johnson used to talk contemptuously of players; but in this work he speaks of them with peculiar acrimony; for which, perhaps, there was formerly too much reason from the licentious and dissolute manners of those engaged in that profession. It is but justice to add, that in our own time such a change has taken place, that there is no longer room for such an unfavourable distinction.

His schoolfellow and friend, Dr. Taylor, told me a pleasant anecdote of Johnson's triumphing over his pupil, David Garrick. When that great actor had played some

³ [This acquaintance probably commenced in the spring of 1738; certainly not earlier, if it be true, that they first met at St. John's Gate, as Johnson was not known to Cave till February or March, 1738.—Ed.]

⁴ [It is another of those remarkable inconsistencies in Johnson's character, before alluded to (p. 49), that as the first publication of this determined admirer of the metropolis was a satire on London, so the first production of this despiser of the stage should be a play! Mr. Boswell is obliged to admit what was too obvious to be concealed—but he does so with reluctance and great tenderness of expression—that Dr. Johnson *envied* Garrick, and we shall see that he even *envied* Sheridan, and to this source must, we fear, be attributed his "indignation" against players. This is no doubt a blot on Johnson's character, and we have seen, and shall see, too many instances of this infirmity.—Ed.]

little time at Goodman's-fields, Johnson and Taylor went to see him perform, and afterwards passed the evening at a tavern with him and old Giffard. Johnson, who was ever depreciating stage-players, after censuring some mistakes in emphasis, which Garrick had committed in the course of that night's acting, said, "The players, sir, have got a kind of rant, with which they run on, without any regard either to accent or emphasis." Both Garrick and Giffard were offended at this sarcasm, and endeavoured to refute it; upon which Johnson rejoined, "Well now, I'll give you something to speak, with which you are little acquainted, and then we shall see how just my observation is. That shall be the criterion. Let me hear you repeat the ninth commandment: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.'" Both tried at it, said Dr. Taylor, and both mistook the emphasis, which should be upon *not* and *false witness*¹. Johnson put them right, and enjoyed his victory with great glee.

His "Life of Savage" was no sooner published, than the following liberal praise was given to it, in "The Champion," a periodical paper:

"This pamphlet is, without flattery to its authour, as just and well written a piece of its kind as I ever saw; so that at the same time that it highly deserves, it certainly stands very little in need of this recommendation. As to the history of the unfortunate person, whose memoirs compose this work, it is certainly penned with equal accuracy and spirit, of which I am so much the better judge, as I know many of the facts mentioned to be strictly true, and very fairly related. Besides, it is not only the story

¹ I suspect Dr. Taylor was inaccurate in this statement. The emphasis should be equally upon *shalt* and *not*, as both concur to form the negative injunction; and *false witness*, like the other acts prohibited in the decalogue, should not be marked by any peculiar emphasis, but only be distinctly enunciated.—BOSWELL.

A moderate emphasis should be placed on *false*.—KEARNEY. [Dr. Kearney is clearly right; whatever emphasis there is should be on *false*. The error of Johnson's suggestion of making *two* or *three* emphatic words will be the more clearly shown by observing that several of the commandments consist, in the Greek and the Latin (as well as in the original Hebrew), of only *two* words, as *Ου κεισεαι*, *Non furaberis*; and Boswell's opinion, that *false witness* should not be emphatical, is contradicted by the fact, that in the Greek version *false witness* is doubly forbidden, *Ου ψευδ μαρτυροσεις μαρτυραν ψευδα*. Yet Dr. Wood, in his *Life of J. Warton* (p. 101) seems to have so little considered the matter as to approve of, what he calls, Johnson's "*reproof of Garrick*."—ED.]

of Mr. Savage, but innumerable incidents relating to other persons, and other affairs, which render this a very amusing, and, withal, a very instructive and valuable performance. The authour's observations are short, significant, and just, as his narrative is remarkably smooth and well disposed; his reflections open to all the recesses of the human heart; and, in a word, a more just or pleasant, a more engaging or a more improving treatise, on all the excellences and defects of human nature, is scarce to be found in our own, or, perhaps, any other language²."

Johnson's partiality for Savage made him entertain no doubt of his story, however extraordinary and improbable. It never occurred to him to question his being the son of the Countess of Macclesfield, of whose unrelenting barbarity he so loudly complained, and the particulars of which are related in so strong and affecting a manner in Johnson's *Life* of him. Johnson was certainly well warranted in publishing his narrative, however offensive it might be to the lady and her relations, because her alleged unnatural and cruel conduct to her son, and shameful avowal of guilt, were stated in a *Life* of Savage now lying before me, which came out so early as 1727, and no attempt had been made to confute it, or to punish the authour or printer as a libeller: but for the honour of human nature, we should be glad to find the shocking tale not true; and from a respectable gentleman³, connected with the lady's family, I have received such information and remarks, as, joined to my own inquiries, will, I think, render it at least somewhat doubtful, especially when we consider that it must have originated from the person himself who went by the name of Richard Savage.

If the maxim, *falsum in uno, falsum in omnibus*, were to be received without qualification, the credit of Savage's narrative, as conveyed to us, would be annihilated; for it contains some assertions which, beyond a question, are not true.

1. In order to induce a belief that the Earl Rivers, on account of a criminal connexion with whom Lady Macclesfield is said to have been divorced from her husband, by Act of Parliament (1697), had a peculiar anxiety about the child which she

² This character of the *Life* of Savage was not written by Fielding, as has been supposed, but most probably by Ralph, who, as appears from the minutes of the Partners of "The Champion," in the possession of Mr. Reed of Staple Inn, succeeded Fielding in his share of the paper, before the date of that eulogium.—BOSWELL.

³ The late Francis Cockayne Cust, esq. one of his majesty's council.—BOSWELL.

bore to him, it is alleged, that his lordship gave him his own name, and had it duly recorded in the register of St. Andrew's, Holborn. I have carefully inspected that register, but no such entry is to be found¹.

¹ Mr. Cust's reasoning, with respect to the filiation of Richard Savage, always appeared to me extremely unsatisfactory; and is entirely overturned by the following decisive observations, for which the reader is indebted to the unwearied researches of Mr. Bindley.—The story on which Mr. Cust so much relies, that Savage was a supposititious child, not the son of Lord Rivers and Lady Macclesfield, but the offspring of a shoemaker, introduced in consequence of her real son's death, was, without doubt, grounded on the circumstance of Lady Macclesfield having, in 1696, previously to the birth of Savage, had a daughter by the Earl Rivers, who died in her infancy: a fact which, as the same gentleman observes to me, was proved in the course of the proceedings on Lord Macclesfield's Bill of Divorce. Most fictions of this kind have some admixture of truth in them.—MALONE.

From "the Earl of Macclesfield's Case," which, in 1697-8, was presented to the Lords, in order to procure an act of divorce, it appears that Anne, Countess of Macclesfield, under the name of Madam SMITH, was delivered of a male child in Fox-court, near Brook-street, Holborn, by Mrs. Wright, a midwife, on Saturday, the 16th of January, 1696-7, at six o'clock in the morning, who was baptized on the Monday following, and registered by the name of RICHARD, the son of John Smith, by Mr. Burbridge, assistant to Dr. Manningham's curate for St. Andrew's, Holborn: that the child was christened on Monday, the 18th of January, in Fox-court; and, from the privacy, was supposed by Mr. Burbridge to be "a by-blow, or bastard." It also appears that, during her delivery, the lady wore a mask; and that Mary Pegler, on the next day after the baptism (Tuesday), took a male child, whose mother was called Madam Smith, from the house of Mrs. Pheasant, in Fox-court [running from Brook-street into Gray's-inn-lane], who went by the name of Mrs. Lee.

Conformable to this statement is the entry in the register of St. Andrew's, Holborn, which is as follows, and which unquestionably records the baptism of Richard Savage, to whom Lord Rivers gave his own Christian name, prefixed to the assumed surname of his mother: Jan. 1696-7. "RICHARD, son of John Smith and Mary, in Fox-court, in Gray's-in-lane, baptized the 18th."—BINDLEY. [Mr. Cust and Mr. Boswell's share of the argument and assertions in the text not being distinguished, it is not possible to say which of them hazarded the assertion relative to the parish register of St. Andrew's, which certainly does contain what the text asserts is not to be found in it. If the maxim, therefore, *falsum in uno, falsum in omnibus*, were to be applied to them, all their observations must be rejected. On the other hand, Mr. Bindley's researches seem only to prove what has been generally admitted, that Lady Macclesfield had a child, by Lord Rivers, baptized by the name of Richard;

2. It is stated, that "Lady Macclesfield having lived for some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty;" and Johnson, assuming this to be true, stigmatises her with indignation, as "the wretch who had, without scruple, proclaimed herself an adulteress²." But I have perused the Journals of both houses of Parliament at the period of her divorce, and there find it authentically ascertained, that so far from voluntarily submitting to the ignominious charge of adultery, she made a strenuous defence by her counsel; the bill having been first moved the 15th of January, 1697-8, in the House of Lords, and proceeded on (with various applications for time to bring up witnesses at a distance, &c.) at intervals, till the 3d of March, when it passed. It was brought to the Commons, by a message from the Lords, the 5th of March, proceeded on the 7th, 10th, 11th, 14th, and 15th, on which day, after a full examination of witnesses on both sides, and hearing of counsel, it was reported without amendments, passed, and carried to the Lords. That Lady Macclesfield was convicted of the crime of which she was accused, cannot be denied; but the question now is, whether the person calling himself Richard Savage was her son.

It has been said³, that when Earl Rivers was dying, and anxious to provide for all his natural children, he was informed by Lady Macclesfield that her son by him was dead. Whether, then, shall we believe that this was a malignant lie, invented by a mother to prevent her own child from receiving the bounty of his father, which was accordingly the consequence, if the person whose life Johnson wrote was her son; or shall we not rather believe that the person who then assumed the name of Richard Savage was an impostor, being in reality the son of the shoemaker under whose wife's care⁴ Lady Macclesfield's child was placed;

but it does not disprove the assertion, that this child died in its infancy, and that Savage, when between seventeen and eighteen, assumed its name. Savage, in a letter to Miss Carter, admits that he did pass under another name till he was seventeen years of age, but not the name of any person he lived with.—*Life of Mrs. Carter*, vol. i. p. 59.—ED.]

² No divorce can be obtained in the courts on confession of the party. There must be proofs.—KEARNEY.

³ By Johnson in his *Life of Savage*.—MALONE.

⁴ This, as an accurate friend remarks to me, is not correctly stated. The shoemaker under whose care Savage was placed, with a view to his becoming his apprentice, was not the husband of his nurse.—See Johnson's *Life of Savage*.—J. BOSWELL.

that after the death of the real Richard Savage, he attempted to personate him; and that the fraud being known to Lady Macclesfield, he was therefore repulsed by her with just resentment.

There is a strong circumstance in support of the last supposition; though it has been mentioned as an aggravation of Lady Macclesfield's unnatural conduct, and that is, her having prevented him from obtaining the benefit of a legacy left to him by Mrs. Lloyd, his godmother. For if there was such a legacy left, his not being able to obtain payment of it must be imputed to his consciousness that he was not the real person. The just inference should be, that by the death of Lady Macclesfield's child before its godmother, the legacy became lapsed, and therefore that Johnson's Richard Savage was an impostor.

If he had a title to the legacy, he could not have found any difficulty in recovering it; for had the executors resisted his claim, the whole costs, as well as the legacy, must have been paid by them, if he had been the child to whom it was given¹.

The talents of Savage, and the mingled fire, rudeness, pride, meanness, and ferocity of his character², concur in making it credible that he was fit to plan and carry on an ambitious and daring scheme of imposture, similar instances of which have not been wanting in higher spheres, in the history of different countries, and have had a considerable degree of success.

Yet on the other hand, to the companion of Johnson (who, through whatever medium he was conveyed into this world, be it ever so doubtful, "to whom related, or by whom begot," was unquestionably, a man of no common endowments), we must allow the weight of general repute as to his *Status* or parentage, though illicit; and supposing him to be an impostor, it seems strange that Lord Tyrconnel, the nephew of Lady Macclesfield, should patronise him, and even admit him as a guest in his family³.

¹ [This reasoning is decisive; if Savage were what he represented himself to be, nothing could have prevented his recovering his legacy.—ED.]

² Johnson's companion appears to have persuaded that lofty-minded man, that he resembled him in having a noble pride; for Johnson, after painting in strong colours the quarrel between Lord Tyrconnel and Savage, asserts that "the spirit of Mr. Savage, indeed, never suffered him to solicit a reconciliation: he returned reproach for reproach, and insult for insult." But the respectable gentleman to whom I have alluded has in his possession a letter from Savage, after Lord Tyrconnel had discarded him, addressed to the Reverend Mr. Gilbert, his Lordship's chaplain, in which he requests him, in the humblest manner, to represent his case to the viscount.—BOSWELL.

³ Trusting to Savage's information, Johnson

Lastly, it must ever appear very suspicious that three different accounts of the Life of Richard Savage, one published in "The Plain Dealer," in 1724, another in 1727, and another by the powerful pen of Johnson, in 1744, and all of them while Lady Macclesfield⁴ was alive, should, notwithstanding the severe attacks upon her, have been suffered to pass without any publick and effectual contradiction⁵.

represents this unhappy man's being received and pensioned by his lordship, as posterior to Savage's conviction and pardon. But I am assured that Savage had received the voluntary bounty of Lord Tyrconnel, and had been dismissed by him long before the murder was committed, and that his lordship was very instrumental in procuring Savage's pardon, by his intercession with the queen, through Lady Hertford. If, therefore, he had been desirous of preventing the publication by Savage, he would have left him to his fate. Indeed, I must observe, that although Johnson mentions that Lord Tyrconnel's patronage of Savage was "upon his promise to lay aside his design of exposing the cruelty of his mother," the great biographer has forgotten that he himself has mentioned that Savage's story had been told, several years before, in "The Plain Dealer;" from which he quotes this strong saying of the generous Sir Richard Steele, that the "inhumanity of his mother had given him a right to find every good man his father." At the same time it must be acknowledged, that Lady Macclesfield and her relations might still wish that her story should not be brought into more conspicuous notice by the satirical pen of Savage.—BOSWELL.

⁴ Miss Mason, after having forfeited the title of Lady Macclesfield by divorce, was married to Colonel Brett, and, it is said, was well known in all the polite circles. Colley Cibber, I am informed, had so high an opinion of her taste and judgment as to genteel life and manners, that he submitted every scene of his "Careless Husband" to Mrs. Brett's revision and correction. Colonel Brett was reported to be free in his gallantry with his lady's maid. Mrs. Brett came into a room one day in her own house, and found the colonel and the maid both fast asleep in two chairs. She tied a white handkerchief round her husband's neck which was a sufficient proof that she had discovered his intrigue; but she never at any time took notice of it to him. This incident, as I am told, gave occasion to the well-wrought scene of Sir Charles and Lady Easy and Edging.—BOSWELL. [Can Mr. Boswell have been well informed that Lady Macclesfield, after her divorce and remarriage, was received in all the polite circles?—ED.]

⁵ [It should, however, be recollected, before we draw any conclusions from Lady Macclesfield's forbearance to prosecute a libeller, that however innocent she might be as to Savage, she was undeniably and inexcusably guilty in other respects, and would have been naturally reluctant to drag her frailties again before the publick. If it had not been for the accident of Johnson having, near twenty years after, happened to write Sav-

I have thus endeavoured to sum up the evidence upon the case as fairly as I can; and the result seems to be, that the world must vibrate in a state of uncertainty as to what was the truth.

This digression, I trust, will not be censured, as it relates to a matter exceedingly curious, and very intimately connected with Johnson, both as a man and an author.

He this year wrote the "Preface to the Harleian Miscellany*." The selection of the pamphlets of which it was composed was made by Mr. Oldys, a man of eager curiosity, and indefatigable diligence, who first exerted that spirit of inquiry into the literature of the old English writers, by which the works of our great dramatick poet have of late been so signally illustrated.

In 1745 he published a pamphlet entitled "Miscellaneous Observations on the Tragedy of Macbeth, with Remarks on Sir T. H.'s (Sir Thomas Hanmer's) edition of Shakspeare*." To which he affixed, proposals for a new edition of that poet.

As we do not trace any thing else¹ published by him during the course of this year, we may conjecture that he was occupied entirely with that work. But the little encouragement which was given by the publick to his anonymous proposals for the execution of a task which Warburton was known to have undertaken, probably damped his ardour. His pamphlet, however, was highly esteemed, and was fortunate enough to obtain the approbation even of the supercilious Warburton himself, who, in the Preface to his Shakspeare, published two years afterwards, thus mentioned it: "As to all those things which have been published under the titles of *Essays, Remarks, Observations, &c.* on Shakspeare, if you except some Critical Notes on Macbeth, given as a specimen of a projected edition, and written, as appears, by a man of parts and genius, the rest are absolutely below a serious notice."

Of this flattering distinction shown to him by Warburton, a very grateful remembrance was ever entertained by Johnson, who said, "He praised me at a time when praise was of value to me."

In 1746 it is probable that he was still employed upon his Shakspeare, which perhaps he laid aside for a time, upon account of the high expectations which were formed of Warburton's edition of that great poet. It is somewhat curious, that his literary career appears to have been almost to-

vage's life, the original libel would never have been heard of.—Ed.]

¹ [Upon the produce of these few and small works he, of course, could not have existed: but how he was otherwise employed, as Boswell failed to discover, we cannot now hope to ascertain: see *ante*, p. 64, *note*.—Ed.]

tally suspended in the years 1745 and 1746, those years which were marked by a civil war in Great Britain, when a rash attempt was made to restore the house of Stuart to the throne. That he had a tenderness for that unfortunate house is well known; and some may fancifully imagine, that a sympathick anxiety impeded the exertion of his intellectual powers; but I am inclined to think, that he was, during this time, sketching the outlines of his great philological work.

None of his letters during those years are extant, so far as I can discover. This is much to be regretted. It might afford some entertainment to see how he then expressed himself to his private friends concerning state affairs. Dr. Adams informs me, that "at this time a favourite object which he had in contemplation was, 'the Life of Alfred;' in which, from the warmth with which he spoke about it, he would, I believe, had he been master of his own will, have engaged himself, rather than on any other subject."

In 1747 it is supposed that the Gentleman's Magazine for May (p. 239) was enriched by him with five short poetical pieces, distinguished by three asterisks². The first is a translation, or rather a paraphrase, of a Latin epitaph on Sir Thomas Hanmer. Whether the Latin was his, or not, I have never heard, though I should think it probably was, if it be certain that he wrote the English; as to which my only cause of doubt is, that his slighting character of Hanmer as an editor, in his "Observations on Macbeth," is very different from that in the Epitaph. It may be said, that there is the same contrariety between the character in the Observations, and that in his own Preface to Shakspeare; but a considerable time elapsed between the one publication and the other, whereas the Observations and the Epitaph came close together. The others are, "To Miss——, on her giving the Authour a gold and silk net-work Purse of her own weaving;" "Stella in Mourning;" "The Winter's Walk;" "An Ode;" and, "To Lyce, an elderly Lady." I am not positive that all these were his productions; but as "The Winter's Walk" has never been controverted to be his, and all of them have the same mark, it is reasonable to con-

² In the *Universal Visiter*, to which Johnson contributed, the mark which is affixed to some pieces, unquestionably his, is also found subjoined to others, of which he certainly was not the author. The mark, therefore, will not ascertain the poems in question to have been written by him. Some of them were probably the productions of Hawkesworth, who, it is believed, was afflicted with the gout. The verses on a purse were inserted afterwards in Mrs. Williams's Miscellanies, and are unquestionably Johnson's.—MALONE.

clude that they are all written by the same hand¹. Yet to the Ode, in which we find a passage very characteristic of him, being a learned description of the gout,

“Unhappy, whom to beds of pain
Arthritick tyranny consigns,”

there is the following note, “The authour being ill of the gout:” but Johnson was not attacked with that distemper till a very late period of his life. May not this, however, be a poetical fiction? Why may not a poet suppose himself to have the gout, as well as suppose himself to be in love, of which we have innumerable instances, and which has been admirably ridiculed by Johnson in his “Life of Cowley?” I have also some difficulty to believe that he could produce such a group of *conceits* as appear in the verses to Lyce, in which he claims for this ancient personage as good a right to be assimilated to *heaven*, as nymphs whom other poets have flattered; he therefore ironically ascribes to her the attributes of the *sky*, in such stanzas as this:

“Her teeth the night with darkness dies,
She’s starr’d with pimples o’er;
Her tongue like nimble lightning plies,
And can with thunder roar.”

But as, at a very advanced age, he could condescend to trifle in *namby-pamby* rhymes, to please Mrs. Thrale and her daughter, he may have, in his earlier years, composed such a piece as this.

It is remarkable, that in this first edition of “The Winter’s Walk,” the concluding line is much more Johnsonian than it was afterwards printed; for in subsequent editions, after praying Stella “to snatch him to her arms,” he says,

“And shield me from the ills of life.”

Whereas in the first edition it is

“And hide me from the sight of life.”

¹ [There is no evidence whatever that *any* of these were Johnson’s, and every reason to suppose that they are Hawkesworth’s. The ode which Boswell doubts about, on internal evidence, is the ode to *Spring*, which, with those on *Summer*, *Autumn*, and *Winter*, have been of late published as Johnson’s, and are, no doubt, all by the same hand. We see that *Spring* bears internal marks of being Hawkesworth’s. *Winter* and *Summer*, Mr. Chalmers (in the preface to the *Adventurer* and in the *Biog. Dict.*) asserts to be his also; and (which seems quite conclusive) the index to the *Gent. Mag.* for 1748 attributes *Summer* to Mr. Greville, a name known to have been assumed by Hawkesworth. The verses on the “Purse,” and to “Stella in Mourning,” are certainly by the same hand as the four odes, and the whole must therefore be assigned to Hawkesworth, and should be removed from their place in Johnson’s works.—ED.]

A horror at life in general is more consonant with Johnson’s habitual gloomy cast of thought².

I have heard him repeat with great energy the following verses, which appeared in the Gentleman’s Magazine for April this year; but I have no authority to say they were his own. Indeed, one of the best critics of our age suggests to me, that “the word *indifferently* being used in the sense of *without concern*, and being also very unpoetical, renders it improbable that they should have been his composition.”

“On Lord Lovat’s Execution.

“Pitied by gentle minds, KILMARNOCK died;
The brave, BALMERINO, were on thy side;
RADCLIFFE, unhappy in his crimes of youth,
Steady in what he still mistook for truth,
Beheld his death so decently unmoved,
The soft lamented, and the brave approved.
But LOVAT’s fate indifferently we view,
True to no king, to no religion true:
No fair forgets the ruin he has done;
No child laments the tyrant of his son;
No tory pities, thinking what he was;
No whig compassions, for he left the cause;
The brave regret not, for he was not brave;
The honest mourn not, knowing him a knave!³”

In the Gentleman’s Magazine for December this year, he inserted an “Ode on Winter” (p. 588), which is, I think, an admirable specimen of his genius for lyric poetry.

² [Johnson’s habitual horror was not of *life*, but of *death*.—ED.]

³ These verses are somewhat too severe on the extraordinary person who is the chief figure in them; for he was undoubtedly brave. His pleasantry during his solemn trial (in which, by the way, I have heard Mr. David Hume observe, that we have one of the very few speeches of Mr. Murray, now Earl of Mansfield, authentically given) was^{*} very remarkable. When asked if he had any questions to put to Sir Everard Fawkener, who was one of the strongest witnesses against him, he answered, “I only wish him joy of his young wife.” And after sentence of death, in the horrible terms in such cases of treason, was pronounced upon him, and he was retiring from the bar, he said, “Fare you well, my lords; we shall not all meet again in one place.” He behaved with perfect composure at his execution, and called out, “*Dulce et decorum est pro patriâ mori.*”—BOSWELL. [He was a profligate villain, and deserved death for his moral, at least, as much as for his political offences. There is in the Gentleman’s Magazine for April an account of the behaviour of Lord Lovat at his execution, the latter part of which, censuring pleasantry in *articulo mortis*, hears strong internal evidence, both in matter and manner, of having been written by Johnson. The interest which he took in this transaction may have fixed in his memory the lines on Lord Lovat, which certainly do not resemble his own style.—ED.]

This year his old pupil and friend, David Garrick, having become joint patentee and manager of Drury-lane theatre, Johnson honoured his opening of it with a Prologue*, which for just and manly dramattick criticism on the whole range of the English stage, as well as for poetical excellence¹, is unrivalled. Like the celebrated Epilogue to the "Distressed Mother," it was, during the season, often called for by the audience. The most striking and brilliant passages of it have been so often repeated, and so well recollected by all the lovers of the drama and of poetry, that it would be superfluous to point them out.

But the year 1747 is distinguished as the epoch when Johnson's arduous and important work, his "DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE," was announced to the world by the publication of its Plan or PROSPECTUS.

How long this immense undertaking had been the object of his contemplation, I do not know. I once asked him by what means he had attained to that astonishing knowledge of our language, by which he was enabled to realize a design of such extent and accumulated difficulty. He told me, that "it was not the effect of particular study; but that it had grown up in his mind insensibly." I have been informed, by Mr. James Dodsley, that several years before this period, when Johnson was one day sitting in his brother Robert's shop, he heard his brother suggest to him, that a Dictionary of the English Language would be a work that would be well received by the publick; that Johnson seemed, at first, to catch at the proposition; but, after a pause, said, in his abrupt decisive manner, "I believe I shall not undertake it." That he, however, had bestowed much thought upon the subject before he published his "Plan," is evident from the enlarged, clear, and accurate views which it exhibits; and we find him mentioning in that tract, that many of the writers whose testimonies were to be produced as authorities were selected by Pope; which proves that he had been furnished, probably by Mr. Robert Dodsley, with whatever hints that eminent poet had contributed towards a great literary project, that had been the subject of important consideration in a former reign.

The booksellers who contracted with

¹ My friend, Mr. Courtnay, whose eulogy on Johnson's Latin poetry has been inserted in this work, is no less happy in praising his English poetry.

"But hark, he sings! the strain even Pope admires;
Indignant Virtue her own bard inspires,
Sublime as Juvenal he pours his lays,
And with the Roman shares congenial praise;—
In glowing numbers now he fires the age,
And Skalspeare's sun relumes the clouded stage."—
BOSWELL.

Johnson, single and unaided, for the execution of a work, which in other countries has not been effected but by the co-operating exertions of many, were Mr. Robert Dodsley, Mr. Charles Hitch, Mr. Andrew Millar, the two Messieurs Longman, and the two Messieurs Knappton. The price stipulated was fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds.

The "Plan" was addressed to Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield, then one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state; a nobleman who was very ambitious of literary distinction, and who, upon being informed of the design, had expressed himself in terms very favourable to its success. There is, perhaps, in every thing of any consequence, a secret history which it would be amusing to know, could we have it authentically communicated. Johnson told me², "Sir, the way in which the plan of my Dictionary came to be inscribed to Lord Chesterfield was this: I had neglected to write it by the time appointed. Dodsley suggested a desire to have it addressed to Lord Chesterfield. I laid hold of this as a pretext for delay, that it might be better done, and let Dodsley have his desire. I said to my friend, Dr. Bathurst, 'Now, if any good comes of my addressing to Lord Chesterfield, it will be ascribed to deep policy, when in fact, it was only a casual excuse for laziness.'³"

It is worthy of observation, that the "Plan" has not only the substantial merit of comprehension, perspicuity, and precision, but that the language of it is unexceptionably excellent; it being altogether free from that inflation of style, and those uncommon, but apt and energetick words, which, in some of his writings, have been censured, with more petulance than justice; and never was there a more dignified strain of compliment than that in which he courts the attention of one, who, he had been persuaded to believe, would be a respectable patron.

"With regard to questions of purity or propriety (says he), I was once in doubt whether I should not attribute to myself too much in attempting to decide them, and whether my province was to extend beyond

² September 22, 1777, going from Ashbourne to Islam.—BOSWELL.

³ [The reader will see, in the very next page, that this account of the affair was, to say the best of it, inaccurate; but if it were correct, would it not invalidate Johnson's subsequent complaint of Lord Chesterfield's inattention and ingratitude? for, even if his lordship had neglected what was dedicated to him only by laziness and accident, he could not justly be charged with ingratitude; a dedicatory who means no compliment, has no reason to complain if he be not rewarded: but more of this hereafter.—ED.]

the proposition of the question, and the display of the suffrages on each side; but I have been since determined, by your lordship's opinion, to interpose my own judgement, and shall therefore endeavour to support what appears to me most consonant to grammar and reason. Ausonius thought that modesty forbade him to plead inability for a task to which Cæsar had judged him equal:

'Cur me posse negem, posse quod ille putat?'

And I hope, my lord, that since you, whose authority in our language is so generally acknowledged, have commissioned me to declare my own opinion, I shall be considered as exercising a kind of vicarious jurisdiction; and that the power which might have been denied to my own claim, will be readily allowed me as the delegate of your lordship."

This passage proves, that Johnson's addressing his "Plan" to Lord Chesterfield was not merely in consequence of the result of a report by means of Dodsley that the earl favoured the design; but that there had been a particular communication with his lordship concerning it. Dr. Taylor told me that Johnson sent his "Plan" to him in manuscript for his perusal; and that when it was lying upon his table, Mr. William Whitehead happened to pay him a visit, and being shown it, was highly pleased with such parts of it as he had time to read, and begged to take it home with him, which he was allowed to do; that from him it got into the hands of a noble lord, who carried it to Lord Chesterfield.¹ When Taylor observed this might be an advantage, Johnson replied, "No, sir, it would have come out with more bloom if it had not been seen before by any body."

The opinion conceived of it by another noble authour appears from the following extract from the Earl of Orrery's note to Dr. Birch:

"Caledon, Dec. 30, 1747.

"I have just now seen the specimen of Mr. Johnson's Dictionary, addressed to Lord Chesterfield. I am much pleased with the plan, and I think the specimen is one of the best that I have ever read. Most specimens disgust rather than prejudice us in favour of the work to follow; but the language of Mr. Johnson's is good,

¹ [This also must be inaccurate, for the plan contains numerous allusions and references to Lord Chesterfield's opinions; and there is the evidence both of Lord Chesterfield and Johnson, that Dodsley was the person who communicated with his lordship on the subject. And the remark about the bloom of the plan seems almost unintelligible. The bloom of a work, as regards the public, cannot be impaired by its being communicated to two or three private friends.—Ed.]

and the arguments are properly and modestly expressed. However, some expressions may be cavilled at, but they are trifles. I'll mention one: the barren laurel. The laurel is not barren, in any sense whatever; it bears fruits or flowers. *Sed hæc sunt nugæ*², and I have great expectations from the performance³."

That he was fully aware of the arduous nature of the undertaking he acknowledges; and shows himself perfectly sensible of it in the conclusion of his "Plan;" but he had a noble consciousness of his own abilities, which enabled him to go on with undaunted spirit.

Dr. Adams found him one day busy at his Dictionary, when the following dialogue ensued:—"ADAMS. This is a great work, sir. How are you to get all the etymologies? JOHNSON. Why, sir, here is a shelf with Junius, and Skinner, and others; and there is a Welsh gentleman who has published a collection of Welsh proverbs, who will help me with the Welsh. ADAMS. But, sir, how can you do this in three years? JOHNSON. Sir, I have no doubt that I can do it in three years. ADAMS. But the French Academy, which consists of forty members, took forty years to compile their Dictionary. JOHNSON. Sir, thus it is. This is the proportion. Let me see; forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three to sixteen hundred, so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman." With so much ease and pleasantry could he talk of that prodigious labour which he had undertaken to execute.

The publick has had, from Sir John Hawkins⁴, a long detail of what had been done in this country by prior Lexicographers; and no doubt Johnson was wise to avail himself of them, so far as they went: but the learned, yet judicious research of etymology, the various, yet accurate display of definition, and the rich collection of authorities, were reserved for the superiour mind of our great philologist. For the mechanical part he employed, as he told me, six amanuenses; and let it be remembered by the natives of North Britain, to whom he is supposed to have been so hostile, that five of them were of that country⁵. There were two Messieurs Macbean; Mr. [Rob-

² [*Nugæ*, indeed! for, though the laurel, of course, goes through the process of fructification, it is, not only in the allegorical but in the ordinary sense of the word, barren. Its flowers have neither hue nor odour, nor is its fruit edible.—Ed.]

³ Birch MSS. Brit. Mus. 4303.—BOSWELL.

⁴ Sir John Hawkins's list of former English Dictionaries is, however, by no means complete.—MALONE.

⁵ [See *ante*. note, p. 53.—Ed.]

Apr. 10,
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ert] Shiels, who, we shall hereafter see, partly¹ wrote the Lives of the

Poets to which the name of Cibber is affixed; Mr. Stewart, son of Mr. George Stewart, bookseller at Edinburgh; and a Mr. Maitland. The sixth of these humble assistants was Mr. Peyton, who, I believe, taught French, and published some elementary tracts.

To all these painful labourers Johnson showed a never-ceasing kindness, so far as they stood in need of it. The elder Mr. Macbean had afterwards the honour of being Librarian to Archibald, Duke of Argyle, for many years, but was left without a shilling. Johnson wrote for him a Preface to "A System of Ancient Geography:" and, by the favour of Lord Thurlow, got him admitted a poor brother of the Charter-house. For Shiels, who died of a consumption, he had much tenderness; and it has been thought that some choice sentences in Shiels' Lives of the Poets were supplied by him. Peyton, when reduced to penury, had frequent aid from the bounty of Johnson, who at last was at the expense of burying him and his wife.

While the Dictionary was going forward, Johnson lived part of the time in Holborn, part in Gough-square, Fleet-street; and he had an upper room fitted up like a counting-house for the purpose, in which he gave to the copyists their several tasks. The words partly taken from other dictionaries, and partly supplied by himself, having been first written down with spaces left between them, he delivered in writing their etymologies, definitions, and various significations. The authorities were copied from the books themselves, in which he had marked the passages with a black-lead pencil, the traces of which could

¹ [It seems strange that Mr. Boswell should have stated that Shiels only partly wrote what are called "*Cibber's Lives of the Poets*," and intimated that Johnson contributed some choice sentences to these "*Lives*;" for Johnson himself, in the *Life of Hammond*, tells the story in a way which seems inconsistent with Mr. Boswell's assertions:—

"I take this opportunity to testify, that the book called '*Cibber's Lives of the Poets*' was not written, nor, I believe, ever seen by either of the Cibbers, but was the work of Robert Shiels, a native of Scotland, a man of a very acute understanding, though with little scholastic education, who, not long after the publication of his work, died in London of a consumption. His life was virtuous and his end was pious. Theophilus Cibber, then a prisoner for debt, imparted, as I was told, his name for ten guineas. The manuscript of Shiels is now in my possession." Johnson, we see, says the whole work was Shiels', to the exclusion of himself as well as Cibber. See more on this subject *post*, 10th April, 1776.—ED.]

easily be effaced. I have seen several of them, in which that trouble had not been taken; so that they were just as when used by the copyists. It is remarkable that he was so attentive in the choice of the passages in which words were authorised, that one may read page after page of his Dictionary with improvement and pleasure; and it should not pass unobserved, that he has quoted no authour whose writings had a tendency to hurt sound religion and morality.

The necessary expense of preparing a work of such magnitude for the press must have been a considerable deduction from the price stipulated to be paid for the copyright. I understand that nothing was allowed by the booksellers on that account; and I remember his telling me, that a large portion of it having, by mistake, been written upon both sides of the paper, so as to be inconvenient for the compositor, it cost him twenty pounds to have it transcribed upon one side only.

He is now to be considered as "tugging at his oar," as engaged in a steady continued course of occupation, sufficient to employ all his time for some years; and which was the best preventive of that constitutional melancholy which was ever lurking about him, ready to trouble his quiet. But his enlarged and lively mind could not be satisfied without more diversity of employment, and the pleasure of animated relaxation. He therefore not only exerted his talents in occasional composition very different from Lexicography, but formed a club [that met every Tuesday evening at the King's Head, a famous beef-steak house] in Ivy-lane, Paternoster-row, with a view to enjoy literary discussion, and amuse his evening hours.

Hawk
p. 219.

[Thither he constantly resorted, and, with a disposition to please and be pleased, would pass those hours in a free and unrestrained interchange of sentiments, which otherwise had been spent at home in painful reflection. The persons who composed this little society were nine in number: they were, the Reverend Dr. Salter, father of the late master of the Charter-house; Dr. Hawkesworth; Mr. Ryland, a merchant, a relation of his²; Mr. John Payne, then a bookseller, but now or very lately chief accountant of the bank; Mr. Samuel Dyer, a learned young man intended for the dissenting ministry; Dr. William M'Ghie, a Scots physician; Dr. Edmund Barker, a young physician; Dr. Richard Bathurst, also a young physician; and Sir J. Hawkins³.

Hawk
p. 237.

² [His brother-in-law.—ED.]

³ [Sir J. Hawkins gives an account of the members of this club, too diffuse to be quoted here, but which is worthy the attention of any

At these meetings Sir J. Hawkins observes not only that in conversation Johnson made it a rule to talk his best, but that on many subjects he was not uniform in his opinions, contending as often for victory as for truth: at one time *good*, at another *evil* was predominant in the moral constitution of the world. Upon one occasion, he would deplore the non-observance of Good-Friday, and on another deny, that among us of the present age there is any decline of public worship. He would sometimes contradict self-evident propositions, such as, that the luxury of this country has increased with its riches; and that the practice of card-playing is more general than heretofore. At this versatility of temper, none, however, took offence: as Alexander and Cæsar were born for conquest, so was Johnson for the office of a symposiarch, to preside in all conversations; and Sir J. Hawkins adds that he never yet saw the man who would venture to contest his right.

Let it not, however, be imagined, that the members of this club met together with the temper of gladiators, or that there was wanting among them a disposition to yield to each other in all diversities of opinion: and, indeed, disputation was not, as in many associations of this kind, the purpose of the meeting; nor were their conversations, like those of the Rota club, restrained to particular topics. On the contrary, it may be said, that with the gravest discourses was intermingled "mirth, that after no repenting draws" (*Milton*); for not only in Johnson's melancholy there were lucid intervals, but he was a great contributor to the mirth of conversation, by the many witty sayings he uttered, and the many excellent stories which his memory had treasured up, and he would on occasion relate; so that those are greatly mistaken who infer, either from the general tendency of his writings, or that appearance of hebetude which marked his countenance when living, and is discernible in the pictures and prints of him, that he could only reason and discuss, dictate and control.

In the talent of *humour* there hardly ever was his equal. By this he was enabled to give to any relation that required it the graces and aids of expression, and to discriminate with the nicest exactness the characters of those whom it concerned. In aping this faculty, Sir J. Hawkins says

Hawk. p. 257. that he had seen even Warburton disconcerted, and when he would fain have been thought a man of pleasantry, not a little out of countenance. [Mr. Murphy, a better judge than Sir

J. Hawkins, tells us, to the same effect, that Johnson was surprised to be told, *but it was certainly true*, that with all his great powers of mind, wit and *humour* were his most shining talents¹]; [and Mrs. Piozzi says, that his vein of humour was rich and apparently inexhaustible—to such a degree that Mr. Murphy used to say he was incomparable at buffoonery.]

[For the sake of further relaxation from his literary labours, and probably also for Mrs. Johnson's health, he this summer visited Tunbridge Wells, then a place of much greater resort than it is at present. In the print², representing some of "the remarkable characters" who were at Tunbridge Wells, in 1748, and copied from a drawing of the same size, Dr. Johnson stands the first figure.] [On the opposite side of the drawing his wife is represented, as are also Garrick, Cibber, Speaker Onslow, Lord Chatham, Lord Lyttelton, and Miss Chudleigh, and several other celebrated persons; and in this assemblage, as has been already stated, neither Johnson or his wife exhibit any appearance of inferiority to the rest of the company.]

In the Gentleman's Magazine for May of this year he wrote a "Life of Roscommon*," with Notes (p. 216); which he afterwards much improved (indenting the notes into text), and inserted amongst his Lives of the English Poets.

Mr. Dodsley this year brought out his "Preceptor," one of the most valuable books for the improvement of young minds that has appeared in any language; and to this meritorious work Johnson furnished "The Preface*," containing a general sketch of the book, with a short and perspicuous recommendation of each article [this he sat up a whole night to write]; and also, "The Vision of Theodore, the Hermit, found in his Cell*," a most beautiful allegory of human life, under the figure of ascending the mountain of Existence. The Bishop of Dromore [Percy] heard Dr. Johnson say, that he thought this was the best thing he ever wrote [and he told Mr. Tyers that he composed it also, in one night, after finishing an evening in Holborn].

In January, 1749, he published "The Vanity of Human Wishes, being the Tenth Satire of Juvenal imitated*." He, I be-

¹ [This should be borne in mind in reading Johnson's conversations, because much of that peculiarity called *humour* cannot be adequately conveyed in words and many things may appear trite, dull, or offensively rude in mere narration, which were enlivened or softened by the air and style of the delivery.—Ed.]

² See *ante*, p. 34, 35.

lieve, composed it the preceding year¹. Mrs. Johnson, for the sake of country air, had lodgings at Hampstead, to which he resorted occasionally, and there the greatest part, if not the whole, of this imitation was written. The fervid rapidity with which it was produced is scarcely credible. I have heard him say, that he composed seventy lines of it one day, without putting one of them upon paper till they were finished². I remember when I once regretted to him that he had not given us more of Juvenal's Satires, he said, he probably should give more, for he had them all in his head; by which I understood, that he had the originals and correspondent allusions floating in his mind, which he could, when he pleased, embody and render permanent without much labour. Some of them³, however, he observed were too gross for imitation.

The profits of a single poem, however excellent, appear to have been very small in the last reign, compared with what a publication of the same size has since been known to yield. I have mentioned upon Johnson's own authority, that for his "London" he had only ten guineas; and now, after his fame was established, he got for his "Vanity of Human Wishes" but five guineas more, as is proved by an authentick document in my possession⁴.

It will be observed, that he reserves to himself the right of printing one edition of this satire, which was his practice upon occasion of the sale of all his writings; it be-

ing his fixed intention to publish at some period, for his own profit, a complete collection of his works.

His "Vanity of Human Wishes" has less of common life, but more of a philosophick dignity than his "London." More readers, therefore, will be delighted with the pointed spirit of "London," than with the profound reflection of "The Vanity of Human wishes." Garrick, for instance, observed in his sprightly manner, with more vivacity than regard to just discrimination, as is usual with wits, "When Johnson lived much with the Herveys, and saw a good deal of what was passing in life, he wrote his 'London,' which is lively and easy: when he became more retired, he gave us his 'Vanity of Human Wishes,' which is as hard as Greek. Had he gone on to imitate another satire, it would have been as hard as Hebrew⁵."

But "The Vanity of Human Wishes" is, in the opinion of the best judges, as high an effort of ethick poetry as any language can show. The instances of variety of disappointment are chosen so judiciously, and painted so strongly, that, the moment they are read, they bring conviction to every thinking mind.

That of the warrior, Charles of Sweden, is, I think, as highly finished a picture as can possibly be conceived. That of the scholar must have depressed the too sanguine expectations of many an ambitious student⁶.

¹ Sir John Hawkins, with *solemn inaccuracy*, represents this poem as a consequence of the indifferent reception of his tragedy. But the fact is, that the poem was published on the 9th of January, and the tragedy was not acted till the 6th of the February following.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell is here more *solemnly inaccurate* than Sir John, who, though he erroneously inverts the order of appearance of the two works, does not represent the poem as a consequence of the indifferent reception of the play, but, on the contrary, neutralizes the mistake he makes as to time, by warning his reader not to impute the translation of Juvenal to the failure of the tragedy.—Ed.]

² [This was Johnson's general habit of composing: his defect of sight rendered writing and written corrections troublesome, and he therefore exercised his memory where others would have employed pen and paper.—Ed.]

³ [He probably said "some passages of them;" for there are none of Juvenal's Satires to which the same objection may be made as to one of Horace's, that it is *altogether* gross and licentious.—Ed.]

⁴ "Nov, 25, 1748, I received of Mr. Dodsley fifteen guineas, for which I assign to him the right of copy of an Imitation of the Tenth Satire of Juvenal, written by me; reserving to myself the right of printing one edition.—SAM. JOHNSON." —BOSWELL.

⁵ From Mr. Langton.—BOSWELL. [Garrick's criticism (if it deserves the name) and his facts are both unfounded. "The Vanity of Human Wishes" is in a graver and higher tone than the *London*, but not *harder* to be understood. On the contrary, some classical allusions, inconsistent with modern manners, obscure passages of the latter; while all the illustrations, sentiments, and expressions of the former are, though wonderfully noble and dignified, yet perfectly intelligible, and almost familiar. Moreover, we have seen that when Johnson wrote *London*, he was not living the gay and fashionable life which Mr. Garrick is represented as mentioning. Alas! he was starving in obscure lodgings on eightpence and even fourpence a day (see *ante*, p. 39), and there is in *London* nothing to show any intimacy with the great or fashionable world. As to the *Herveys*, it may be here observed—contrary to Mr. Boswell's (as well as Mr. Garrick's) supposition—that he was intimate with that family previous to the publication of *London*:—that the sneer in that poem at "*Clodio's jest*," stood in the first edition "*H—y's jest*," and was probably aimed at Lord Hervey, who was a favourite theme of satire with the opposition writers of the day.—Ed.]

⁶ In this poem one of the instances mentioned of unfortunate learned men is *Lydiat*:

"Hear Lydiat's Life, and Galileo's end."

Piozzi, p. 58, 59. [When Dr. Johnson, one day, read his own satire, in which the life of a scholar is painted, with the various obstructions thrown in his way to fortune and to fame, he burst into a passion of tears: Mr. Thrale's family and Mr. Scott¹ only were present, who, in a jocose way, clapped him on the back, and said, "What's all this, my dear sir? Why you, and I, and *Hercules*², you know, were all troubled with *melancholy*." He was a very large man, and made out the triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough.]

Were all the other excellencies of this poem annihilated, it must ever have our

The History of Lydiat being little known, the following account of him may be acceptable to many of my readers. It appeared as a note in the Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for 1748, in which some passages extracted from Johnson's poem were inserted, and it should have been added in the subsequent editions.—“A very learned divine and mathematician, Fellow of New College, Oxon, and Rector of Okerton, near Banbury. He wrote, among many others, a Latin treatise ‘*De naturâ cæli, &c.*’ in which he attacked the sentiments of Scaliger and Aristotle, not bearing to hear it urged, *that some things are true in philosophy, and false in divinity*. He made above 600 Sermons on the harmony of the Evangelists. Being unsuccessful in publishing his works, he lay in the prison of Beccard at Oxford, and in the King's Bench, till Bishop Usher, Dr. Laud, Sir William Boswell, and Dr. Pink, released him by paying his debts. He petitioned King Charles I. to be sent into Ethiopia, &c. to procure MSS. Having spoken in favour of monarchy and bishops, he was plundered by the parliament forces, and twice carried away prisoner from his rectory; and afterwards had not a shirt to shift him in three months, without he borrowed it, and died very poor in 1646.”—BOSWELL. [In 1609, Lydiat accompanied Usher into Ireland, and obtained (probably by his interest) the office of chapel-reader in Trinity College, Dublin, at a salary of 3*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per quarter: he was resident there about two years; and in March, 1612, it appears, that he had from the college “5*l.* to furnish him for his journey to England.” The remembrance of Lydiat was traditionally preserved in Dublin College; and the Editor recollects to have heard, about 1797, that, in some ancient buildings, then recently removed, Lydiat had resided—evidence, either that he had left a high reputation behind him, or, more probably, that Johnson's mention of him had revived the memory of his sojourn in that university.—ED.]

¹ [George Lewis Scott, F. R. S., an amiable and learned man, formerly sub-preceptor to George the Third, and afterwards a *Commissioner of Excise*, whom it seems Johnson did not now reckon as “one of the *lowest* of all human beings.” See *ante*, p. 10.—ED.]

² [In allusion to the madness of Hercules on Mount Oeta.—ED.]

grateful reverence from its noble conclusion, in which we are consoled with the assurance that happiness may be attained, if we “apply our hearts” to piety:

“Where then shall hope and fear their objects find?
Shall dull suspense corrupt the stagnant mind?
Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
Shall no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,
No cries attempt the mercy of the skies?
Inquirer, cease; petitions yet remain,
Which Heav'n may hear, nor deem Religion vain
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,
But leave to Heaven the measure and the choice
Safe in His hand, whose eye discerns afar
The secret ambush of a specious pray'r;
Implore His aid, in His decisions rest,
Secure, whate'er He gives, He gives the best:
Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,
Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
Obedient passions, and a will resigned;
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;
For patience, sovereign o'er transmuted ill;
For faith, which panting for a happier seat,
Counts death kind Nature's signal for retreat:
These goods for man the laws of Heaven ordain,
These goods He grants, who grants the power to gain;
With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,
And makes the happiness she does not find.”

Garrick being now vested with theatrical power by being manager of Drury-lane theatre, he kindly and generously made use of it to bring out Johnson's tragedy, which had been long kept back for want of encouragement. But in this benevolent purpose he met with no small difficulty from the temper of Johnson, which could not brook that a drama which he had formed with much study, and had been obliged to keep more than the nine years of Horace, should be revised and altered at the pleasure of an actor. Yet Garrick knew well, that without some alterations it would not be fit for the stage. A violent dispute having ensued between them, Garrick applied to the Reverend Dr. Taylor to

³ In this poem, a line in which the danger attending on female beauty is mentioned, has very generally, I believe, been misunderstood:

“Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring,
And Sedley curs'd the form that pleas'd a king.”

The lady mentioned in the first of these verses was not the celebrated Lady Vane, whose memoirs were given to the publick by Dr. Smollett, but Anne Vane, who was mistress to Frederick, Prince of Wales, and died in 1736, not long before Johnson settled in London. Some account of this lady was published, under the title of “*The Secret History of Vanella*, 8vo. 1732.” See also “*Vanella in the Straw*, 4to. 1732.”—BOSWELL. [See *post*, 17 Aug. 1778, some observations respecting the lines in question.—ED.]

interpose. Johnson was at first very obstinate. "Sir (said he), the fellow wants me to make Mahomet run mad, that he may have an opportunity of tossing his hands and kicking his heels¹." He was, however, at last, with difficulty, prevailed on to comply with Garrick's wishes, so as to allow of some changes; but still there were not enough.

Dr. Adams was present the first night of the representation of *Irene*, and gave me the following account: "Before the curtain drew up, there were catcalls whistling, which alarmed Johnson's friends. The Prologue, which was written by himself in a manly strain, soothed the audience², and the play went off tolerably, till it came to the conclusion, when Mrs. Pritchard, the heroine of the piece, was to be strangled upon the stage, and was to speak two lines with the bow-string round her neck. The audience cried out '*Murder! murder!*'³ She several times attempted to speak; but in vain. At last she was obliged to go off the stage alive." This passage was afterwards struck out, and she was carried off to be put to death behind the scenes, as the play now has it. The Epilogue, as Johnson informed me⁴, was written by Sir

William Yonge. I know not how his play came to be thus graced by the pen of a person then so eminent in the political world⁵.

Notwithstanding all the support of such performers as Garrick, Barry, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, and every advantage of dress and decoration, the tragedy of Irene did not please the publick⁶. Mr. Garrick's zeal carried it through for nine nights, so that the authour had his three nights' profits; and from a receipt signed by him, now in the hands of Mr. James Dodsley, it appears that his friend, Mr. Robert Dodsley,

epilogue was always supposed to be Johnson's, and that Mr. Boswell's account is a "new discovery, and by no means probable," and he adds, that "it were to be wished that the epilogue could be transferred to any other writer, it being the worst *jeu d'esprit* which ever fell from Johnson's pen." Mr. John Taylor also has lately informed the editor that Murphy subsequently repeated to him that Johnson was the author of the epilogue. The first fourteen lines certainly deserve Murphy's censure, and could hardly have been written by the pen of Johnson; but the last ten lines are much better, and it may be suspected that these Johnson added to or altered from the original copy.—ED.]

⁵ [It has been observed that he must, before this, have some acquaintance with Sir W. Yonge, who told him that *great* should be pronounced so as to rhyme with *seat*, while Lord Chesterfield had said it should rhyme to *state*. (See *post*, 27th March, 1772.)—ED.]

⁶ I know not what Sir John Hawkins means by the *cold reception* of *IRENE*. [See *ante*, note, p. 77.] I was at the first representation; and most of the subsequent. It was much applauded the first night, particularly the speech on *to-morrow*. It ran nine nights at least. It did not indeed become a stock-play, but there was not the least opposition during the representation, except the first night in the last act, where Irene was to be strangled on the stage, which John [Bull] could not bear, though a dramattick poet may stab or slay by hundreds. The bow-string was not a Christian nor an ancient Greek or Roman death. But this offence was removed after the first night, and Irene went off the stage to be strangled.—Many stories were circulated at the time, of the authour's being observed at the representation to be dissatisfied with some of the speeches and conduct of the play himself; and, like La Fontaine, expressing his disapprobation aloud.—BURNLEY.

[Mr. Murphy (Life, p. 53,) says, "the amount of the three benefit nights for the tragedy of *IRENE*, it is to be feared, were not very considerable, as the profit, that stimulating motive, never invited the authour to another dramattick attempt." But Mr. Isaac Reed discovered that the authour's three nights, after deducting about 130*l.* for the expenses of the house, amounted together to near 200*l.*, besides the 100*l.* for the copy. These were, at the time, large sums to Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

¹ *Mahomet* was in fact played by Mr. Barry, and *Demetrius* by Mr. Garrick: but probably the parts were not yet cast.—BOSWELL. [It has been said that Garrick originally intended to have taken the part of Mahomet, and he probably yielded it to Barry to propitiate him in the authour's favour.—ED.]

² The expression used by Dr. Adams was "soothed." I should rather think the audience was *awed* by the extraordinary spirit and dignity of the following lines:

"Be this at least his praise, be this his pride,
To force applause no modern arts are tried;
Should partial catcalls all his hopes confound,
He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound;
Should welcome sleep relieve the weary wit,
He rolls no thunders o'er the drowsy pit;
No snares to captivate the judgement spreads,
Nor bribes your eyes, to prejudice your heads.
Unmoved, though wittings sneer and rivals rail,
Studious to please, yet not ashamed to fail,
He scorns the meek address, the suppliant strain,
With merit needless, and without it vain;
In Reason, Nature, Truth, he dares to trust:
Ye fops be silent, and ye wits be just!"

³ This shows how ready modern audiences are to condemn in a new play what they have frequently endured very quietly in an old one. Rowe has made *Monezes*, in *Tamertane*, die by the bow-string, without offence.—MALONE. [And Davies tell us, in his "*Life of Garrick*," vol. i. p. 128, that the strangling Irene, contrary to Horace's rule, *coram populo*, was suggested by Garrick.—ED.]

⁴ [Dr. Anderson says in his *Life*, that "Mr. Boswell ascribes this epilogue to Sir W. Yonge on no good foundation:" yet Mr. Boswell, who in his first edition had simply stated the fact, added in the second, "as Johnson informed me." Mr. Murphy too asserts (Life, p. 154), that the

gave him one hundred pounds for the copy, with his usual reservation of the right of one edition.

IRENE, considered as a poem, is entitled to the praise of superiour excellence. Analysed into parts, it will furnish a rich store of noble sentiments, fine imagery, and beautiful language; but it is deficient in pathos, in that delicate power of touching the human feelings, which is the principal end of the drama¹. Indeed Garrick has complained to me, that Johnson not only had not the faculty of producing the impressions of tragedy, but that he had not the sensibility to perceive them. His great friend Mr. Wamsley's prediction, that he would "turn out a fine tragedy writer," was, therefore, ill-founded. Johnson was wise enough to be convinced that he had not the talents necessary to write successfully for the stage, and never made another attempt in that species of composition.

When asked how he felt upon the ill success of his tragedy, he replied, "Like the Monument;" meaning that he continued firm and unmoved as that column². And let it be remembered, as an admonition to the *genus irritabile* of dramattick writers, that this great man, instead of peevishly complaining of the bad taste of the town, submitted to its decision without a murmur. He had, indeed, upon all occasions a great deference for the general opinion: "A man (said he) who writes a book, thinks himself wiser or wittier than the rest of mankind; he supposes that he can instruct or amuse them, and the publick to whom he appeals must, after all, be the judges of his pretensions."

On occasion of this play being brought upon the stage, Johnson had a fancy that as a dramattick authour his dress should be more gay than what he ordinarily wore; he therefore appeared behind the scenes, and even in one of the side-boxes, in a scarlet waistcoat, with rich gold-lace, and a gold-lace hat. He humorously observed to Mr. Langton, "that when in that dress he could not treat people with the same ease as when in his usual plain clothes."

¹ Aaron Hill (vol. ii. p. 355), in a letter to Mr. Mallett, gives the following account of Irene after having seen it. "I was at the anomalous Mr. Johnson's benefit, and found the play his proper representative; strong sense ungraced by sweetness or decorum."—BOSWELL.

² [Or, more modestly perhaps, that he felt no more than the Monument could feel. It may, indeed, be presumed, from Dr. Burney's evidence, and from considering that it produced him more money than he probably had ever before possessed, that he was far from thinking that his tragedy had failed. The London Magazine for February, states that Irene was then acting with great applause.—Ed.]

Dress indeed, we must allow, has more effect even upon strong minds than one should suppose, without having had the experience of it. His necessary attendance while his play was in rehearsal, and during its performance, brought him acquainted with many of the performers of both sexes, which produced a more favourable opinion³ of their profession than he had harshly expressed in his *Life of Savage*. With some of them he kept up an acquaintance as long as he and they lived, and was ever ready to show them acts of kindness. He for a considerable time used to frequent the *Green Room*, and seemed to take delight in dissipating his gloom, by mixing in the sprightly chit-chat of the motley circle then to be found there. Mr. David Hume related to me from Mr. Garrick, that Johnson at last denied himself this amusement, from considerations of rigid virtue, saying, "I'll come no more behind your scenes, David; for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS PORTER⁴. MS
"Goff⁵ Square, July 12, 1749.

"DEAR MISS,—I am extremely obliged to you for your letter, which I would have answered last post, but that illness⁵ prevented me. I have been often out of order of late, and have very much neglected my affairs. You have acted very prudently with regard to Levett's affair, which will, I think, not at all embarrass me, for you may promise him, that the mortgage shall be taken up at Michaelmas, or, at least, some time between that and Christmas; and if he requires to have it done sooner, I will endeavour it. I make no doubt, by that time, of either doing it myself, or persuading some of my friends to do it for me.

"Please to acquaint him with it, and let me know if he be satisfied. When he once called on me, his name was mistaken, and therefore I did not see him; but finding the mistake, wrote to him the same day, but never heard more of him, though I entreated him to let me know where to wait on him. You frightened me, you little gipsy, with your black wafer, for I had forgot you

³ [This appears to have been by no means the case. His most acrimonious attacks on Garrick, and Sheridan, and players in general, were subsequent to this period.—Ed.]

⁴ [This letter, and some others, which will appear in their proper places, I owe to the unsolicited kindness of the Rev. Dr. Harwood, the historian of Lichfield, who procured the copies, with permission to publish them, from Mrs. Pearson of Lichfield, who is in possession of the originals.—Ed.]

⁵ [Thus in the original.—Ed.]

⁶ [This confirms the statement, as to this debt, in page 64. n.—Ed.]

were in mourning, and was afraid your letter had brought me ill news of my mother, whose death is one of the few calamities on which I think with terror. I long to know how she does, and how you all do. Your poor mamma is come home, but very weak; yet I hope she will grow better, else she shall go into the country. She is now up stairs, and knows not of my writing. I am, dear miss, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

In 1750 he came forth in the character for which he was eminently qualified, a majestick teacher of moral and religious wisdom. The vehicle which he chose was that of a periodical paper, which he knew had been, upon former occasions, employed with great success. The *Tatler*, *Spectator*, and *Guardian*, were the last of the kind published in England, which had stood the test of a long trial; and such an interval had now elapsed since their publication, as made him justly think that, to many of his readers, this form of instruction would, in some degree, have the advantage of novelty. A few days before the first of his *Essays* came out, there started another competitor for fame in the same form, under the title of “*The Tatler Revived*,” which I believe was “born but to die.” Johnson was, I think, not very happy in the choice of his title,—“*The Rambler*,” which certainly is not suited to a series of grave and moral discourses; which the Italians have literally, but ludicrously, translated by *Il Vagabondo*, and which has been lately assumed as the denomination of a vehicle of licentious tales, “*The Rambler’s Magazine*.” He gave Sir Joshua Reynolds the following account of its getting this name: “What *must* be done, sir, *will* be done. When I was to begin publishing that paper, I was at a loss how to name it. I sat down at night upon my bedside, and resolved that I would not go to sleep till I had fixed its title. The *Rambler* seemed the best that occurred, and I took it ¹.”

With what devout and conscientious sentiments this paper was undertaken, is evi-

¹ I have heard Dr. Warton mention, that he was at Mr. Robert Dodsley’s with the late Mr. Moore, and several of his friends, considering what should be the name of the periodical paper which Moore had undertaken. Garrick proposed the *Salad*, which, by a curious coincidence, was afterwards applied to himself by Goldsmith :

“Our Garrick’s a salad, for in him we see
Oil, vinegar, sugar, and saltness agree!”

At last, the company having separated, without any thing of which they approved having been offered, Dodsley himself thought of *The World*.

—BOSWELL.

denced by the following prayer, which he composed and offered up on the occasion :

“Almighty God, the giver of all good things, without whose help all labour is ineffectual, and without whose grace all wisdom is folly: grant, I beseech Thee, that in this undertaking thy Holy Spirit may not be withheld from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the salvation of myself and others: grant this, O Lord, for the sake of thy Son, JESUS CHRIST. Amen.”

The first paper of the *Rambler* was published on Tuesday the 20th of March, 1749-50: and its authour was enabled to continue it without interruption, every Tuesday and Saturday, till Saturday the 17th of March³, 1752, on which day it closed. This is a strong confirmation of the truth of a remark of his, which I have had occasion to quote elsewhere, ^{16 Aug. 1773.} that “a man may write at any time, if he will set himself doggedly to it;” for, notwithstanding his constitutional indolence, his depression of spirits, and his labour in carrying on his *Dictionary*, he answered the stated calls of the press twice a week from the stores of his mind, during all that time; having received no assistance except four billets in No. 10, by Miss Mulso, now Mrs. Chapone; No. 30, by Mrs. Catherine Talbot; No. 97, by Mr. Samuel Richardson, whom he describes in an introductory note as “An authour who has enlarged the knowledge of human nature, and taught the passions to move at the command of virtue⁴; and Numbers 44 and

² In the Pemb. MS. the last sentence runs—“the salvation *both* of myself and others: grant this, O Lord, for the sake of Jesus Christ.”—HALL.

³ This is a mistake, into which the authour was very pardonably led by the inaccuracy of the original folio edition of the *Rambler*, in which the concluding paper of that work is [obviously by an error of the press] dated on “Saturday, March 17.” But Saturday was in fact the *fourteenth* of March. This circumstance, though it may at first appear of very little importance, is yet worth notice; for Mrs. Johnson died on the *seventeenth* of March.—MALONE.

⁴ [Lady Bradshaigh, one of Mr. Richardson’s female sycophants, thus addresses him on the subject of this letter: “A few days ago I was pleased with hearing a very sensible lady greatly pleased with the *Rambler*, No. 97. She happened to be in town when it was published; and I asked if she knew who was the author? She said, it was supposed to be one who was concerned in the *Spectators*, it being much better written than any of the *Ramblers*. I wanted to say you were really the author, but durst not, without your permission.” *Rich. Cor.* vol. vi. p. 108. It was probably on some such authority that Mr. Payne told Mr. Chalmers (*Brit. Ess.* vol. xix. p. 14), that No. 97 was “the only paper which had a

Piozzi, 10, by Mrs. Elizabeth Carter; p. 38. [which latter, signed Chariessa, had much of his esteem, though he blamed Mrs. Piozzi for preferring it to the allegory (No. 45), where Religion and Superstition are indeed most masterly delineated.]

Posterity will be astonished when they are told, upon the authority of Johnson himself, that many of these discourses, which we should suppose had been laboured with all the slow attention of literary leisure, were written in haste as the moment pressed, without even being read over by him before they were printed. [The fine

Rambler on Procrastination¹ was hastily composed in Sir Joshua Reynolds's parlour² while the boy waited to carry it to the press, and numberless are the instances of his writing under the immediate pressure of importunity or distress.] It can be accounted for only in this way; that by reading and meditation, and a very close inspection of life, he had accumulated a great fund of miscellaneous knowledge, which, by a peculiar promptitude of mind, was ever ready at his call, and which he had constantly accustomed himself to clothe in the most apt and energetic expressions. Sir Joshua Reynolds once asked him by what means he had attained his extraordinary accuracy and flow of language. He told him, that he had early laid it down as a fixed rule to do his best on every occasion, and in every company: to impart whatever he knew in the most forcible language he could put it in, and that by constant practice, and never suffering any careless expressions to escape him, or attempting to deliver his thoughts without arranging them in the clearest manner, it became habitual to him³.

Yet he was not altogether unprepared as

prosperous sale, and was popular." The flatteries which Richardson's coterie lavished on him and all his works were quite extravagant: the paper is rather a poor one.—Ed.]

¹ [I suppose No. 134 is meant.—D'ISRAELI.]

² [Mrs. Piozzi's date of the paper on *Procrastination* must be a mistake, as Johnson did not know Sir J. Reynolds so early. See vol. i. p. 103, and vol. iii. p. 000.—Ed.]

³ The rule which Dr. Johnson observed is sanctioned by the authority of two great writers of antiquity: "Ne id quidem tacendum est, quod eidem Ciceroni placet, nullum nostrum usquam negligentem esse sermonem: *quicquid loquimur, ubique, sit pro sua scilicet portione perfectum.*" *Quintil. x. 7.*—MALONE. [It has been stated by Mr. Chalmers, in his edition of the *British Essayists*, that Johnson most elaborately revised and extensively corrected the *Rambler* when he collected them into volumes; but this does not disprove Mr. Boswell's account of the celerity and ease with which they were originally written.—Ed.]

a periodical writer; for I have in my possession a small duodecimo volume, in which he has written, in the form of Mr. Locke's *Common-Place Book*, a variety of hints for essays on different subjects. He has marked upon the first blank leaf of it, "To the 128th page, collections for the *RAMBLER*;" and in another place, "in fifty-two there were seventeen provided; in 97—21; in 190—25." At a subsequent period (probably after the work was finished) he added, "In all, taken of provided materials, 30¹."

Sir John Hawkins, who is unluckily upon all occasions, tells us, that "this method of accumulating intelligence has been practised by Mr. Addison, and is humorously described in one of the *Spectators*, wherein he feigns to have dropped his paper of *notanda*, consisting of a diverting medley of broken sentences and loose hints, which he tells us he had collected, and meant to make use of. Much of the same kind is Johnson's *Adversaria*." But the truth is, that there is no resemblance at all between them. Addison's note was a fiction, in which unconnected fragments of his lucubrations were purposely jumbled together, in as odd a manner as he could, in order to produce a laughable effect. Whereas Johnson's abbreviations are all distinct, and applicable to each subject of which the head is mentioned.

For instance, there is the following specimen:

"Youth's Entry, &c.

"Baxter's account of things in which he had changed his mind as he grew up. Voluminous.—No wonder.—If every man was to tell, or mark, on how many subjects he has changed, it would make vols. but the changes not always observed by man's self.—From pleasure to bus. [*business*] to quiet; from thoughtfulness to reflect. to piety; from dissipation to domestic. by imperfect gradat. but the change is certain. *Dial non progredi, progress. esse conspicimus.* Look back, consider what was thought at some dist. period.

"Hope predom. in youth. Mind not

⁴ [This, no doubt, means, that of the first 52 *Rambler*s, 17 had been prepared, and so on, till, at the completion of the whole 208 numbers, he found that only 30 had been formed of materials previously provided.—Ed.]

⁵ [In this instance Mr. Boswell is more unlucky than Hawkins, whose account is by no means incorrect. He knew very well, and distinctly states, that Addison's published *Notanda* were a mere pleasantry, consisting of topics drolly selected and arranged; but he infers, rationally enough, that Addison had taken the idea from his own real practice of collecting *notanda*; and he is quite justified in adding "much of the same kind are Johnson's *Adversaria*."—Ed.]

willingly indulges unpleasing thoughts. The world lies all enamelled before him, as a distant prospect sun-gilt¹; inequalities only found by coming to it. *Love is to be all joy—children excellent—Fame to be constant—caresses of the great—applauses of the learned—smiles of Beauty.*

“*Fear of disgrace—Bashfulness—Finds things of less importance. Miscarriages forgot like excellencies;—if remembered, of no import. Danger of sinking into negligence of reputation;—lest the fear of disgrace destroy activity.*

“*Confidence in himself. Long tract of life before him—No thought of sickness—Embarrassment of affairs.—Distraction of family. Publick calamities.—No sense of the prevalence of bad habits. Negligent of time—ready to undertake—careless to pursue—all changed by time.*

“*Confident of others—unsuspecting as unexperienced—imagining himself secure against neglect, never imagines they will venture to treat him ill. Ready to trust; expecting to be trusted. Convinced by time of the selfishness, the meanness, the cowardice, the treachery of men.*

“*Youth ambitious, as thinking honours easy to be had.*

“*Different kinds of praise pursued at different periods. Of the gay in youth,—dang. hurt, &c. despised.*

“*Of the fancy in manhood. Ambit.—stocks—bargains.—Of the wise and sober in old age—seriousness—formality—maxims, but general—only of the rich, otherwise age is happy—but at last everything referred to riches—no having fame, honour, influence, without subjection to caprice.*

“*Horace.*

“*Hard it would be if men entered life with the same views with which they leave it, or left as they enter it—No hope—no undertaking—no regard to benevolence—no fear of disgrace, &c.*

“*Youth to be taught the piety of age—age to retain the honour of youth.*”

This, it will be observed, is the sketch of Number 196 of the Rambler. I shall gratify my readers with another specimen:

“*Confederacies difficult; why.*

“*Seldom in war a match for single persons—nor in peace; therefore kings make themselves absolute. Confederacies in learning—every great work the work of one. Bruy. Scholars’ friendship like ladies. Scriebamus, &c. Mart.² The apple of dis-*

¹ This most beautiful image of the enchanting delusion of youthful prospect has not been used in any of Johnson’s essays.

² Lib. xii. 96. “*In Tuccam æmulum omnium suorum studiorum.*”—MALONE.

cord—the laurel of discord—the poverty of criticism. Swift’s opinion of the power of six geniuses united. That union scarce possible. His remarks just;—man a social, not steady nature. Drawn to man by words, repelled by passions. Orb drawn by attraction, rep. [*repelled*] by centrifugal.

“*Common danger unites by crushing other passions—but they return. Equality hinders compliance. Superiority produces insolence and envy. Too much regard in each to private interest;—too little.*

“*The mischiefs of private and exclusive societies.—The fitness of social attraction diffused through the whole. The mischiefs of too partial love of our country. Contraction of moral duties.—ΟΙ ΦΙΛΙΤΑΙ, & ΦΙΛΙΣΣ.*

“*Every man moves upon his own centre, and therefore repels others from too near a contact, though he may comply with some general laws.*

“*Of confederacy with superiors every one knows the inconvenience. With equals, no authority;—every man his own opinion—his own interest.*

“*Man and wife hardly united;—scarce ever without children. Computation, if two to one against two, how many against five? If confederacies were easy—useless;—many oppresses many.—If possible only to some, dangerous. Principum amicitias.*”

Here we see the embryo of Number 45 of the Adventurer; and it is a confirmation of what I shall presently have occasion to mention, that the papers in that collection marked T. were written by Johnson.

This scanty preparation of materials will not, however, much diminish our wonder at the extraordinary fertility of his mind; for the proportion which they bear to the number of essays which he wrote is very small; and it is remarkable, that those for which he had made no preparation are as rich and as highly finished, as those for which the hints were lying by him. It is also to be observed, that the papers formed from his hints are worked up with such strength and elegance, that we almost lose sight of the hints, which become like “drops in the bucket.” Indeed, in several instances, he has made a very slender use of them, so that many of them remain still unapplied³.

³ Sir John Hawkins has selected from this little collection of materials, what he calls the “*Rudiments of two of the papers of the Rambler.*” But he has not been able to read the manuscript distinctly. Thus he writes, p. 266, “*Sailor’s fate any mansion;*” whereas the original is “*Sailor’s life my aversion.*” He has also transcribed the unappropriated hints on *Writers for bread*, in which he deciphers these notable passages, one in Latin, *fatui non fame*, instead of

As the Rambler was entirely the work of one man, there was, of course, such a uniformity in its texture, as very much to exclude the charm of variety; and the grave and often solemn cast of thinking, which distinguished it from other periodical papers, made it, for some time, not generally liked. So slowly did this excellent work, of which twelve editions have now issued from the press, gain upon the world at large, that even in the closing number the authour says, "I have never been much a favourite of the publick."

Yet, very soon after its commencement, there were who felt and acknowledged its uncommon excellence. Verses in its praise appeared in the newspapers; and the editor of the Gentleman's Magazine mentions, in October, his having received several letters to the same purpose from the learned. "The Student, or Oxford and Cambridge Miscellany," in which Mr. Bonnel Thornton and Mr. Colman were the principal writers, describes it as "a work that exceeds any thing of the kind ever published in this kingdom, some of the Spectators excepted,—if indeed they may be excepted." And afterwards, "May the publick favours crown his merits, and may not the English, under the auspicious reign of GEORGE the Second, neglect a man, who, had he lived in the first century, would have been one of the greatest favourites of Augustus." This flattery of the monarch had no effect. It is too well known, that the second George never was an Augustus to learning or genius.

[Richardson, the authour of *Clarissa*, to whom Cave had sent the five first numbers of the Rambler, became, as they proceeded, "so inexpressibly pleased with them," that he wrote to Cave in strong commendation, and intimated his conviction (the name of the authour being still a secret) that Johnson was the only man who could write them. Cave's answer seems worth inserting, as giving a higher idea of his own station in society than has been hitherto entertained, as well as more clearly explaining some points of Dr. Johnson's life.

Rich. Cor.

vol. 1. "MR CAVE TO MR. RICHARDSON.
P. 166.

"St. John's Gate, August 28, 1750

"DEAR SIR,—I received the pleasure

famî non famæ; Johnson having in his mind what Thuanus says of the learned German antiquary and linguist, Nylander, who, he tells us, lived in such poverty, that he was supposed *famî non famæ scribere*; and another in French, *Degente de fate et affamé d'argent*, instead of *Degouté de fame* (an old word for *renommé*) *et affamé d'argent*. The manuscript, being written in an exceedingly small hand, is indeed very hard to read; but it would have been better to have left blanks than to write nonsense.—

BOEWELL.

of your letter of the 9th inst. at Gloucester, and did intend to answer it from that city, though I had but one sound hand (the cold and rain on my journey having given me the gout); but, as soon as I could write I went to Westminster¹, the seat of Mr. Cambridge², who entertained the Prince³ there, and, in his boat, on the Severn. He kept me one night, and took me down part of his river to the Severn, where I sailed in one of his boats, and took a view of another of a peculiar make, having two keels, or being rather two long canoes, connected by a floor or stage. I was then towed back again to sup and repose. Next morning he explained to me the contrivance of some waterfalls, which seem to come from a piece of water which is four feet lower. The three following days I spent in returning to town, and could not find time to write in an inn.

"I need not tell you that the Prince appeared highly pleased with every thing that Mr. Cambridge showed, though he called him upon deek often to be seen by the people on the shore, who came in prodigious crowds, and thronged from place to place, to have a view as often as they could, not satisfied with one; so that many who came between the towing line and the bank of the river were thrown into it, and his royal highness could scarce forbear laughing; but sedately said to them, 'I am sorry for your condition.'

"Excuse this ramble from the purpose of your letter. I return to answer, that Mr. Johnson is the *Great Rambler*, being, as you observe, the only man who can furnish two such papers in a week, besides his other great business, and has not been assisted with above three.

"I may discover to you, that the world is not so kind to itself as you wish it. The encouragement, as to sale, is not in proportion to the high character given to the work by the judicious, not to say the raptures expressed by the few that do read it; but its being thus relished in numbers gives hope that the sets must go off, as it is a fine paper, and, considering the late hour of having the copy, tolerably printed.

"When the authour was to be kept private (which was the first scheme), two gentlemen, belonging to the Prince's court,

¹ [So in the work quoted, but it is a mistake for Whitminster in Gloucestershire, the seat then, as now, of the family of Cambridge.—Ed.]

² [Richard Owen Cambridge, author of the *Scribblersiad*, and a considerable contributor to the *World*. He was born in 1714, and died in 1802 at his seat opposite Richmond.—Ed.]

³ [In July and August of this year the Prince and Princess of Wales, and their eldest daughter (the late Duchess of Brunswick), made a tour through Gloucestershire, Somersetshire, and Hampshire.—Ed.]

came to me to inquire his name, in order to do him service; and also brought a list of seven gentlemen to be served with the *Rambler*. A I was not at liberty, an inference was drawn, that I was desirous to keep to myself so excellent a writer. Soon after, Mr. Doddington¹ sent a letter directed to the *Rambler*, inviting him to his house, when he should be disposed to enlarge his acquaintance. In a subsequent number² a kind of excuse was made, with a hint that a good writer might not appear to advantage in conversation. Since that time several circumstances, and Mr. Garrick and others, who knew the authour's powers and style from the first, unadvisedly asserted their (but) suspicions, overturned the scheme of secrecy. (About which there is also one paper³.)

"I have had letters of approbation from Dr. Young, Dr. Hartley, Dr. Sharpe, Miss Carter, &c. &c. most of them, like you, setting them in a rank equal, and some superiour, to the *Spectators* (of which I have not read many, for the reasons³ which you assign): but, notwithstanding such recommendation, whether the price of *two-pence*, or the unfavourable season of their first publication, hinders the demand, no boast can be made of it.

"The authour (who thinks highly of your writings) is obliged to you for contributing your endeavours; and so is, for several marks of your friendship, good sir, your admirer, and very humble servant,

"E. CAVE."]

Johnson told me, with an amiable fondness, a little pleasing circumstance relative to this work. Mrs. Johnson, in whose judgement and taste he had great confidence, said to him, after a few numbers of the *Rambler* had come out, "I thought very well of you before; but I did not imagine you could have written any thing equal to this." Distant praise, from whatever quarter, is not so delightful as that of a wife whom a man loves and esteems. Her approbation may be said to "come home to his bosom;" and being

¹ [George Bubb Doddington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, whose fame as a statesman and a wit has been obscured, if not obliterated, by the publication of his *Diary*.—ED.]

² [The two *Ramblers* referred to are probably Nos. 14 and 13.—ED.]

³ [Richardson had said, "I remember not any thing in those *Spectators* that I read, for I never found time to read them all, that half so much struck me." It seems very strange that men of literary habits, like Richardson and Cave, should have read the *Spectator* so imperfectly. It is the stranger, with regard to Richardson, for his only paper in the *Rambler* (No. 97) is written in the character of a professed admirer of the *Spectator*.—ED.]

so near, its effect is most sensible and permanent.

Mr. James Elphinston⁴, who has since published various works, and who was ever esteemed by Johnson as a worthy man, happened to be in Scotland while the *Rambler* was coming out in single papers at London. With a laudable zeal at once for the improvement of his countrymen, and the reputation of his friend, he suggested and took the charge of an edition of those *Essays* at Edinburgh, which followed progressively the London publication⁵.

The following letter written at this time, though not dated, will show how much pleased Johnson was with this publication, and what kindness and regard he had for Mr. Elphinston.

"TO MR. JAMES ELPHINSTON.

(No date.)

"DEAR SIR,—I cannot but confess the failures of my correspondence, but hope

⁴ [Mr. James Elphinston was born in Edinburgh, in 1721. He, when very young, was a private tutor in two or three eminent families: but about 1752 set up a boarding-school at Kensington, where, as we shall see, Dr. Johnson sometimes visited him. He died in 1809. His works are forgotten or remembered for their absurdity. He translated Martial, of which Dr. Beattie says, "It is truly an unique—the specimens formerly published did very well to laugh at; but a whole quarto of nonsense and gibberish is too much. It is strange that a man not wholly illiterate should have lived so long in England without learning the language."—*Biog. Dic.* And it was, no doubt, of this strange work that Mrs. Piozzi relates, that "of a modern Martial, when it came out, Dr. Johnson said there are in these verses too much folly for madness, I think, and too much madness for folly."—*Piozzi*, p. 47.—ED.]

⁵ It was executed in the printing-office of Sands, Murray, and Cochran, with uncommon elegance, upon writing paper, of a duodecimo size, and with the greatest correctness: and Mr. Elphinston enriched it with translations of the mottoes. When completed, it made eight handsome volumes. It is, unquestionably, the most accurate and beautiful edition of this work; and there being but a small impression, it is now become scarce, and sells at a very high price.—BOSWELL. With respect to the correctness of this edition, my father probably derived his information from some other person, and appears to have been misinformed; for it was *not* accurately printed, as we learn from Mr. A. Chalmers.—J. BOSWELL. [Mr. Chalmers a little misrepresents, and Mr. James Boswell wholly mistook the fact. Elphinston's edition *was* correctly printed after the original folio numbers as they came out. Mr. Chalmers denies its accuracy, because it has not the various corrections *subsequently* made by Johnson when he *republished* the *Rambler* in volumes.—ED.]

the same regard which you express for me on every other occasion, will incline you to forgive me. I am often, very often, ill; and, when I am well, am obliged to work; and, indeed, have never much used myself to punctuality. You are however, not to make unkind inferences, when I forbear to reply to your kindness; for be assured, I never receive a letter from you without great pleasure, and a very warm sense of your generosity and friendship, which I heartily blame myself for not cultivating with more care. In this, as in many other cases, I go wrong, in opposition to conviction; for I think scarce any temporal good equally to be desired with the regard and familiarity of worthy men. I hope we shall be some time nearer to each other, and have a more ready way of pouring out our hearts.

“I am glad that you still find encouragement to proceed in your publication, and shall beg the favour of six more volumes to add to my former six, when you can with any convenience send them me. Please to present a set in my name to Mr. Ruddiman¹, of whom, I hear, that his learning is not his highest excellence. I have transcribed the mottos, and returned them, I hope not too late, of which I think many very happily performed. Mr. Cave has put the last in the magazine², in which I think he did well. I beg of you to write soon, and to write often, and to write long letters, which I hope in time to repay you; but you must be a patient creditor. I have, however, this of gratitude, that I think of you with regard, when I do not, perhaps, give the proofs which I ought, of being, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

This year he wrote to the same gentleman another letter upon a mournful occasion.

¹ Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, the learned grammarian of Scotland, well known for his various excellent works, and for his accurate editions of several authours. He was also a man of a most worthy private character. His zeal for the royal House of Stuart did not render him less estimable in Dr. Johnson's eye.—BOSWELL.

² If the Magazine here referred to be that for October, 1752 (see *Gent. Mag.* vol. 22, p. 468), then this letter belongs to a later period. If it relates to the Magazine for September, 1750 (see *Gent. Mag.* vol. 20, p. 406), then it may be ascribed to the month of October in that year, and should have followed the subsequent letter.—MALONE. [It seems clear from the expression of the letter that it refers to Cave's first publication of the mottos, and was probably written in Oct. 1750; but in either case it should have followed the letter of the 25th Sept.; though the editor has not thought it worth while to disturb Mr. Boswell's original arrangement.—ED.]

“TO MR. JAMES ELPHINSTON.

“September 25, 1750.

“DEAR SIR,—You have, as I find by every kind of evidence, lost an excellent mother; and I hope you will not think me incapable of partaking of your grief. I have a mother, now eighty-two years of age, whom, therefore, I must soon lose, unless it please God that she should rather mourn for me. I read the letters in which you relate your mother's death to Mrs. Strahan³, and think I do myself honour, when I tell you that I read them with tears; but tears are neither to *you* nor to *me* of any farther use, when once the tribute of nature has been paid. The business of life summons us away from useless grief, and calls us to the exercise of those virtues of which we are lamenting our deprivation. The greatest benefit which one friend can confer upon another is to guard, and excite, and elevate, his virtues. This your mother will still perform, if you diligently preserve the memory of her life, and of her death: a life, so far as I can learn, useful, wise, and innocent; and a death resigned, peaceful, and holy. I cannot forbear to mention, that neither reason nor revelation denies you to hope, that you may increase her happiness by obeying her precepts; and that she may, in her present state, look with pleasure upon every act of virtue to which her instructions or example have contributed⁴. Whether this be more than a pleasing dream, or a just opinion of separate spirits, is, indeed, of no great importance to us, when we consider ourselves as acting under the eye of God; yet, surely, there is something pleasing in the belief, that our separation from those whom we love is merely corporeal; and it may be a great incitement to virtuous friendship, if it can be made probable that that union that has received the divine approbation shall continue to eternity.

“There is one expedient by which you may, in some degree, continue her presence. If you write down minutely what you remember of her from her earliest years, you will read it with great pleasure, and receive from it many hints of soothing recollection, when time shall remove her yet farther from you, and your grief shall be matured to veneration. To this, however painful for the present, I cannot but advise you, as to a source of comfort and satisfaction in the time to come; for all comfort and all satis-

³ [Sister to Mr. Elphinston.—*Gent. Mag.* 1785, p. 755. It is to be observed, that, for many of his early acquaintance, Johnson was indebted to the society of Mr. Strahan.—ED.]

⁴ [This letter may, as the editor of the Gentleman's Magazine observes (*loc. cit.*), be read as a commentary on the celebrated passages in Johnson's Meditations, relative to the intermediate state of departed friends.—ED.]

faction is sincerely wished you by, dear sir, your most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

The Rambler has increased in fame as in age. Soon after its first folio edition was concluded it was published in six duodecimo volumes¹; and its author lived to see ten numerous editions of it in London, beside those of Ireland and Scotland.

I profess myself to have ever entertained a profound veneration for the astonishing force and vivacity of mind which the Rambler exhibits. That Johnson had penetration enough to see, and, seeing, would not disguise, the general misery of man in this state of being, may have given rise to the superficial notion of his being too stern a philosopher. But men of reflection will be sensible that he has given a true representation of human existence, and that he has, at the same time, with a generous benevolence, displayed every consolation which our state affords us; not only those arising from the hopes of futurity, but such as may be attained in the immediate progress through life. He has not depressed the soul to despondency and indifference. He has every where inculcated study, labour, and exertion. Nay, he has shown, in a very odious light, a man, whose practice is to go about darkening the views of others, by perpetual complaints of evil, and awakening those considerations of danger and distress, which are, for the most part, lulled into a quiet oblivion. This he has done very strongly in his character of Suspirius, (No. 55) from which Goldsmith took that of Croaker, in his comedy of “The good-natured Man,” as Johnson told me he acknowledged to him, and which is, indeed, very obvious.

To point out the numerous subjects which the Rambler treats, with a dignity and perspicuity which are there united in a manner which we shall in vain look for any where else, would take up too large a portion of my book, and would, I trust, be superflu-

¹ This is not quite accurate. In the *Gent. Mag.* for Nov. 1751, while the work was yet proceeding, is an advertisement, announcing that four volumes of the Rambler would speedily be published; and, it is believed, that they were published in the next month. The fifth and sixth volumes, with tables of contents, and translations of the mottos, were published in July, 1752, by Payne (the original publisher), three months after the close of the work. When the Rambler was collected into volumes, Johnson revised and corrected it throughout. Mr. Boswell was not aware of this circumstance, which has lately been discovered, and accurately stated, by Mr. Alexander Chalmers, in a new edition of these and various other periodical essays, under the title of “The British Essayists.”—MALONE.

ous, considering how universally those volumes are now disseminated. Even the most condensed and brilliant sentences which they contain, and which have very properly been selected under the name of “*BEAUTIES*,” are of considerable bulk. But I may shortly observe, that the Rambler furnishes such an assemblage of discourses on practical religion and moral duty, of critical investigations, and allegorical and oriental tales, that no mind can be thought very deficient that has, by constant study and meditation, assimilated to itself all that may be found there. No. 7, written in Passion-week, on abstraction and self-examination, and No. 110, on penitence and the placability of the Divine Nature, cannot be too often read. No. 54, on the effect which the death of a friend should have upon us, though rather too dispiriting, may be occasionally very medicinal to the mind. Every one must suppose the writer to have been deeply impressed by a real scene; but he told me that was not the case; which shows how well his fancy could conduct him to the “house of mourning.” Some of these more solemn papers, I doubt not, particularly attracted the notice of Dr. Young, the author of “The Night Thoughts,” of whom my estimation is such, as to reckon his applause an honour even to Johnson. I have seen some volumes of Dr. Young’s copy of the Rambler, in which he has marked the passages which he thought particularly excellent, by folding down a corner of the page; and such as he rated in a supereminent degree are marked by double folds. I am sorry that some of the volumes are lost. Johnson was pleased when told of the minute attention with which Young had signified his approbation of his essays.

I will venture to say, that in no writings whatever can be found more *bark and steel for the mind*, if I may use the expression; more that can brace and invigorate every manly and noble sentiment. No. 32, on patience, even under extreme misery, is wonderfully lofty, and as much above the rant of stoicism, as the sun of Revelation is brighter than the twilight of Pagan philosophy. I never read the following sentence without feeling my frame thrill: “I think there is some reason for questioning whether the body and mind are not so proportioned, that the one can bear all which can be inflicted on the other; whether virtue can-

² Dr. Johnson was gratified by seeing this selection, and wrote to Mr. Kearsley, bookseller, in Fleet street, the following note:—

“Mr. Johnson sends compliments to Mr. Kearsley, and begs the favour of seeing him as soon as he can. Mr. Kearsley is desired to bring with him the last edition of what he has honoured with the name of *BEAUTIES*. May 20, 1782.”—BOSWELL.

not stand its ground as long as life, and whether a soul well principled will not be sooner separated than subdued."

Though instruction be the predominant purpose of the Rambler, yet it is enlivened with a considerable portion of amusement. Nothing can be more erroneous than the notion which some persons have entertained, that Johnson was then a retired author, ignorant of the world; and, of consequence, that he wrote only from his imagination, when he described characters and manners. He said to me that, before he wrote that work, he had been "running about the world," as he expressed it, more than almost any body; and I have heard him relate, with much satisfaction, that several of the characters in the Rambler were drawn so naturally, that when it first circulated in numbers, a club in one of the towns in Essex imagined themselves to be severally exhibited in it, and were much incensed against a person who, they suspected, had thus made them objects of publick notice; nor were they quieted till authentick assurance was given them, that the Rambler was written by a person who had never heard of any one of them¹. Some of the characters are believed to have been actually drawn from the life², particularly that of Prospero from Garrick³, who never entirely forgave

¹ [This anecdote was, according to Mrs. Piozzi, communicated to Johnson by Mr. Murphy, but (as the lady tells it), with details which savour more of a desire to make a *good* story than to tell a true one. See *Piozzi*, p. 180.—ED.]

² That of GELIDUS, in No. 24, from Professor Colson, and that of EUPHUES in the same paper, which, with many others, was doubtless drawn from the life. EUPHUES, I once thought, might have been intended to represent either Lord Chesterfield or Soame Jenyns; but Mr. Bindley, with more probability, thinks that George Bubb Doddington, who was remarkable for the homeliness of his person, and the finery of his dress, was the person meant under that character. MALONE. [See (*ante*, p. 38) reasons for doubting that *Gelidus* could be meant for Professor Colson. The folly of such *guesses* at characters is forcibly exemplified in Mr. Malone's producing three such different candidates for that of *Euphues*, as Lord Chesterfield, Soame Jenyns, and Bubb Doddington!—ED.]

³ [Having just seen Garrick's generous and successful endeavours to advance the fame and improve the fortunes of his friend, it were melancholy to be obliged, by the evidence of Boswell, Murphy, and Mrs. Piozzi, to believe that Johnson meant to satirize that amiable, inoffensive, and (to him) most friendly man, whose profession, as well as his personal feelings, rendered him peculiarly sensitive to such attacks. Mr. Murphy, with less taste and good nature than is usual to him, seems to make light of poor Garrick's vexation; but amongst the many instances which have been adduced of that infirmity of

its pointed satire. [*Sophron* was *Piozzi*, likewise a picture drawn from reality; and by *Gelidus*, the philosopher, he meant to represent Mr. Coulson, a mathematician, who formerly lived at Rochester. The man immortalized for purring like a cat was, as he told Mrs. Piozzi, one Busby, a proctor in the Commons. He who barked so ingeniously, and then called the drawer to drive away the dog, was father to Dr. Salter, of the Charterhouse. He who sung a song, and, by correspondent motions of his arm, chalked out a giant on the wall, was one Richardson, an attorney⁴.]

For instances of fertility of fancy, and accurate description of real life, I appeal to No. 19, a man who wanders from one profession to another, with most plausible reasons for every change: No. 34, female fastidiousness and timorous refinement: No. 82, a virtuoso who has collected curiosities: No. 88, petty modes of entertaining a company, and conciliating kindness: No. 182, fortune-hunting: No. 194—195, a tutor's account of the follies of his pupil: No. 197—198, legacy-hunting: He has given a specimen of his nice observation of the mere external appearances of life, in the following passage in No. 179, against affectation, that frequent and most disgusting quality: "He that stands to contemplate the crowds that fill the streets of a populous city will see many passengers, whose air and motions it will be difficult to behold without contempt and laughter: but if he examine what are the appearances that thus powerfully excite his risibility, he will find among them neither poverty nor disease, nor any involuntary or painful defect. The disposition to derision and insult is awakened by the softness of foppery, the swell of insolence, the liveliness of levity, or the solemnity of grandeur; by the sprightly trip, the stately walk, the formal strut, and the lofty mien; by gestures intended to catch the eye, and by looks

Johnson's temper, which almost amounted to *envy*, there is none that seems, all the circumstances considered, more unjustifiable than this would have been. Hawkins, however, who seldom missed an opportunity of displaying Johnson's faults or frailties, does not, even when censuring his conduct towards Garrick, allude to this offence. (See *Life* p. 421). Let us therefore hope, that the other biographers made an application of the character of Prospero which Johnson did not intend.—ED.]

⁴ [These characters are alluded to in the conclusion of the 188th Rambler, but so slightly that it seems hardly worth while to inquire whether the hints were furnished by observation or invention. As to the anecdote told of the elder Dr. Salter, it could have only been, as Mr. Chalmers observes, the repetition of some story of his youthful days, for he was 70 years of age before he became a member of the Ivy-lane club.—ED.]

elaborately formed as evidences of importance.”

[Of the allegorical papers in the *Rambler*, *Labour and Rest* (No. 33) was Johnson's favourite; but Serotinus (No 165), the man who returns late in life to receive honours in his native country, and meets with mortification instead of respect, was considered by him as a masterpiece in the science of life and manners.]

Every page of the *Rambler* shows a mind teeming with classical allusions and poetical imagery: illustrations from other writers are, upon all occasions, so ready, and mingle so easily, in his periods, that the whole appears of one uniform vivid texture.

The style of this work has been censured by some shallow criticks as involved and turgid, and abounding with antiquated and hard words. So ill-founded is the first part of this objection, that I will challenge all who may honour this book with a perusal, to point out any English writer whose language conveys his meaning with equal force and perspicuity¹. It must, indeed, be allowed, that the structure of his sentences is expanded, and often has somewhat of the inversion of Latin; and that he delighted to express familiar thoughts in philosophical language; being in this the reverse of Socrates, who, it is said, reduced philosophy to the simplicity of common life. But let us attend to what he himself says in his concluding paper: “When common words were less pleasing to the ear, or less distinct in their signification, I have familiarized the terms of philosophy, by applying them to popular ideas.” And, as to the second part of this objection, upon a late careful revision of the work, I can with confidence say, that it is amazing how few of those words, for which it has been unjustly characterised, are actually to be found in it: I am sure not the proportion of one to each paper². This

¹ Yet his style did not escape the harmless shafts of pleasant humour; for the ingenious Bonnell Thornton published a mock *Rambler* in the *Dunry-lane Journal*.—BOSWELL.—[And Mr. Murphy, in commenting on this passage, quotes the witty observation of Dryden: “If so many foreign words are poured in upon us, it looks as if they were designed not to assist the natives but to conquer them.” *Life*, p. 157.—E.D.]

² [Mr. Boswell's zeal carries him too far: Johnson's style, especially in the *Rambler*, is frequently turgid, even to ridicule; but he has been too often censured with a malicious flippancy, which Boswell may be excused for resenting; and even graver critics have sometimes treated him with inconsiderate injustice; for instance,—The Rev. Dr. Burrowes (now Dean of Cork), in an “*Essay on the Style of Dr. Johnson*,” published in the first volume of the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy* (1787), observes:

“Johnson says that he has rarely admitted any

idle charge has been echoed from one babler to another, who have confounded Johnson's *Essays* with Johnson's *Dictionary*; and because he thought it right in a lexicon of our language to collect many words which had fallen into disuse, but were supported by great authorities, it has been imagined that all of these have been interwoven into his own compositions. That some of them have been adopted by him unnecessarily, may, perhaps, be allowed; but, in general, they are evidently an advantage, for without them his stately ideas would be confined and cramped. “He that thinks with more extent than another, will want words of a larger meaning³.” He once told me, that he had formed

Idler, No. 70.

word not authorized by former writers; but where are we to seek authorities for ‘resuscitation, orbity, volant, fatuity, divaricate, asinine, narcotic, vulnerary, empireumatic, papilionaceous,’ and innumerable others of the same stamp, which abound in and disgrace his pages?—for ‘obtund, disruption, sensory, or panoply,’ all occurring in the short compass of a single essay in the *Rambler*;—or for ‘cremation, horticulture, germination, and decussation,’ within a few pages in his *Life of Brownie*? They may be found, perhaps, in the works of former writers, but they make no part of the English language. They are the illegitimate offspring of learning by vanity.” It is wonderful, that, instead of asking where these words were to be found, Dr. Burrowes did not think of referring to Johnson's own dictionary. He would have found good authorities for almost every one of them; for instance, for *resuscitation*, Milton and Bacon are quoted; for *volant*, Milton and Phillips; for *fatuity*, Arbuthnot; for *asinine*, Milton; for *narcotic* and *vulnerary*, Browne; for *germination*, Bacon, and so on. But although these authorities, which Dr. Burrowes might have found in the dictionary, are a sufficient answer to his question, let it be also observed, that many of these words were in use in more familiar authors than Johnson chose to quote, and that the majority of them are now become familiar, which is a sufficient proof that the English language has not considered them as *illegitimate*.—E.D.]

³ [This is a truism in the disguise of a sophism. “He that thinks with more extent will,” no doubt, “want words of a larger meaning,” but the words themselves may be plain and simple; the number of syllables, and *oro-rotundity* (if one may venture to use the expression) of the sound of a word can never add much, and may, in some cases, do injury to the meaning. What words were ever written of a larger meaning than the following, which, however, are the most simple and elementary that can be found—“*God said, Let there be light, and there was light!*” If we were to convert the proposition in the *Idler*, and say, that “he who thinks feebly needs bigger words to cover his inanity,” we should be nearer the truth. But it must be admitted (as Mr. Boswell soon after observes) that Johnson (though he, in some of his works, pushed his peculiarities

his style upon that of Sir William Temple, and upon "Chambers's Proposal for his Dictionary¹." He certainly was mistaken; or if he imagined at first that he was imitating Temple, he was very unsuccessful²; for nothing can be more unlike than the simplicity of Temple, and the richness of Johnson. Their styles differ as plain cloth and brocade. Temple, indeed, seems equally erroneous in supposing that he himself had formed his style upon Sandys's View of the State of Religion in the Western Parts of the World.

The style of Johnson was, undoubtedly, much formed upon that of the great writers in the last century, Hooker, Bacon, Sanderson, Hakewill, and others; those "GIANTS," as they were well characterised by a GREAT PERSONAGE³, whose authority, were I to

to an absurd extent) has been on the whole a benefactor to our language; he has introduced more dignity into our style, more regularity into our grammatical construction, and given a fuller and more sonorous sound to the march of our sentences and the cadence of our periods.—ED.]

¹ The paper here alluded to was, I believe, Chamber's Proposal for a second and improved edition of his Dictionary, which, I think, appeared in 1738. This proposal was probably in circulation in 1737, when Johnson first came to London.—MALONE.

² The author appears to me to have misunderstood Johnson in this instance. He did not, I conceive, mean to say that, when he first began to write, he made Sir William Temple his model, with a view to form a style that should resemble his in all its parts; but that he formed his style on that of Temple and others, by taking from each those characteristic excellencies which were most worthy of imitation. See this matter further explained under April 9, 1778; where, in a conversation at Sir Joshua Reynold's, Johnson himself mentions the particular improvements which Temple made in the English style. These, doubtless, were the objects of his imitation, so far as that writer was his model.—MALONE.

³ [Here is an instance of the difficulty of explaining, after the lapse of a very few years, circumstances once of great notoriety. My learned and excellent friend, the Bishop of Ferns, writes to me, "State that this *Great Personage* was his late majesty, George the Third. Every one knows it *now*, but who will know it fifty years hence?" No doubt the generality of readers have understood Mr. Boswell to refer to the late king; but, although the Editor has made very extensive inquiries amongst those who were most likely to know, he has not been able to discover any precise authority on this point, nor has he obtained even a conjecture as to the person to whom, or the occasion on which, his majesty used this happy expression. The editor had formerly heard, but he does not recollect from whom, that when, on some occasion, the great divines of the 17th century were mentioned in the king's presence, his majesty said, "Yes—*there were GIANTS in those days*,"—in allusion to Genesis,

name him, would stamp a reverence on the opinion.

[That Johnson owed his excellence as a writer to the divines and others of the last century, Sir John Hawkins attests, from having been the witness of his course of reading, and heard him declare his sentiments of their works. Hooker he admired for his logical precision, Sanderson for his acuteness, and Taylor for his amazing erudition; Sir Thomas Browne for his penetration, and Cowley for the ease and unaffected structure of his periods. The tinsel of Sprat disgusted him, and he could but just endure the smooth verbosity of Tillotson. Hammond and Barrow he thought involved; and of the latter that he was unnecessarily prolix⁴.]

We may, with the utmost propriety, apply to his learned style that passage of Horace, a part of which he has taken as the motto to his Dictionary:

"Cum tabulis animum censoris sumet honesti;
Audebit quæcumque parùm splendoris habebunt
Et sine pondere erant, et honore indigna ferentur,
Verba movere loco, quamvis invita recedant,
Et versentur adhuc intra penetralia Vestæ.
Obscurata diu populo bonus eruet, atque
Proferet in lucem speciosa vocabula rerum,
Quæ prisca memorata Catonibus atque Cethegis,
Nunc situs informis premit et deserta vetustas:
Adsciscet nova, quæ genitor produxerit usus;
Vehemens, et liquidus, puroque simillimus ammi,
Fundet opes Latiumque beabit divite linguâ."
Epist. l. ii. e. 2.

To so great a master of thinking, to one of such vast and various knowledge as Johnson, might have been allowed a liberal indulgence of that licence which Horace claims in another place:

"————— Si fortè necesse est
Indiciis monstrare recentibus abdita rerum,

vi. 4. It is to be observed, that Mr. Boswell, in his first edition, attributed this anecdote to "one whose authority, &c.:" in subsequent editions he changed "one" into "GREAT PERSONAGE."
—ED.]

⁴ [The editor has thought it right to preserve the foregoing, as the evidence of an eye-witness to Johnson's course of reading; though it may be well doubted whether Sir J. Hawkins has preserved exactly the characteristic qualities which he attributed to these illustrious men. It is not easy to conceive how the erudition of Taylor or the penetration of Browne could have improved Johnson's *style*; nor is it likely that Johnson would have celebrated the eloquent and subtle Taylor for erudition alone, or the pious and learned Browne for mere penetration. Johnson's friend, Mr. Fitzherbert, said (see *post*, 8th April, 1775) that "it was not every man who could *carry a bon mot*;" certainly Hawkins was not a man likely to convey adequately Dr. Johnson's critical opinion of Jeremy Taylor.—ED.]

Fingere cinctutis non exaudita Ceth'gis
 Continget, dabiturque licentia sumpta pudenter:
 Et nova factaque nuper habebunt verba fidem, si
 Græco fonte cadant, parçè detorta. Quid autem
 Cæcilio Plautoque dabit Romanus, ademptum
 Virgilio Varioque? Ego cur, acquirere pauca
 Si possum, inuideor; cum lingua Catonis et Enni
 Sermonem patrium ditaverit, et nova rerum
 Nomina protulerit? Licuit, semperque licebit
 Signatum præsentè notâ producere nomen.”

De Arte Poeticâ.

Yet Johnson assured me, that he had not taken upon him to add more than four or five words to the English language, of his own formation; and he was very much offended at the general licence by no means “modestly taken” in his time, not only to coin new words, but to use many words in senses quite different from their established meaning, and those frequently very fantastical.

Sir Thomas Browne, whose Life Johnson wrote, was remarkably fond of Anglo-Latin diction; and to his example we are to ascribe Johnson's sometimes indulging himself in this kind of phraseology¹. Johnson's comprehension of mind was the mould for his language. Had his conceptions been narrower, his expression would have been easier. His sentences have a dignified march; and it is certain, that his example has given a general elevation to the language of his country, for many of our best writers have approached very near to him; and, from the influence which he has had upon our composition, scarcely any thing is written now that is not better expressed than was usual before he appeared to lead the national taste.

This circumstance, the truth of which must strike every critical reader, has been so happily enforced by Mr. Courtenay, in his “Moral and Literary Character of Dr. Johnson,” that I cannot prevail on myself to withhold it, notwithstanding his, perhaps, too great partiality for one of his friends:

“By nature's gifts ordain'd mankind to rule,
 He, like a Titian, form'd his brilliant school;
 And taught congenial spirits to excel,
 While from his lips impressive wisdom fell.
 Our boasted Goldsmith felt the sovereign sway;
 From him derived the sweet, yet nervous lay.
 To Fame's proud cliff he bade our Raffælle rise:
 Hence Reynolds' pen with Reynolds' pencil vies.
 With Johnson's flame melodious Burney glows,
 While the grand strain in smoother cadence flows.

¹ The observation of his having imitated Sir Thomas Browne has been made by many people; and lately it has been insisted on, and illustrated by a variety of quotations from Browne, in one of the popular Essays written by the Rev. Mr. Knox, master of Tunbridge-school, whom I have set down in my list of those who have sometimes not unsuccessfully imitated Dr. Johnson's style.—BOSWELL.

And you, Malone, to critic learning dear,
 Correct and elegant, refined though clear,
 By studying him, acquired that classic taste,
 Which high in Shakspeare's fame thy statue placed
 Near Johnson Steevens stands, on scenick ground,
 Acute, laborious, fertile, and profound.
 Ingenious Hawkesworth to this school we owe,
 And scarce the pupil from the tutor know.
 Here early parts accomplish'd Jones sublimes,
 And science blends with Asia's lofty rhymes:
 Harmonious Jones! who in his splendid strains
 Sings Camdeo's sports, on Agra's flowery plains,
 In Hindu fictions, while we fondly trace
 Love and the Muses, deck'd with Attick grace.
 Amid these names can Boswell be forgot,
 Scarce by North Britons now esteem'd a Scot?
 Who to the sage devoted from his youth,
 Imbib'd from him the sacred love of truth;
 The keen research, the exercise of mind,
 And that best art, the art to know mankind.—
 Nor was his energy confin'd alone
 To friends around his philosophick throne;
 Its influence wide improv'd our letter'd isle,
 And lucid vigour mark'd the general style:
 As Nile's proud waves, swoln from their oozy bed,
 First o'er the neighbouring meads majestic spread,
 Till gathering force, they more and more expand,
 And with new virtue fertilise the land.”

Johnson's language, however, must be allowed to be too masculine for the delicate gentleness of female writing. His ladies, therefore, seem strangely formal, even to ridicule; and are well denominated by the names which he has given them, as Misella, Zozima, Properantia, Rhodoclia².

It has of late been the fashion to compare the style of Addison and Johnson, and to depreciate³, I think, very unjustly, the style

² The following observation in Mr. Eoswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* may sufficiently account for that gentleman's being “now scarcely esteemed a Scot” by many of his countrymen: “If he (Dr. Johnson) was particularly prejudiced against the Scots, it was because they were more in his way; because he thought their success in England rather exceeded the due proportion of their real merit; and because he could not but see in them that nationality, which, I believe, no liberal-minded Scotchman will deny.” Mr. Eoswell, indeed, is so free from national prejudices, that he might with equal propriety have been described as—

“Scarce by South Britons now esteem'd a Scot.”
 COURTENAY.

³ [Mr. Eurke said pleasantly, that “his ladies were all Johnsons in petticoats.” Mr. Murphy (*Life*, p. 159) seems to pass somewhat of the same censure on the letter in the 12th Rambler, from a young woman that wants a place: yet—such is the uncertainty of criticism—this is the paper quoted by Mr. Chalmers, as an example of such ease and familiarity of style, which made him almost doubt whether it was Johnson's *Brit. Ess.* vol. xix. p. 44.—Ed.]

⁴ [Where did Mr. Eoswell discover this, except in Sir J. Hawkins, who says (p. 270), with more than usual absurdity and bad taste, “I find

of Addison as nerveless and feeble, because it has not the strength and energy of that of Johnson. Their prose may be balanced like the poetry of Dryden and Pope. Both are excellent, though in different ways. Addison writes with the ease of a gentleman. His readers fancy that a wise and accomplished companion is talking to them; so that he insinuates his sentiments and taste into their minds by an imperceptible influence. Johnson writes like a teacher. He dictates to his readers as if from an academical chair. They attend with awe and admiration; and his precepts are impressed upon them by his commanding eloquence. Addison's style, like a light wine, pleases every body from the first. Johnson's, like a liquor of more body, seems too strong at first, but, by degrees, is highly relished; and such is the melody of his periods, so much do they captivate the ear, and seize upon the attention, that there is scarcely any writer, however inconsiderable, who does not aim, in some degree, at the same species of excellence. But let us not ungratefully undervalue that beautiful style, which has pleasingly conveyed to us much instruction and entertainment. Though comparatively weak, opposed to Johnson's Herculean vigour, let us not call it positively feeble. Let us remember the character of his style, as given by Johnson himself: "What he attempted he performed; he is *never feeble*, and he did not wish to be energetic; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity; his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy¹. Whoever wishes to

an opinion gaining ground, not much to the advantage of Mr. Addison's style, the characteristics of which are feebleness and inanity—I speak of *that alone*, for his sentiments are excellent and his humour exquisite." What the worthy knight meant by *inanity*, as applied to Addison's style, is not worth inquiring.—ED.]

¹ When Johnson showed me a proof-sheet of the character of Addison, in which he so highly extols his style, I could not help observing, that it had not been his own model, as no two styles could differ more from each other. "Sir, Addison had his style, and I have mine." When I ventured to ask him, whether the difference did not consist in this, that Addison's style was full of idioms, colloquial phrases, and proverbs; and his own more strictly grammatical and free from such phraseology and modes of speech as can never be literally translated or understood by foreigners; he allowed the discrimination to be just. Let any one who doubts it, try to translate one of Addison's Spectators into Latin, French, or Italian; and though so easy, familiar, and elegant, to an Englishman, as to give the intellect no trouble; yet he would find the transfusion into another language extremely difficult, if not impos-

attain an English style, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison²."

[His manner of criticising and commending Addison's prose was the same in conversation as we read it in his printed strictures, and many of the expressions used have been heard to fall from him on common occasions. It was notwithstanding observable enough (or Mrs. Piozzi fancied so), that he never liked, though he always thought fit, to praise it; and his praises resembled those of a man who extols the superior elegance of high-painted porcelain, while he himself always chooses to eat off *plate*. She told him so one day, and he neither denied it nor appeared displeased.

But his opinion of Steele's essays was not so favourable. "They are too thin (said he) for an Englishman's taste; mere superficial observations on life and manners, without erudition enough to make them keep, like the light French wines, which turn sour with standing awhile, for want of *body*, as we call it³."

Though the Rambler was not concluded till the year 1752, I shall, under this year, say all that I have to observe upon it. Some of the translations of the mottos, by himself, are admirably done. He acknowledges to have received "elegant translations" of many of them from Mr James Elphinston; and some are very happily translated by a Mr. F. Lewis, of whom I never heard more, except that Johnson thus described him to Mr. Malone: "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society⁴." The concluding paper of his Ram-

ble. But a Rambler, Adventurer, or Idler, of Johnson, would fall into any classical or European language, as easily as if it had been originally conceived in it.—BURNET.

² I shall probably, in another work, maintain the merit of Addison's poetry, which has been very unjustly depreciated.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell never, that the editor knows of, executed this intention.—ED.]

³ [This illustration (which Mr. Boswell has applied to Addison and Johnson) seems, in this instance, not very happy, and still less just. Steele's Essays have outlived a century, and are certainly not yet sour to any good taste.—ED.]

⁴ In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1752, p. 468, he is styled "the Rev. Francis Lewis, of Chiswick." The late Lord Macartney, while he resided at Chiswick, at my request, made some inquiry concerning him at that place, but no intelligence was obtained.

The translations of the mottos supplied by Mr. Elphinston appeared first in the Edinburgh edition of the Rambler, and in some instances were revised and improved, probably by Johnson, be-

Piozzi,
p. 153.

Piozzi,
p. 45.

bler is at once dignified and pathetic. I cannot, however, but wish that he had not ended it with an unnecessary Greek verse, translated also into an English couplet:

Αὐτὰν ἐκ μυχῶν αὐτῶν εἰς ἀμοιβὴν.

Celestial powers! that piety regard,
From you my labours wait their last reward."

It is too much like the conceit of those dramatick poets, who used to conclude each act with a rhyme; and the expression in the first line of his couplet, "*Celestial powers*," though proper in Pagan poetry, is ill suited to Christianity, with "a conformity" to which he consoles himself. How much better would it have been to have ended with the prose sentence, "I shall never envy the honours which wit and learning obtain in any other cause, if I can be numbered among the writers who have given ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth."

His friend Dr. Birch being now engaged in preparing an edition of Raleigh's smaller pieces, Dr. Johnson wrote the following letter to that gentleman:

"TO DR. BIRCH.

"Gough Square, May 12, 1750.

"SIR,—Knowing that you are now preparing to favour the publick with a new edition of Raleigh's miscellaneous pieces, I have taken the liberty to send you a manuscript, which fell by chance within my notice. I perceive no proofs of forgery in my examination of it; and the owner tells me, that, as *he* has heard, the handwriting is Sir Walter's. If you should find reason to conclude it genuine, it will be a kindness to the owner, a blind person², to recommend it to the book-sellers. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

His just abhorrence of Milton's political notions was ever strong. But this did not prevent his warm admiration of Milton's great poetical merit, to which he has done illustrious justice, beyond all who have written upon the subject. And this year he

fore they were inserted in the London octavo edition. The translations of the mottos affixed to the first thirty numbers of the Rambler were published, from the Edinburgh edition, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September, 1750, before the work was collected into volumes.—MALONE. [Those of the next twenty-seven numbers, marked with the initials of the translators, are to be found in the same magazine for October, 1752, with two admirable improvements of the former translation of the mottos to Nos. 7 and 11, one of which is already quoted, *ante*, p. 54.—ED.]

¹ Not in the original edition, in folio.—MALONE.

² Mrs. Williams is probably the person meant.—BOSWELL.

not only wrote a Prologue, which was spoken by Mr. Garrick before the acting of *Comus* at Drury-lane theatre, for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter, but took a very zealous interest in the success of the charity. On the day preceding the performance, he published the following letter in the "*General Advertiser*," addressed to the printer of that paper:

"SIR,—That a certain degree of reputation is acquired merely by approving the works of genius, and testifying a regard to the memory of authours, is a truth too evident to be denied; and therefore to ensure a participation of fame with a celebrated poet, many, who would, perhaps, have contributed to starve him when alive, have heaped expensive pageants upon his grave³.

"It must, indeed, be confessed, that this method of becoming known to posterity with honour is peculiar to the great, or at least to the wealthy; but an opportunity now offers for almost every individual to secure the praise of paying a just regard to the illustrious dead, united with the pleasure of doing good to the living. To assist industrious indigence, struggling with distress, and debilitated by age, is a display of virtue, and an acquisition of happiness and honour.

"Whoever, then, would be thought capable of pleasure in reading the works of our incomparable Milton, and not so destitute of gratitude as to refuse to lay out a trifle in rational and elegant entertainment, for the benefit of his living remains, for the exercise of their own virtue, the increase of their reputation, and the pleasing consciousness of doing good, should appear at Drury-lane theatre to-morrow, April 5, when *Comus* will be performed for the benefit of Mrs Elizabeth Foster, grand-daughter to the authour⁴, and the only surviving branch of his family.

"N. B. There will be a new prologue on the occasion, written by the authour of *Irene*, and spoken by Mr. Garrick; and, by particular desire, there will be added to the Masque a dramatick satire, called *Lethe*, in which Mr. Garrick will perform."

In 1751 we are to consider him as carrying on both his *Dictionary* and *Rambler*. But he also wrote "*The Life of Cheynel*," in the miscellany called "*The Student*;"

³ Alluding probably to Mr. Auditor Benson, [who erected a monument to Milton in Westminster Abbey.—ED.] See the *Dunciad*, b. iv.—MALONE.

⁴ [She survived this benefit but three years, and died without issue. It is remarkable that none of our great, and few of our second-rate poets have left posterity.—ED.]

and the Rev. Dr. Douglas having with uncommon acuteness clearly detected a gross forgery and imposition upon the publick by William Lauder, a Scotch schoolmaster, who had, with equal impudence and ingenuity, represented Milton as a plagiarist from certain modern Latin poets, Johnson, who had been so far imposed upon as to furnish a Preface and Postscript to his work, now dictated a letter for Lauder, addressed to Dr. Douglas, acknowledging his fraud in terms of suitable contrition ¹.

This extraordinary attempt of Lauder was no sudden effort. He had brooded over it for many years: and to this hour it is uncertain what his principal motive was, unless it were a vain notion of his superiority, in being able, by whatever means, to deceive mankind. To effect this, he produced certain passages from Grotius, Masenius, and others, which had a faint resemblance to some parts of the "Paradise Lost." In these he interpolated some fragments of Hog's Latin translation of that poem, alleging that the mass thus fabricated was the archetype from which Milton copied. These fabrications he published from time to time in the Gentleman's Magazine; and exulting in his fancied success, he in 1750 ventured

¹ Lest there should be any person, at any future period, absurd enough to suspect that Johnson was a partaker in Lauder's fraud, or had any knowledge of it, when he assisted him with his masterly pen, it is proper here to quote the words of Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, at the time when he detected the imposition. "It is to be hoped, nay it is *expected*, that the elegant and nervous writer, whose judicious sentiments and inimitable style point out the author of Lauder's Preface and Postscript, will no longer allow one to *plume himself with his feathers*, who appeareth so little to deserve assistance: an assistance which I am persuaded would never have been communicated, had there been the least suspicion of those facts which I have been the instrument of conveying to the world in these sheets." *Milton no Plagiary*, 2d edit. p. 78. And his lordship has been pleased now to authorise me to say, in the strongest manner, that there is no ground whatever for any unfavourable reflection against Dr. Johnson, who expressed the strongest indignation against Lauder.—BOSWELL. [See, however, *note* in p. 95.—Ed.]

[In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1754, is a short account of a renewed attack by Lauder on Milton's character, in a pamphlet entitled "The Grand Imposter detected, or Milton convicted of Forgery against King Charles I."—Mr. Chalmers thinks that this review was probably written by Johnson; but it is, on every account, very unlikely. The article is trivial, and seems to be written neither in the style nor sentiments of Johnson.—Ed.]

Lauder afterwards went to Barbadoes, where he died very miserably about the year 1771.—MALONE.

to collect them into a pamphlet, entitled "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns in his Paradise Lost." To this pamphlet Johnson wrote a Preface, in full persuasion of Lauder's honesty, and a Postscript recommending, in the most persuasive terms, a subscription for the relief of the grand-daughter of Milton, of whom he thus speaks: "It is yet in the power of a great people to reward the poet whose name they boast, and from their alliance to whose genius they claim some kind of superiority to every other nation of the earth; that poet, whose works may possibly be read when every other monument of British greatness shall be obliterated; to reward him, not with pictures or with medals, which, if he sees, he sees with contempt, but with tokens of gratitude, which he, perhaps, may even now consider as not unworthy the regard of an immortal spirit." Surely this is inconsistent with "enmity towards Milton," which Sir John Hawkins imputes to Johnson upon this occasion, adding, "I could all along observe that Johnson seemed to approve not only of the design, but of the argument; and seemed to exult in a persuasion, that the reputation of Milton was likely to suffer by this discovery. That he was not privy to the imposture, I am well persuaded; that he wished well to the argument, may be inferred from the preface, which indubitably was written by Johnson." Is it possible for any man of clear judgement to suppose that Johnson, who so nobly praised the poetical excellence of Milton in a postscript to this very "discovery," as he then supposed it, could, at the same time, exult in a persuasion that the great poet's reputation was likely to suffer by it? This is an inconsistency of which Johnson was incapable; nor can any thing more be fairly inferred from the Preface, than that Johnson, who was alike distinguished for ardent curiosity and love of truth², was pleased with an investigation by which both were gratified. That he was actuated by these motives, and certainly by no unworthy desire to depreciate our great epick poet, is evident from his own words; for, after mentioning the general zeal of men of genius and literature, "to advance the honour, and distinguish the beauties of Paradise Lost," he says, "Among the inquiries to which this

² [But is it not extraordinary that Johnson, who had himself meditated a history of modern Latin poetry (see *ante*, p. 32), should not have shown his *curiosity and love of truth* by, at least, comparing Lauder's quotations with the original authors? It was, we might say, his duty to have done so, before he so far pronounced his judgment as to assist Lauder; and had he attempted but to verify a single quotation, he must have immediately discovered the fraud.—Ed.]

ardour of criticism has naturally given occasion, none is more obscure in itself, or more worthy of rational curiosity, than a retrospect of the progress of this mighty genius in the construction of his work; a view of the fabrick gradually rising, perhaps, from small beginnings, till its foundation rests in the centre, and its turrets sparkle in the skies; to trace back the structure through all its varieties, to the simplicity of its first plan; to find what was first projected, whence the scheme was taken, how it was improved, by what assistance it was executed, and from what stores the materials were collected; whether its founder dug them from the quarries of Nature, or demolished other buildings to embellish his own¹,” —Is this the language of one who wishes to blast the laurels of Milton?

[Mrs. Lenox², a lady now well known in the literary world, had written a novel entitled “The Life

Hawk.
p. 285-7.

¹ “Proposals (written evidently by Johnson) for printing the *ADAMUS EXUL* of Grotius, with a Translation and Notes by Wm. Lauder, A. M.” *Gent. Mag.* 1747. vol. 17, p. 404.—MALONE.

² [Mrs. Charlotte Lenox was born in 1720. Her father, Colonel Ramsay, Lieutenant Governor of New York, sent her over to England at the age of fifteen; but, unfortunately, the relative to whose care she was consigned was either dead or in a state of insanity on Miss Ramsay’s arrival. A lady who heard of, and pitied so extraordinary a disappointment, interested Lady Rockingham in the fate of Miss Ramsay; and the result was, that she was received into her ladyship’s family, where she remained till she fancied that a gentleman who visited at the house had become enamoured of her; though she is said to have been very plain in her person. This fancied passion led her into some extravagances of vanity and jealousy, which terminated her residence with Lady Rockingham. Her moral character, however, was never impeached, and she obtained some countenance and protection from the Duchess of Newcastle; but was chiefly dependant for a livelihood on her own literary exertions. In 1747, she published a volume of poems, and became, probably about that time, known to Mr. Strahan, the printer, in consequence of which she became acquainted with and married a Mr. Lenox, who was in Mr. Strahan’s employ, but in what capacity is not known. She next published, in 1751, the novel of Harriot Stuart, mentioned in the text, in which it is supposed she gave her own history. The Duchess of Newcastle honoured her by standing godmother to her first child, who was called Henrietta Holles, and did her the more substantial benefits of procuring for Mr. Lenox the place of tidewaiter in the customs, and for herself an apartment in Somerset-house. Nothing more is remembered of Mr. Lenox, except that he, at a later period of life, put forward some claim to a Scottish peerage. Mrs. Lenox lost her apartments by the pulling down of Somerset-house; and, in the latter part of her life, was redu-

ced to great distress. Besides her acquaintance with Dr. Johnson (who was always extremely kind to her), and other literary characters, she had the good fortune to become acquainted, at Mr. Strahan’s, with the late Right Hon. George Rose, who liberally assisted her in the latter years of her life—particularly in her last illness, and was at the expense of her burial in the beginning of January, 1804.

For most of the foregoing details, the editor is indebted to his friend the Right Hon. Sir George Rose, whose venerable mother still remembers Mrs. Lenox.—Ed.]

[“TO MR. RICHARDSON. *Rich. Cor.*
“March 9, 1750—1. v. 5, p. 281.

“DEAR SIR,—Though Clarissa wants no help from external splendour, I was glad to see her improved in her appearance, but more glad to find that she was now got above all fears of prolixity, and confident enough

ced to great distress. Besides her acquaintance with Dr. Johnson (who was always extremely kind to her), and other literary characters, she had the good fortune to become acquainted, at Mr. Strahan’s, with the late Right Hon. George Rose, who liberally assisted her in the latter years of her life—particularly in her last illness, and was at the expense of her burial in the beginning of January, 1804.

For most of the foregoing details, the editor is indebted to his friend the Right Hon. Sir George Rose, whose venerable mother still remembers Mrs. Lenox.—Ed.]

of success to supply whatever had been hitherto suppressed. I never indeed found a hint of any such defalcation, but I regretted it; for though the story is long, every letter is short.

"I wish you would add an *index rerum*, that when the reader recollects any incident, he may easily find it, which at present he cannot do, unless he knows in which volume it is told; for Clarissa is not a performance to be read with eagerness, and laid aside forever; but will be occasionally consulted by the busy, the aged, and the studious; and therefore I beg that this edition, by which I suppose posterity is to abide, may want nothing that can facilitate its use.—I am, sir, yours, &c. "S. JOHNSON."]

Ed. [This proposition of an *index rerum* to a novel will appear extraordinary, but Johnson at this time appears to have been very anxious to cultivate the acquaintance of Richardson¹, who lived in an atmosphere of flattery, and Johnson found it necessary to fall into the fashion of the society.] [Mr. Northcote

Life of Reynolds, p. 46. relates that Johnson introduced Sir Joshua Reynolds and his sister to Richardson, but hinted to them, at the same time, that if they wished to see the latter in good humour, they must expatiate on the excellencies of Clarissa²;

Piozzi, p. 142. [and Mrs. Piozzi tells us, that when talking of Richardson, he once said, "You think I love flattery—and so I do; but a little too much always disgusts me: that fellow, Richardson, on the contrary, could not be contented to sail quietly down the stream of reputation without longing to taste the froth from every stroke of the oar."]

In 1752 he was almost entirely occupied with his Dictionary. The last paper of his Rambler was published March 2³, this

¹ [See *post*, 18th Ap. 1778.—Ed.]

² [See Mr. Langton's testimony to the same effect, *post*, 1780.—Ed.]

³ Here the authour's memory failed him, for, according to the account given in a former page (see p. 81), we should here read March 17; but, in truth, as has been already observed, the Rambler closed on Saturday the *fourteenth* of March; at which time Mrs. Johnson was near her end, for she died on the following Tuesday, March 17. Had the concluding paper of that work been written on the day of her death, it would have been still more extraordinary than it is, considering the extreme grief into which the authour was plunged by that event. The melancholy cast of that concluding essay is sufficiently accounted for by the situation of Mrs. Johnson at the time it was written; and her death three days afterwards put an end to the paper.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone seems also to have fallen into some errors, from not adverting to the change of style. Johnson, at this period, used the *old style*;

year; after which there was a cessation for some time of any exertion of his talents as an essayist. But, in the same year, Dr. Hawkesworth, who was his warm admirer, and a studious imitator of his style, and then lived in great intimacy with him, began a periodical paper, entitled "THE ADVENTURER," in connexion with other gentlemen, one of whom was Johnson's much-loved friend, Dr. Bathurst; and, without doubt, they received many valuable hints from his conversation, most of his friends having been so assisted in the course of their works.

[The curiosity of the reader [as to the several writers of the Adventurer] is, to a small degree, gratified by the last paper, which assigns to Dr. Joseph Warton such as have the signature Z., and leaves to Dr. Hawkesworth himself the praise of such as are without any. To the information there given, Sir John Hawkins adds, that the papers marked A. which are said to have come from a source that soon failed, were supplied by Dr. Bathurst, an original associate in the work, and those distinguished by the letter T. [the first of which is dated 3d March, 1753,] by Johnson, who received two guineas for every number that he wrote; a rate of payment which he had before adjusted in his stipulation for the Rambler, and was probably the measure of reward to his fellow-labourers.]

That there should be a suspension of his literary labours during a part of the year 1752, will not seem strange, when it is considered that soon after closing his Rambler, he suffered a loss which, there can be no doubt, affected him with the deepest distress. For on the 17th of March, O. S. his wife died. Why Sir John Hawkins should unwarrantably take upon him even to *suppose* that Johnson's fondness for her was *dissembled* (meaning simulated or assumed⁴), and to assert, that if it was not

Hawk.
p. 293.
319.

so that Mr. Boswell may have copied from some MS. note the date of the 2d of March as that on which the last Rambler was written, though it was published next day, viz. the 3d, O. S. or 14th, N. S.; and as Mrs. Johnson's death was on the 17th, O. S., or 28th, N. S., the Rambler was concluded a fortnight before that event; and was concluded because, as Dr. Johnson expressly says in the last number, "having supported it for *two years*, and multiplied his essays to six volumes, he determined to desist." It died therefore a natural death, though it is very likely that the loss of Mrs. Johnson would have stopped it, had it not been already terminated.—Ed.]

⁴ [Mr. Boswell is a little unlucky in this criticism, as Johnson himself has in his Dictionary given to the word "*dissembled*" the same meaning in which it is here used by Hawkins. He adds, however, very justly, that such a use of it is erroneous.—Ed.]

the case, "it was a lesson he had learned by rote," I cannot conceive; unless it proceeded from a want of similar feelings in his own breast. To argue from her being much older than Johnson, or any other circumstances, that he could not really love her, is absurd; for love is not a subject of reasoning, but of feeling, and therefore there are no common principles upon which one can persuade another concerning it. Every man feels for himself, and knows how he is affected by particular qualities in the person he admires, the impressions of which are too minute and delicate to be substantiated in language.

The following very solemn and affecting prayer was found after Dr. Johnson's decease, by his servant, Mr. Francis Barber, who delivered it to my worthy friend the Reverend Mr. Strahan, vicar of Islington, who at my earnest request has obligingly favoured me with a copy of it, which he and I compared with the original. I present it to the world as an undoubted proof of a circumstance in the character of my illustrious friend, which, though some, whose hard minds I never shall envy, may attack as superstitious, will I am sure endear him more to numbers of good men. I have an additional, and that a personal motive for presenting it, because it sanctions what I myself have always maintained and am fond to indulge:

"April 26, 1752, being after 12 at night of the 25th.

"O Lord! Governour of heaven and earth, in whose hands are embodied and departed Spirits, if thou hast ordained the Souls of the Dead to minister to the Living, and appointed my departed Wife to have care of me, grant that I may enjoy the good effects of her attention and ministration, whether exercised by appearance, impulses, dreams, or in any other manner agreeable to thy government. Forgive my presumption, enlighten my ignorance, and however meaner agents are employed, grant me the blessed influences of thy holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

What actually followed upon this most interesting piece of devotion by Johnson, we are not informed; but I, whom it has pleased God to afflict in a similar manner to that which occasioned it, have certain experience of benignant communication by dreams.

That his love for his wife was of the most ardent kind, and, during the long period of fifty years, was unimpaired by the lapse of time, is evident from various passages in the series of his Prayers and Meditations¹, published by the Rev. Mr. Strahan,

¹ [The originals of this publication are now deposited in Pembroke College. It is to be observed. I.

as well as from other memorials, two of which I select, as strongly marking the tenderness and sensibility of his mind.

"March 28, 1753. I kept this day as the anniversary of my 'Tetty's death, with prayer and tears in the morning. In the evening I prayed for her conditionally, if it were lawful."

"April 23, 1753. I know not whether I do not too much indulge the vain longings of affection; but I hope they intenerate my heart, and that when I die like my 'Tetty, this affection will be acknowledged in a happy interview, and that in the mean time I am incited by it to piety. I will, however, not deviate too much from common and received methods of devotion²."

served that they consist of a few little memorandum books, and a great number of separate scraps of paper, and bear no marks of having been arranged or intended for publication by Dr. Johnson. Each *prayer* is on a separate piece of paper, generally a sheet (but sometimes a fragment) of note paper. The *memoranda* and *observations* are generally in little books of a few leaves sewed together. This subject will be referred to hereafter; but it is even now important that the reader should recollect that Mr. Strahan's publication was not prepared by Dr. Johnson himself, but formed by the reverend gentleman out of the loose materials above mentioned.—Ed.]

² [Miss Seward, with equal truth and taste, thus expresses herself concerning these and similar passages: "Those pharisaic meditations, with their *popish* prayers for old 'Tetty's soul; their contrite *parade* about lying in bed on a morning; drinking creamed tea on a fast day; snoring at sermons; and having omitted to ponder well Bel and the Dragon, and Tobit and his Dog." And in another letter she does not scruple to say that Mr. Boswell confessed to her his idea that Johnson was "a Roman Catholic in his heart." Miss Seward's credit is by this time so low that it is hardly necessary to observe how improbable it is that Mr. Boswell could have made any such confession. Dr. Johnson thought charitably of the Roman Catholics, and defended their religion from the coarse language of our political tests, which call it impious and idolatrous (*post*, 26th Oct. 1769); but he strenuously disclaimed all participation in the doctrines of that church (see *post*, 3d May, 1773; 5th April, 1776; 10th Oct. 1779; 10th June, 1784). Lady Knight (the mother of Miss Cornelia Knight, the accomplished author of *Marcus Flaminius* and other ingenious works) made the following communication to Mr. Hoole, which may be properly quoted on this point: "Dr. Johnson's political principles ran high, both in church and state: he wished power to the king and to the heads of the church, as the laws of England have established; but I know he disliked absolute power; and I am very sure of his disapprobation of the doctrines of the church of Rome; because about three weeks before we came abroad, he said to my Cornelia, 'you are going where the ostentatious pomp of church ceremonies attracts the imagina-

Her wedding-ring, when she became his wife, was, after her death, preserved by him, as long as he lived, with an affectionate care, in a little round wooden box, in the inside of which he pasted a slip of paper, thus inscribed by him in fair characters, as follows:

“*Eheu!*
Eliz. Johnson,
Nupta Jul. 9^o. 1736,
Mortua, eheu!
Mart. 17^o. 1752¹.”

After his death, Mr. Francis Barber, his faithful servant, and residuary legatee, offered this memorial of tenderness to Mrs. Lucy Porter, Mrs. Johnson’s daughter; but she having declined² to accept of it, he had it enamelled as a mourning ring for his old master, and presented it to his wife, Mrs. Barber, who now has it.

The state of mind in which a man must be upon the death of a woman whom he sincerely loves, had been in his contemplation many years before. In his *IRENE*, we find the following fervent and tender speech of Demetrius, addressed to his Aspasia:

“From those bright regions of eternal day,
Where now thou shin’st amongst thy fellow saints,
Array’d in purer light, look down on me!
In pleasing visions and assuasive dreams,
O! soothe my soul, and teach me how to lose thee.”

I have, indeed, been told by Mrs. Desmoulins, who, before her marriage, lived

tion; but if they want to persuade you to change, you must remember, that by increasing your faith, you may be persuaded to become Turk.’ If these were not the words, I have kept up to the express meaning.” Mrs. Piozzi also says, “though beloved by all his Roman Catholic acquaintance, yet was Mr. Johnson a most unshaken church-of-England man; and I think, or at least I once *did* think, that a letter written by him to Mr. Barnard, the king’s librarian, when he was in Italy collecting books, contained some very particular advice to his friend to be on his guard against the seductions of the church of Rome.” And, finally—which may perhaps be thought more likely to express his real sentiments than even a more formal assertion—when it was proposed (see *post*, 30th April, 1773), that monuments of eminent men should in future be erected in St. Paul’s, and when some one in conversation suggested to begin with Pope, Johnson observed, “Why, sir, as Pope was a Roman Catholic, I would not have his to be first.”—Ed.]

[¹ It seems as if Dr. Johnson had been a little ashamed of the disproportion between his age and that of his wife, for neither in this inscription nor that over her grave, written thirty years later, does he mention her *age*, which was at her death *sixty-three*.—Ed.]

[² Offended perhaps, and not unreasonably, that she was not mentioned in Johnson’s will.—Ed.]

for sometime with Mrs. Johnson at Hampstead, that she indulged herself in country air and nice living, at an unsuitable expense, while her husband was drudging in the smoke of London, and that she by no means treated him with that complacency which is the most engaging quality in a wife;

[and when Mrs. Piozzi asked him if he ever disputed with his wife ^{Piozzi, p. 112-15.} (that lady having heard that he had loved her passionately), “Perpetually (said he): my wife had a particular reverence for cleanliness, and desired the praise of neatness in her dress and furniture, as many ladies do, till they become troublesome to their best friends, slaves to their own whims, and only sigh for the hour of sweeping their husbands out of the house as dirt and useless lumber: a clean floor is *so* comfortable, she would say sometimes, by way of twitting; till at last I told her, that I thought we had had talk enough about the *floor*, we would now have a touch at the *ceiling*.” On another occasion Mrs. Piozzi heard him blame her for a fault many people have, of setting the miseries of their neighbours half unintentionally, half wantonly, before their eyes, showing them the bad side of their profession, situation, &c. He said, “she would lament the dependence of pupilage to a young heir, &c. and once told a waterman who rowed her along the Thames in a wherry, that he was no happier than a galley-slave, one being chained to the oar by authority, the other by want. I had, however (said he, laughing), the wit to get her daughter on my side always before we began the dispute³.”]

But all this is perfectly compatible with his fondness for her, especially when it is remembered that he had a high opinion of her understanding, and that the impressions which her beauty, real or imaginary, had originally made upon his fancy, being continued by habit, had not been effaced, though she herself was doubtless much altered for the worse. [Garrick told Mr. ^{Piozzi, p. 113-14.} Thrale, however, that she was a little painted puppet, of no value at all, and quite disguised with affectation, full of odd airs of rural elegance; and he made out some comical scenes, by mimicking her in a dialogue he pretended to have overheard. Dr. Johnson told Mrs. Piozzi that her hair was eminently beautiful, quite *blonde* like that of a baby; but that she fretted about the colour, and was always desirous to dye it black, which he very judiciously hindered her from doing. A picture found of her at Lichfield was very

³ [This must have referred to some circumstances of early life, for it does not appear that Miss Porter ever resided with Dr. and Mrs. Johnson after they left Edial in 1737.—Ed.]

pretty, and her daughter, Mrs. Lucy Porter, said it was like. The intelligence Mrs. Piozzi gained of her from Mr. Levett was only perpetual illness and perpetual opium¹.]

The dreadful shock of separation took place in the night; and Dr. Johnson immediately despatched a letter to his friend, the Rev. Dr. Taylor, which, as Taylor told me, expressed grief in the strongest manner he had ever read; so that it is much to be regretted it has not been preserved². The letter was brought to Dr. Taylor, at his house in the Cloysters, Westminster, about three in the morning; and as it signified an earnest desire to see him, he got up, and went to Johnson as soon as he was dressed, and found him in tears and in extreme agitation. After being a little while together, Johnson requested him to join with him in prayer. He then prayed extempore, as did Dr. Taylor; and thus by means of that piety which was ever his primary object, his troubled mind was, in some degree, soothed and composed.

The next day he wrote as follows:

“TO THE REV. DR. TAYLOR.

“DEAR SIR,—Let me have your company and instruction. Do not live away from me. My distress is great.

“Pray desire Mrs. Taylor to inform me what mourning I should buy for my mother and Miss Porter, and bring a note in writing with you.

“Remember me in your prayers, for vain is the help of man. I am, dear sir, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“March 18, 1752.”

That his sufferings upon the death of his wife were severe, beyond what are commonly endured, I have no doubt, from the information of many who were then about him, to none of whom I give more credit than to Mr. Francis Barber, his faithful negro servant³, who came into his family about

¹ [Levett did not know Mrs. Johnson till the year 1746, when she was fiftyseven or eight years of age, and in very ill health.—ED.]

² In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1794 (p. 100), was printed a letter pretending to be that written by Johnson on the death of his wife. But it is merely a transcript of the 41st number of “The Idler,” on the death of a friend. A fictitious date, March 17, 1751, O. S. was added by some person, previously to this paper's being sent to the publisher of that miscellany, to give a colour to this deception.—MALONE. [The date is 1752—the year of Mrs. Johnson's decease.—ED.]

³ Francis Barber was born in Jamaica, and was brought to England in 1750 by colonel Bathurst, father of Johnson's very intimate friend, Dr. Bathurst. He was sent, for some time, to the

a fortnight after the dismal event. These sufferings were aggravated by the melancholy inherent in his constitution; and although he probably was not oftener in the wrong than she was, in the little disagreements which sometimes troubled his married state, during which, he owned to me, that the gloomy irritability of his existence was more painful to him than ever, he might very naturally, after her death, be tenderly disposed to charge himself with slight omissions and offences, the sense of which would give him much uneasiness⁴. Accordingly we find, about a year after her decease, that he thus addressed the Supreme Being:

“O Lord, who givest the grace of repentance, and hearest the prayers of the penitent, grant that by true contrition I may obtain forgiveness of all the sins committed, and of all duties neglected, in my union with the wife whom thou hast taken from me; for the neglect of joint devotion, patient exhortation, and mild instruction.”

The kindness of his heart, notwithstanding the impetuosity of his temper, is well known to his friends; and I cannot trace the smallest foundation for the following dark and uncharitable assertion by Sir John Hawkins: “The apparition of his departed wife was altogether of the Hawk.
p. 316.terrific kind, and hardly afforded him a hope that she was in a state of happiness.” That he, in conformity with the opinion of many of the most able, learned, and pious Christians in all ages, supposed that there was a middle state⁵ after death, previous to the time at which departed souls

Rev. Mr. Jackson's school, at Barton, in Yorkshire. The colonel by his will left him his freedom, and Dr. Bathurst was willing that he should enter into Johnson's service, in which he continued from 1752 till Johnson's death, with the exception of two intervals; in one of which, upon some difference with his master, he went and served an apothecary in Cheapside, but still visited Dr. Johnson occasionally; in another, he took a fancy to go to sea. Part of the time, indeed, he was, by the kindness of his master, at a school in Northamptonshire, that he might have the advantage of some learning. So early and so lasting a connexion was there between Dr. Johnson and this humble friend.—BOSWELL.

⁴ See his beautiful and affecting Rambler, No. 54.—MALONE.

⁵ It does not appear that Johnson was fully persuaded that there was a middle state: his prayers being only *conditional*, i. e. if such a state existed.—MALONE. [This is not an exact view of the matter; the *condition* was that *it should be lawful to him* so to intercede; and in all his prayers of this nature he scrupulously introduces the humble limitation of “as far as it is lawful,” or “as far as may be permitted, I recommend,” &c.; but it is also to be observed that he *sometimes* prays that “the Almighty may have had mercy” on the departed, as if he be-

are finally received to eternal felicity, appears, I think, unquestionably from his devotions:

“And, O Lord, so far as it may be lawful in me, I commend to thy fatherly goodness the *soul of my departed wife*; beseeching thee to *grant* her whatever is best in her *present state*, and *finally to receive her to eternal happiness.*”

But this state has not been looked upon with horror, but only as less gracious.

He deposited the remains of Mrs. Johnson in the church of Bromley in Kent¹, to which he was probably led by the residence of his friend Hawkesworth at that place. The funeral sermon which he composed for her, which was never preached, but, having been given to Dr. Taylor, has been published since his death, is a performance of uncommon excellence, and full of rational and pious comfort to such as are depressed by that severe affliction which Johnson felt when he wrote it. When it is considered that it was written in such an agitation of mind, and in the short interval between her death and burial, it cannot be read without wonder.

Though Johnson's circumstances were at this time far from being easy, his humane and charitable disposition was constantly exerting itself. Mrs. Anna Williams, daughter of a very ingenious Welsh physician, and a woman of more than ordinary talents and literature, having come to London in hopes of being cured of a cataract in both her eyes, which afterwards ended in total blindness, was kindly received as a constant visitor at his house while Mrs. Johnson lived; and after her death, having come under his roof in order to have an operation upon her eyes performed with more comfort to her than in lodgings, she had an apartment from him during the rest of her life, at all times when he had a house.

[Before the calamity of total deprivation of sight befel her, she, with the assistance of her father, had acquired a knowledge of the

lied the sentence to have been already pronounced.—Ed.]

¹ A few months before his death, Johnson honoured her memory by the following epitaph, which was inscribed on her tombstone, in the church of Bromley :

Hic conduntur reliquæ

ELIZABETHÆ

Antiquæ Jarvisiorum gente,

Pentlingæ, apud Leicestrienses, ortæ ;

Formosæ, cultæ, ingeniosæ, piæ ;

Uxor, primis nuptiis, HENRICI PORTER,

Secundis, SAMUELIS JOHNSON :

Qui multum amatam, diuque defletam

Hoc lapide contextit.

Obiit Londini, Mense Mart.

A. D. MDCCLII.—MALONE.

French and Italian languages, and had made great improvements in literature, which, together with the exercise of her needle, at which she was very dexterous, as well after the loss of her sight as before, contributed to support her under her affliction, till a time when it was thought by her friends, that relief might be obtained from the hand of an operating surgeon. At the request of Dr. Johnson, Sir J. Hawkins went with her to a friend of his, Mr. Samuel Sharp, senior surgeon of Guy's hospital, who before had given him to understand that he would couch her gratis if the cataract was ripe, but upon making the experiment it was found otherwise, and that the crystalline humour was not sufficiently inspissated for the needle to take effect. She had been almost a constant companion of Mrs. Johnson for some time before her decease, but had never resided in the house; afterwards, for the convenience of performing the intended operation, Johnson took her home, and, upon the failure of that, kept her as the partner of his dwelling till he removed into chambers. Afterward, in 1766, upon his taking a house in Johnson's-court, in Fleet-street, he invited her thither, and in that, and his last house, in Bolt-court, she successively dwelt for the remainder of her life².

² Lady Knight, in a paper already referred to (*ante*, p. 97), gives the following account of Mrs. Williams: “She was a person extremely interesting. She had an uncommon firmness of mind, a boundless curiosity, retentive memory, and strong judgment. She had various powers of pleasing. Her personal afflictions and slender fortune she seemed to forget, when she had the power of doing an act of kindness: she was social, cheerful, and active, in a state of body that was truly deplorable. Her regard to Dr. Johnson was formed with such strength of judgment and firm esteem, that her voice never hesitated when she repeated his maxims, or recited his good deeds; though upon many other occasions her want of sight had led her to make so much use of her ear, as to affect her speech.

Mrs. Williams was blind before she was acquainted with Dr. Johnson.—She had many resources, though none very great. With the Miss Wilkinsons she generally passed a part of the year, and received from them presents, and from the first who died, a legacy of clothes and money. The last of them, Mrs. Jane, left her an annual rent; but from the blundering manner of the will, I fear she never reaped the benefit of it. The lady left money to erect an hospital for ancient maids: but the number she had allotted being too great for the donation, the doctor (Johnson) said, it would be better to expunge the word *maintain*, and put in to *starve* such a number of old maids. They asked him, what name should be given it? he replied, ‘Let it be called *JENNY'S WHIM.*’ (The name of a well-known tavern near Chelsea, in former days.)

The loss of her sight made but a small abatement of her cheerfulness, and was scarce any interruption of her studies. With the assistance of two female friends, she translated from the French of Père La Bletrie "the Life of the Emperor Julian¹," and, in 1766, she published, by subscription, a quarto volume of miscellanies, in prose and verse, and thereby increased her little fund to three hundred pounds, which, being prudently invested, yielded an income that, under such protection as she experienced from Dr. Johnson, was sufficient for her support.

She was a woman of an enlightened understanding; plain, as it is called, in her person, and easily provoked to anger, but possessing, nevertheless, some excellent moral qualities, among which no one was more conspicuous than her desire to promote the welfare and happiness of others, and of this she gave a signal proof, by her solicitude in favour of an institution for the maintenance and education of poor deserted females in the parish of St. Sepulchre, London, supported by the voluntary contributions of

ladies, and, as the foundation-stone of a fund for its future subsistence, she bequeathed to it the whole of the little which she had been able to accumulate. To the endowments and qualities here ascribed to her, may be added, a larger share of experimental prudence than is the lot of most of her sex. Johnson, in many exigencies, found her an able counsellor, and seldom showed his wisdom more than when he hearkened to her advice. In return, she received from his conversation the advantages of religious and moral improvement, which she cultivated so, as in a great measure to smooth the constitutional asperity of her temper. When these particulars are known, this intimacy, which began with compassion, and terminated in a friendship that subsisted till death dissolved it, will be easily accounted for.

[Mrs. Chapone, in one of her letters, gives an interesting account of her meeting Johnson and Miss Williams at Richardson's country-house near Fulham, about this time. Ed.

"MRS. CHAPONE TO MISS CARTER.

"10th July, 1752.

"We had a visit, whilst at North end, from your friend Mr. Johnson and poor Mrs. Williams. I was charmed with his behaviour to her, which was like that of a fond father to his daughter. She seemed much pleased with her visit; showed very good sense, with a great deal of modesty and humility; and so much patience and cheerfulness under her misfortune, that it doubled my concern for her. Mr. Johnson was very communicative and entertaining, and did me the honour to address most of his discourse to me. I had the assurance to dispute with him on the subject of human malignity, and wondered to hear a man, who, by his actions, shows so much benevolence, maintain that the human heart is naturally malevolent, and that all the benevolence we see in the few who are good is acquired by reason and religion. You may believe I entirely disagreed with him, being, as you know, fully persuaded that benevolence, or the love of our fellow-creatures, is as much a part of our natures as self-love; and that it cannot be suppressed or extinguished without great violence from the force of other passions. I told him, I suspected him of these bad notions from some of his *Ramblers*, and had accused him to you; but that you had persuaded me I had mistaken his sense. To which he answered, that if he had betrayed such sentiments in the *Ramblers*, it was without design; for that he believed that the doctrine of human malevolence, though a true one, is not a useful one, and ought not to be published to the world. Is there any truth that

Chap.
Works,
vol. i.
p. 72.

"Lady Phillips made her a small annual allowance, and some other Welsh ladies, to all of whom she was related. Mrs. Montagu, on the death of Mr. Montagu, settled upon her (by deed) ten pounds per annum.—As near as I can calculate, Mrs. Williams had about thirty-five or forty pounds a year. The furniture she used [in her apartment in Dr. Johnson's house] was her own; her expenses were small, tea and bread and butter being at least half of her nourishment. Sometimes she had a servant or char-woman to do the ruder offices of the house; but she was herself active and industrious. I have frequently seen her at work. Upon remarking one day her facility in moving about the house, searching into drawers, and finding books, without the help of sight, 'Believe me (said she), persons who cannot do these common offices without sight, did but little while they enjoyed that blessing.'—Scanty circumstances, bad health, and blindness, are surely a sufficient apology for her being sometimes impatient: her natural disposition was good, friendly, and humane."—MALONE.

[The following description of Mrs. Williams (at a later date) may be here introduced: "I see her now a pale, shrunken old lady, dressed in scarlet, made in the handsome French fashion of the time (1775), with a lace cap, with two stiffened projecting wings on the temples, and a black lace hood over it. Her temper has been recorded as marked with Welsh fire, and this might be excited by some of the meaner inmates of the upper floors [of Dr. Johnson's house]; but her gentle kindness to me I never shall forget, or think consistent with a bad temper. I know nobody from whose discourse there was a better chance of deriving high ideas of moral rectitude."—*Miss Hawkins's Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 152.—Ed.]

¹ See it mentioned in Nichols's *Life of Bowyer*.

would not be useful, or that should not be known?"]

Hawk.
p. 322,
327.

[By some papers, in the hands of Sir John Hawkins, it seems that, notwithstanding Johnson was paid for writing the Rambler, he had a remaining interest in the copy-right of that paper, which about this time he sold. The produce thereof, the pay he was receiving for his papers in the Adventurer¹, and the fruits of his other literary labours, had now exalted him to such a state of comparative² affluence, as, in his judgment, made a man-servant necessary. Soon after the decease of Mrs. Johnson, the father of Dr. Bathurst arrived in England, from Jamaica, and brought with him a negro-servant, a native of that island, whom he caused to be baptized, and named Francis Barber, and sent for instruction to Burton-upon-Tees, in Yorkshire. Upon the decease of Captain Bathurst (for so he was called), Francis went to live with his son, who willingly parted with him to Johnson. The uses for which he was intended to serve this his last master were not very apparent, for Diogenes himself never wanted a servant less than he seemed to do. The great bushy wig, which, throughout his life, he affected to wear, by that closeness of texture which it had contracted and been suffered to retain, was ever nearly as impenetrable by a comb as a quickset hedge; and little of the dust that had once settled on his outer garments was ever known to have been disturbed by the brush.]

From Mr. Francis Barber I have had the following authentick and artless account of the situation in which he found him recently after his wife's death: "He was in great affliction. Mrs. Williams was then living in his house, which was in Gough-square. He was busy with the Dictionary. Mr. Shiels, and some others of the gentlemen who had formerly written for him, used to come about him. He had then little for himself, but frequently sent money to Mr. Shiels³ when in distress. The friends who visited him at that time were chiefly Dr. Bathurst, and Mr.

¹ [Mr. Boswell states on evidence, which (however improbable the fact) it is hard to resist, that Johnson resigned to Dr. Bathurst some, if not all, the profits of the Adventurer, which at most were two guineas a paper for about thirty papers.—Ed.]

² [This is hardly consistent with all the other accounts, which lead to a belief that Johnson was, from the death of his wife in 1752, to the time of his pension in 1762, in very narrow circumstances. He most probably was induced to take the negro by charity and his love for Dr. Bathurst.—Ed.]

³ [See ante, p. 75.—Ed.]

Diamond, an apothecary in Cork-street, Burlington-gardens, with whom he and Mrs. Williams generally dined every Sunday. There was a talk of his going to Iceland with him, which would probably have happened, had he lived. There were also Mr. Cave, Dr. Hawkesworth, Mr. Ryland, merchant on Tower-hill, Mrs. Masters⁴, the poetess, who lived with Mr. Cave, Mrs. Carter, and sometimes Mrs. Macaulay⁵; also, Mrs. Gardiner, wife of a tallow-chandler, on Snow-hill, not in the learned way, but a worthy good woman⁶; Mr. (now Sir Joshua) Reynolds; Mr. Miller, Mr. Dodsley, Mr. Boquet, Mr. Payne, of Paternoster-row, booksellers; Mr. Strahan, the printer; the Earl of Orrery⁷, Lord Southwell⁸, Mr. Garrick."

Many are, no doubt, omitted in this catalogue of his friends, and in particular, his humble friend Mr. Robert Levet, an obscure practiser in physick amongst the lower people, his fees being sometimes very small sums, sometimes whatever provisions his patients could afford him; but of such extensive practice in that way, that Mrs. Williams has told me his walk was from Houndsditch to Marybone. It appears,

⁴ [Mary Masters published a small volume of poems about 1738, and, in 1755—"Familiar Letters and Poems," in octavo. She is supposed to have died about 1759.—Ed.]

⁵ [Catharine Sawbridge, sister of Mrs. Alderman Sawbridge, was born in 1733; but it was not till 1760 that she was married to Dr. Macaulay, a physician; so that Barber's account was, in respect to her, incorrect, either in date or name. She was married a second time, in 1778, to a Mr. Graham, with no increase of respectability. She died in 1791.—Ed.]

⁶ [With this good woman, who was introduced to him by Mrs. Masters, he kept up a constant intercourse, and remembered her in his will, by the bequest of a book. See post, Nov. 1783.—Ed.]

⁷ [John Boyle, born in 1707; educated first under the private tuition of Fenton the poet, and afterwards, at Westminster school and Christ Church College, Oxford; succeeded his father as fifth Earl of Orrery in 1737; D. C. L. of Oxford in 1743; F. R. S. in 1750; and, on the death of his cousin, 1753, fifth Earl of Corke. He published several works, but the only original one of any note is his *Life of Swift*, written with great professions of friendship, but in fact with considerable severity towards the dean. Lord Orrery's acquaintance may have tended to increase Johnson's aversion to Swift. Lord Orrery's estate was much encumbered, and his circumstances were consequently embarrassed. Mr. Tyers intimates (*Biog. Sk.* p. 7.) that, *if it had been in his power*, Lord Orrery would have afforded Johnson pecuniary assistance.—Ed.]

⁸ [Thomas, second Lord Southwell, F. R. S., born 1698, succeeded his father in 1720, and died 1766.—Ed.]

from Johnson's diary, that their acquaintance commenced about the year 1746; and such was Johnson's predilection for him, and fanciful estimation of his moderate abilities, that I have heard him say he should not be satisfied, though attended by all the college of physicians, unless he had Mr. Levet with him. Ever since I was acquainted with Dr. Johnson, and many years before, as I have been assured by those who knew him earlier, Mr. Levet had an apartment in his house, or his chambers, and waited upon him every morning, through the whole course of his late and tedious breakfast. He was of a strange grotesque appearance, stiff and formal in his manner, and seldom said a word while any company was present¹.

The circle of his friends, indeed, at this time was extensive and various, far beyond what has been generally imagined². To trace his acquaintance with each particular person, if it could be done, would be a task, of which the labour would not be repaid by the advantage. But exceptions are to be made; one of which must be a friend so eminent as Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was truly his *dulce decus*, and with whom he maintained an uninterrupted intimacy to the last hour of life. When Johnson lived in Castle-street, Cavendish-square, he used frequently to visit two ladies, who lived opposite to him³, Miss

¹ A more particular account of this person may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February, 1785. It originally appeared in the *St. James's Chronicle*, and, I believe, was written by the late George Steevens, Esq.—MALONE.

² [Mr. Murphy, who is, as to this period, better authority than Mr. Boswell, says, "It was late in life before he had the habit of mixing, otherwise than occasionally, with polite company; and Dr. Harwood has favoured me with the following memorandum, in Johnson's writing, made about this time, of certain visits which he was to make (perhaps on his return from Oxford in 1754), and which, as it contains the names of some of the highest and lowest of his acquaintance, is probably a list of nearly all his friends:

Visits to

Brodie	Hawkesworth	Bathurst
Fowke	Gardiner	Grainger
Taylor	Drew	Baker
Elphinston	Lawrence	Weston
Osborne	Garrick	Millar
Garden[er]	Robinson, sen.	Craster
Richardson	Boyle	Simpson
Strahan	Wilson	Rose
Millar	Henry	Giffard
Tonson	Tyers	Gregory
Dodsley	Hawkins	Desmoulins
Reynolds	Ryland	Lloyd
Lenox	Payne	Sherrard.
Gully	Newberry	Ed.]

³ [It might be inferred, from an expression or

Cotterells, daughters of Admiral Cotterell⁴, Reynolds⁵ used also to visit there, and thus they met. Mr. Reynolds, as I have observed above, had, from the first reading of his "Life of Savage," conceived a very high admiration of Johnson's powers of writing. His conversation no less delighted him; and he cultivated his acquaintance with the laudable zeal of one who was ambitious of general improvement. Sir Joshua, indeed, was lucky enough, at their very first meeting, to make a remark, which was so much above the common-place style of conversation, that Johnson at once perceived that Reynolds had the habit of thinking for himself. The ladies were regretting the death of a friend, to whom they owed great obligations; upon which Reynolds observed, "You have, however, the comfort of being relieved from a burden of gratitude." They were shocked a little at this alleviating suggestion, as too selfish; but Johnson defended it in his clear and forcible manner, and was much pleased with the *mind*, the fair view of human nature⁶ which it exhibited, like some of the

two in his letters to Barretti (*see post*, 1761 and 1762), that these ladies were connexions of his wife, but Dr. Harwood informs me, on the authority of Mrs. Pearson, that there was no relationship.—Ed.]

⁴ ["Captain Charles Cotterell retired totally from the service in July, 1747, being put, with a number of other gentlemen, on the superannuated list, with the rank and pay of a rear-admiral. He died in July, 1754." *Biog. Nav.*—Ed.]

⁵ [It would be naturally inferred from Mr. Boswell's account, that the acquaintance between Johnson and Sir Joshua took place so early as the time when the former resided in Castle-street. This can hardly have been the case. Reynolds, then a youth under age, passed the years 1741 and 1742 in London, but did not again revisit the metropolis till the end of 1752. (*See Northcote's Life*, p. 12, 31, and 32.) That the acquaintance did not commence on the first visit, is proved by its having occurred *after* the publication of the *Life of Savage*, which was in 1744. Barber also must have been in error when he described Reynolds as one of Johnson's intimates at the period of his wife's death.—Ed.]

⁶ Johnson himself has a sentiment somewhat similar in his 87th Rambler: "There are minds so impatient of inferiority, that their gratitude is a species of revenge, and they return benefits, not because recompense is a pleasure, but because obligation is a pain."—J. BOSWELL. [This is, no doubt, "a somewhat similar sentiment;" but in the Rambler, Johnson mentions it with the censure it deserves; whereas, in the text, he is represented as applauding it. Such an observation is very little like the usual good manners, good nature, and good sense of Sir Joshua; and we cannot but suspect the authority, whatever it was, on which Boswell admitted this anecdote.—Ed.]

reflections of Rochefoucault. The consequence was, that he went home with Reynolds, and supped with him.

Sir Joshua told me a pleasant characteristic anecdote of Johnson about the time of their first acquaintance. When they were one evening together at the Miss Cotterells', the then Duchess of Argyle¹ and another lady of high rank came in. Johnson thinking that the Miss Cotterells were too much engrossed by them, and that he and his friend were neglected, as low company, of whom they were somewhat ashamed, grew angry; and resolving to shock their supposed pride, by making their great visitors imagine that his friend and he were low indeed, he addressed himself in a loud tone to Mr. Reynolds, saying, "How much do you think you and I could get in a week, if we were to *work as hard* as we could?" as if they had been common mechanics.

[Of Dr. Bathurst, who stands Piozzi, p. 14, 64. first in the foregoing list of his friends, Dr. Johnson told Mrs. Piozzi that he loved "dear, dear Bathurst, better than he ever loved any human creature;" and it was on him that he bestowed the singular eulogy of being a *good hater*. "Dear Bathurst," said he to Mrs. Piozzi, "was a man to my very heart's content; he hated a fool, and he hated a rogue, and he hated a whig—he was a *very good hater!*"]

Dr. Bathurst, though a physician of no inconsiderable merit, had not the good fortune to get much practice in London². He was, therefore, willing to accept of employment abroad, and, to the regret of all who knew him, fell a sacrifice to the destructive climate, in the expedition against the Havannah. Mr. Langton recollects the following passage in a letter from Dr. Johnson to Mr. Beauclerk: "The Havannah is taken;—a conquest too dearly obtained; for Bathurst died before it.

"*Vix Priamus tanti totaque Troja fuit.*"

[It would seem from the two following letters that Dr. Bathurst left London and returned to the West Indies some years before the expedition against the Havannah; nor is his name to be found in the list of medical officers who accompa-

¹ [Jane Warburton, second wife of John, second Duke of Argyle. His Grace died in 1743. She survived till 1767.—Ed.]

² [Sir John Hawkins is the authority on which these few and meagre particulars, relative to Dr. Bathurst, have been preserved. He adds, however, that Dr. Bathurst, before he went abroad, had been elected physician to an hospital (the Middlesex); but though Sir John tells so little (and that little not, it seems, very correctly) of the immediate subject of his notice, he gives a

nied the army from England; he probably, therefore, joined the expedition in the West Indies.

"DR. BATHURST TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Barbadoes, 13 Jan. 1757

"DEAR SIR,—The many acts of friendship and affection you have conferred upon me, so fully convince me of your being interested in my welfare, that even my present stupidity will not prevent my taking a pen in my hand to acquaint you that I am this instant arrived safe at Barbadoes, and I hope I may add, without having forgot all your lessons; and I am confident not without praying most fervently that the Supreme Being will enable me to deserve the approbation and friendship of so great and so good a man: alas! you little know how undeserving I am of the favours I have received from you. May health and happiness forever attend you. Excuse my dropping my pen, for it is impossible that it should express the gratitude that is due to you, from your most affectionate friend, and most obliged servant,

Harwood's
Hist. Lich.
p. 451, 452.

"RICHARD BATHURST.

"P. S. Let me trouble you with compliments to Miss Williams, to Mrs. Lennox, to Dr. Lawrence, and his family; in short, to all who shall be so obliging as to inquire after me; and if it will put you to no great inconvenience, let me beg that you will send to Mr. Scroold and to Mr. Bathurst an account of my arrival at this place. I know you will call me a lazy dog, and, in truth, I deserve it; but I am afraid I shall never mend. I have indeed long known that I can love my friends without being able to tell them so. I find that I can write a long postscript, though I was not bred in Mr. Richardson's school: how easy is it to copy imperfections.—Is it not better to be blind than to be able to see our faults without being able to correct them? I must entreat you once more, my dear Mr. Johnson, to continue your forgiveness to me. Adieu, my dearest friend."

"DR. BATHURST TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Jamaica, 18 March, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—In compliance with my promise to acquaint you by the first conveyance of my arrival at this place, I have now taken a pen into my hand, but with what fear and dread it is impossible for me to express; the danger of offending the best of friends, to whom I stand indebted for all the little virtue and knowledge that I have, could scarcely compel me to it; and I now

Harwood's
Hist. Lich.
p. 452.

very amusing account of the various characters and fortunes of several of the medical profession in London about the middle of the last century. See his *Life of Johnson*, pp. 234, &c.—Ed.]

tremble to think that I shall not long be able to avoid the horrid imputation of ingratitude. I esteem, I honour, and I love you, and though I cannot write, I shall for ever be proud to acknowledge myself, your most obliged and most affectionate

“RICHARD BATHURST.

“P. S. The inhabitants of this execrable region are much addicted to the making of promises which they never intend to perform, or I might flatter myself from the assurances of Mr. Joyce, the heir of Mr. Lamb, deceased, with a speedy return to England. Nothing, I think, but absolute want can force me to continue where I am. Let me request the continuance of your friendship, and kind wishes for a quick deliverance. Adieu.”]

His acquaintance with Bennet Langton¹, esq., of Langton, in Lincolnshire, another much-valued friend, commenced soon after the conclusion of his Rambler, which that gentleman, then a youth², had read with so much admiration, that he came to London chiefly with a view of endeavouring to be introduced to its authour. By a fortunate chance, he happened to take lodgings in a house where Mr. Levet frequently visited; and having mentioned his wish to his landlady, she introduced him to Mr. Levet, who readily obtained Johnson's permission to bring Mr. Langton to him; as, indeed, Johnson, during the whole course of his life, had no shyness, real or affected, but

¹ [Mr. Langton was born about 1737, and entered, as Dr. Hall informs me, of Trinity College, Oxford, 7th July, 1757. So much of his history is told with that of Dr. Johnson's, that it is unnecessary to say more in this place, except that he was remarkable for his knowledge of Greek, and that he seems, at one time of his life, to have practised engineering as a profession. On Dr. Johnson's death, he succeeded him as professor of ancient literature in the Royal Academy. He died on the 10th December, 1801, and was buried at Southampton. The following description of his person and appearance later in life may be amusing. “O! that we could sketch him with his mild countenance, his elegant features, and his sweet smile, sitting with one leg twisted round the other, as if fearing to occupy more space than was equitable; his person inclining forward, as if wanting strength to support his height, and his arms crossed over his bosom, or his hands locked together on his knee; his oblong gold-mounted snuff-box, taken from the waistcoat pocket opposite his hand, and either remaining between his fingers or set by him on the table, but which was never used but when his mind was occupied on conversation; so soon as conversation began, the box was produced.” *Miss Hawkins's Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 282.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Langton was only fifteen when the Rambler was terminated.—Ed.]

was easy of access to all who were properly recommended, and even wished to see numbers at his levee, as his morning circle of company might, with strict propriety, be called. Mr. Langton was exceedingly surprised when the sage first appeared. He had not received the smallest intimation of his figure, dress, or manner. From perusing his writings, he fancied he should see a decent, well-dressed, in short, a remarkably decorous philosopher. Instead of which, down from his bedchamber, about noon, came, as newly risen, a huge uncouth figure, with a little dark wig, which scarcely covered his head, and his clothes hanging loose about him. But his conversation was so rich, so animated, and so forcible, and his religious and political notions so congenial with those in which Langton had been educated, that he conceived for him that veneration and attachment which he ever preserved. Johnson was not the less ready to love Mr. Langton for his being of a very ancient family; for I have heard him say, with pleasure, “Langton, sir, has a grant of free-warren from Henry the Second; and Cardinal Stephen Langton, in King John's reign, was of this family.”]

Mr. Langton afterwards went to pursue his studies at Trinity College, Oxford, where he formed an acquaintance with his fellow-student, Mr. Topham Beauclerk⁴; who, though their opinions and modes of life were so different, that it seemed utterly improbable that they should at all agree, had so ardent a love of literature, so acute an understanding, such elegance of manners, and so well discerned the excellent qualities of Mr. Langton, a gentleman eminent not only for worth and learning, but for an inexhaustible fund of entertaining conversation, that they became intimate friends.

Johnson, soon after this acquaintance began, passed a considerable time at Oxford. He at first thought it strange that Langton should associate so much with one who had the character of being loose, both in his

³ [It is to be wondered that he did not also mention Bishop Langton, a distinguished benefactor to the cathedral of *Lichfield*, and who also had a grant of free-warren over his patrimonial inheritance, from Edward I.; the relationship might probably be as clearly traced in the one case as in the other. *Harwood's History of Lichfield*, p. 139.—Ed.]

⁴ [Only son of Lord Sidney, third son of the first Duke of St. Albans. He was entered (as Dr. Hall informs me), of Trinity College, Oxford, 11th Nov. 1757, as “Topham, the son of Sidney of Windsor, Esq. aged seventeen;” and I find in the *Genl. Mag.* that the lady of Lord Sidney Beauclerk was on the “21st Dec. 1739, delivered of a son and heir,”—no doubt the person in question.—Ed.]

principles and practice; but by degrees, he himself was fascinated. Mr. Beauclerk's being of the St. Albans family, and having, in some particulars, a resemblance to Charles the Second, contributed, in Johnson's imagination, to throw a lustre upon his other qualities; and, in a short time, the moral, pious Johnson, and the gay, dissipated Beauclerk, were companions. "What a coalition! (said Garrick, when he heard of this:) I shall have my old friend to bail out of the round-house." But I can bear testimony that it was a very agreeable association. Beauclerk was too polite, and valued learning and wit too much, to offend Johnson by sallies of infidelity or licentiousness; and Johnson delighted in the good qualities of Beauclerk, and hoped to correct the evil. Innumerable were the scenes in which Johnson was amused by these young men. Beauclerk could take more liberty with him, than any body with whom I ever saw him; but, on the other hand, Beauclerk was not spared by his respectable companion, when reproof was proper. Beauclerk had such a propensity to satire, that at one time Johnson said to him, "You never open your mouth but with intention to give pain; and you have often given me pain, not from the power of what you said, but from seeing your intention." At another time applying to him, with a slight alteration, a line of Pope, he said,

"Thy love of folly, and thy scorn of fools—

Every thing thou dost shows the one, and everything thou sayest the other." At another time he said to him, "Thy body is all vice, and thy mind all virtue." Beauclerk not seeming to relish the compliment, Johnson said, "Nay, sir, Alexander the Great, marching in triumph into Babylon, could not have desired to have had more said to him."

Johnson was some time with Beauclerk at his house at Windsor, where he was entertained with experiments in natural philosophy¹. One Sunday, when the weather was very fine, Beauclerk enticed him, insensibly, to saunter about all the morning. They went into a church-yard, in the time of divine service, and Johnson laid himself down at his ease upon one of the tombstones. "Now, sir, (said Beauclerk) you are like Hogarth's Idle Apprentice." When Johnson got his pension, Beauclerk said to him, in the humorous phrase of Falstaff, "I hope you'll now purge, and live cleanly, like a gentleman."

One night, when Beauclerk and Langton

¹ [Probably some experiments in electricity, which was at one time a fashionable curiosity: it cannot be supposed that the natural philosophy of Mr. Beauclerk's country-house went very deep.—Ed.]

had supped at a tavern in London, and sat till about three in the morning, it came into their heads to go and knock up Johnson, and see if they could prevail on him to join them in a ramble. They rapped violently at the door of his chambers in the Temple, till at last he appeared in his shirt, with his little black wig on the top of his head, instead of a nightcap, and a poker in his hand, imagining, probably, that some ruffians were coming to attack him. When he discovered who they were, and was told their errand, he smiled, and with great good-humour agreed to their proposal: "What, is it you, you dogs! I'll have a frisk with you!" He was soon dressed, and they sallied forth together into Covent-garden, where the green-grocers and fruiterers were beginning to arrange their hampers, just come in from the country. Johnson made some attempts to help them; but the honest gardeners stared so at his figure and manner, and odd interference, that he soon saw his services were not relished. They then repaired to one of the neighbouring taverns, and made a bowl of that liquor called *bishop*, which Johnson had always liked: while, in joyous contempt of sleep, from which he had been roused, he repeated the festive lines,

"Short, O short, then, be thy reign,
And give us to the world again!"

They did not stay long, but walked down to the Thames, took a boat and rowed to Billingsgate. Beauclerk and Johnson were so well pleased with their amusement, that they resolved to persevere in dissipation⁴ for the rest of the day: but Langton deserted them, being engaged to breakfast with some young ladies. Johnson scolded him for "leaving his social friends, to go and sit with a set of wretched *un-idea'd* girls." Garrick being told of this ramble, said to him smartly, "I heard of your frolick² other night. You'll be in the Chronicle." Upon which Johnson afterwards ob-

² Johnson, as Mr. Kenble observes to me, might here have had in his thoughts the words of Sir John Brute (a character which, doubtless, he had seen represented by Garrick), who uses nearly the same expression in "the Provoked Wife," act iii. sc. 1.—MALONE.

³ Mr. Langton recollected, or Dr. Johnson repeated, the passage wrong. The lines are from Lord Lansdowne's Drinking Song to Sleep, and run thus:

"Short, very short, be then thy reign,
For I'm in haste to laugh and drink again."—BOSWELL.

⁴ [As Johnson's companions in this frolic were both thirty years younger than he, it is no wonder that Garrick should be a little alarmed at such extravagances. Nor can we help smiling at the philosopher of fifty scolding a young man of twenty, for having the *bad taste* to prefer the company of a set of wretched *un-idea'd* girls.—Ed.]

served, "He durst not do such a thing. His wife¹ would not let him!"

[His acquaintance was now sought by persons of the first eminence in literature, and his house, in respect of the conversations there, became an academy. Many persons were desirous of adding him to the number of their friends. Invitations to dine with such of those as he liked, he so seldom declined, that, to a friend of his, he said, "I never but once, upon a resolution to employ myself in study, balked an invitation out to dinner, and then I stayed at home and did nothing." Little, however, did that laxity of temper, which this confession seems to imply, retard the progress of the great work in which he was employed: the conclusion, and also the perfection of his dictionary, were objects from which his attention was not to be diverted. The avocations he gave way to were such only as, when complied with, served to invigorate his mind to the performance of his engagements to his employers and the publick, and hasten the approach of the day that was to reward his labour with applause.]

He entered upon this year, 1753, with his usual piety, as appears from the following prayer, which I transcribed from that part of his diary which he burnt a few days before his death:

"Jan. 1, 1753, N. S. which I shall use for the future.

"Almighty God, who hast continued my life to this day, grant that, by the assistance of thy Holy Spirit, I may improve the time which thou shalt grant me, to my eternal salvation. Make me to remember, to thy glory, thy judgments, and thy mercies. Make me so to consider the loss of my wife, whom thou hast taken from me, that it may dispose me, by thy grace, to lead the residue of my life in thy fear. Grant this, O LORD, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake. Amen."

He now relieved the drudgery of his Dictionary, and the melancholy of his grief, by taking an active part in the composition of "The Adventurer," in which he began to write, April 10, marking his essays with the signature T, by which most of his papers in that collection are distinguished: those, however, which have that signature, and also that of *Mysargyrus*, were not written by him, but, as I suppose, by Dr. Bathurst. Indeed Johnson's energy of thought and richness of language are still more decisive marks than any signature.

¹ [This sarcastic allusion to Garrick's domestic habits seems a little inconsistent with that almost morbid regret which Johnson felt so long for the loss of his own wife.—ED.]

As a proof of this, my readers, I imagine, will not doubt that number 39, on Sleep, is his; for it not only has the general texture and colour of his style, but the authours with whom he was peculiarly conversant are readily introduced in it in cursory allusion. The translation of a passage in Statius², quoted in that paper, and marked C. B., has been erroneously ascribed to Dr. Bathurst, whose christian name was Richard. How much this amiable man actually contributed to "The Adventurer," cannot be known. Let me add, that Hawkesworth's imitations of Johnson are sometimes so happy, that it is extremely difficult to distinguish them, with certainty, from the composition of his great archetype. Hawkesworth was his closest imitator, a circumstance of which that writer would once have been proud to be told; though, when he had become elated by having arisen into some degree of consequence, he, in a conversation with me, had the provoking effrontery³ to say he was not sensible of it.

Johnson was truly zealous for the success of "The Adventurer;" and very soon after his engaging in it, he wrote the following letter:

"TO THE REV. DR. JOSEPH WARTON.

"8 March, 1753.

DEAR SIR,—I ought to have written to you before now, but I ought to do many things which I do not; nor can I, indeed, claim any merit from this letter; for being desired by the authors and proprietor of the Adventurer to look out for another hand, my thoughts necessarily fixed upon you, whose fund of literature will enable you to assist them, with very little interruption of your studies.

"They desire you to engage to furnish one paper a month, at two guineas a paper, which you may very readily perform. We have considered that a paper should consist of pieces of imagination, pictures of life, and disquisitions of literature. The

² This is a slight inaccuracy. The Latin Sapphicks translated by C. B. in that paper were written by Cowley, and are in his fourth book on Plants.—MALONE.

³ [This is not a tone in which Mr. Boswell should have allowed himself to speak of Doctor Hawkesworth on such an occasion; the improved style of Dr. Johnson in the Idler might as well be said to be borrowed from the Adventurer, as that of the Adventurer from the Rambler. Johnson and Hawkesworth may have influenced each other, and yet either might say, without *effrontery*, that he was not conscious of it. Boswell had the mania of imagining, that every eminent writer of the day owed his fame to being an imitator of Johnson; we shall see several instances of it in the course of the work.—ED.]

part which depends on the imagination is very well supplied, as you will find when you read the paper; for descriptions of life, there is now a treaty almost made with an authour and an authouress; and the province of criticism and literature they are very desirous to assign to the commentator on Virgil.

“I hope this proposal will not be rejected, and that the next post will bring us your compliance. I speak as one of the fraternity, though I have no part in the paper, beyond now and then a motto; but two of the writers are my particular friends, and I hope the pleasure of seeing a third united to them will not be denied to, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“SAM JOHNSON.”]

The consequence of this letter was, Dr. Warton’s enriching the collection with several admirable essays.

[And here, though a little out of the order of date, may be introduced Doctor Johnson’s letter to Dr. Warton on the conclusion of the *Adventurer*.

“8 March, 1754.

Life of Dr. War-
ton,
p. 219. “DEAR SIR,—I cannot but congratulate you upon the conclusion of a work, in which you have borne so great a part with so much reputation. I immediately determined that your name should be mentioned, but the paper having been some time written, Mr. Hawkesworth, I suppose, did not care to disorder its text, and therefore put your eulogy in a note. He and every other man mentions your papers of Criticism with great commendation, though not with greater than they deserve.

“But how little can we venture to exult in any intellectual powers or literary attainments, when we consider the condition of poor Collins. I knew him a few years ago full of hopes and full of projects, versed in many languages, high in fancy, and strong in retention. This busy and forcible mind is now under the government of those who lately would not have been able to comprehend the least and most narrow of its designs. What do you hear of him? are there hopes of his recovery? or is he to pass the remainder of his life in misery and degradation? perhaps with complete consciousness of his calamity.

“You have flattered us, dear sir, for some time with hopes of seeing you; when you come you will find your reputation increased, and with it the kindness of those

¹ [Mr. Malone here added a long note, surmising that this author and authouress were Henry Fielding and his sister; but he produces no proof, and seems to admit, that even if they were the persons meant, they never contributed.—Ed.]

friends who do not envy you; for success always produces either love or hatred. I enter my name among those that love, and love you more and more in proportion, as by writing more you are more known; and believe, that as you continue to diffuse among us your integrity and learning, I shall be still with greater esteem and affection, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

Johnson’s saying “I have no part in the paper, beyond now and then a motto,” may seem inconsistent with his being the authour of the papers marked T. But he had, at this time, written only one number²;

² The authour, I conceive, is here in an error. He had before stated, that Johnson began to write in “*The Adventurer*” on April 10th (when No. 45 was published), above a month after the date of his letter to Dr. Warton. The two papers published previously with the signature T, and subscribed MYSARGYRUS (No. 34 and 41), were written, I believe, by Eonnel Thornton, who contributed also the papers signed A. This information I received several years ago; but do not precisely remember from whom I derived it. I believe, however, my informer was Dr. Warton.

With respect to No. 39, on Sleep, which our authour has ascribed to Johnson (see p. 107), even if it were written by him, it would not be inconsistent with his statement to Dr. Warton; for it appeared on March 20th, near a fortnight after the date of Johnson’s letter to that gentleman.—But on considering it attentively, though the style bears a strong resemblance to that of Johnson, I believe it was written by his friend, Dr. Bathurst, and perhaps touched in a few places by Johnson. Mr. Boswell has observed, that “this paper not only has the general texture and colour of his style, but the authours with whom he was peculiarly conversant are readily introduced in it, in cursory allusion.” Now the authours mentioned in that paper are Fontenelle, Milton, Ramazzini, Madlle. Scuderi, Swift, Homer, Barretier, Statius, Cowley, and Sir Thomas Browne. With many of these, doubtless, Johnson was particularly conversant; but I doubt whether he would have characterised the expression quoted from Swift as *elegant*; and with the works of Ramazzini it is very improbable that he should have been acquainted. Ramazzini was a celebrated physician, who died at Padua, in 1714, at the age of 81; with whose writings Dr. Bathurst may be supposed to have been conversant. So also with respect to Cowley: Johnson, without doubt, had read his Latin poem on plants; but Bathurst’s profession probably led him to read it with more attention than his friend had given to it; and Cowley’s eulogy on the *ROPPY* would more readily occur to the naturalist and the physician, than to a more general reader. I believe, however, that the last paragraph of the paper on Sleep, in which Sir Thomas Browne is quoted, to show the propriety of prayer, before we lie down to rest, was added by Johnson.—MALONE.

[There is a great confusion and, as it seems,

and besides, even at any after period, he might have used the same expression, considering it as a point of honour not to own them; for Mrs. Williams told me that, "as he had given those Essays to Dr. Bathurst, who sold them at two guineas each, he never would own them; nay, he used to say he did not *write* them: but the fact was, that he *dictated* them while Bathurst wrote." I read to him Mrs. Williams's account; he smiled and said nothing.

I am not quite satisfied with the casuistry¹ by which the productions of one person are thus passed upon the world for the productions of another. I allow that not only knowledge, but powers and qualities of mind may be communicated; but the actual effect of individual exertion never can be transferred, with truth, to any other than its own original cause. One person's

several errors in Mr. Boswell's and Mr. Malone's account of Johnson's share in the *Adventurer*, but it may be confidently asserted, on the evidence of Dr. Warton, and on Johnson's own confession to Miss Boothby (*Letters*, p. 48), that he wrote all those marked with the signature *T.* of which No. 39 on *Sleep* is one. The only difficulty is, that on the *8th March* he tells Dr. Warton that he had "no *part* in the paper," and that one of the letters of *Mysargyrus*, marked *T.*, was published on the *3d*: but Johnson, whether he gave some of these essays to Dr. Bathurst or not, probably did not consider himself as having, by the writing *one* letter, a *part*,—that is, a *proprietary* or *responsible part*,—in the paper; and even if the letters principally in question had not had the mark *T.*, the pedantic signature *Mysargyrus* would have been enough to lead us to suspect that they were Johnson's. Almost all the names, whether of men or women, affixed to the letters in the *Rambler* and *Idler* are of the same class.—ED.]

¹ [Mr. Boswell's reprehension of this casuistry seems just and candid. A man may undoubtedly sell the works of his mind as well as of his hands, but in neither case can *falsehood* (which might become *fraud*) be justified. Dollond would have had a perfect right to present a friend with one of his instruments to be sold to that friend's advantage, but he would not have been justifiable in allowing another maker to use his name. If a publisher had, on the strength of these papers in the *Adventurer*, offered Dr. Bathurst a large price for a literary work, could Johnson have possibly acquiesced in such a mistake? But after all, it seems doubtful that Johnson did give up *all* his share of the profits of the *Adventurer* to Dr. Bathurst, who, as Hawkins says, wrote the papers marked *A.* Johnson was at this period in great pecuniary distress—greater, we may suppose, than Bathurst was likely to be in. Mr. Chalmers treats lightly Dr. Johnson's seeming acquiescence in Mrs. Williams's statement: "Dr. Johnson," says he, "probably smiled to see his friend puzzling himself with a difficulty which a plain question could in a moment have removed."—*Brit. Ess.* vol. xxiii. p. 32.—ED.]

child may be made the child of another person by adoption, as among the Romans, or by the ancient Jewish mode of a wife having children borne to her upon her knees, by her handmaid. But these were children in a different sense from that of nature. It was clearly understood that they were not of the blood of their nominal parents. So in literary children, an author may give the profits and fame of his composition to another man, but cannot make that other the real author. A Highland gentleman, a younger branch of a family, once consulted me if he could not validly purchase the chieftainship of his family from the chief, who was willing to sell it. I told him it was impossible for him to acquire, by purchase, a right to be a different person from what he really was; for that the right of chieftainship attached to the blood of primogeniture, and, therefore, was incapable of being transferred. I added, that though Esau sold his birthright, or the advantages belonging to it, he still remained the first-born of his parents; and that whatever agreement a chief might make with any of the clan, the heralds'-office could not admit of the metamorphosis, or with any decency attest that the younger was the elder; but I did not convince the worthy gentleman.

Johnson's papers in the *Adventurer* are very similar to those of the *Rambler*²; but being rather more varied in their subjects, and being mixed with essays by other writers, upon topics more generally attractive than even the most elegant ethical discourses, the sale of the work, at first, was more extensive. Without meaning, however, to depreciate the *Adventurer*, I must observe, that as the value of the *Rambler* came, in the progress of time, to be better known, it grew upon the publick estimation, and that its sale has far exceeded that of any other periodical papers since the reign of Queen Anne.

In one of the books of his diary I find the following entry:

"Apr. 3, 1753. I began the second vol. of my Dictionary, room being left in the first for Preface, Grammar, and History, none of them yet begun.

"O God, who hast hitherto supported me, enable me to proceed in this labour,

² Dr. Johnson lowered and somewhat disguised his style, in writing the *Adventurers*, in order that his papers might pass for those of Dr. Bathurst to whom he consigned the profits. This was Hawkesworth's opinion.—BURNBY.

[This seems very improbable; it is much more likely that, observing and feeling that a lighter style was better suited to such essays, he, with his natural good sense, fell a little into the easier manner of his colleagues. See *ante*, p. 102, n. —ED.]

and in the whole task of my present state; and when I shall render up, at the last day, an account of the talent committed to me, I may receive pardon, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen."

[“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. RICHARDSON.
“26th Sept. 1753.

“DEAR SIR,—I return you my sincerest thanks for the volumes of your new work!; but it is a kind of tyrannical kindness to give only so much at a time, as makes more longed for; but that will probably be thought, even of the whole, when you have given it.

“I have no objection but to the preface, in which you first mention the letters as fallen by some chance into your hands, and afterwards mention your health as such, that you almost despaired of going through your plan. If you were to require my opinion which part should be changed, I should be inclined to the suppression of that part which seems to disclaim the composition. What is modesty, if it deserts from truth? Of what use is the disguise by which nothing is concealed?

“You must forgive this, because it is meant well.

“I thank you once more, dear sir, for your books; but cannot I prevail this time for an index?—such I wished, and shall wish, to *Clarissa*². Suppose that in one volume an accurate index was made to the three works—but while I am writing an objection arises—such an index to the three would look like the preclusion of a fourth, to which I will never contribute; for if I cannot benefit mankind, I hope never to injure them. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

He this year favoured Mrs. Lenox with a Dedication* to the Earl of Orrery, of her “*Shakspeare Illustrated*.”

¹ [Sir Charles Grandison, which was originally published in successive volumes. This relates to the sixth and seventh volumes.—ED.]

² Richardson adopted Johnson's hint; for in 1755 he published in octavo, “*A Collection of the Moral and Instructive Sentiments, Maxims, Cautions, and Reflections, contained in the Histories of Pamela, Clarissa, and Sir Charles Grandison, digested under proper heads.*” It is remarkable, that both to this book, and to the first two volumes of *Clarissa*, is prefixed a Preface by a friend. The “friend,” in this latter instance, was the celebrated Dr. Warburton.—MALONE.

³ [Dr. Warton, in a letter to his brother, 7th June, 1753, says, “I want to see Charlotte Lennox's book,” upon which Mr. Wooll adds the following note: “This eminently learned lady translated the *Enchiridion of Epictetus*, and the *Greek Theatre of Le Père Brumoy.*”—*Life of W.* p. 217. Poor Mrs. Lennox had no claim

In 1754 I can trace nothing published by him, except his numbers of the *Adventurer*, and “*The Life of Edward Cave*,” in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for February. In biography there can be no question that he excelled, beyond all who have attempted that species of composition; upon which, indeed, he set the highest value. To the minute selection⁴ of characteristic circumstances, for which the ancients were remarkable, he added a philosophical research, and the most perspicuous and energetick language. Cave was certainly a man of estimable qualities, and was eminently diligent and successful in his own business, which, doubtless, entitled him to respect. But he was peculiarly fortunate in being recorded by Johnson; who, of the narrow life of a printer and publisher, without any digression or adventitious circumstances, has made an interesting and agreeable narrative.

The Dictionary, we may believe, afforded Johnson full occupation this year. As it approached to its conclusion, he probably worked with redoubled vigour, as seamen increase their exertions and alacrity when they have a near prospect of their haven.

Lord Chesterfield, to whom Johnson had paid the high compliment of addressing to his lordship the Plan of his Dictionary, had behaved to him in such a manner as to excite his contempt and indignation. The world has been for many years amused with a story confidently told, and as confidently repeated with additional circumstances, that a sudden disgust was taken by Johnson upon occasion of his having been one day kept long in waiting in his lordship's antechamber, for which the reason assigned was, that he had company with him; and that at last, when the door opened, out walked Colley Cibber; and that Johnson was so violently provoked when he found for whom he had been so long excluded, that he went away

to the title of “an eminently learned lady.” She did not translate Epictetus; and her translation from the *French* of Brumoy was not published till 1759. It was probably her above-mentioned book on Shakspeare that Dr. Warton was desirous of seeing in 1753.—ED.]

⁴ [This is not Johnson's appropriate praise; and indeed his want of attention to details is his greatest if not his only fault as a biographer. In the whole *Life of Savage* there is not one date: and no one, from his *Life of Cave*, would have imagined that Cave had been invited to meet the Prince and Princess of Wales at a country-house. Several details and corrections of errors, with which he was furnished for his *Lives of the Poets*, were wholly neglected. But in truth Mr. Boswell himself has, more than any other writer, contributed to create the public taste for biographical details; “the minute selection of characteristic circumstances,” was neither the style of Johnson, nor the fashion of his day.—ED.]

in a passion, and never would return. I remember having mentioned this story to George Lord Lyttelton, who told me he was very intimate with Lord Chesterfield; and holding it as a well-known truth, defended Lord Chesterfield by saying, that "Cibber, who had been introduced familiarly by the back-stairs, had probably not been there above ten minutes." It may seem strange even to entertain a doubt concerning a story so long and so widely current, and thus implicitly adopted, if not sanctioned, by the authority which I have mentioned; but Johnson himself assured me, that there was not the least foundation for it¹. He told me, that there never was any particular incident which produced a quarrel between Lord Chesterfield and him; but that his lordship's continued neglect² was

the reason why he resolved to have no connexion with him. When the Dictionary was upon the eve of publication, Lord Chesterfield, who, it is said, had flattered himself with expectations that Johnson would dedicate the work to him, attempted, in a courtly manner, to soothe and insinuate himself with the sage, conscious, as it should seem, of the cold indifference with which he had treated its learned author; and further attempted to conciliate him, by writing two papers in "The World," in recommendation of the work; and it must be confessed, that they contain some studied compliments, so finely turned, that if there had been no previous offence, it is probable that Johnson would have been highly delighted. Praise, in general, was pleasing to him; but

¹ [Hawkins, who lived much with Johnson, about this period, attributes the breach between him and Lord Chesterfield to the offence taken by Johnson at being kept waiting during a visit of Cibber's; and Johnson himself, in his celebrated letter, seems to give colour to this latter opinion. He says: "It is seven years since I waited in your outer rooms, or was repulsed from your door, during which I have pushed my work to the verge of publication without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour; the expressions, "waited in your outer rooms" and repulsed from your door" certainly gave colour to "the long current and implicitly adopted story" as told by Hawkins, and sanctioned by Lord Lyttelton. In all this affair, Johnson's account, as given by Boswell, is involved in inconsistencies, which seem to prove that his pride, or his waywardness, had taken offence at what he afterwards felt, in his own heart, to be no adequate cause of animosity.—Ed.]

² [Why was it to be expected that Lord Chesterfield should cultivate his private acquaintance? that he did not do so, was a loss to his lordship; and the "amour propre" of Johnson might be (as, indeed, it probably was) offended at that neglect, but surely it was no ground for the kind of charge which is made against his lordship.

But even this neglect of Johnson's acquaintance is not without some excuse. Johnson's personal manners and habits, even at a later and more polished period of his life, would probably not have been much to Lord Chesterfield's taste; but it must be remembered, that Johnson's introduction to Lord Chesterfield did not take place till his lordship was past fifty, and he was soon after attacked by a disease which estranged him from society. The neglect lasted, it is charged, from 1748 to 1755: the following extracts of his private letters to his most intimate friends will prove that during that period Lord Chesterfield may be excused for not cultivating Johnson's society:—

20th January, 1749.—"My old disorder in my head hindered me from acknowledging your former letters."

30th June, 1752.—"I am here in my hermitage, very deaf, and consequently alone; but I

am less dejected than most people in my situation would be."

11th Nov. 1752.—"The waters have done my head some good, but not enough to refit me for social life."

16th Feb. 1753.—"I grow deafer, and consequently more 'isolé' from society every day."

10th Oct. 1753.—"I belong no more to social life, which, when I quitted busy publick life, I flattered myself would be the comfort of my declining age."

16th Nov. 1753.—"I give up all hopes of cure. I know my place and form my plan accordingly, for I strike society out of it."

7th Feb. 1754.—"At my age, and with my shattered constitution, freedom from pain is the best I can expect."

1st March, 1754.—"I am too much isolé, too much secluded either from the busy or the beau monde, to give you any account of either."

25th Sept. 1754.—"In truth, all the infirmities of an age still more advanced than mine crowd upon me. In this situation you will easily suppose that I have no pleasant hours."

10th July, 1755.—"My deafness is extremely increased, and daily increasing, and cuts me wholly off from the society of others, and my other complaints deny me the society of myself."

Johnson, perhaps, knew nothing of all this, and imagined that Lord Chesterfield declined his acquaintance on some opinion derogatory to his personal pretensions. Mr. Tyers however, who knew Johnson early and more familiarly than the other biographers, suggests a more precise and probable ground for Johnson's animosity than Boswell gives, by hinting that Johnson expected some pecuniary assistance from Lord Chesterfield. He says, "It does not appear that Lord Chesterfield showed any substantial proofs of approbation to our philologer. A small present Johnson would have disdained, and he was not of a temper to put up with the affront of a disappointment. He revenged himself in a letter to his lordship written with great acrimony. Lord Chesterfield indeed commends and recommends Mr. Johnson's Dictionary in two or three numbers of the World: but 'not words alone please him.'"—*Biog. Sketch*. p. 7.—Ed.]

by praise from a man of rank and elegant accomplishments, he was peculiarly gratified.

His lordship says, "I think the publick in general, and the republick of letters in particular, are greatly obliged to Mr. Johnson, for having undertaken and executed so great and desirable a work. Perfection is not to be expected from man: but if we are to judge by the various works of Johnson already published, we have good reason to believe, that he will bring this as near to perfection as any man could do. The plan of it, which he published some years ago, seems to me to be a proof of it. Nothing can be more rationally imagined, or more accurately and elegantly expressed. I therefore recommend the previous perusal of it to all those who intend to buy the Dictionary, and who, I suppose, are all those who can afford it.

* * * * *

"It must be owned, that our language is, at present, in a state of anarchy, and hitherto, perhaps, it may not have been the worse for it. During our free and open trade, many words and expressions have been imported, adopted, and naturalized from other languages, which have greatly enriched our own. Let it still preserve what real strength and beauty it may have borrowed from others; but let it not, like the Tarpeian maid, be overwhelmed and crushed by unnecessary ornaments. The time for discrimination seems to be now come. Toleration, adoption, and naturalization have run their lengths. Good order and authority are now necessary. But where shall we find them, and at the same time, the obedience due to them? We must have recourse to the old Roman expedient in times of confusion, and choose a dictator. Upon this principle I give my vote for Mr. Johnson, to fill that great and arduous post; and I hereby declare that I make a total surrender of all my rights and privileges in the English language, as a free-born British subject, to the said Mr. Johnson, during the term of his dictatorship. Nay more, I will not only obey him like an old Roman, as my dictator, but, like a modern Roman, I will implicitly believe in him as my pope, and hold him to be infallible while in the chair, but no longer. More than this he cannot well require; for, I presume, that obedience can never be expected, when there is neither terror to enforce, nor interest to invite it.

* * * * *

"But a Grammar, a Dictionary, and a History of our Language, through its several stages, were still wanting at home, and importunately called for from abroad. Mr. Johnson's labours will now, I dare say, very fully supply that want, and greatly contri-

bute to the farther spreading of our language in other countries. Learners were discouraged, by finding no standard to resort to; and, consequently, thought it incapable of any. They will now be undeceived and encouraged."

This courtly device failed of its effect. Johnson, who thought that "all was false and hollow," despised the honeyed words, and was even indignant that Lord Chesterfield should, for a moment, imagine that he could be the dupe of such an artifice¹. His expression to me concerning Lord Chesterfield, upon this occasion, was, "Sir, after making great professions, he had, for many years, taken no notice of me; but when my Dictionary was coming out, he fell a scribbling in 'The World' about it. Upon which, I wrote him a letter expressed in civil terms, but such as might show him that I did not mind what he said or wrote, and that I had done with him."

This is that celebrated letter of which so much has been said, and about which curiosity has been so long excited, without being gratified. I for many years solicited Johnson to favour me with a copy of it, that so excellent a composition might not be lost to posterity. He delayed from time to time to give it to me; till at last, in 1781, when we were on a visit at Mr. Dilly's, at Southill in Bedfordshire, he was pleased to dictate it to me from memory. He afterwards found among his papers a copy of it, which he had dictated to Mr. Baccetti, with its title and corrections, in his own hand-writing. This he gave to Mr. Langton; adding that if it were to come into print, he wished it to be from that copy. By Mr. Langton's kindness, I am enabled to enrich my work with a perfect transcript of what the world has so eagerly desired to see.

"TO THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD.

7th February, 1755.

"MY LORD,—I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of 'The World,' that two

¹ [It does not appear that there was any thing like "device" or "artifice."—ED.]

² Dr. Johnson appeared to have had a remarkable delicacy with respect to the circulation of this letter; for Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury, informs me, that having many years ago pressed him to be allowed to read it to the second Lord Hardwicke, who was very desirous to hear it (promising at the same time, that no copy of it should be taken), Johnson seemed much pleased that it had attracted the attention of a nobleman of such respectable character; but after pausing some time, declined to comply with the request, saying, with a smile, "No Sir; I have hurt the dog too much already;" or words to that purpose.—BOSWELL. [This admission favours the editor's opinion that Johnson, when the first ebullition of temper had subsided, felt that he had been unreasonably violent.—ED.]

papers, in which my Dictionary is recommended to the publick, were written by your lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

“When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*¹;—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your lordship in publick, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

“Seven years, my lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance², one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a patron before.

“The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks³.

¹ [No very moderate expectation for “a retired and uncourtly scholar!”—ED.]

² The following note is subjoined by Mr. Langton: “Dr. Johnson, when he gave me this copy of his letter, desired that I would annex to it his information to me, that whereas it is said in the letter, that ‘no assistance had been received,’ he did once receive from Lord Chesterfield the sum of ten pounds; but as that was so inconsiderable a sum, he thought the mention of it could not properly find a place in a letter of the kind that this was.”—BOSWELL. [This surely is an unsatisfactory excuse; for the sum, though now so inconsiderable, was one which many years before, Johnson tells us, that Paul Whitehead, then a fashionable poet, received for a new work; it was as much as Johnson himself had received for the copyright of his best poetical production: and when Dr. Madden, some years after, gave him the same sum for revising a work of his, Johnson said that the Doctor “was very generous, for ten guineas was to me, at that time, a great sum” (see *post*, 1756). When Johnson alleged against Lord Chesterfield such a trifle as the *waiting in his anteroom*, he ought not to have omitted a pecuniary obligation, however inconsiderable.—ED.]

³ [The editor confesses that he does not see the object of this allusion; if some more ingenious

“Is not a patron, my lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it⁵; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the publick should consider me as owing that to a patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

“Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long wakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation. My lord, your lordship’s most humble, most obedient servant, “SAM. JOHNSON⁶.”

“While this was the talk of the town⁷, (says Dr. Adams, in a letter to me) I happened to visit Dr. Warburton, who, finding that I was acquainted with Johnson, desired me earnestly to carry his compliments to him, and to tell him, that he honoured him for his manly behaviour in rejecting

eye should discover a meaning, it must still be admitted to be pedantic.—ED.]

⁴ [The notice could not have been, for any useful purpose, taken earlier. Johnson might have complained that notice of *some other kind* had not been taken, but “the notice which his lordship was pleased to take” was peculiarly well timed, and could not properly have come sooner.—ED.]

⁵ In this passage Dr. Johnson evidently alludes to the loss of his wife. We find the same tender recollection recurring to his mind upon innumerable occasions: and perhaps no man ever more forcibly felt the truth of the sentiment so elegantly expressed by my friend Mr. Malone, in his prologue to Mr. Jephson’s tragedy of Julia:

“Vain—wealth, and fame, and fortune’s fostering care,
If no fond breast the splendid blessings share;
And, each day’s bustling pageantry once past,
There, only there, our bliss is found at last.”—BOSWELL.

⁶ Upon comparing this copy with that which Dr. Johnson dictated to me from recollection, the variations are found to be so slight, that this must be added to the many other proofs which he gave of the wonderful extent and accuracy of his memory. To gratify the curious in composition, I have deposited both the copies in the British Museum.—BOSWELL.

⁷ If this letter was the talk of the town, it appears, from all the evidence, that it must have become known through Lord Chesterfield, as Johnson always refused to let it be seen.—ED.]

these condescensions of Lord Chesterfield, and for resenting the treatment he had received from him with a proper spirit. Johnson was visibly pleased with this compliment, for he had always a high opinion of Warburton¹. Indeed, the force of mind which appeared in this letter was congenial with that which Warburton himself amply possessed.

There is a curious minute circumstance which struck me, in comparing the various editions of Johnson's *Imitations of Juvenal*. In the tenth Satire one of the couplets upon the vanity of wishes even for literary distinction stood thus:

"Toil, envy, want, the scholar's life assail,
Toil, envy, want, the *garret*, and the jail."

But after experiencing the uneasiness which Lord Chesterfield's fallacious patronage made him feel, he dismissed the word *garret* from the sad group, and in all the subsequent editions the line stands,

"Toil, envy, want, the *Patron*, and the jail."

That Lord Chesterfield must have been mortified by the lofty contempt, and polite, yet keen, satire with which Johnson exhibited him to himself in this letter, it is impossible to doubt. He, however, with that glossy duplicity which was his constant study, affected to be quite unconcerned. Dr. Adams mentioned to Mr. Robert Dodsley that he was sorry Johnson had written his letter to Lord Chesterfield. Dodsley, with the true feelings of trade, said, "he was very sorry too; for that he had a property in the Dictionary, to which his lordship's patronage might have been of consequence." He then told Dr. Adams, that Lord Chesterfield had shown him the letter. "I should have imagined (replied Dr. Adams) that Lord Chesterfield would have concealed it." "Poh! (said Dodsley) do you think a letter from Johnson could hurt Lord Chesterfield? Not at all, sir. It lay upon his table, where any body might see it. He read it to me; said, 'this man has great powers,' pointed out the severest passages, and observed how well they were

¹ Soon after Edwards's "Canons of Criticism" came out, Johnson was dining at Tonson the bookseller's with Hayman the painter and some more company. Hayman related to Sir Joshua Reynolds, that the conversation having turned upon Edwards's book, the gentlemen praised it much, and Johnson allowed its merit. But when they went farther, and appeared to put that author upon a level with Warburton, "Nay (said Johnson), he has given him some smart hits, to be sure; but there is no proportion between the two men; they must not be named together. A fly, sir, may sting a stately horse, and make him wince; but one is but an insect, and the other is a horse still."—BOSWELL.

expressed." The air of indifference, which imposed upon the worthy Dodsley, was certainly nothing but a specimen of that dissimulation² which Lord Chesterfield inculcated as one of the most essential lessons for the conduct of life. His lordship endeavoured to justify himself to Dodsley from the charges brought against him by Johnson; but we may judge of the flimsiness of his defence, from his having excused his neglect of Johnson, by saying, that "he had heard he had changed his lodgings, and did not know where he lived;" as if there could have been the smallest difficulty to inform himself of that circumstance, by inquiring in the literary circle with which his lordship was well acquainted, and was, indeed, himself, one of its ornaments.

Dr. Adams expostulated with Johnson, and suggested, that his not being admitted when he called on him, was probably not to be imputed to Lord Chesterfield; for his lordship had declared to Dodsley, that "he would have turned off the best servant he ever had, if he had known that he denied him to a man who would have been always more than welcome;" and in confirmation of this, he insisted on Lord Chesterfield's general affability and easiness of access, especially to literary men. "Sir (said Johnson), that is not Lord Chesterfield; he is the proudest man this day existing." "No (said Dr. Adams), there is one person, at least, as proud; I think, by your own account, you are the prouder man of the two." "But mine (replied Johnson instantly) was *defensive* pride." This, as Dr. Adams well observed, was one of those happy turns³ for which he was so remarkably ready.

Johnson having now explicitly avowed his opinion of Lord Chesterfield, did not refrain from expressing himself concerning that nobleman with pointed freedom: "This man (said he) I thought had been a lord among wits; but, I find, he is only a wit among lords!" And when his Letters to his natural son were published, he observ-

² [Why? If, as may have been the case, Lord Chesterfield felt that Johnson was unjust towards him, he would not have been mortified—*Il n'y a que la vérité qui blesse*. By Mr. Boswell's own confession it appears that Johnson did not give copies of this letter; that for many years Boswell had in vain solicited him to do so, and that he, after the lapse of twenty years, did so reluctantly. With all these admissions, how can Mr. Boswell attribute to any thing but conscious rectitude Lord Chesterfield's exposure of a letter which the author was so willing to bury in oblivion?—E.D.]

³ [This, like all the rest of the affair, seems discoloured by prejudice. Lord Chesterfield made no *attack* on Johnson, who certainly acted on the *offensive*, and not the *defensive*.—E.D.]

ed, that "they teach the morals of a prostitute, and the manners of a dancing-master¹."

The character of a "respectable Hottentot," in Lord Chesterfield's Letters, has been generally understood to be meant for Johnson, and I have no doubt that it was. But I remember when the *literary propriety* of those letters was contested in the court of session in Scotland, and Mr. Henry Dundas², one of the counsel for the proprietors, read this character as an exhibition of Johnson, Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, one of the judges, maintained, with some warmth, that it was not intended as a portrait of Johnson, but of a late noble lord³, distinguished for abstruse science.

¹ That collection of letters cannot be vindicated from the serious charge of encouraging, in some passages, one of the vices most destructive to the good order and comfort of society, which his lordship represents a mere fashionable gallantry; and, in others, of inculcating the base practice of dissimulation, and recommending, with disproportionate anxiety, a perpetual attention to external elegance of manners. But it must, at the same time, be allowed, that they contain many good precepts of conduct, and much genuine information upon life and manners, very happily expressed; and that there was considerable merit in paying so much attention to the improvement of one who was dependent upon his lordship's protection; it has, probably, been exceeded in no instance by the most exemplary parent; and though I can by no means approve of confounding the distinction between lawful and illicit offspring, which is, in effect, insulting the civil establishment of our country, to look no higher; I cannot help thinking it laudable to be kindly attentive to those, of whose existence we have, in any way, been the cause. Mr. Stanhope's character has been unjustly represented as diametrically opposite to what Lord Chesterfield wished him to be. He has been called dull, gross, and awkward: but I knew him at Dresden, when he was envoy to that court; and though he could not boast of the *graces*, he was, in truth, a sensible, civil, well-behaved man.

—BOSWELL.

² Now (1792) one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state.—BOSWELL. [And afterwards Vincent Melville.—ED.]

³ [Probably George, second Earl of Macclesfield, who published, in 1751, a learned pamphlet on the alteration of the style, and was, in 1752, elected president of the Royal Society. Lord Macclesfield's manner was, no doubt, awkward and embarrassed, but little else in his character resembles that of the "respectable Hottentot," which more probably was, as the world has supposed, intended for Johnson.

Lord Macclesfield assisted Lord Chesterfield in the bill for changing the style; and Lord Chesterfield very candidly confessed that his own lighter and more graceful way of treating a subject which he understood but superficially ran away with the applause which was more justly due to the superior information and science of Lord Mac-

I have heard Johnson himself talk of the character, and say that it was meant for George Lord Littleton, in which I could by no means agree; for his lordship had nothing of that violence which is a conspicuous feature in the composition. Finding that my illustrious friend could bear to have it supposed that it might be meant for him, I said, laughingly, that there was one trait which unquestionably did not belong to him; "he throws his meat any where but down his throat." "Sir (said he), Lord Chesterfield never saw me eat in his life⁴."

On the 6th of March came out Lord Bolingbroke's works, published by Mr. David Mallet. The wild and pernicious ravings, under the name of "Philosophy," which were thus ushered into the world, gave great offence to all well-principled men. Johnson, hearing of their tendency, which nobody disputed, was roused with a just indignation, and pronounced this memorable sentence⁵ upon the noble authour⁶ and his editor. "Sir, he was a scoundrel, and a coward: a scoundrel for charging a blunderbuss against religion and morality; a coward, because he had not resolution to fire it off himself, but left half a crown to a beggarly Scotchman⁷ to draw the trigger after his death!" Garrick, who I can attest from my own knowledge had his mind seasoned

clesfield. See *Lord Chesterfield's Life by Mallet*, p. 199.—ED.]

⁴ [Lord Chesterfield's picture, if meant for Johnson, was not overcharged; for what between his blindness, his nervousness, and his eagerness, all his friends describe his mode of eating to have been something worse than awkward. See *post*, 5th Aug. 1763.—ED.]

⁵ [It was the first remarkable phrase which Mr. Murphy ever heard him utter.—ED.]

⁶ [It is, however, remarkable that Johnson had not read what he thus indignantly censured. See *post*, March, 1658, where, in conversation with Dr. Burney, he confessed that he had not read Bolingbroke's works; and was, therefore, not anxious about their refutation.—ED.]

⁷ [Mallet's wife, a foolish and conceited woman, one evening introduced herself to David Hume, at an assembly, saying, "We deists, Mr. Hume, should know one another." Hume was exceedingly displeased and disconcerted, and replied, "Madam, I am no deist; I do not so style myself, neither do I desire to be known by that appellation."—*Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont*, vol. i. p. 235. The imputation might, even on mere worldly grounds, be very disagreeable to Hume; for the editor has in his possession proof that when Lord Hertford (whose private secretary, in his embassy to Paris, Hume had been) was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, his lordship declined continuing him in the same character, alleging as a reason the dissatisfaction that it would excite on account of Hume's anti-religious principles.—ED.]

with pious reverence, and sincerely disapproved of the infidel writings of several, whom in the course of his almost universal gay intercourse with men of eminence, he treated with external civility, distinguished himself upon this occasion. Mr. Pelham having died on the very day on which Lord Bolingbroke's works came out, he wrote an elegant Ode on his death, beginning

“Let others hail the rising sun,
I bow to that whose course is run.”

In which is the following stanza:

“The same sad morn, to church and state
(So for our sins 't was fixed by fate),
A double stroke was given;
Black as the whirlwinds of the north,
St. John's fell genius issued forth,
And Pelham fled to heaven.”

Johnson this year found an interval of leisure to make an excursion to Oxford, for the purpose of consulting the libraries there. Of this, and of many interesting circumstances concerning him, during a part of his life when he conversed but little with the world¹, I am enabled to give a particular account, by the liberal communications of the Rev. Mr. Thomas Warton, who obligingly furnished me with several of our common friend's letters, which he illustrated with notes. These I shall insert in their proper places.

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London), 16 July, 1754.

“SIR,—It is but an ill return for the book with which you were pleased to favour me², to have delayed my thanks for it till now. I am too apt to be negligent; but I can never deliberately show my disrespect to a man of your character; and I now pay you a very honest acknowledgement, for the advancement of the literature of our native country. You have shown to all, who shall hereafter attempt the study of our ancient authours, the way to success; by directing them to the perusal of the books which those authours had read. Of this method, Hughes³, and men much greater than Hughes, seem never to have thought. The reason why the authours, which are yet read, of the sixteenth century, are so little understood, is, that they are read alone; and no help is borrowed from those who lived with them, or before them. Some part of this ignorance I hope

¹ [This seems to invalidate Mr. Boswell's former statement, p. 102, and to support that of Mr. Murphy.—ED.]

² Observations on Spenser's Fairy Queen, the first edition of which was now published.—WARTON.

³ Hughes published an edition of Spenser.—WARTON.

to remove by my book⁴, which now draws towards its end; but which I cannot finish to my mind, without visiting the libraries of Oxford, which I therefore hope to see in a fortnight⁵. I know not how long I shall stay, or where I shall lodge; but shall be sure to look for you at my arrival, and we shall easily settle the rest. I am, dear sir, your most obedient, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

Of his conversation while at Oxford at this time, Mr. Warton preserved and communicated to me the following memorial, which, though not written with all the care and attention which that learned and elegant writer bestowed on those compositions which he intended for the publick eye, is so happily expressed in an easy style, that I should injure it by any alteration:

“When Johnson came to Oxford in 1754, the long vacation ^{Thomas Warton.} was beginning, and most people were leaving the place. This was the first time of his being there, after quitting the University. The next morning after his arrival, he wished to see his old college, *Pembroke*. I went with him. He was highly pleased to find all the college servants which he had left there still remaining, particularly a very old butler, and expressed great satisfaction at being recognised by them, and conversed with them familiarly. He waited on the master, Dr. Radcliffe, who received him very coldly. Johnson at least expected, that the master would order a copy of his Dictionary, now near publication; but the master did not choose to talk on the subject, never asked Johnson to dine, nor even to visit him while he stayed at Oxford. After we had left the lodgings, Johnson said to me, ‘*There* lives a man, who lives by the revenues of literature, and will not move a finger to support it⁶. If I

⁴ His Dictionary.—WARTON.

⁵ He came to Oxford within a fortnight, and stayed about five weeks. He lodged at a house called Kettel-hall, near Trinity College. But during his visit at Oxford, he collected nothing in the libraries for his Dictionary.—WARTON. [Probably because, as we shall see presently, he found sufficient employment in the private library of Mr. Wise.—ED]. Kettel-Hall is an ancient tenement, adjoining to Trinity College, built about the year 1615, by Dr. Ralph Kettel, then president, for the accommodation of commoners of that society. In this ancient *hostel*, then in a very ruinous state, about forty years after Johnson had lodged there, Mr. Windham and the present writer were accommodated with two chambers, of primitive simplicity, during the installation of the Duke of Portland as chancellor of the University of Oxford, in 1793. It has since been converted into a commodious private house.—MALONE.

⁶ [There is some excuse for Doctor Radcliffe

come to live at Oxford, I shall take up my abode at Trinity¹.' We then called on the Reverend Mr. Meeke, one of the fellows, and of Johnson's standing. Here was a most cordial greeting on both sides. On leaving him, Johnson said, 'I used to think Meeke had excellent parts, when we were boys together at the college: but, alas!

'Lost in a convent's solitary gloom!—'

I remember, at the classical lecture in the hall, I could not bear Meeke's superiority, and I tried to sit as far from him as I could, that I might not hear him construe.'

'As we were leaving the college, he said, 'Here I translated Pope's Messiah. Which do you think is the best line in it? My own favourite is,

'Vallis aromáticas fundit Saronica nubes.'

I told him, I thought it a very sonorous hexameter. I did not tell him, it was not in the Virgilian style. He much regretted that his *first* tutor was dead; for whom he seemed to retain the greatest regard. He said, 'I once had been a whole morning sliding in Christ-Church meadows, and missed his lecture in logick. After dinner he sent for me to his room. I expected a sharp rebuke for my idleness, and went with a beating heart². When we were seated, he told me he had sent for me to drink a

(so he spelt his name) not ordering a copy of the book, for this visit occurred seven or eight months before the Dictionary was published. His *personal* neglect of Johnson is less easily to be accounted for, unless it be by the fact that he was a great invalid; but the imputation of his living by the revenues of literature, and doing nothing for it, cannot, as Dr. Hall informs me, be justly made against Dr. Ratcliff; for he bequeathed to his college 1000*l.* 4 per-cents. for the establishment of an exhibition for the son of a Gloucestershire clergyman—1000*l.* for the improvement of the college buildings—100*l.* worth of books—and 100*l.* for contingent expenses. The residue of his property he (except 600*l.* left for the repair of the prebendal house at Gloucester) left to the old butler mentioned in the text, who had long been his servant: a bequest which Johnson himself imitated in favour of his own servant, Barber.—Ed.]

¹ [Mr. Warton's own College.—Ed.]

² [This was Johnson's earliest account of this little event, and probably the most accurate; many years after this he told the story to Boswell and Mrs. Piozzi, and made a parade of his having waited on his tutor, not with a "*beating heart*," but with "*nonchalance* and even *insolence*." It would seem as if Johnson had been induced, by the too obsequious deference of his later admirers, to assign to his character in youth a little more of that sturdy dignity than, when his recollection was fresher and his ear unspoiled by flattery, he assumed to Mr. Warton (see *ante*, p. 21, *æ*).—Ed.]

glass of wine with him, and to tell me, he was *not* angry with me for missing his lecture. This was, in fact, a most severe reprimand. Some more of the boys were then sent for, and we spent a very pleasant afternoon.' Besides Mr. Meeke, there was only one other fellow of Pembroke now resident: from both of whom Johnson received the greatest civilities during this visit, and they pressed him very much to have a room in the college.

'In the course of this visit (1754) Johnson and I walked three or four times to Ellsfield, a village beautifully situated about three miles from Oxford, to see Mr. Wise, Radclivian librarian, with whom Johnson was much pleased. At this place, Mr. Wise had fitted up a house and gardens, in a singular manner, but with great taste. Here was an excellent library, particularly a valuable collection of books in Northern literature, with which Johnson was often very busy. One day Mr. Wise read to us a dissertation which he was preparing for the press, entitled 'A History and Chronology of the Fabulous Ages.' Some old divinities of Thrace, related to the Titans, and called the *CABIRI*, made a very important part of the theory of this piece; and in conversation afterwards, Mr. Wise talked much of his *CABIRI*. As we returned to Oxford in the evening, I outwalked Johnson, and he cried out *Sufflamina*, a Latin word, which came from his mouth with peculiar grace, and was as much as to say, *Put on your drag chain*. Before we got home, I again walked too fast for him; and he now cried out, 'Why, you walk as if you were pursued by all the *CABIRI* in a body.' In an evening we frequently took long walks from Oxford into the country, returning to supper. Once, in our way home, we viewed the ruins of the abbies of Oseney and Rewley, near Oxford. After at least half an hour's silence, Johnson said, 'I viewed them with indignation³!' We had then a long conversation on Gothic buildings: and in talking of the form of old halls, he said, 'In these halls, the fireplace was anciently always in the middle of the room, till the whigs removed it on one side⁴.' About this time there had been an execution of two or three criminals at Oxford on a Monday. Soon afterwards, one day at dinner, I was saying that Mr. Swinton, the chap-

³ [The Scotch, who were so angry at Johnson's indignation at the desecration and dilapidation of religious edifices in Scotland, would have been pacified had they sooner known that a similar indignation was excited by similar causes in England.—Ed.]

⁴ [What can this mean? What had the whigs to do with removing the smoky hearths from the centre of the great halls to a more commodious chimney at the side?—Ed.]

lain of the gaol¹, and also a frequent preacher before the university, a learned man, but often thoughtless and absent, preached the condemnation sermon on repentance, before the convicts, on the preceding day, Sunday; and that in the close he told his audience, that he should give them the remainder of what he had to say on the subject, the next Lord's Day. Upon which, one of our company, a doctor of divinity, and a plain matter-of-fact man, by way of offering an apology for Mr. Swinton, gravely remarked, that he had probably preached the same sermon before the university: 'Yes sir, (says Johnson) but the university were not to be hanged the next morning.'

"I forgot to observe before, that when he left Mr. Meeke (as I have told above), he added, 'About the same time of life, Meeke was left behind at Oxford to feed on a fellowship, and I went to London to get my living: now, sir, see the difference of our literary characters?'"

The following letter was written by Dr. Johnson to Mr. Chambers, of Lincoln College, afterwards Sir Robert Chambers³, one of the judges in India:

"TO MR. CHAMBERS OF LINCOLN COLLEGE.

"21st Nov. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—The commission which I delayed to trouble you with at your departure, I am now obliged to send you; and beg that you will be so kind as to carry it to Mr. Warton, of Trinity, to whom I should have written immediately, but that I know not if he be yet come back to Oxford.

"In the Catalogue of MSS. of Gr. Brit. see vol. i. pag. 18. MSS. Bodl. MARTYRIUM

¹ [The Rev. Mr. Swinton, who had so conspicuous a share in the Universal History.—See post, 6 Dec. 1784.—Ed.]

² [*Curis acuens mortalia corda*. Poverty was the stimulus which made Johnson exert a genius naturally, it may be supposed, more vigorous than Meeke's, and he was now beginning to enjoy the fame, of which so many painful years of distress and penury had laid the foundation. Meeke had lived an easy life of decent competence; and on the whole, perhaps, as little envied Johnson, as Johnson him: the goodness and justice of Providence equalize to a degree, not always visible at first sight, the happiness of mankind—*nec vivit malè qui natus moriensque fefellit*.—Ed.]

³ [Sir Robert Chambers was born in 1737, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, and educated at the same school with Lord Stowell and his brother the Earl of Eldon, and afterwards (like them) a member of University College. It was by visiting Chambers, when a fellow of University, that Johnson became acquainted with Lord Stowell; and when Chambers went to India, Lord Stowell, as he expressed it to the Editor, "seemed to succeed to his place in Johnson's friendship."—Ed.]

xv. *martyrum sub Juliano, auctore Theophylacto.*

It is desired that Mr. Warton will inquire, and send word, what will be the cost of transcribing this manuscript.

"Vol. ii. p. 32. Num. 1022. 58. COLL. Nov.—*Commentaria in Acta Apostol.*—*Comment. in Septem Epistolas Catholicas.*

"He is desired to tell what is the age of each of these manuscripts; and what it will cost to have a transcript of the two first pages of each.

"If Mr. Warton be not in Oxford, you may try if you can get it done by any body else; or stay till he comes according to your own convenience. It is for an Italian *literato*.

"The answer is to be directed to his excellency Mr. Zon, Venetian resident, Soho-square.

"I hope, dear sir, that you do not regret the change of London for Oxford. Mr. Baretti is well, and Miss Williams; and we shall all be glad to hear from you, whenever you shall be so kind as to write to, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON"

The degree of master of arts, which, it has been observed, could not be obtained for him at an early period of his life, was now considered as an honour of considerable importance, in order to grace the title-page of his Dictionary; and his character in the literary world being by this time deservedly high, his friends thought that, if proper exertions were made, the University of Oxford would pay him the compliment.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London, 28th Nov. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I am extremely obliged to you and to Mr. Wise, for the uncommon care which you have taken of my interest⁴; if you can accomplish your kind design, I shall certainly take me a little habitation among you.

"The books which I promised to Mr. Wise⁵, I have not been able to procure: but I shall send him a Finnick dictionary, the only copy, perhaps, in England, which was presented to me by a learned Swede: but I keep it back, that it may make a set of my own books of the new edition⁶, with which I shall accompany it, more welcome. You will assure him of my gratitude.

⁴ In procuring him the degree of master of arts by diploma at Oxford.—WARTON.

⁵ Lately fellow of Trinity College, and at this time Radclivian librarian at Oxford. He was a man of very considerable learning, and eminently skilled in Roman and Anglo-Saxon antiquities. He died in 1767.—WARTON.

⁶ [This must have been a new edition of the Rambler.—Ed.]

"Poor dear Collins¹!—Would a letter give him any pleasure? I have a mind to write.

"I am glad of your hinarance in your Spenserian design², yet I would not have it delayed. Three hours a day stolen from sleep and amusement will produce it. Let a servitour³ transcribe the quotations, and interleave them with references, to save time. This will shorten the work, and lessen the fatigue.

"Can I do any thing to promote the diploma? I would not be wanting to co-operate with your kindness; of which whatever be the effect, I shall be, dear sir, your most obliged, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London), 21 Dec. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I am extremely sensible of the favour done me both by Mr. Wise and yourself. The book⁴ cannot I think, be printed in less than six weeks, nor probably so soon; and I will keep back the title-page, for such an insertion as you seem to promise me. Be pleased to let me know what money I shall send you for bearing the expense of the affair; and I will take care that you may have it ready at your hand.

"I had lately the favour of a letter from your brother, with some account of poor Collins, for whom I am much concerned. I have a notion, that by very great temperance, or more properly abstinence⁵, he may yet recover.

"There is an old English and Latin book of poems by Barclay, called 'The Ship of Fools:' at the end of which are a number of *Eglogues*,—so he writes it, from *Egloga*,—which are probably the first in our language. If you cannot find the book, I will get Mr. Dodsley to send it you.

"I shall be extremely glad to hear from you again, to know if the affair proceeds⁶.

¹ Collins (the poet) was at this time at Oxford, on a visit to Mr. Warton; but labouring under the most deplorable languor of body and dejection of mind. WARTON. (See *ante*, p. 108.—Ed.)

Mr. Collins, who was the son of a hatter at Chichester, was born December 25, 1720, and was released from the dismal state here so pathetically described, in 1756.—MALONE. [See *ante*, p. 108.—Ed.]

² Of publishing a volume of observations on the best of Spenser's works. It was hindered by my taking pupils in this college.—WARTON.

³ Young students of the lowest rank at Oxford are so called.—WARTON.

⁴ His Dictionary.—WARTON.

⁵ [See *ante*, p. 39, note.—Ed.]

⁶ Of the degree at Oxford.—WARTON.

I have mentioned it to none of my friends, for fear of being laughed at for my disappointment.

"You know poor Mr. Dodsley has lost his wife; I believe he is much affected. I hope he will not suffer so much as I yet suffer for the loss of mine.

Οιμοι τι δ' οιμοι; θνητα γαρ πεπονθαμεν⁷.

I have ever since seemed to myself broken off from mankind; a kind of solitary wanderer in the wild of life, without any direction, or fixed point of view; a gloomy gazer on the world to which I have little relation. Yet I would endeavour, by the help of you, and your brother, to supply the want of closer union, by friendship; and hope to have long the pleasure of being, dear sir, most affectionately yours,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London), 24th Dec. 1754.

"DEAR SIR,—I am sat down to answer your kind letter, though I know not whether I shall direct it so as that it may reach you; the miscarriage of it will be no great matter, as I have nothing to send but thanks, of which I owe you many, yet if a few should be lost, I shall amply find them in my own mind; and professions of respect, of which the profession will easily be renewed while the respect continues: and the same causes which first produced can hardly fail to preserve it. Pray let me know, however, whether my letter finds its way to you.

"Poor dear Collins!—Let me know whether you think it would give him pleasure if I should write to him. *I have often been near his state*⁸, and therefore have it in great commiseration.

"I sincerely wish you the usual pleasures of this joyous season, and more than the usual pleasures, those of contemplation on the great event which this festival commemorates. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1755 we behold him to great advantage; his degree of master of arts conferred upon him, his Dictionary published, his correspondence animated, his benevolence exercised.

⁷ This verse is taken from the long lost BELLETEROPHON, a tragedy by Euripides. It is preserved by Suidas in his Lexicon, Voc. Οιμοι Η. p. 666, where the reading is, θνητα τοι πεπονθαμεν.—BURNEY. [The meaning is, Alas! but why should I say *alas*? we have suffered only the common lot of mortality!—Ed.]

⁸ [See *ante*, p. 10.—Ed.]

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

“(London), 1 Feb. 1755.

“DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you some weeks ago, but believe did not direct accurately, and therefore know not whether you had my letter. I would, likewise, write to your brother, but know not where to find him. I now begin to see land, after having wandered, according to Mr. Warburton’s phrase, in this vast sea of words. What reception I shall meet with on the shore, I know not; whether the sound of bells, and acclamations of the people, which Ariosto talks of in his last canto, or a general murmur of dislike, I know not: whether I shall find upon the coast a Calypso that will court, or a Polypheme that will resist. But if Polypheme comes, have at his eye! I hope, however, the criticks will let me be at peace; for though I do not much fear their skill and strength, I am a little afraid of myself, and would not willingly feel so much ill-will in my bosom as literary quarrels are apt to excite.

“MR. BARETTI is about a work for which he is in great want of Crescimbeni, which you may have again when you please.

“THERE is nothing considerable done or doing among us here. We are not perhaps as innocent as villagers, but most of us seem to be as idle. I hope, however, you are busy; and should be glad to know what you are doing. I am, dearest sir, your humble servant,
“SAM JOHNSON.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

“(London), 4 Feb. 1755.

“DEAR SIR,—I received your letter this day, with great sense of the favour that has been done me¹; for which I return my most sincere thanks; and entreat you to pay to Mr. Wise such returns as I ought to make for so much kindness so little deserved.

“I sent Mr. Wise the Lexicon, and afterwards wrote to him; but know not whether he had either the book or letter. Be so good as to contrive to inquire.

“But why does my dear Mr. Warton tell me nothing of himself? Where hangs the new volume²? Can I help? Let not the past labour be lost, for want of a little more; but snatch what time you can from the hall, and the pupils, and the coffee-house, and the parks³, and complete your design. I am, dear sir, &c.

SAM. JOHNSON.”

¹ His degree had now past, according to the usual form, the suffrages of the heads of colleges; but was not yet finally granted by the university. It was carried without a single dissentient voice.
—WARTON.

² On Spelser.—WARTON.

³ [The walks near Oxford so called.—ED.]

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

“(London), 13 Feb. 1755.

“DEAR SIR,—I had a letter last week from Mr. Wise, but have yet heard nothing from you, nor know in what state my affair⁴ stands; of which I beg you to inform me, if you can to-morrow, by the return of the post.

“MR. WISE sends me word, that he has not had the Finnick Lexicon yet, which I sent some time ago; and if he has it not, you must inquire after it. However, do not let your letter stay for that.

“YOUR brother, who is a better correspondent than you, and not much better, sends me word that your pupils keep you in college: but do they keep you from writing too? Let them, at least, give you time to write to, dear sir, your most affectionate, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

“(London), Feb. 1755.

“DEAR SIR,—Dr. King⁵ was with me a few minutes before your letter; this, however, is the first instance in which your kind intentions to me have ever been frustrated⁶. I have now the full effect of your care and benevolence; and am far from thinking it a slight honour, or a small advantage; since it will put the enjoyment of your conversation more frequently in the power of, dear sir, your most obliged and affectionate

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“P. S. I have enclosed a letter to the vice-chancellor⁷, which you will read; and if you like it, seal and give him.”

⁴ Of the degree.—WARTON.

⁵ Principal of Saint Mary Hall at Oxford. He brought with him the diploma from Oxford.—WARTON. [Born in 1685. Entered of Baliol in 1701. D. C. L. 1715, and Principal of St. Mary Hall in 1718. In 1722 he was a candidate for the representation of the university in parliament, on the tory interest; but was defeated. He died in 1763. He was a wit and a scholar, and, in particular, celebrated for his latinity; highly obnoxious to the Hanoverian party, and the idol of the Jacobites. It appears from his Memoirs, lately published, that he was one of those who was intrusted with the knowledge of the Pretender’s being in London in the latter end of the reign of George the Second, where Dr. King was introduced to him. In the *memoirs*, the year is stated to have been 1756, but there is reason to suspect that this is an error of the transcriber or the press, for the Pretender’s visit is elsewhere said to have been in 1750.—ED.]

⁶ I suppose Johnson means that my *kind intention* of being the *first* to give him the good news of the degree being granted was *frustrated*, because Dr. King brought it before my intelligence arrived.—WARTON.

⁷ Dr. Huddesford, President of Trinity College.—WARTON.

As the publick will doubtless be pleased to see the whole progress of this well-earned academical honour, I shall insert the Chancellor of Oxford's letter to the university¹, the diploma, and Johnson's letter of thanks to the vice-chancellor.

TO THE REV. DR. HUDDSFORD, *Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford; to be communicated to the heads of houses, and proposed in convocation.*

“Grosvenor-street, Feb. 1755.

“MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR, AND GENTLEMEN,—Mr. Samuel Johnson, who was formerly of Pembroke College, having very eminently distinguished himself by the publication of a series of essays, excellently calculated to form the manners of the people, and in which the cause of religion and morality is every where maintained by the strongest powers of argument and language; and who shortly intends to publish a Dictionary of the English Tongue, formed on a new plan, and executed with the greatest labour and judgment; I persuade myself that I shall act agreeable to the sentiments of the whole university, in desiring that it may be proposed in convocation to confer on him the degree of master of arts by diploma, to which I readily give my consent; and am, Mr. Vice-chancellor, and gentlemen, your affectionate friend and servant,

“ARRAN.”

Term
S^o. Hilarii. “DIPLOMA MAGISTRI JOHNSON.
1755.

“CANCELLARIUS, *Magistri et Scholares Universitatis Oxoniensis omnibus ad quos hoc presens scriptum pervenerit, salutem in Domino sempiternam.*

“*Cum eum in finem gradus academici à majoribus nostris instituti fuerint, ut viri ingenio et doctrinâ præstantes titulis quoque præter cæteros insignirentur; cumque vir doctissimus Samuel Johnson è Collegio Pembrochiensi, scriptis suis popularium mores informantibus dudum literato orbi innotuerit; quin et linguæ patriæ tum ornandæ tum stabilendæ (Lexicon scilicet Anglicanum summo studio, summo à se judicio congestum propediem editurus) etiam nunc utilissimam impendat operam; nos igitur Cancellarius, Magistri, et Scholares antedicti, nè virum de literis humanioribus optimè meritum diutius inhonoratum prætereamus, in solenni convocatione Doctorum, Magistrorum, Regentium, et non Regentium, decimo die mensis Februarii Anno Domini Millesimo Septingentesimo Quinquagesimo quinto habitâ, præfatum virum Samuelem Johnson (conspirantium omnium suffragiis) Magistrum in Artibus renunciamus et constituimus; eumque, virtute præsentis diplomatis, singulis juribus privilegiis et honoribus ad istum gradum quæquâ pertinentibus frui et gaudere jussimus.*

¹ Extracted from the Convocation Register, Oxford.—BOSWELL.

VOL. I. 16

“*In cujus rei testimonium sigillum Universitatis Oxoniensis præsentibus apponi fecimus.*

“*Datum in domo nostræ Convocationis die 20^o mensis Feb. Anno Dom. prædicto.*

“*Diploma supra scriptum per Registrarium lectum erat, et ex decreto venerabilis Domûs communi Universitatis sigillo munitum².*”

“*Londini. Ato Cal. Mart. 1755.*

“VIRO REVERENDO (GEORGIO) HUDDSFORD, S. T. P. UNIVERSITATIS OXONIENSIS VICE-CANCELLARIO DIGNISSIMO, S. P. D.

“SAM. JOHNSON³.

“*INGRATUS planè et tibi et mihi videcr, nisi quanto me gaudio affecerint, quos nuper mihi honores (te, credo, auctore), decrevit Senatus Academicus, literarum, quo tamen nihil levius, officio, significem; ingratus etiam, nisi comitatem, quâ vir eximius⁴ mihi restri testimonium amoris in manus tradidit, agnoscam et laudem. Si quid est, undè rei tam grate accedit gratia, hoc ipso magis mihi placeat, quod eo tempore in ordines Academicos deudù cooptatus sim, quo tuam imminuere auctoritatem, famamque Oxoniæ lædere, omnibus modis conantur homines vafri, nec tamen acuti: quibus ego, prout viro umbratico licuit, semper restiti, semper restituros. Qui enim, inter has rucrum procellas, vel tibi vel Academiæ defuerit, illum virtuti et literis, sibi que et posteris, defuturum existimo. Vale.*”

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London) 29th March, 1755.

“DEAR SIR,—After I received my diploma, I wrote you a letter of thanks, with a letter to the Vice-chancellor, and sent another to Mr. Wise; but have heard from nobody since; and begin to think myself forgotten. It is true, I sent you a double letter, and you may fear an expensive correspondent; but I would have taken it kindly, if you had returned it treble: and what is a double letter to a *petty king*, that having *fellowship and fines*, can sleep without a *modus in his head*?”

² The original is in my possession.—BOSWELL.

³ The superscription of this letter was not quite correct in the early editions of this work. It is here given from Dr. Johnson's original letter, now before me.—MALONE.

⁴ We may conceive what a high gratification it must have been to Johnson to receive his diploma from the hands of the great Dr. King, whose principles were so congenial with his own.—BOSWELL. [The reader will see in the preceding note, p. 120, why Mr. Boswell calls this gentleman the *great Dr. King*.—ED.]

⁵ The words in Italicks are allusions to passages in Mr. Warton's poem, called “*The Progress of Discontent*,” now lately published.—WARTON.

“Dear Mr. Warton, let me hear from you, and tell me something, I care not what, so I hear it but from you. Something I will tell you:—I hope to see my Dictionary bound and lettered next week;—*vastâ mole superbus*. And I have a great mind to come to Oxford at Easter; but you will not invite me. Shall I come uninvited, or stay here where nobody perhaps would miss me if I went? A hard choice! But such is the world to, dear sir, yours, &c.
“SAM JOHNSON.”

[The following extract of a letter from Mr. Warton to his brother will show his first sentiments on this great work.

“19th April, 1755.

Mem. of Dr. W. p. 230. “The Dictionary is arrived; the preface is noble. There is a grammar prefixed, and the history of the language is pretty full; but you may plainly perceive strokes of laxity and indolence. They are two most unwieldy volumes. I have written him an invitation. I fear his preface will disgust, by the expression of his consciousness of superiority, and of his contempt of patronage. The Rawlinson benefaction¹ won't do for Johnson, which is this—a professorship of 50*l.* per annum, which is not to take place these forty years; a fellowship to Hertford College, which is too ample for them to receive agreeably to Newton's statutes; and a fellowship to St. John's College. Neither of the last are to take place these forty years.”]

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

“(London), 25th March, 1755.”

“DEAR SIR,—Though not to write, when a man can write so well, is an offence sufficiently heinous, yet I shall pass it by. I am very glad that the Vice-Chancellor was pleased with my note. I shall impatiently expect you at London, that we may consider what to do next. I intend in the winter to open a *Bibliothèque*, and remember, that you are to subscribe a sheet a year: let us try, likewise, if we can persuade your brother to subscribe another. My book is now coming *in luminis oras*. What will be its fate I know not, nor think much, because thinking is to no purpose. It must stand the censure of the *great vulgar* and the *small*; of those that understand it, and that understand it not. But in all this, I suffer not alone; every writer has the same difficulties, and, perhaps, every writer talks of them more than he thinks.

“You will be pleased to make my com-

pliments to all my friends; and be so kind, at every idle hour, as to remember, dear sir, yours, &c.
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

Dr. Adams told me, that this scheme of a *Bibliothèque* was a serious one: for upon his visiting him one day, he found his parlour floor covered with parcels of foreign and English literary journals, and he told Dr. Adams he meant to undertake a Review. “How, sir (said Dr. Adams), can you think of doing it alone? All branches of knowledge must be considered in it. Do you know Mathematicks? Do you know Natural History?” Johnson answered, “Why, sir, I must do as well as I can. My chief purpose is to give my countrymen a view of what is doing in literature upon the continent; and I shall have, in a good measure, the choice of my subject, for I shall select such books as I best understand.” Dr. Adams suggested, that as Dr. Maty² had just then finished his *Bibliothèque Britannique*, which was a well-executed work, giving foreigners an account of British publications, he might, with great advantage, assume him as an assistant. “He (said Johnson), the little black dog! I'd throw him into the Thames.” The scheme, however, was dropped.

In one of his little memorandum books I find the following hints for his intended Review or Literary Journal:

“*The annals of Literature, foreign as well as domestick*. Imitate Le Clerc—Bayle—Barbeyrac. Infelicity of Journals in England. ‘Works of the learned.’ We cannot take in all. Sometimes copy from foreign Journalists. Always tell.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO DR. BIRCH.

“29th March, 1755.

“SIR,—I have sent some parts of my Dictionary, such as were at hand, for your

² [Matthew Maty, M. D. and F. R. S. He was born in Holland in 1718, and educated at Leyden, but he came in 1740 to settle in England. He became secretary to the Royal Society in 1765, on the resignation of Dr. Birch, and in 1772, principal librarian of the British Museum. Maty being the friend and admirer of Lord Chesterfield, whose works he afterwards published, would, as Dr. Hall observes, particularly at this period, have little recommendation to the good opinion of the lexicographer; but his *Journal Britannique* is mentioned by Mr. Gibbon in a tone very different from Dr. Johnson's. “This humble though useful labour, which had once been dignified by the genius of Bayle and the learning of Le Clerc, was not disgraced by the taste, the knowledge, and the judgment of Maty. His style is pure and eloquent, and in his virtues or even in his defects he may be reckoned as one of the last disciples of the school of Fontenelle.”—*Gibbon's Misc. Works*. Dr. Maty died in 1776.—Ed.]

¹ [By this, I suppose, is meant the Anglo-Saxon professorship which was founded in 1750, but did not take effect before 1795, exactly forty years from the date of this letter.—HALL.]

inspection. The favour which I beg is, that if you do not like them, you will say nothing. I am, sir, your most affectionate humble servant,
 “SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

“Norfolk-street, 23 April, 1755.

“SIR,—The part of your Dictionary which you have favoured me with the sight of, has given me such an idea of the whole, that I most sincerely congratulate the publick upon the acquisition of a work long wanted, and now executed with an industry, accuracy, and judgement, equal to the importance of the subject. You might, perhaps, have chosen one in which your genius would have appeared to more advantage, but you could not have fixed upon any other in which your labours would have done such substantial service to the present age and to posterity. I am glad that your health has supported the application necessary to the performance of so vast a task; and can undertake to promise you as one (though perhaps the only) reward of it, the approbation and thanks of every well-wisher to the honour of the English language. I am with the greatest regard, sir, your most faithful and most affectionate humble servant,

“THO. BIRCH.”

Mr. Charles Burney, who has since distinguished himself so much in the science of musick, and obtained a doctor's degree from the University of Oxford, had been driven from the capital by bad health, and was now residing at Lynne Regis in Norfolk. He had been so much delighted with Johnson's Rambler, and the plan of his Dictionary, that when the great work was announced in the newspapers as nearly finished, he wrote to Dr. Johnson, begging to be informed when and in what manner his Dictionary would be published; entreating, if it should be by subscription, or he should have any books at his own disposal, to be favoured with six copies for himself and friends.

In answer to this application, Dr. Johnson wrote the following letter, of which (to use Dr. Burney's own words) “if it be remembered that it was written to an obscure young man, who at this time had not much distinguished himself even in his own profession, but whose name could never have reached the authour of *The Rambler*, the politeness and urbanity may be opposed to some of the stories which have been lately circulated of Dr. Johnson's natural rudeness and ferocity.”

“TO MR. BURNEY, LYNNE REGIS, NORFOLK.

“Gough-square, Fleet-street, 8 April, 1755.

“SIR,—If you imagine that by delaying

my answer I intended to show any neglect of the notice with which you have favoured me, you will neither think justly of yourself nor of me. Your civilities were offered with too much elegance not to engage attention; and I have too much pleasure in pleasing men like you, not to feel very sensibly the distinction you have bestowed upon me.

“Few consequences of my endeavours to please or to benefit mankind have delighted me more than your friendship thus voluntarily offered, which now I have it I hope to keep, because I hope to continue to deserve it.

“I have no Dictionaries to dispose of for myself, but shall be glad to have you direct your friends to Mr. Dodsley, because it was by his recommendation that I was employed in the work.

“When you have leisure to think again upon me, let me be favoured with another letter; and another yet, when you have looked into my Dictionary. If you find faults, I shall endeavour to mend them; if you find none, I shall think you blinded by kind partiality: but to have made you partial in his favour, will very much gratify the ambition of, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

Mr. Andrew Millar, bookseller in the Strand, took the principal charge of conducting the publication of Johnson's Dictionary; and as the patience of the proprietors was repeatedly tried and almost exhausted, by their expecting that the work would be completed, within the time which Johnson had sanguinely supposed, the learned authour was often goaded to despatch, more especially as he had received all the copy money, by different drafts, a considerable time before he had finished his task. When the messenger who carried the last sheet to Millar returned, Johnson asked him, “Well, what did he say?”—“Sir, (answered the messenger), he said, thank God I have done with him.”—“I am glad (replied Johnson with a smile) that he thanks God for any thing¹.” It is remarkable, that those with whom Johnson chiefly contracted for his literary labours were Scotchmen, Mr. Millar and Mr. Strahan. Millar, though himself no great judge of literature, had good sense enough to have for his friends very able men, to give him their opinion and advice in the purchase of

¹ Sir John Hawkins (*Life*, p. 341), inserts two notes as having passed formerly between Andrew Millar and Johnson, to the above effect. I am assured this was not the case. In the way of incidental remark it was a pleasant play of raiillery. To have deliberately written notes in such terms would have been morose.—BOSWELL.

copyright; the consequence of which was his acquiring a very large fortune with great liberality. Johnson said of him, "I respect Millar, sir; he has raised the price of literature." The same praise may be justly given to Panckoucke, the eminent bookseller of Paris. Mr. Strahan's liberality, judgment, and success, are well known.

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"6 May, 1755.

"SIR,—It has been long observed, that men do not suspect faults which they do not commit; your own elegance of manners, and punctuality of complaisance, did not suffer you to impute to me that negligence of which I was guilty, and [for¹] which I have not since atoned. I received both your letters, and received them with pleasure proportioned to the esteem which so short an acquaintance strongly impressed, and which I hope to confirm by nearer knowledge, though I am afraid that gratification will be for a time withheld.

"I have, indeed, published my book², of which I beg to know your father's judgment, and yours; and I have now staid long enough to watch its progress in the world. It has, you see, no patrons, and I think has yet had no opponents, except the critics of the coffee-house, whose outcries are soon dispersed into the air, and are thought on no more; from this, therefore, I am at liberty, and think of taking the opportunity of this interval to make an excursion, and why not then into Lincolnshire? or, to mention a stronger attraction, why not to dear Mr. Langton? I will give the true reason, which I know you will approve:—I have a mother more than eighty years old, who has counted the days to the publication of my book, in hopes of seeing me; and to her if I can disengage myself here, I resolve to go³.

"As I know, dear sir, that to delay my visit for a reason like this, will not deprive me of your esteem, I beg it may not lessen your kindness. I have very seldom received an offer of friendship which I so earnestly desire to cultivate and mature. I shall rejoice to hear from you, till I can see you, and will see you as soon as I can; for when the duty that calls me to Lichfield is discharged, my inclination will carry me to Langton. I shall delight to hear the ocean roar⁴, or see the stars twinkle, in the com-

pany of men to whom nature does not spread her volume to utter her voice in vain.

"Do not, dear sir, make the slowness of this letter a precedent for delay, or imagine that I approved the incivility that I have committed; for I have known you enough to love you, and sincerely to wish a further knowledge; and I assure you once more, that to live in a house that contains such a father and such a son, will be accounted a very uncommon degree of pleasure, by, dear sir, your most obliged, and most humble servant. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 13 May, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I am grieved that you should think me capable of neglecting your letters; and beg you will never admit any such suspicion again. I purpose to come down next week if you shall be there; or any other week, that shall be more agreeable to you. Therefore let me know. I can stay this visit but a week; but intend to make preparations for longer stay next time; being resolved not to lose sight of the university. How goes Apollonius⁵? Don't let him be forgotten. Some things of this kind must be done, to keep us up. Pay my compliments to Mr. Wise, and all my other friends. I think to come to Kettel-Hall. I am, sir, your most affectionate, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. RICHARDSON⁶.

"17 May, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—As you were the first that gave me notice of this paragraph, I send it to you, with a few little notes, which I wish you would read. It is well, when men of learning and penetration busy themselves in these inquiries, but what is their idleness is my business. Help, indeed, now comes too late for me, when a large part of my book has passed the press.

"I shall be glad if these strictures appear to you not unwarrantable; for whom should he, who toils in settling a language, desire to please but him who is adorning it? I hope your new book is printing. *Macte novâ virtute*. I am, dear sir, most respectfully and most affectionately, your humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

"(London), 10 June, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—It is strange how many things will happen to intercept every pleasure, though it (be) only that of two friends meeting together. I have promised myself every day to inform you when you might expect me at Oxford, and have not

⁵ A translation of Apollonius Rhodius was now intended by Mr. Warton.—WARTON.

⁶ [Communicated by Dr. Harwood.—ED.]

¹ The word "for" has here probably slipped out by error of the transcriber or the press. See the word *alone*, in Johnson's Dictionary.—ED.]

² His Dictionary.—BOSWELL.

³ [It is to be feared that this duty was not performed: see *post*, January, 1759.—ED.]

⁴ [This must refer to some general allusion in Mr. Langton's letters, for the village of Langton is ten or twelve miles from the coast.—ED.]

been able to fix a time. This time, however, is, I think, at last come; and I promise myself to repose in Kettell-hall, one of the first nights of the next week. I am afraid my stay with you cannot be long; but what is the inference? We must endeavour to make it cheerful. I wish your brother could meet us, that we might go and drink tea with Mr. Wise in a body. I hope he will be at Oxford, or at his nest of British and Saxon antiquities¹. I shall expect to see Spenser finished, and many other things begun. Dodsley is gone to visit the Dutch. The Dictionary sells well. The rest of the world goes on as it did. Dear sir, your most affectionate, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London), 24 June, 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—To talk of coming to you and not yet to come, has an air of trifling which I would not willingly have among you; and which, I believe, you will not willingly impute to me, when I have told you, that since my promise, two of our partners² are dead, and that I was solicited to suspend my excursion till we could recover from our confusion.

"I have not laid aside my purpose; for every day makes me more impatient of staying from you. But death, you know, hears not supplications, nor pays any regard to the convenience of mortals. I hope now to see you next week; but next week is but another name for to-morrow, which has been noted for promising and deceiving. I am, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London), 7 Aug. 1755.

"DEAR SIR,—I told you that among the manuscripts are some things of Sir Thomas More. I beg you to pass an hour in looking on them, and procure a transcript of the ten or twenty first lines of each, to be compared with what I have; that I may know whether they are yet published. The manuscripts are these:

"Catalogue of Bodl. MS. pag. 122. F. 3. Sir Thomas More.

"1. Fall of angels. 2. Creation and fall of mankind. 3. Determination of the Trinity for the rescue of mankind. 4. Five lectures of our Saviour's passion. 5. Of the institution of the Sacrament, three lectures. 6. How to receive the blessed body of our Lord sacramentally. 7. Neomenia, the new moon. 8. *De tristitia, tedio, pavore, et oratione Christi ante captionem ejus.*

¹ At Ellsfield, a village three miles from Oxford.—WARTON.

² Booksellers concerned in his Dictionary.—WARTON. [Mr. Paul Knapton died on the 12th, and Mr. Thomas Longman on the 18th June, 1755.—ED.]

"Catalogue, pag. 154. Life of Sir Thomas More. Qu. Whether Roper's? Page 363. *De resignatione Magni Sigilli in manus regis per D. Thomam Morum.* Pag. 364. *Mori Defensio Morie.*

"If you procure the young gentleman in the library to write out what you think fit to be written, I will send to Mr. Prince the bookseller to pay him what you shall think proper.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to Mr. Wise, and all my friends. I am, sir, your affectionate, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The Dictionary, with a Grammar and History of the English Language, being now at length published, in two volumes folio, the world contemplated with wonder so stupendous a work achieved by one man, while other countries had thought such undertakings fit only for whole academies. Vast as his powers were, I cannot but think that his imagination deceived him, when he supposed that by constant application he might have performed the task in three years. Let the Preface be attentively perused, in which is given, in a clear, strong, and glowing style, a comprehensive, yet particular view of what he had done; and it will be evident, that the time he employed upon it was comparatively short. I am unwilling to swell my book with long quotations from what is in every body's hands, and I believe there are few prose compositions in the English language that are read with more delight, or are more impressed upon the memory, than that preliminary discourse. One of its excellencies has always struck me with peculiar admiration; I mean the perspicuity with which he has expressed abstract scientific notions. As an instance of this, I shall quote the following sentence: "When the radical idea branches out into parallel ramifications, how can a consecutive series be formed of senses in their own nature collateral³?" We have here an example of what has been often said, and I believe with justice, that there is for every thought a certain nice adaption of words which none other could equal, and which, when a man has been so fortunate as to hit, he has attained, in that particular case, the perfection of language.

The extensive reading which was absolutely necessary for the accumulation of authorities, and which alone may account

³ [Mr. Boswell's apprehension was much clearer than, or his ideas of perspicuity very different from those of the editor, who is not ashamed to confess that he does not understand this *perspicuous* passage. There seems, moreover, to be something like a contradiction in the terms: how can *parallels* be said to *branch out*?—ED.]

for Johnson's retentive mind being enriched with a very large and various store of knowledge and imagery, must have occupied several years. The Preface furnishes an eminent instance of a double talent, of which Johnson was fully conscious. Sir Joshua Reynolds heard him say, "There are two things which I am confident I can do very well: one is an introduction to any literary work, stating what it is to contain, and how it should be executed in the most perfect manner: the other is a conclusion, showing from various causes why the execution has not been equal to what the author promised to himself and to the publick."

How should puny scribblers be abashed and disappointed, when they find him displaying a perfect theory of lexicographical excellence, yet at the same time candidly and modestly allowing that he "had not satisfied his own expectations." Here was a fair occasion for the exercise of Johnson's modesty, when he was called upon to compare his own arduous performance, not with those of other individuals (in which case his inflexible regard to truth would have been violated had he affected diffidence), but with speculative perfection; as he, who can outstrip all his competitors in the race, may yet be sensible of his deficiency when he runs against time. Well might he say, that "the English Dictionary was written with little assistance of the learned;" for he told me, that the only aid which he received was a paper containing twenty etymologies, sent to him by a person then unknown, who he was afterwards informed was Dr. Pearce, Bishop of Rochester. The etymologies, though they exhibit learning and judgement, are not, I think, entitled to the first praise amongst the various parts of this immense work. The definitions have always appeared to me such astonishing proofs of acuteness of intellect and precision of language, as indicate a genius of the highest rank. This it is which marks the superiour excellence of Johnson's Dictionary over others equally or even more voluminous, and must have made it a work of much greater mental labour than mere Lexicons, or *Word-Books*, as the Dutch call them. They, who will make the experiment of trying how they can define a few words of whatever nature, will soon be satisfied of the unquestionable justice of this observation, which I can assure my readers is founded upon much study, and upon communication with more minds than my own.

A few of his definitions must be admitted to be erroneous. Thus *Windward* and *Lee-ward*, though directly of opposite meaning, are defined identically the same way—[to-

ward the wind]¹; as to which inconsiderable specks it is enough to observe, that his Preface announces that he was aware there might be many such in so immense a work; nor was he at all disconcerted when an instance was pointed out to him. A lady once asked him how he came to define *Pastern* the *knee* of a horse: instead of making an elaborate defence, as she expected, he at once answered, "Ignorance, madam, pure ignorance." His definition of *Network*—[*any thing reticulated or decussated at equal distances, with interstices between the interseCTIONS*]²—has been often quoted with sportive malignity, as obscuring a thing in itself very plain. But to these frivolous censures no other answer is necessary than that with which we are furnished by his own Preface. "To explain, requires the use of terms less abstruse than that which is to be explained, and such terms cannot always be found. For as nothing can be proved but by supposing something intuitively known, and evident without proof, so nothing can be defined but by the use of words too plain to admit of definition. Sometimes easier words are changed into harder; as *burial*, into *sepulture* or *interment*; *dry*, into *desiccative*; *dryness* into *siccity* or *aridity*; *fit*, into *paroxysm*; for the *easiest* word, whatever it be, can never be translated into one more easy."

His introducing his own opinions, and even prejudices, under general definitions of words, while at the same time the original meaning of the words is not explained, and a few more, cannot be fully defended, and must be placed to the account of capricious and humorous indulgence. Such are

TORY [*a cant term, derived, I suppose, from an Irish word signifying a savage. One who adheres to the ancient constitution of the state and the apostolic hierarchy of the church of England: opposed to a Whig*].

WHIG [*the name of a faction*].

PENSION [*an allowance made to any one without an equivalent. In England it is generally understood to mean pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country*].

PENSIONER [*a slave of state hired by a stipend to obey his master*].

OATS [*a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people*].

EXCISE [*a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but by WRETCHES hired by those to whom excise is paid*]².

¹ He owns in his Preface the deficiency of the technical part of his work; and he said he should be much obliged to me for definitions of musical terms for his next edition, which he did not live to superintend.—BURNBY.

² The Commissioners of Excise being offended

Talking to me upon this subject when we were at Ashbourne in 1777, he mentioned a still stronger instance of the predominance of his private feelings in the composition of

by this severe reflection, consulted Mr. Murray, then Attorney-General, to know whether redress could be legally obtained. I wished to have procured for my readers a copy of the opinion which he gave, and which may now be justly considered as history; but the mysterious secrecy of office it seems would not permit it. I am, however, informed, by very good authority, that its import was, that the passage might be considered as actionable; but that it would be more prudent in the board not to prosecute. Johnson never made the smallest alteration in this passage. We find he still retained his early prejudice against Excise; for in "The Idler, No. 65," there is the following very extraordinary paragraph: "The authenticity of *Clarendon's* history, though printed with the sanction of one of the first Universities of the world, had not an unexpected manuscript been happily discovered, would, with the help of factious credulity, have been brought into question, by the two lowest of all human beings, a Scribbler for a party, and a Commissioner of Excise." The persons to whom he alludes were Mr. John Oldmixon, and George Duckett, Esq.—BOSWELL. [The present Editor is more fortunate than Mr. Boswell, in being able (through the favour of Sir F. H. Doyle, now Deputy-Chairman of the Excise Board) to present the reader with a copy of the case submitted to Lord Mansfield and his opinion:

"CASE for the opinion of Mr. Attorney-General.

"Mr. Samuel Johnson has lately published a book entitled '*A dictionary of the English Language, in which the words are deduced from their originals, and illustrated in their different significations by examples from the best writers. To which are prefixed, a History of the Language and an English Grammar.*'

"Under this title, EXCISE, are the following words:

"EXCISE, *n. s.* (Accijs, Dutch; Excisum, Latin.)—A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid.

"*The people should pay a ratable tax for their shoes, and an excise for every thing which they should eat.*"—HAYWARD.

"*Ambitious now to take excise
Of a more fragrant paradise.*"—CLEVELAND.

"*Excise
With hundred rows of teeth, the shark exceeds,
And on all trades, like cassawar, she feeds.*"—MARVEL.

"*Can hire large houses, and oppress the poor by farmed excise.*" DRYDEN'S *Juvenal*, Sat. 3d.

"The author's definition being observed by the Commissioners of Excise, they desire the favour of your opinion.

"*Qu.* Whether it will not be considered as a libel, and if so, whether it is not proper to proceed against the author, printers, and publishers

this work, than any now to be found in it. "You know, sir, Lord Gower forsook the old Jacobite interest. When I came to the word *Renegado*, after telling that it meant 'one who deserts to the enemy, a revolter,' I added *Sometimes we say a GOWER* 1. Thus it went to the press: but the printer had more wit than I, and struck it out."

Let it, however, be remembered, that this indulgence does not display itself only in sarcasm towards others, but sometimes in playful allusion to the notions commonly entertained of his own laborious task. Thus: "*Grub-street*, the name of a street in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, *dictionaries*, and temporary poems; whence any mean production is called *Grub-street*."—"Lexicographer, a writer of dictionaries, a *harmless drudge* 2."

At the time when he was concluding his very eloquent Preface, Johnson's mind appears to have been in such a state of depression, that we cannot contemplate without wonder the vigorous and splendid thoughts which so highly distinguish that performance. "I (says he) may surely be contented without the praise of perfection, which if I could obtain in this gloom of solitude, what would it avail me? I have protracted my work till most of those whom I wished to please have sunk into the grave; and success and miscarriage are empty sounds. I therefore dismiss it with frigid tranquillity, having little to fear or hope from censure or from praise." That this

thereof, or any and which of them by information, or how otherwise?

"I am of opinion that it is a libel. But under all the circumstances, I should think it better to give him an opportunity of altering his definition; and, in case he do not, to threaten him with an information.

"29th Nov. 1755. "W. MURRAY."

Whether any such step was taken, Sir Francis Doyle has not been able to discover: probably not; but Johnson, in his own octavo abridgment of the Dictionary, had the good sense to omit the more offensive parts of the definitions of both EXCISE and PENSION. We have already seen (*ante*, p. 12) the probable motive of the attack on the *Excise*.—ED.]

¹ [Lord Gower, after a long opposition to the whig ministry (which was looked upon as equivalent to *Jacobitism*), accepted, in 1742, the office of Privy-Seal, and was the object of much censure both with Whigs and Tories. Sir Charles H. Williams ironically calls him "*Hanoverian Gower*;" but it is probable that Johnson's aversion to Lord Gower arose out of something more personal; perhaps the disappointment about Appleby school. see *ante*, p. 51.—ED.]

² [A writer of dictionaries, who should admit such reflections as those on the *Excise*, *Lord Gower*, &c., could hardly hope to pass as a *harmless drudge*.—ED.]

indifference was rather a temporary than an habitual feeling, appears, I think, from his letters to Mr. Warton; and however he may have been affected for the moment, certain it is that the honours which his great work procured him, both at home and abroad, were very grateful to him. His friend the Earl of Corke and Orrery¹, being at Florence, presented it to the *Accademia della Crusca*. That Academy sent Johnson their *Vocabolario*, and the French Academy sent him their *Dictionnaire*, which Mr. Langton had the pleasure to convey to him.

It must undoubtedly seem strange, that the conclusion of his Preface should be expressed in terms so desponding, when it is considered that the authour was then only in his forty-sixth year. But we must ascribe its gloom to that miserable dejection of spirits to which he was constitutionally subject, and which was aggravated by the death of his wife two years before. I have heard it ingeniously observed by a lady of rank and elegance, that "his melancholy was then at its meridian." It pleased God to grant him almost thirty years of life after this time; and once when he was in a placid frame of mind, he was obliged to own to me that he had enjoyed happier days, and had many more friends, since that gloomy hour, than before.

It is a sad saying, that "most of those whom he wished to please had sunk into the grave;" and his case at forty-five was singularly unhappy, unless the circle of his friends was very narrow. I have often thought, that as longevity is generally desired, and I believe generally expected, it would be wise to be continually adding to the number of our friends, that the loss of some may be supplied by others. Friendship, "the wine of life," should, like a well-stocked cellar, be thus continually renewed; and it is consolatory to think, that although we can seldom add what will equal the generous *first growths* of our youth, yet friendship becomes insensibly old in much less time than is commonly imagined, and not many years are required to make it very mellow and pleasant. *Warmth* will, no doubt, make a considerable difference. Men of affectionate temper and bright fancy will coalesce a great deal sooner than those who are cold and dull.

The proposition which I have now endeavoured to illustrate was, at a subsequent period of his life, the opinion of Johnson himself. He said to Sir Joshua Reynolds, "If a man does not make new acquaintance as he advances through life, he will soon find himself left alone. A man, sir, should keep his friendship in *constant repair*."

The celebrated Mr. Wilkes, whose no-

tions and habits of life were very opposite to his, but who was ever eminent for literature and vivacity, sallied forth with a little *jeu d'esprit* upon the following passage in his Grammar of the English Tongue, prefixed to the Dictionary: "*H* seldom, perhaps never, begins any but the first syllable." In an essay printed in "the Publick Advertiser," this lively writer enumerated many instances in opposition to this remark; for example: "The authour of this observation must be a man of a quick *apprehension*, and of a most *comprehensive* genius." The position is undoubtedly expressed with too much latitude.

This light sally, we may suppose, made no great impression on our Lexicographer; for we find that he did not alter the passage till many years afterwards².

He had the pleasure of being treated in a very different manner by his old pupil Mr. Garrick, in the following complimentary Epigram:

ON JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.

"Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier will beat ten of France;
Would we alter the boast from the sword to the
pen,

Our odds are still greater, still greater our men;
In the deep mines of science though Frenchmen
may toil,

Can their strength be compared to Locke, New-
ton, and Boyle?

Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their
pow'rs,

Their verse-men and prose-men, then match them
with ours!

First Shakspeare and Milton, like gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epick to flight;
In satires, epistles, and odes, would they cope,
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope;
And Johnson, well-arm'd like a hero of yore,
Has beat forty French³, and will beat forty more⁴!"

Johnson this year gave at once a proof of his benevolence, quickness of apprehension, and admirable art of composition, in the assistance which he gave to Mr. Zachariah Williams, father of the blind lady

² In the third edition, published in 1773, he left out the words *perhaps never*, and added the following paragraph:

"It sometimes begins middle or final syllables in words compounded, as *block-head*, or derived from the Latin, as *compre-hended*."—BOSWELL.

³ The number of the French Academy employed in settling their language.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [This compliment is creditable to Garrick's placability, if we are to believe that he took to himself the character of Prospero in the Rambler of the 15th Feb. 1752 (see *ante*, p. 88); but it surely is not a very happy effort of wit. "*Well arm'd like a hero of yore*," and "*will beat forty more*," have little meaning, and are awkward epithets, added, it would seem, merely because they *rhymed*.—ED.]

¹ [See *ante*, p. 102.—ED.]

whom he had humanely received under his roof. Mr. Williams had followed the profession of physick in Wales; but having a very strong propensity to the study of natural philosophy, had made many ingenious advances towards a discovery of the longitude, and repaired to London in hopes of obtaining the great parliamentary reward. He failed of success; but Johnson having made himself master of his principles and experiments, wrote for him a pamphlet, published in quarto, with the following title: "An Account of an Attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Theory of the Variation of the Magnetical Needle; with a Table of the Variations at the most remarkable Cities in Europe, from the year 1660 to 1860 †." To diffuse it more extensively, it was accompanied with an Italian translation on the opposite page, which it is supposed was the work of Signor Baretti², an Italian of considerable literature, who having come to England a few years before, had been employed in the capacity both of a language master and an authour, and formed an intimacy with Dr. Johnson. This pamphlet Johnson presented to the Bodleian Library³. On a blank leaf of it is pasted a paragraph cut out of

a newspaper, containing an account of the death and character of Williams, plainly written by Johnson⁴.

In July this year he had formed some scheme of mental improvement, the particular purpose of which does not appear. But we find in his "Prayers and Meditations," p. 25, a prayer entitled "On the Study of Philosophy, as an instrument of living;" and after it follows a note, "This study was not pursued."

On the 13th of the same month he wrote in his Journal the following scheme of life, for Sunday: "Having lived" (as he with tenderness of conscience expresses himself) "not without an habitual reverence for the Sabbath, yet without that attention to its religious duties which Christianity requires:"

"1. To rise early, and in order to it, to go to sleep early on Saturday.

"2. To use some extraordinary devotion in the morning.

"3. To examine the tenour of my life, and particularly the last week; and to mark my advances in religion, or recession from it.

"4. To read the Scripture methodically with such helps as are at hand.

"5. To go to church twice.

"6. To read books of Divinity, either speculative or practical.

"7. To instruct my family.

"8. To wear off by meditation any worldly soil contracted in the week⁵."

In 1756 Johnson found that the great fame of his Dictionary had not set him above the necessity of "making provision for the day that was passing over him." No royal or noble patron extended a munificent hand to give independence to the man who had conferred stability on the language of his country. We may feel indignant that there should have been such unworthy neglect; but we must, at the same time, congratulate ourselves, when we consider, that to this very neglect, operating to rouse the natural indolence of his constitution, we owe many valuable produc-

⁴ "On Saturday the 12th [July, 1755], about twelve at night, died Mr. Zachariah Williams, in his eighty-third year, after an illness of eight months, in full possession of his mental faculties. He has been long known to philosophers and seamen for his skill in magnetism, and his proposal to ascertain the longitude by a peculiar system of the variation of the compass. He was a man of industry indefatigable, of conversation inoffensive, patient of adversity and disease, eminently sober, temperate, and pious; and worthy to have ended life with better fortune."

⁵ [In 1755 Johnson seems to have written for Mrs. Lenox the dedication to the Duke of Newcastle of her *Translation of Sully's Memoirs*.—Ed.]

¹ [Mr. Williams, as early as 1721, persuaded himself that he had discovered the means of ascertaining the longitude, and he seems to have passed a long life in that delusion.—Ed.]

² This ingenious foreigner, who was a native of Piedmont, came to England about the year 1753, and died in London, May 5, 1789. A very candid and judicious account of him and his works, beginning with the words, "So much asperity," and written, it is believed, by a distinguished dignitary in the church, [Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster], may be found in the Gentleman's Magazine for that year, p. 469.—MALONE.

³ When Dr. Johnson was with me at Oxford, in 1755, he gave to the Bodleian Library a thin quarto of twenty-one pages, a work in Italian, with an English translation on the opposite page. The English title-page is this: "An Account of an Attempt to ascertain the Longitude at Sea, by an exact Variation of the Magnetical Needle, &c. By Zachariah Williams. London, printed for Dodsley, 1755." The English translation, from the strongest internal marks, is unquestionably the work of Johnson. In a blank leaf, Johnson has written the age, and time of death, of the authour Z. Williams, as I have said above. On another blank leaf is pasted a paragraph from a newspaper, of the death and character of Williams, which is plainly written by Johnson. He was very anxious about placing this book in the Bodleian; and, for fear of any omission or mistake, he entered, in the great Catalogue, the title-page of it with his own hand.—WARTON.

In this statement there is a slight mistake. The English account, which was written by Johnson, was the *original*; the Italian was a *translation*, done by Baretti.—MALONE.

tions, which otherwise, perhaps, might never have appeared.

He had spent, during the progress of the work, the money for which he had contracted to write his Dictionary. We have seen that the reward of his labour was only fifteen hundred and seventy-five pounds; and when the expense of amanuenses and paper, and other articles, are deducted, his clear profit was very inconsiderable. I once said to him, "I am sorry, sir, you did not get more for your Dictionary." His answer was, "I am sorry too. But it was very well. The booksellers are generous, liberal-minded men." He, upon all occasions, did ample justice to their character in this respect. He considered them as the patrons of literature; and, indeed, although they have eventually¹ been considerable gainers by his Dictionary, it is to them that we owe its having been undertaken and carried through at the risk of great expense, for they were not absolutely sure of being indemnified.

[In 1756, Mr. Garrick, ever disposed to help the afflicted, indulged Miss Williams with a benefit-play, that produced her two hundred pounds.]

[Johnson, as might be expected, exerted his influence to swell the profits of this act of kindness, which indeed was probably intended by Garrick as a mark of regard as much to Johnson as to Miss Williams.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS CARTER.

"Gough-square, 14th Jan. 1756.

Harwood. "MADAM,—From the liberty of writing to you, if I have hitherto been deterred from the fear of your understanding, I am now encouraged to it from the confidence of your goodness.

"I am soliciting a benefit for Miss Williams, and beg that if you can by letters influence any in her favour (and who is there whom you cannot influence?) you will be pleased to patronize her on this occasion. Yet, for the time is short, and as you were not in town, I did not till this day remember that you might help us, and recollect how widely and how rapidly light is diffused.

"To every joy is appended a sorrow. The name of Miss Carter introduces the memory of Cave. Poor dear Cave! I owed him much; for to him I owe that I have known you. He died, I am afraid, unexpectedly to himself, yet surely unburthened with any great crime, and for the positive duties of religion I have yet no right to condemn him for neglect.

¹ [They seem to have been immediately considerable gainers, for a second folio edition was (if we may credit the title-page) published in the same year as the first—an extraordinary sale for so great and expensive a work.—ED.]

"I am, with respect, which I neither owe nor pay to any other, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

On the first day of this year, we find, from his private devotions, that he had then recovered from sickness, and in February that his eye was restored to its use. The pious gratitude with which he acknowledges mercies upon every occasion is very edifying; as is the humble submission which he breathes, when it is the will of his heavenly Father to try him with afflictions. As such dispositions become the state of man here, and are the true effect of religious discipline, we cannot but venerate in Johnson one of the most exercised minds that our holy religion hath ever formed. If there be any thoughtless enough to suppose such exercise the weakness of a great understanding, let them look up to Johnson, and be convinced that what he so earnestly practised must have a rational foundation.

[The two next letters are melancholy evidence of the pecuniary distress in which he was at this period involved. It is afflictive to contemplate the author of the Rambler and the Dictionary reduced to such precarious means of existence as the casual profits from magazines and reviews, and subjected to all the evils and affronts of a state of penury; but it, at the same time, raises our admiration and esteem to recollect that even in this season of distress he continued to share his mite with Miss Williams, Mr. Levett, and the other objects of his charitable regard.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"Tuesday, 19th Feb. 1756.

"DEAR SIR,—I return you my sincerest thanks for the favour² which you were pleased to do me two nights ago.

"Be pleased to accept of this little book³, which is all that I have published this winter. The inflammation is come again into my eye, so that I can write very little. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

² ["This letter was written in consequence of Mr. Richardson's having given bail for Dr. Johnson." The foregoing note is from Richardson's Correspondence; but there must be some mistake in the date of the letter itself. The 19th Feb. 1756, fell on a Thursday. As Johnson's handwriting is not easily read, perhaps the transcriber mistook Thursday for Tuesday.—ED.]

³ [No work of Johnson's appears to have been published separately about this time, except Williams's Account of the Longitude.—ED.]

[" TO MR. RICHARDSON.

"Gough Square, 16th March, 1756.

Gent. "SIR,—I am obliged to entreat
Mag. your assistance; I am now under
vol. 58. an arrest for five pounds eighteen
p. 479. shillings. Mr. Strahan, from whom
I should have received the necessary help
in this case, is not at home, and I am afraid
of not finding Mr. Millar. If you will be
so good as to send me this sum, I will very
gratefully repay you, and add it to all former
obligations. I am, sir, your most obedient
and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Sent six guineas¹.

"WITNESS WILLIAM RICHARDSON."]

[" DR. JOHNSON TO DR. WARTON."]

"15th April, 1756.

Mem. "DEAR SIR,—Though, when
of Dr. you and your brother were in town,
Warton, you did not think my humble habi-
p. 233. tation worth a visit, yet I will not
so far give way to sullenness as not to tell
you that I have lately seen an octavo book²
which I suspect to be yours, though I have
not yet read above ten pages. That way of
publishing, without acquainting your
friends, is a wicked trick. However, I will
not so far depend upon a mere conjecture as
to charge you with a fraud which I cannot
prove you to have committed.

"I should be glad to hear that you are
pleased with your new situation³. You
have now a kind of royalty, and are to be
answerable for your conduct to posterity.
I suppose you care not now to answer a letter,
except there be a lucky concurrence of
a postday with a holiday. These restraints
are troublesome for a time, but custom
makes them easy with the help of some hon-

¹ [Upon this Mr. Murphy regrets, "for the honour of an admired writer, not to find a more liberal entry—to his friend in distress he sent eight shillings more than was wanted! Had an incident of this kind occurred in one of his romances, Richardson would have known how to grace his hero; but in fictitious scenes generosity costs the writer nothing."—*Life*, p. 87. This is very unjust. We have seen that Mr. Richardson had, just the month before, been called upon to do Johnson a similar service; and it has been stated that about this period Richardson was his constant resource in difficulties of this kind. Richardson moreover had numerous calls of the same nature from other quarters, which he answered with a ready and well-regulated charity. Instead, therefore, of censuring him for not giving more, Mr. Murphy might have praised him for having done all that was required on the particular occasion.—Ed.]

² [His essay on the writings and genius of Pope.—Ed.]

³ [His appointment of head-master of Winchester school.—Ed.]

our, and a great deal of profit, and I doubt not but your abilities will obtain both.

"For my part, I have not lately done much. I have been ill in the winter, and my eye has been inflamed; but I please myself with the hopes of doing many things with which I have long pleased and deceived myself.

"What becomes of poor dear Collins⁵? I wrote him a letter which he never answered. I suppose writing is very troublesome to him. That man is no common loss. The moralists all talk of the uncertainty of fortune, and the transitoriness of beauty; but it is yet more dreadful to consider that the powers of the mind are equally liable to change, that understanding may make its appearance and depart, that it may blaze and expire.

"Let me not be long without a letter, and I will forgive you the omission of the visit; and if you can tell me that you are now more happy than before, you will give great pleasure to, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

His works this year were, an abstract or epitome, in octavo, of his folio Dictionary, and a few essays in a monthly publication, entitled "THE UNIVERSAL VISITER." Christopher Smart, with whose unhappy vacillation of mind he sincerely sympathised, was one of the stated undertakers of this miscellany; and it was to assist him that Johnson sometimes employed his pen. All the essays marked with two *asterisks* have been ascribed to him; but I am confident, from internal evidence, that of these, neither "The Life of Chaucer," "Reflections on the State of Portugal," nor an "Essay on Architecture," were written by him. I am equally confident, upon the same evidence, that he wrote "Further Thoughts on Agriculture †;" being the sequel of a very inferior essay on the same subject, and which, though carried on as if by the same hand, is both in thinking and expression so far above it, and so strikingly peculiar, as to leave no doubt of its true parent; and that he also wrote "A Dissertation on the State of Literature and Authors ‡," and "A Dissertation on the Epitaphs written by Pope*." The last of these, indeed, he afterwards added to his "Idler." Why the essays truly written by him are marked in the same manner with some which he did not write, I cannot explain; but with deference to those who have ascribed to him the three essays which I have rejected, they want all the characteristic marks of Johnsonian composition.

He engaged also to superintend and con-

⁴ [Collins died in this year.—Ed.]

tribute largely to another monthly publication, entitled "THE LITERARY MAGAZINE, OR UNIVERSAL REVIEW* 1;" the first number of which came out in May this year. What were his emoluments from this undertaking, and what other writers were employed in it, I have not discovered. He continued to write in it, with intermissions, till the fifteenth number; and I think that he never gave better proofs of the force, acuteness, and vivacity of his mind, than in this miscellany, whether we consider his original essays, or his reviews of the works of others. The "Preliminary Address†" to the publick is a proof how this great man could embellish, with the graces of superior composition, even so trite a thing as the plan of a magazine.

His original essays are, "An introduction to the Political State of Great Britain†;" "Remarks on the Militia Bill †;" "Observations on his Britannick Majesty's Treaties with the Empress of Russia and the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel †;" "Observations on the present State of Affairs†;" and "Memoirs of Frederick III. King of Prussia†." In all these he displays extensive political knowledge and sagacity, expressed with uncommon energy and perspicuity, without any of those words which he sometimes took a pleasure in adopting, in imitation of Sir Thomas Browne; of whose "Christian Morals" he this year gave an edition, with his "Life*" prefixed to it, which is one of Johnson's best biographical performances. In one instance only in these essays has he indulged his *Brownism*. Dr. Robertson, the historian, mentioned it to me, as having at once convinced him that Johnson was the author of the "Memoirs of the King of Prussia." Speaking of the pride which the old king, the father of his hero, took in being master of the tallest regiment in Europe, he says, "To review this *towering* regiment was his daily pleasure; and to perpetuate it was so much his care, that when he met a tall woman he immediately commanded one of his *Titanian* retinue to marry her, that they might *propagate procerity*." For this Anglo-Latian word *procerity*, Johnson had, however, the authority of Addison.

His reviews are of the following books: "Birch's History of the Royal Society†;" "Murphy's Gray's-Inn Journal†;" "Warton's Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope, vol. I.†;" "Hampton's Translation of Polybius†;" "Blackwell's Memoirs of the Court of Augustus†;" "Russel's Natural History of Aleppo†;" "Sir Isaac Newton's Arguments in Proof of a Deity†;"

¹ [Probably this was the execution of the design which he mentioned to Dr. Adams. See *ante*, p. 122.—Ed.]

"Borlase's History of the Isles of Scilly†;" "Holme's Experiments on Bleaching†;" "Browne's Christian Moral†;" "Hales on distilling Sea-Water, Ventilators in Ships, and curing an ill Taste in Milk†;" "Lucas's Essay on Water†;" "Keith's Catalogue of the Scottish Bishops†;" "Browne's History of Jamaica†;" "Philosophical Transactions, vol. XLIX.†;" "Mrs. Lenox's Translation of Sully's Memoirs*;" "Miscellanies by Elizabeth Harrison†;" "Evans's Map and Account of the Middle Colonies in America†;" "Letter on the Case of Admiral Byng*;" "Appeal to the People concerning Admiral Byng*;" "Hanway's Eight Days' Journey, and Essay on Tea*;" "The Cadet, a Military Treatise†;" "Some further Particulars in Relation to the Case of admiral Byng, by a Gentleman of Oxford*;" "The Conduct of the Ministry relating to the present War impartially examined†;" "A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil*." All these, from internal evidence, were written by Johnson: some of them I know he avowed, and have marked them with an *asterisk* accordingly. Mr. Thomas Davies, indeed, ascribed to him the Review of Mr. Burke's "Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful;" and Sir John Hawkins, with equal discernment, has inserted it in his collection of Johnson's works: whereas it has no resemblance to Johnson's composition, and is well known to have been written by Mr. Murphy, who has acknowledged it to me and many others.

It is worthy of remark, in justice to Johnson's political character, which has been misrepresented² as abjectly submissive to power, that his "Observation on the present State of Affairs" glow with as animated a spirit of constitutional liberty as can be found any where. Thus he begins:

"The time is now come, in which every Englishman expects to be informed of the national affairs; and in which he has a right to have that expectation gratified. For, whatever may be urged by ministers, or

² [Dr. Johnson's political bias is nowhere, that the editor knows, represented as having been, *at this date*, "abjectly submissive to power." On the contrary, he was supposed, and with some justice, to be adverse to the reigning house and its successive ministers. The charge (which Mr. Boswell thus ingeniously answers by *shifting* it) was, that *after the grant of his pension* he became too "submissive to power;" but the truth is, that in spite of his party bias, Johnson was always a friend to discipline in the political, as in the social world; and although he joined in the clamour against Walpole, and hated George the Second, his general disposition was always to support the monarchical part of the constitution.—Ed.]

those whom vanity or interest make the followers of ministers, concerning the necessity of confidence in our governours, and the presumption of prying with profane eyes into the recesses of policy, it is evident that this reverence can be claimed only by counsels yet unexecuted, and projects suspended in deliberation. But when a design has ended in miscarriage or success, when every eye and every ear is witness to general discontent, or general satisfaction, it is then a proper time to disentangle confusion and illustrate obscurity; to show by what causes every event was produced, and in what effects it was likely to terminate; to lay down with distinct particularity what rumour always huddles in general exclamation, or perplexes by indigested narratives; to show whence happiness or calamity is derived, and whence it may be expected; and honestly to lay before the people what inquiry can gather of the past, and conjecture can estimate of the future."

Here we have it assumed as an incontrovertible principle, that in this country the people are the superintendents of the conduct and measures of those by whom government is administered; of the beneficial effect of which the present reign afforded an illustrious example, when addresses from all parts of the kingdom controlled an audacious attempt to introduce a new power subversive of the crown¹.

A still stronger proof of his patriotick spirit appears in his review of an "Essay on Waters, by Dr. Lucas²," of whom, after describing him as a man well known to the world for his daring defiance to power, when he thought it exerted on the side of wrong, he thus speaks:

"The Irish ministers drove him from his native country by a proclamation, in which they charge him with crimes of which they never intended to be called to the proof, and oppressed him by methods equally irresistible by guilt and innocence.

"Let the man thus driven into exile, for having been the friend of his country, be received in every other place as a confessor of liberty; and let the tools of power be taught in time, that they may rob, but cannot impoverish."

Some of his reviews in this magazine

¹ [Mr. Boswell means Mr. Fox's celebrated *India Bill*, as an adversary of which he distinguished himself as much as a man in a private station could do.—ED.]

² [Dr. Lucas was an apothecary in Dublin, who brought himself into public notice and a high degree of popularity by his writings and speeches against the government. He was elected representative of the city of Dublin in 1761; and a marble statue to his honor is erected in the Royal Exchange of that city. He died in Nov. 1771.—ED.]

are very short accounts of the pieces noticed, and I mention them only that Dr. Johnson's opinion of the works may be known; but many of them are examples of elaborate criticism, in the most masterly style. In his review of the "Memoirs of the Court of Augustus," he has the resolution to think and speak from his own mind, regardless of the cant transmitted from age to age, in praise of the ancient Romans. Thus:

"I know not why any one but a school-boy in his declamation should whine over the commonwealth of Rome which grew great only by the misery of the rest of mankind. The Romans, like others, as soon as they grew rich, grew corrupt; and in their corruption sold the lives and freedoms of themselves, and of one another."

Again,

"A people, who while they were poor robbed mankind; and as soon as they became rich robbed one another."

In his review of the *Miscellanies* in prose and verse, published by Elizabeth Harrison, but written by many hands, he gives an eminent proof at once of his orthodoxy and candour.

"The authours of the essays in prose seem generally to have imitated, or tried to imitate, the copiousness and luxuriance of Mrs. Rowe. This, however, is not all their praise; they have laboured to add to her brightness of imagery, her purity of sentiments. The poets have had Dr. Watts before their eyes; a writer who, if he stood not in the first class of genius, compensated that defect by a ready application of his powers to the promotion of piety. The attempt to employ the ornaments of romance in the decoration of religion was, I think, first made by Mr. Boyle's *Martyrdom of Theodora*; but Boyle's philosophical studies did not allow him time for the cultivation of style: and the completion of the great design was reserved for Mrs. Rowe. Dr. Watts was one of the first who taught the dissenters to write and speak like other men, by showing them that elegance might consist with piety. They would have both done honour to a better society, for they had that charity which might well make their failings forgotten, and with which the whole Christian world might wish for communion. They were pure from all the heresies of an age, to which every opinion is become a favourite that the universal church has hitherto detested!"

"This praise the general interest of mankind requires to be given to writers who please and do not corrupt, who instruct and do not weary. But to them all human eulogies are vain, whom I believe applauded by angels, and numbered with the just."

His defence of tea against Mr. Jonas

Hanway's violent attack upon that elegant and popular beverage, shows how very well a man of genius can write upon the slightest subject, when he writes, as the Italians say, *con amore*: I suppose no person ever enjoyed with more relish the infusion of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank of it at all hours were so great, that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong, not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it¹. He assured me that he never felt the least inconvenience from it; which is a proof that the fault of his constitution was rather a too great tension of fibres, than the contrary. Mr. Hanway wrote an angry answer to Johnson's review of his Essay on Tea, and Johnson, after a full and deliberate pause, made a reply to it; the only instance, I believe, in the whole course of his life, when he condescended to oppose any thing that was written against him. I suppose when he thought of any of his little antagonists, he was ever justly aware of the high sentiment of Ajax in Ovid:

"Iste tulit pretium jam nunc certaminis hujus,
Qui, cum victus erit, mecum certasse feretur."

But, indeed, the good Mr. Hanway laid himself so open to ridicule, that Johnson's animadversions upon his attack were chiefly to make sport.

The generosity with which he pleads the cause of Admiral Byng is highly to the honour of his heart and spirit. Though Voltaire affects to be witty upon the fate of that unfortunate officer, observing that he was shot "*pour encourager les autres*," the nation has long been satisfied that his life was sacrificed to the political fervour of the times². In the vault belonging to the Torrington family, in the church of South-hill, in Bedfordshire, there is the following

¹ [Sir John Hawkins calls his addiction to it *unmanly*, and almost gives it the colour of a crime. The Rev. Mr. Parker, of Henley, is in possession of a teapot which belonged to Dr. Johnson, and which contains *above two quarts*.—ED.]

² [Nothing can be more unfounded than the assertion that Byng fell a martyr to *political party*. It is impossible to read the trial without being convinced that he had misconducted himself; and the extraordinary proceedings in both houses of parliament subsequent to his trial prove at once the zeal of his friends to invalidate the finding of the Court-Martial, and the absence of all reason for doing so. By a strange coincidence of circumstances, it happened that there was a total change of ministry between his condemnation and his death; so that one party presided at his trial and another at his execution:—there can be no stronger proof that he was not a political martyr. See this subject treated at large in the *Quarterly Review*, for March, 1822, article *Lord Oxford's Memoirs*.—ED.]

epitaph upon his monument, which I have transcribed:

"TO THE PERPETUAL DISGRACE
OF PUBLIC JUSTICE,
THE HONOURABLE JOHN BYNG, ESQ.
ADMIRAL OF THE BLUE,
FELL A MARTYR TO POLITICAL
PERSECUTION,
MARCH 14, IN THE YEAR 1757;
WHEN BRAVERY AND LOYALTY
WERE INSUFFICIENT SECURITIES
FOR THE LIFE AND HONOUR OF
A NAVAL OFFICER."

Johnson's most exquisite critical essay in the Literary Magazine, and indeed any where, is his review of Soame Jenyns's "Inquiry into the Origin of Evil." Jenyns was possessed of lively talents, and a style eminently pure and easy, and could very happily play with a light subject, either in prose or verse; but when he speculated on that most difficult and execrating question, the Origin of Evil, he "ventured far beyond his depth," and accordingly, was exposed by Johnson, both with acute argument and brilliant wit. I remember when the late Mr. Bicknell's humourous performance, entitled "The Musical Travels of Joel Collyer," in which a slight attempt is made to ridicule Johnson, was ascribed to Soame Jenyns, "Ha! (said Johnson) I thought I had given *him* enough of it."

His triumph over Jenyns is thus described by my friend Mr. Courtenay in his "Poetical Review of the literary and moral Character of Dr. Johnson;" a performance of such merit, that had I not been honoured with a very kind and partial notice in it, I should echo the sentiments of men of the first taste loudly in its praise:

"When specious sophists with presumption scan
The source of evil hidden still from man;
Revive Arabian tales, and vainly hope
To rival St. John, and his scholar Pope:
Though metaphysics spread the gloom of night,
By reason's star he guides our aching sight;
The bounds of knowledge marks, and points the
way
To pathless wastes, where wilder'd sages stray;
Where, like a farthing link-boy, Jenyns stands,
And the dim torch drops from his feeble hands³."

³ Some time after Dr. Johnson's death, there appeared in the newspapers and magazines [the following] illiberal and petulant attack upon him, in the form of an Epitaph, under the name of Mr. Soame Jenyns, very unworthy of that gentleman, who had quietly submitted to the critical lash while Johnson lived. It assumed, as characteristic of him, all the vulgar circumstances of abuse which had circulated amongst the ignorant.

[EPITAPH. *By Soame Jenyns, Esq.*

"Here lies poor JOHNSON. Reader, have a care,
Tread lightly, lest you rouse a sleeping bear;

Tyers,
Biogr.
Sketch,
p. 11.

[It was about this time that Mr. Tyers, by the introduction of Christopher Smart, formed that acquaintance with Johnson which lasted to the doctor's death, with, it is believed, unabated cordiality.

Johnson, whose hearing was not always good, understood Smart called him by the name of Thyer, that eminent scholar, librarian of Manchester, and a nonjuror. This mistake was rather beneficial than otherwise to Mr. Tyers. Johnson had been much indisposed all that day, and repeated a psalm he had just translated, during his affliction, into Latin verse, and did not commit to paper. For so retentive was his memory, that he could always recover whatever he lent to that faculty. Smart in return recited some of his own Latin compositions. He had translated with success, and to Mr. Pope's *satisfaction*, his *St. Cecilia* Ode.

Come when you would, early or late (for Johnson desired to be called from bed when a visitor was at the door) the tea-table was sure to be spread, *TE veniente die, TE decedente*.—With *TEA* he cheered the morning; with *TEA* he solaced the evening. This

Religious, moral, generous, and humane
He was—but self-sufficient, rude, and vain:
Ill-bred and over-bearing in dispute,
A scholar and a Christian—yet a brute.
Would you know all his wisdom and his folly,
His actions, sayings, mirth and melancholy,
Boswell and *Thrale*, retailers of his wit,
Will tell you how he wrote, and talked, and cough'd,
and spit.”

Gent. Mag. 1736, p. 423.]

This was an unbecoming indulgence of puny resentment, at a time when he himself was at a very advanced age, and had a near prospect of descending to the grave. I was truly sorry for it; for he was then become an avowed and (as my Lord Bishop of London, who had a serious conversation with him on the subject, assures me) a sincere Christian. He could not expect that Johnson's numerous friends would patiently bear to have the memory of their master stigmatized by no mean pen, but that, at least, one would be found to retort. Accordingly, this unjust and sarcastick Epitaph, was met in the same publick field by an answer, in terms by no means soft, and such as wanton provocation only could justify:

EPITAPH,

Prepared for a creature not quite dead yet.

“Here lies a little ugly nauseous elf,
Who judging only from his wretched self,
Feebly attempted, petulant and vain,
The ‘Origin of Evil’ to explain.
A mighty genius at this elf displeas'd,
With a strong critick grasp the urchin squeez'd.
For thirty years its coward spleen it kept,
Till in the dust the mighty Genius slept:
Then stunk and fretted in expiring snuff,
And blink'd at JOHNSON with its last poor puff.”

[The answer was no doubt by Mr. Boswell himself, and does more credit to his zeal than his poetical talents.—Ed.]

pun upon his favourite liquor he heard with a smile. Though his time seemed to be bespoke, and quite engrossed, his house was always open to all his acquaintance, new and old. His amanuensis has given up his pen, the printer's devil has waited on the stairs for a proof sheet, and the press has often stood still, while his visitors were delighted and instructed. No subject ever came amiss to him. He could transfer his thoughts from one thing to another with the most accommodating facility. He had the art, for which Locke was famous, of leading people to talk on their favourite subjects, and on what they knew best. By this he acquired a great deal of information. What he once heard he rarely forgot. They gave him their best conversation, and he generally made them pleased with themselves, for endeavouring to please him. Poet Smart used to relate, “that his first conversation with Johnson was of such variety and length, that it began with poetry and ended at fluxions.” He always talked as if he was talking upon oath. He was the wisest person, and had the most knowledge in ready cash, that Tyers ever knew. Johnson's advice was consulted on all occasions. He was known to be a good casuist, and therefore had many cases submitted for his judgment. His conversation, in the judgment of several, was thought to be equal to his correct writings. Perhaps the tongue will throw out more animated expressions than the pen. He said the most common things in the newest manner. He always commanded attention and regard. His person, though unadorned with dress, and even deformed by neglect, made you expect something, and you was hardly ever disappointed. His manner was interesting: the tone of his voice, and the sincerity of his expressions, even when they did not captivate your affections, or carry conviction, prevented contempt. If the line, by Pope, on his father, can be applied to Johnson, it is characteristic of him, who never swore, nor told a lie. If the first part is not confined to the oath of allegiance¹, it will be useful to insert it.

“Nor dared an oath, nor hazarded a lie.”

It must be owned, his countenance, on some occasions, resembled too much the medallick likeness of Magliabechi², as exhibited before the printed account of him by Mr. Spence. No man dared to take liberties

¹ [Mr. Tyers seems to mean that the *oath of allegiance* is the only justifiable oath; and in allusion, perhaps, to Johnson's political principles, he insinuates, that even *that* oath he would not have willingly taken.—Ed.]

² [Librarian to the Grand Dukes of Florence, and celebrated for vast erudition and extreme slovenliness. He died in 1714, aged 80.—Ed.]

with him, nor flatly contradict him; for he could repel any attack, having always about him the weapons of ridicule, of wit, and of argument. It must be owned, that some who had the desire to be admitted to him thought him too dogmatical, and as exacting too much homage to his opinions, and came no more. For they said, while he presided in his library, surrounded by his admirers, he would, "like Cato, give his little senate laws." He had great knowledge in the science of human nature, and of the fashions and customs of life, and knew the world well. He had often in his mouth this line of Pope,

"The proper study of mankind is man."

He was desirous of surveying life in all its modes and forms, and in all climates. He once offered to attend his friend Vansittart¹ to India, who was invited there to make a fortune; but it did not take place. He talked much of travelling into Poland, to observe the life of the Palatines, the account of which struck his curiosity very much.

His benevolence to mankind was known to all who knew him. Though so declared a friend to the church of England and even a friend to the convocation, it assuredly was not in his wish to persecute for speculative notions. He used to say, he had no quarrel with any order of men, unless they disbelieved in revelation and a future state. He would indeed have sided with Sacheverell against Daniel Burgess, if he thought the church was in danger. His hand and his heart were always open to charity. The objects under his own roof were only a few of the subjects for relief. He was ever at the head of subscription in cases of distress. His guinea, as he said of another man of a bountiful disposition, was always ready. He wrote an exhortation to publick bounty. He drew up a paper to recommend the French prisoners, in the last war but one, to the English benevolence; which was of service. He implored the hand of benevolence for others, even when he almost seemed a proper object of it himself.

It may be inserted here, that Johnson, soon after his coming to London, had thought of writing a history of the revival of learning. The booksellers had other service to offer him. But he never undertook it.

¹ [This proposition of an adventure to India is nowhere else, that the editor has seen, alluded to. Dr. Vansittart, of Oxford, was a great friend of Johnson's, and it is possible that he may have been invited by his younger brother, Mr. Henry Vansittart, when Governor of Bengal, to join him in India, and Dr. Vansittart might perhaps have had some idea of including Johnson in the arrangement. It seems doubtful whether Johnson was personally acquainted with Mr. Henry Vansittart.—Ed.]

The proprietors of the Universal History wished him to take any part in that voluminous work. But he declined their offer².

This gentleman, whom he familiarly called Tom Tyers, was the son of Mr. Jonathan Tyers, the founder of that excellent place of publick amusement, Vauxhall Gardens, which must ever be an estate to the proprietor, as it is peculiarly adapted to the taste of the English nation; there being a mixture of curious show, gay exhibition, musick, vocal and instrumental, not too refined for the general ear,—for all which only a shilling is paid³; and, though last, not least, good eating and drinking for those who choose to purchase that regale. Mr. Thomas Tyers was bred to the law; but having a handsome fortune, vivacity of temper, and eccentricity of mind, he could not confine himself to the regularity of practice. He therefore ran about the world with a pleasant carelessness, amusing every body by his desultory conversation. He abounded in anecdote, but was not sufficiently attentive to accuracy⁴. I therefore cannot

² [Although much of the foregoing extract is founded on Mr. Tyers's later observations, yet, as it refers more particularly to the impression made at the commencement of their acquaintance, when there is little said by Mr. Boswell of Dr. Johnson's personal history, it is thought right to insert the whole in this place. Here, too, is added Mr. Boswell's account of Mr. Tyers, which, in the former editions, is found sub anno 1778.—Ed.]

³ In summer, 1792, additional and more expensive decorations having been introduced, the price of admission was raised to two shillings. I cannot approve of this. The company may be more select; but a number of the honest commonalty are, I fear, excluded from sharing in elegant and innocent entertainment. An attempt to abolish the one-shilling gallery at the playhouse has been very properly counteracted.—BOSWELL. [The admission has been since raised to four shillings, without improving, it is said, either the class of company, or the profits of the proprietors. Ed.]

⁴ [Mr. Boswell, who was justly proud of the happy diligence with which he made daily notes of Dr. Johnson's conversation, is too apt to blame every other reporter of anecdotes for "inaccuracy." We have seen, and shall have future occasions to observe, that his own written records are sometimes liable to the same imputation, and of course still more so must be the relations of those who not only made no notes, but who, at the time, never contemplated writing. Mr. Tyers very modestly calls his pamphlet a *sketch*, and he certainly writes, as Mr. Boswell says, in a careless and desultory style; but there seems, on examination, no reason to doubt the accuracy of his *facts*; indeed, all the other biographers (not excepting Mr. Boswell himself) have either borrowed from Tyers, or have told the same stories in the same way as he has done, and thus vouch for his general accuracy.—Ed.]

venture to avail myself much of a biographical sketch of Johnson which he published, being one among the various persons ambitious of appending their names to that of my illustrious friend. That sketch is, however, an entertaining little collection of fragments. Those which he published of Pope and Addison are of higher merit; but his fame must chiefly rest upon his "Political Conferences," in which he introduces several eminent persons delivering their sentiments in the way of dialogue, and discovers a considerable share of learning, various knowledge, and discernment of character. This much may I be allowed to say of a man who was exceedingly obliging to me, and who lived with Dr. Johnson in as easy a manner as almost any of his very numerous acquaintance.

This year Mr. William Payne, brother of the respectable bookseller of that name, published "An Introduction to the Game of Draughts," to which Johnson contributed a Dedication to the Earl of Rochford*, and a Preface*, both of which are admirably adapted to the treatise to which they are prefixed. Johnson, I believe, did not play at draughts after leaving college, by which he suffered; for it would have afforded him an innocent soothing relief from the melancholy which distressed him so often. I have heard him regret that he had not learned to play at cards; and the game at draughts we know is peculiarly calculated to fix the attention without straining it. There is a composure and gravity in draughts which insensibly, tranquillizes the mind; and, accordingly, the Dutch are fond of it, as they are of smoking, of the sedative influence of which, though he himself never smoked, he had a high opinion¹. [Sir J. Hawkins heard him say that insanity had grown more frequent since smoking had gone out of fashion.] Besides, there is in draughts some exercise of the faculties; and, accordingly, Johnson wishing to dignify the subject in his Dedication with what is most estimable in it, observes, "Triflers may find or make anything a trifle: but since it is the great characteristick of a wise man to see events in their causes, to obviate consequences, and ascertain contingencies, your lordship will think nothing a trifle by which the mind is inured to caution, foresight, and circumspection."

As one of the little occasional advantages which he did not disdain to take by his pen, as a man whose profession was literature, he this year accepted of a guinea from Mr. Robert Dodsley, for writing the introduction to "The London Chronicle," an evening newspaper; and even in so slight a performance exhibited peculiar talents. This

Chronicle still subsists, and from what I observed, when I was abroad, has a more extensive circulation upon the continent than any of the English newspapers. It was constantly read by Johnson himself; and it is but just to observe, that it has all along been distinguished for good sense, accuracy, moderation, and delicacy.

Another instance of the same nature has been communicated² to me by the Rev. Dr. Thomas Campbell³, who has done himself considerable credit by his own writings. "Sitting with Dr. Johnson one morning alone, he asked me if I had known Dr. Madden, who was author of the premium-scheme⁴ in Ireland. On my answering in the affirmative, and also that I had for some years lived in his neighbourhood, &c. he begged of me that when I returned to Ireland, I would endeavour to procure for him a poem of Dr. Madden's called 'Boulter's Monument'⁵. 'The reason (said he) why I wish for it is this: when Dr. Madden came to London, he submitted that work to my castigation; and I remember I blotted a great many lines, and might have blotted many more without making the poem worse⁶. However, the doctor was very

² [Hawkins had told the same story on Johnson's written authority, but Poswell is always reluctant to have any obligations to Hawkins.—Ed.]

³ [See *post*, 6th April, 1775.—Ed.]

⁴ In the college of Dublin, four quarterly examinations of the students are held in each year, in various prescribed branches of literature and science; and premiums, consisting of books impressed with the college arms, are judged by examiners (composed generally of the junior fellows), to those who have most distinguished themselves in the several classes, after a very rigid trial, which lasts two days: this regulation, which has subsisted about seventy years, has been attended with the most beneficial effects. Dr. Samuel Madden was the first proposer in that university. They were instituted about the year 1734. He was also one of the founders of the Dublin Society for the encouragement of arts and agriculture. In addition to the premiums which were and are still annually given by that society for this purpose, Dr. Madden gave others from his own fund. Hence he was usually called "Premium Madden."—MALONE.

⁵ Dr. Hugh Boulter, archbishop of Armagh, and primate of Ireland. He died in Sept. 27, 1742, at which time he was, for the thirteenth time, one of the lords justices of that kingdom. Johnson speaks of him in high terms of commendation, in his *Life of Ambrose Philips*.—BOSWELL.

⁶ Dr. Madden wrote very bad verses. Vide those prefixed to Leland's *Life of Philip of Macedon*, 4to. 1758.—KEARNEY. [It is needless to look further than the work in question. Boulter's Monument is, in spite of Johnson's mending hand, exceedingly insipid.—Ed.]

¹ See *post*, 19th Aug. 1773.

thankful, and very generous, for he gave me ten guineas, *which was to me at that time a great sum.*” [Such casual emolument

Hawk. p. 391, 392. as these Johnson frequently derived from his profession of an authour. For the dedication to his present majesty, of Adams’s book on the use of the globes, he was, as himself informed me, gratified with a present of a very curious meteorological instrument, of a new and ingenious construction.

About this time, as it is supposed, he composed pulpit discourses for sundry clergymen, and for these, he made no scruple of confessing, he was paid: his price, I am informed, was a moderate one, a guinea; and such was his notion of justice, that having been paid, he considered them so absolutely the property of the purchaser, as to renounce all claim to them. He reckoned that he had written about forty sermons; but, except as to some, knew not in what hands they were—“I have,” said he, “been paid for them, and have no right to inquire about them¹.”]

Hawk. p. 360, 361. [About the year 1756, time had produced a change in the situation of many of Johnson’s friends, who were used to meet him in Ivy-lane.

Death had taken from them M^r Ghie; Barker went to settle as a practising physician at Trowbridge; Dyer went abroad; Hawkesworth was busied in forming new connexions; and Sir J. Hawkins had lately made one that removed from him all temptations to pass his evenings from home. The consequence was, that the club at the King’s-head broke up, and he who had first formed it into a society was left with fewer around him than were able to support it.

All this while, the booksellers, who, by his own confession, were his best friends, had their eyes upon Johnson, and reflected with some concern on what seemed to them a misapplication of his talents. The furnishing magazines, reviews, and even newspapers, with literary intelligence, and the authours of books, who could not write them for themselves, with dedications and prefaces, they looked on as employments beneath him, who had attained to such eminence as a writer; they, therefore, in the year 1756, found out for him such a one as seemed to afford a prospect both of amusement and profit: this was an edition of Shakspeare’s dramatic works, which, by a concurrence of circumstances, was now become necessary, to answer the increasing demand of the publick for the writings of that authour.

¹ [This practice is of very doubtful propriety. In the case of an *elective* chapel, it might, as the Bishop of Ferns observes to me, amount to an absolute fraud, as a person might be chosen for the merits of a sermon not written by himself. See *ante*, p. 109, *note*.—Ed.]

In consequence of this application], he this year resumed his scheme of giving an edition of Shakspeare with notes. He issued Proposals of considerable length², in which he showed that he perfectly well knew what a variety of research such an undertaking required; but his indolence prevented him from pursuing it with that diligence which alone can collect those scattered facts, that genius, however acute, penetrating, and luminous, cannot discover by its own force. It is remarkable, that this time his fancied activity was for the moment so vigorous, that he promised his work should be published before Christmas, 1757. Yet nine years elapsed before it saw the light. His throes in bringing it forth had been severe and remittent; and at last we may almost conclude that the Cæsarean operation was performed by the knife of Churchill, whose upbraiding satire, I dare say, made Johnson’s friend urge him to despatch.

“He for subscribers baits his hook,
And takes your cash; but where’s the book?
No matter where; wise fear, you know,
Forbids the robbing of a foe;
But what, to serve our private ends,
Forbids the cheating of our friends?”

A stranger to Johnson’s character and temper would have thought, that the study of an authour, whose skill in the science of human life was so deep, and whose perfections were so many and various as to be above the reach of all praise, must have been the most pleasing employment that his imagination could suggest, but it was not so: in a visit that he one morning made to Sir J. Hawkins, the latter congratulated him on his being now engaged in a work that suited his genius, and that, requiring none of that severe application which his Dictionary had condemned him to, would, no doubt, be executed *con amore*.—His answer was, “I look upon this as I did upon the Dictionary: it is all *work*, and my inducement to it is not love or desire of fame, but the want of money, which is the only motive to writing that I know of.”—And the event was, Sir J. Hawkins adds, evidence to him, that in this speech he declared his genuine sentiments; for neither did he set himself to collect early editions of his authour, old plays, translations of histories, and of the classics, and other materials necessary for his purpose, nor could he be prevailed on to enter into that course of reading, without which it seemed impossible to come at the sense of his authour. It was provoking to all his friends to see him waste his days, his weeks, and

Hawk.
p. 362.

² They have been reprinted by Mr. Malone in the preface to his edition of Shakspeare.—Boswell.

his months so long, that they feared a mental lethargy had seized him, out of which he would never recover. In this, however, they were happily deceived, for, after two years' inactivity, they find him roused to action, and engaged—not in the prosecution of the work, for the completion whereof he stood doubly bound, but—in a new one, the furnishing a series of periodical essays, entitled, and it may be thought not improperly, "The Idler," as his motive to the employment was aversion to a labour he had undertaken, though in the execution, it must be owned, it merited a better name.]

About this period he was offered a living of considerable value in Lincolnshire, if he were inclined to enter into holy orders. It was a rectory in the gift of Mr. Langton, the father of his much-valued friend. But he did not accept of it; partly I believe from a conscientious motive, being persuaded that his temper and habits rendered him unfit for that assiduous and familiar instruction of the vulgar and ignorant, which he held to be an essential duty in a clergyman; and partly because his love of a London life was so strong, that he would have thought himself an exile in any other place, particularly if residing in the country. Whoever would wish to see his thoughts upon that subject displayed in their full force, may peruse the *Adventurer*, Number 126.

In 1757 it does not appear that he published any thing, except some of those articles in the *Literary Magazine*, which have been mentioned. That magazine, after Johnson ceased to write in it, gradually declined, though the popular epithet of *Antigallican* was added to it; and in July, 1758, it expired. He probably prepared a part of his *Shakspeare* this year, and he dictated a speech on the subject of an address to the throne, after the expedition to Rochefort, which was delivered by one of his friends, I know not in what public meeting. It is printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for October, 1785 (p. 764), as his, and bears sufficient marks of authenticity.

By the favour of Mr. Joseph Cooper Walker, of the treasury, Dublin, I have obtained a copy of the following letter from Johnson to the venerable authour of "*Dissertations on the History of Ireland.*"

TO CHARLES O'CONNOR, ESQ.¹

London, 9 April, 1757.

"SIR,—I have lately, by the favour of Mr. Faulkner, seen your account of Ireland,

¹ Of this gentleman, who died at his seat at Ballinagare, in the county of Roscommon, in Ireland, July 1, 1791, in his eighty-second year, some account may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of that date. Of the work here alluded to by Dr. Johnson—"Dissertations on the History of Ireland"—a second and much improved

edition was published by the authour in 1766.—MALONE.

and cannot forbear to solicit a prosecution of your design. Sir William Temple complains that Ireland is less known than any other country, as to its ancient state. The natives have had little leisure, and little encouragement for inquiry; and strangers, not knowing the language, have had no ability.

"I have long wished that the Irish literature were cultivated². Ireland is known by tradition to have been once the seat of piety and learning; and surely it would be very acceptable to all those who are curious either in the original of nations, or the affinities of languages, to be further informed of the revolution of a people so ancient, and once so illustrious.

"What relation there is between the Welsh and Irish language, or between the language of Ireland and that of Biscay, deserves inquiry. Of these provincial and unextended tongues, it seldom happens that more than one are understood by any one man; and, therefore, it seldom happens that a fair comparison can be made. I hope you will continue to cultivate this kind of learning, which has too long lain neglected, and which, if it be suffered to remain in oblivion for another century, may, perhaps, never be retrieved. As I wish well to all useful undertakings, I would not forbear to let you know how much you deserve, in my opinion, from all lovers of study, and how much pleasure your work has given to, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REV. MR. THOMAS WARTON.

(London), 21 June, 1757.

"DEAR SIR,—Dr. Marsili, of Padua, a learned gentleman, and good Latin poet, has a mind to see Oxford. I have given him a letter to Dr. Huddersford³, and shall be glad if you will introduce him, and show him any thing in Oxford.

proved edition was published by the authour in 1766.—MALONE.

² The celebrated orator, Mr. Flood, has shown himself to be of Dr. Johnson's opinion; having by his will bequeathed his estate, after the death of his wife Lady Frances, to the University of Dublin; desiring that immediately after the said estate shall come into their possession, they shall appoint two professors, one for the study of the native Erse or Irish language, and the other for the study of Irish antiquities and Irish history, and for the study of any other European language illustrative of, or auxiliary to, the study of Irish antiquities or Irish history: and that they shall give yearly two liberal premiums for two compositions, one in verse, and the other in prose, in the Irish language.—BOSWELL.

Since the above was written, Mr. Flood's will has been set aside, after a trial at bar, in the court of exchequer in Ireland.—MALONE.

³ Now, or late, vice-chancellor.—WARTON.

"I am printing my new edition of Shakspeare.

"I long to see you all, but cannot conveniently come yet. You might write to me now and then, if you were good for any thing. But *honores mutant mores*. Professors forget their friends. I shall certainly complain to Miss Jones². I am, your, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Please to make my compliments to Mr. Wise."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. OF TRIN. COLL. OXFORD³.

"28 June, 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—Though I might have expected to hear from you, upon your entrance into a new state of life at a new place, yet recollecting (not without some degree of shame) that I owe you a letter upon an old account, I think it my part to write first. This, indeed, I do not only from complaisance, but from interest; for living on in the old way, I am very glad of a correspondent so capable as yourself, to diversify the hours. You have, at present, too many novelties about you to need any help from me to drive along your time.

"I know not any thing more pleasant, or more instructive, than to compare experience with expectation, or to register from time to time the difference between idea and reality. It is by this kind of observation that we grow daily less liable to be disappointed. You, who are very capable of anticipating futurity, and raising phantoms before your own eyes, must often have imagined to yourself an academical life, and have conceived what would be the manners, the views and the conversation, of men devoted to letters; how they would choose their companions, how they would direct their studies, and how they would regulate

¹ Mr. Warton was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford in the preceding year.—WARTON.

² Miss Jones lived at Oxford, and was often of our parties. She was a very ingenious poetess, and published a volume of poems; and, on the whole, was a most sensible, agreeable, and amiable woman. She was sister to the Reverend River Jones, chanter of Christ-church cathedral at Oxford, and Johnson used to call her the *chantress*. I have heard him often address her in this passage from "*Il Penseroso*:"

"Thee, chantress, oft the woods among
I woo, &c."

She died unmarried.—WARTON.

³ [This letter is dated June, 1758, and so placed by Mr. Boswell; but it is evident that this must be a mistake; for it is written on Mr. Langton's first entrance into college life; and we shall see in the letter dated June 1, 1758 (p. 143), that Langton had been already some time the pupil of Mr. Warton. The true date, therefore, of this letter was probably June, 1757.—ED.]

their lives. Let me know what you expected, and what you have found. At least record it to yourself before custom has reconciled you to the scenes before you, and the disparity of your discoveries to your hopes has vanished from your mind. It is a rule never to be forgotten, that whatever strikes strongly should be described while the first impression remains fresh upon the mind.

"I love, dear sir, to think on you, and therefore should willingly write more to you, but that the post will not now give me leave to do more than send my compliments to Mr. Warton, and tell you that I am, dear sir, most affectionately, your very humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Burney having enclosed to him an extract from the review of his Dictionary in the *Bibliothèque des Savans*⁴, and a list of subscribers to his Shakspeare, which Mr. Burney had procured in Norfolk, he wrote the following answer:

"TO MR. BURNEY, IN LYNNE, NORFOLK.

"Gough-square, 24 Dec. 1757.

"SIR,—That I may show myself sensible of your favours, and not commit the same fault a second time, I make haste to answer the letter which I received this morning. The truth is, the other likewise was received, and I wrote an answer; but being desirous to transmit you some proposals and receipts, I waited till I could find a convenient conveyance, and day was passed after day, till other things drove it from my thoughts; yet not so, but that I remember with great pleasure your commendation of my Dictionary. Your praise was welcome, not only because I believe it was sincere, but because praise has been very scarce. A man of your candour will be surprised when I tell you that among all my acquaintances there were only two, who, upon the publication of my book, did not endeavour to depress me with threats of censure from the publick, or with objections learned from those who had learned them from my own preface. Yours is the only letter of good-will that I have received; though, indeed, I am promised something of that sort from Sweden.

"How my new edition of Shakspeare will be received I know not; the subscription has not been very successful. I shall publish about March.

"If you can direct me how to send proposals, I should wish that they were in such hands.

"I remember, sir, in some of the first letters with which you favoured me, you mentioned your lady. May I inquire after

⁴ Tom. III. p. 482.

her? In return for the favours which you have shown me, it is not much to tell you, that I wish you and her all that can conduce to your happiness. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

In 1758, we find him, it should seem, in as easy and pleasant a state of existence, as constitutional unhappiness ever permitted him to enjoy¹.

“TO MR. BURNEY, AT LYNNE, NORFOLK.

“London, 8 March, 1758.

“SIR,—Your kindness is so great, and my claim to any particular regard from you so little, that I am at a loss how to express my sense of your favours²; but I am, indeed, much pleased to be thus distinguished by you.

“I am ashamed to tell you that my Shakspeare will not be out so soon as I promised my subscribers; but I did not promise them more than I promised myself. It will, however, be published before summer.

“I have sent you a bundle of proposals, which I think, do not profess more than I have hitherto performed. I have printed many of the plays, and have hitherto left very few passages unexplained: where I am quite at loss, I confess my ignorance, which is seldom done by commentators.

“I have likewise enclosed twelve receipts; not that I mean to impose upon you the trouble of pushing them with more importunity than may seem proper, but that you may rather have more than fewer than you will want. The proposals you will disseminate as there shall be an opportunity. I once printed them at length in the Chronicle, and some of my friends (I believe Mr. Murphy, who formerly wrote the Gray's-Inn Journal) introduced them with a splendid encomium.

“Since the life of Browne, I have been a little engaged, from time to time, in the Literary Magazine, but not very lately. I have not the collection by me, and therefore cannot draw out a catalogue of my own parts, but will do it, and send it. Do not buy them, for I will gather all those that have any thing of mine in them, and send them to Mrs. Burney, as a small token of gratitude for the regard which she is pleased to bestow upon me. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

¹ [Here, in his later editions, Mr. Boswell had erroneously inserted a letter to Mr. Langton, which will be found in its real place at the beginning of the next year.—ED.]

² This letter was an answer to one, in which was enclosed a draft for the payment of some subscriptions to his Shakspeare.—BOSWELL.

Dr. Burney has kindly favoured me with the following memorandum, which I take the liberty to insert in his own genuine easy style. I love to exhibit sketches of my illustrious friend by various eminent hands.

“Soon after this, Mr. Burney, during a visit to the capital, had an interview with him in Gough-square³, where he dined and drank tea with him, and was introduced to the acquaintance of Mrs. Williams. After dinner, Mr. Johnson proposed to Mr. Burney to go up with him into his garret, which being accepted, he there found about five or six Greek folios, a deal writing-desk, and a chair and a half. Johnson giving to his guest the entire seat, tottered himself on one with only three legs and one arm. Here he gave Mr. Burney Mrs. Williams's history, and showed him some volumes of his Shakspeare already printed, to prove that he was in earnest. Upon Mr. Burney's opening the first volume, at the Merchant of Venice, he observed to him, that he seemed to be more severe on Warburton than Theobald. ‘O poor Tib. ! (said Johnson) he was ready knocked down to my hands; Warburton stands between me and him.’—‘But sir (said Mr. Burney), you'll have Warburton upon your bones, won't you?’—‘No, sir; he'll not come out: he'll only growl in his den.’—‘But you think, sir, that Warburton is a superiour critick to Theobald?’—‘O, sir, he'd make two-and-fifty Theobalds, cut into slices! The worst of Warburton is, that he has a rage for saying something, when there's nothing to be said.’—Mr. Burney then asked him whether he had seen the letter which Warburton had written in answer to a pamphlet addressed ‘To the most impudent Man alive.’ He answered in the negative. Mr. Burney told him it was supposed to be written by Mallet. The controversy now raged between the friends of Pope and Bolingbroke; and Warburton and Mallet were the leaders of the several parties. Mr. Burney asked him then if he had seen Warburton's book against Bolingbroke's Philosophy? ‘No, sir; I have never read Bolingbroke's impiety, and therefore am not interested about its confutation⁴.’

On the fifteenth of April he began a new periodical paper, entitled “THE IDLER*,” which came out every Saturday in a weekly Newspaper, called “The Universal

³ If the error in the date of the letter to Mr. Langton, of January, 1759, had not been discovered, we might have doubted the accuracy of Dr. Burney as to his having been entertained by Johnson, in Gough-square, so late in the spring of 1758: but it is now plain that it was not till the spring of 1759 that he broke up his establishment there.—ED.]

⁴ [See *ante*, p. 115.—ED.]

Chronicle, or Weekly Gazette," published by Newbery¹. These essays were continued till April 5, 1760. Of one hundred and three, their total number, twelve were contributed by his friends; of which, Numbers 33, 93, and 96, were written by Mr. Thomas Warton; No. 67, by Mr. Langton; and No. 76, 79, and 82, by Sir Joshua Reynolds; the concluding words of No. 82, "and pollute his canvas with deformity," being added by Johnson; as Sir Joshua informed me.

The IDLER is evidently the work of the same mind which produced the RAMBLER, but has less body and more spirit. It has more variety of real life, and greater facility of language. He describes the miseries of idleness, with the lively sensations of one who has felt them; and in his private memorandums while engaged in it, we find "This year I hope to learn diligence." Many of these excellent essays were written as hastily as an ordinary letter. Mr. Langton remembers Johnson, when on a visit at Oxford, asking him one evening how long it was till the post went out; and on being told about half an hour, he exclaimed, "then we shall do very well." He upon this instantly sat down and finished an Idler, which it was necessary should be in London the next day. Mr. Langton having signified a wish to read it, "Sir, (said he) you shall not do more than I have done myself." He then folded it up, and sent it off.

Yet there are in the Idler several papers which show as much profundity of thought, and labour of language, as any of this great man's writings. No. 14, "Robbery of Time;" No. 24, "Thinking;" No. 41, "Death of a Friend;" No. 43, "Flight of Time;" No. 51, "Domestic greatness unattainable;" No. 52, "Self-denial;" No. 58, "Actual, how short of fancied, excellence;" No. 89, "Physical evil moral good;" and his concluding paper on "The horror of the last," will prove this assertion. I know not why a motto, the usual trapping of periodical papers, is prefixed to very few of the Idlers, as I have heard Johnson commend the custom; and he never could be at a loss for one, his memory being stored with innumerable passages of the classicks. In this series of essays he exhibits admirable instances of grave humour, of which he had an uncommon share. Nor on some occasions has he repressed that power of sophistry which he possessed

in so eminent a degree. In No. 11, he treats with the utmost contempt the opinion that our mental faculties depend, in some degree, upon the weather; an opinion, which they who have never experienced its truth are not to be envied, and of which he himself could not but be sensible, as the effects of weather upon him were very visible. Yet thus he declaims: "Surely nothing is more reproachful to a being endowed with reason, than to resign its powers to the influence of the air, and live in dependence on the weather and the wind for the only blessings which nature has put into our power, tranquillity and benevolence.— This distinction of seasons is produced only by imagination operating on luxury. To temperance, every day is bright; and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that shall resolutely excite his faculties, or exert his virtues, will soon make himself superior to the seasons; and may set at defiance the morning mist and the evening damp, the blasts of the east, and the clouds of the south."

Alas! it is too certain, that where the frame has delicate fibres, and there is a fine sensibility, such influences of the air are irresistible. He might as well have bid defiance to the ague, the palsy, and all other bodily disorders. Such boasting of the mind is false elevation:

"I think the Romans call it Stoicism."

But in this number of his Idler his spirits seem to run riot²; for in the wantonness of his disquisition he forgets, for a moment, even the reverence for that which he held in high respect; and describes "the attendant on a court³," as one "whose business is to watch the looks of a being, weak and foolish as himself."

His unqualified ridicule of rhetorical gesture or action is not, surely, a test of truth; yet we cannot help admiring how well it is adapted to produce the effect which he wished. "Neither the judges of our laws, nor the representatives of our people, would be much affected by laboured gesticulations, or believe any man the more because he rolled his eyes, or puffed his cheeks, or spread abroad his arms, or stamped the ground, or thumped his breast; turned his eyes sometimes to the ceiling and sometimes to the floor."

² [This doctrine of the little influence of the weather, however, seems to have been his fixed opinion: he often repeated it in conversation. See *post*, 9th July, 1763.—Ed.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 132. Mr. Boswell seems resolved to forget that Johnson's reverence for the court had not yet commenced. George II. was still alive, whom Johnson always abused, and sometimes very indecently. See *ante*, p. 57, and *post*, 6th April, 1775.—Ed.]

¹ This is a slight mistake. The first number of "The Idler" appeared on the 15th of April, 1758, in No. 2 of the *Universal Chronicle*, &c., which was published by J. Payne, for whom also the Rambler had been printed. On the 29th of April this newspaper assumed the title of *Payne's Universal Chronicle*, &c.—MALONE.

A casual coincidence with other writers, or an adoption of a sentiment or image which has been found in the writings of another, and afterwards appears in the mind as one's own, is not unfrequent. The richness of Johnson's fancy, which could supply his page abundantly on all occasions, and the strength of his memory, which at once detected the real owner of any thought, made him less liable to the imputation of plagiarism than, perhaps, any of our writers. In the *Idler*, however, there is a paper, in which conversation is assimilated to a bowl of punch, where there is the same train of comparison as in a poem by Blacklock, in his collection published in 1756; in which a parallel is ingeniously drawn between human life and that liquor. It ends,

“Say, then, physicians of each kind,
Who cure the body or the mind,
What harm in drinking can there be,
Since punch and life so well agree?”

To the *Idler*, when collected in volumes, he added, beside the *Essay on Epitaphs*, and the dissertation on those of Pope, an *Essay on the Bravery of the English common Soldiers*. He, however, omitted one of the original papers, which in the folio copy is No. 22¹.

[The profits accruing from the sale of this paper, and the subscriptions which, from the year 1756, he was receiving for the edition of Shakspeare by him proposed, were the only known means of his subsistence for a period of near four years, and we may suppose them hardly adequate to his wants, for, upon finding the balance of the account for the Dictionary against him, he [found it necessary to retrench his expenses. He gave up his house in Gough-square.

Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. He retired to Gray's-Inn, and soon removed to chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, where he lived in poverty, total idleness, and the pride of literature. *Magni stat nominis umbra*. Mr. Fitzherbert (the father of Lord St. Helen's), a man distinguished through life for his benevolence and other amiable qualities, used to say, that he paid a morning visit to Johnson, intending from his chambers to send a letter into the city; but, to his great surprise, he found an author by profession without pen, ink, or paper. The present Bishop of Salisbury was also among those who endeavoured, by constant attention, to soothe the cares of a mind which he knew to be afflicted with gloomy apprehensions.]

¹ This paper may be found in Stockdale's supplemental volume, of Johnson's *Miscellaneous Pieces*.—BOSWELL.

“DR. JOHNSON TO MR. WARTON.

(London), 14th April, 1758.

“DEAR SIR,—Your notes upon my poet were very acceptable. I beg that you will be so kind as to continue your searches. It will be reputable to my work, and suitable to your professorship, to have something of yours in the notes. As you have given no directions about your name, I shall therefore put it. I wish your brother would take the same trouble. A commentary must arise from the fortuitous discoveries of many men in devious walks of literature. Some of your remarks are on plays already printed: but I purpose to add an Appendix of Notes, so that nothing comes too late.

“You give yourself too much uneasiness, dear sir, about the loss of the papers². The loss is nothing, if nobody has found them; nor even then, perhaps, if the numbers be known. You are not the only friend that has had the same mischance. You may repair your want out of a stock, which is deposited with Mr. Allen of Magdalen Hall; or out of a parcel which I have just sent to Mr. Chambers³ for the use of any body that will be so kind as to want them. Mr. Langtons are well; and Miss Roberts⁴, whom I have at last brought to speak, upon the information which you gave me, that she had something to say. I am, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. WARTON.

(London,) 1st June, 1758.

“DEAR SIR,—You will receive this by Mr. Baretti, a gentleman particularly entitled to the notice and kindness of the professor of poesy. He has time but for a short stay, and will be glad to have it filled up with as much as he can hear and see.

“In recommending another to your favour, I ought not to omit thanks for the kindness which you have shown to myself. Have you any more notes on Shakspeare? I shall be glad of them.

“I see your pupil sometimes⁵; his mind is as exalted as his stature. I am half afraid of him; but he is no less amiable than formidable. He will, if the forwardness of his spring be not blasted, be a credit to you, and to the university. He brings some of my plays⁶ with him, which he has my per-

² Receipts for Shakspeare.—WARTON.

³ Then of Lincoln College.—WARTON.

⁴ [Miss Roberts was a near relation of Mr. Langton; the subject on which she was to afford information does not appear.—Ed.]

⁵ Mr. Langton.—WARTON. [He was very tall.—Ed.]

⁶ Part of the impression of the Shakspeare, which Dr. Johnson conducted alone, and published by subscription. This edition came out in 1765.—WARTON

mission to show you, on condition you will hide them from every body else. I am, dear sir, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.
"21st Sept. 1758.

"DEAR SIR,—I should be sorry to think that what engrosses the attention of my friend should have no part of mine. Your mind is now full of the fate of Drury¹; but his fate is past, and nothing remains but to try what reflection will suggest to mitigate the terrors of a violent death, which is more formidable at the first glance, than on a nearer and more steady view. A violent death is never very painful: the only danger is, lest it should be unprovided. But if a man can be supposed to make no provision for death in war, what can be the state that would have awakened him to the care of futurity? When would that man have prepared himself to die, who went to seek death without preparation? What then can be the reason why we lament more him that dies of a wound, than him that dies of a fever? A man that languishes with disease, ends his life with more pain, but with less virtue: he leaves no example to his friends, nor bequeaths any honor to his descendants. The only reason why we lament a soldier's death, is, that we think he might have lived longer; yet this cause of grief is common to many other kinds of death, which are not so passionately bewailed. The truth is, that every death is violent which is the effect of accident; every death, which is not gradually brought on by the miseries of age, or when life is extinguished for any other reason than that it is burnt out. He that dies before sixty, of a cold or consumption, dies, in reality, by a violent death; yet his death is borne with patience, only because the cause of his untimely end is silent and invisible. Let us endeavour to see things as they are, and then inquire whether we ought to complain. Whether to see life as it is, will give us much consolation, I know not; but the consolation which is drawn from truth, if any there be, is solid and durable: that which may be derived from error, must be, like its original, fallacious and fugitive. I am, dear, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON².
"9th Jan. 1758. [1759.]

"DEAREST SIR,—I must have indeed slept very fast, not to have been awakened by your letter. None of your suspicions are true; I am not much richer than when you left me; and what is worse, my omission of an answer to your first letter will prove that I am not much wiser. But I go on as I formerly did, designing to be some time or other both rich and wise; and yet cultivate neither mind nor fortune. Do you take notice of my example, and learn the danger of delay. When I was as you are now, towering in [the] confidence of twenty-one, little did I suspect that I should be, at forty-nine, what I now am³.

"But you do not seem to need my admonition. You are busy in acquiring and in communicating knowledge, and while you are studying, enjoy the end of study, by making others wiser and happier. I was much pleased with the tale that you told me of being tutor to your sisters. I, who have no sisters nor brothers, look with some degree of innocent envy on those who may be said to be born to friends⁴; and cannot

² This letter was by Mr. Boswell misplaced under the year 1758, of which it bears the date. Johnson frequently, at the beginning of a new year, continued inadvertently the date of the old one. But the reference to Cleone, which was acted in the autumn of 1758, shows this letter to have been written in January, 1759, about the time when pecuniary distress obliged him to break up his establishment in Gough-square, and retire to chambers, first in Staple-inn, and afterwards in the Inner Temple; which he alludes to in this letter by saying that he has "given up housekeeping." In the list of Johnson's residences (*ante*, p. 42), the editor, misled by the date of this letter, the error of which he had not then discovered, placed the time of Johnson's residence at Staple-inn a year too soon. A subsequent letter to Miss Porter ascertains the point.—*Ed.*]

³ [If the reader will look back to Johnson's deplorable situation when he was about the age of twenty-one, he will be inclined to think that he might rather have prided himself at having attained to the station which he now held in society.—*Ed.*]

⁴ [See, however (*ante*, p. 10), Johnson's observation to Mrs. Piozzi, from which, as well as from other circumstances, it may be inferred that he did not, while he possessed it, sufficiently appreciate the happiness of fraternal intercourse. Mr. Gibbon, in his memoirs, alludes to this subject with good taste and feeling: "From my childhood to the present hour, I have deeply and sincerely regretted my sister, whose life was somewhat prolonged, and whom I remember to have seen an amiable infant. The relation of a brother and a sister, particularly if they do not marry, appears to me of a very singular nature.

¹ Major General Alexander Dury, of the first regiment of foot-guards, who fell in the gallant discharge of his duty, near St. Cas, in the well-known unfortunate expedition against France, in 1758. His lady and Mr. Langton's mother were sisters. He left an only son, Lieutenant Colonel Dury, who has a company in the same regiment.—*Boswell.*

see, without wonder, how rarely that native union is afterwards regarded. It sometimes, indeed, happens, that some supervenient cause of discord may overpower this original amity; but it seems to me more frequently thrown away with levity, or lost by negligence, than destroyed by injury or violence. We tell the ladies that good wives make good husbands; I believe it is a more certain position that good brothers make good sisters.

“I am satisfied with your stay at home, as Juvenal with his friend’s retirement to Cumæ: I know that your absence is best, though it be not best for me.

‘Quamvis disgressu veteris confusus amici,
Laudo tamen vacuis quod sedem figere Cumis
Destinet, atque unum civem donare Sibyllæ.’”

“Langton is a good Cumæ, but who must be Sibylla? Mrs. Langton is as wise as Sibyl, and as good; and will live, if my wishes can prolong life, till she shall in time be as old. But she differs in this, that she has not scattered her precepts in the wind, at least not those which she bestowed upon you.

“The two Wartons just looked into the town, and were taken to see *Cleone*, where, David [Garrick] says, they were starved for want of company to keep them warm. David and Doddy¹ have had a new quarrel, and, I think, cannot conveniently quarrel any more. ‘Cleone’ was well acted by all the characters, but Bellamy² left nothing to be desired. I went the first night, and supported it as well as I might; for Doddy, you know, is my patron, and I would not desert him. The play was very well received. Doddy, after the danger was over, went every night to the stage-side, and cried at the distress of poor Cleone.

“I have left off housekeeping, and therefore made presents of the game which you were pleased to send me. The pheasant I gave to Mr. Richardson³, the bustard to Dr. Lawrence, and the pot I placed with Miss Williams, to be eaten by myself. She desires that her compliments and good wishes may be accepted by the family; and I make the same request for myself.

It is a familiar and tender friendship with a female much about our own age; an affection perhaps softened by the secret influence of the sex, but pure from any mixture of sensual desire—the sole species of Platonic love that can be indulged with truth and without danger.”—*Mem. p. 25.*—ED.]

¹ Mr. Dodsley, the author of *Cleone*.—BOSWELL.

² [The well-known Miss George Anne Bellamy, who played the heroine.—ED.]

³ The author of *Clarissa*.—BOSWELL.

“Mr. Reynolds has within these few days raised his price to twenty guineas a head³, and Miss¹ is much employed in miniatures. I know not any body (else) whose prosperity has increased since you left them.

“Murphy is to have his ‘Orphan of China’ acted next month; and is therefore, I suppose, happy. I wish I could tell you of any great good to which I was approaching, but at present my prospects do not much delight me; however, I am always pleased when I find that you, dear sir, remember your affectionate, humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

In 1759, in the month of January, his mother died at the great age of ninety, an event which deeply affected him; not that “his mind had acquired no firmness by the contemplation of mortality³,” but that his reverential affection for her was not abated by years, as indeed he retained all his tender feelings even to the latest period of his life. I have been told, that he regretted much his not having gone to visit his mother for several years previous to her death. But he was constantly engaged in literary labours which confined him to London; and though he had not the comfort of seeing his aged parent, he contributed liberally to her support.

Hawk.
p. 395.

⁴ [Sir Joshua afterwards greatly advanced his price. I have been informed by Sir Thomas Lawrence, his admirer and rival, that in 1787 his prices were two hundred guineas for the *whole length*, one hundred for the *half-length*, seventy for the *kit-cat*, and fifty for (what is called) the *three-quarters*. But even on these prices some increase must have been made, as Horace Walpole said, “Sir Joshua, in his old age, becomes avaricious. He had one thousand guineas for my picture of the three ladies Waldegrave.”—*Walpoliana*. This picture are *half-lengths* of the three ladies on one canvas.—ED.]

⁵ [Miss Reynolds, the sister of Sir Joshua.—ED.]

⁶ [Mr. Boswell contradicts Hawkins, for the mere pleasure, as it would seem, of doing so. The reader must observe that Mr. Boswell’s work is full of anecdotes of Johnson’s want of firmness in contemplating mortality: and though Johnson may have been *in theory* an affectionate son, there is reason to fear that he had never visited, and, consequently, not seen his mother since 1737. Mr. Boswell alleges as an excuse, that he was engaged in literary labours, which confined him to London. Such an excuse for an absence of *twenty years* is idle; besides, it is stated that Johnson visited Ashbourn about 1740 (*ante*, p. 29), Tunbridge Wells in 1748 (*ante*, p. 76), Oxford in 1754 (*ante*, p. 116). We shall see presently, that Johnson felt remorse for this neglect of his parent.—ED.]

“TO MRS. JOHNSON, IN LICHFIELD¹.

“13th Jan. 1758².

Malone. “HONOURED MADAM,—The account which Miss [Porter] gives me of your health pierces my heart. God comfort and preserve you and save you for the sake of Jesus Christ.

“I would have miss read to you from time to time the Passion of our Saviour, and sometimes the sentences in the Communion Service, beginning—*Come unto me, all ye that travel and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

“I have just now read a physical book, which inclines me to think that a strong infusion of the bark would do you good. Do, dear mother, try it.

“Pray, send me your blessing, and forgive all that I have done amiss to you. And whatever you would have done, and what debts you would have paid first, or any thing else that you would direct, let Miss [Porter] put it down; I shall endeavour to obey you.

“I have got twelve guineas³ to send you, but unhappily am at a loss how to send it to-night. If I cannot send it to-night, it will come by the next post.

“Pray, do not omit any thing mentioned in this letter. God bless you for ever and ever.—I am your dutiful son,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MISS PORTER AT MRS. JOHNSON’S, IN LICHFIELD.

“16th Jan. 1759.

Malone. “MY DEAR MISS,—I think myself obliged to you beyond all expression of gratitude for your care of my dear mother. God grant it may not be without success. Tell Kitty⁴ that I shall never

¹ Since the publication of the third edition of this work, the following letters of Dr. Johnson, occasioned by the last illness of his mother, were obligingly communicated to Mr. Malone, by the Rev. Dr. Vyse. They are placed here agreeably to the chronological order almost uniformly observed by the authour; and so strongly evince Dr. Johnson’s piety and tenderness of heart, that every reader must be gratified by their insertion.—MALONE.

² Written by mistake for 1759, as the subsequent letters show [see *ante*, p. 140]. In the next letter, he had inadvertently fallen into the same error, but corrected it. On the *outside* of the letter of the 13th was written by another hand—“Pray acknowledge the receipt of this by return of post, without fail.”—MALONE.

³ Six of these twelve guineas Johnson appears to have borrowed from Mr. Allen, the printer. See Hawkins’s *Life of Johnson*, p. 366, n.—MALONE.

⁴ Catherine Chambers, Mrs. Johnson’s maid-servant. She died in October, 1767. See Dr. Johnson’s *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 71: “Sunday, Oct. 18, 1767. Yesterday, Oct. 17, I took my leave for ever of my dear old friend,

forget her tenderness for her mistress. Whatever you can do, continue to do. My heart is very full.

“I hope you received twelve guineas on Monday. I found a way of sending them by means of the postmaster, after I had written my letter, and hope they came safe. I will send you more in a few days. God bless you all. I am, my dear, your most obliged and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“Over the leaf is a letter to my mother.”

“16th Jan. 1759.

“DEAR HONOURED MOTHER,—Your weakness afflicts me beyond what I am willing to communicate to you. I do not think you unfit to face death, but I know not how to bear the thought of losing you. Endeavour to do all you [can] for yourself. Eat as much as you can.

“I pray often for you; do you pray for me. I have nothing to add to my last letter. I am, dear, dear mother, your dutiful son,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MRS. JOHNSON IN LICHFIELD.

“18th Jan. 1759.

“DEAR HONOURED MOTHER,—I Malone. fear you are too ill for long letters; therefore I will only tell you, you have from me all the regard that can possibly subsist in the heart. I pray God to bless you for ever more, for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.

“Let miss write to me every post, however short.

“I am, dear mother, your dutiful son,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MISS PORTER, AT MRS. JOHNSON’S IN LICHFIELD.

“20th Jan. 1759.

“DEAR MISS,—I will, if it be Malone. possible, come down to you. God grant I may yet [find] my dear mother breathing and sensible. Do not tell her lest I disappoint her. If I miss to write next post, I am on the road. I am my dearest miss, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“On the other side.”

“20th Jan. 1759.

“DEAR HONOURED MOTHER⁵,—Neither your condition nor your character make it fit for me to say much. You have been the

Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother, and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.”—MALONE.

⁵ This letter was written on the second leaf of the preceding, addressed to Miss Porter.—MALONE.

best mother, and I believe the best woman in the world. I thank you for your indulgence to me, and beg forgiveness of all that I have done ill, and all that I have omitted to do well¹. God grant you his Holy Spirit, and receive you to everlasting happiness, for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen. Lord Jesus receive your spirit. Amen.—I am, dear, dear mother, your dutiful son,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MISS PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

“23d Jan. 1759.”

Malone. “You will conceive my sorrow for the loss of my mother, of the best mother. If she were to live again, surely I should behave better to her. But she is happy, and what is past is nothing to her; and for me, since I cannot repair my faults to her, I hope repentance will efface them. I return you and all those that have been good to her my sincerest thanks, and pray God to repay you all with infinite advantage. Write to me, and comfort me, dear child. I shall be glad likewise, if Kitty will write to me. I shall send a bill of twenty pounds in a few days, which I thought to have brought to my mother; but God suffered it not. I have not power or composure to say much more. God bless you, and bless us all. I am, dear miss, your affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

[“TO MISS LUCY PORTER.

“25th Jan. 1759.”

Pearson
Miss. (The beginning of the writing torn and lost.)

“You will forgive me if I am not yet so composed as to give any directions about any thing. But you are wiser and better than I, and I shall be pleased with all that you shall do. It is not of any use for me now to come down³; nor can I bear the

¹ So, in the prayer which he composed on this occasion: “Almighty God, merciful Father, in whose hands are life and death, sanctify unto me the sorrow which I now feel. *Forgive me whatever I have done unkindly to my mother, and whatever I have omitted to do kindly.* Make me to remember her good precepts and good example, and to reform my life according to thy holy word, &c.”—*Prayers and Meditations*, p. 31.—MALONE.

² Mrs. Johnson probably died on the 20th or 21st January, and was buried on the day this letter was written.—MALONE.

³ [Mr. Murphy states: “With this supply (the price of *Rasselas*) Johnson set out for Lichfield; but did not arrive in time to close the eyes of a parent whom he loved. He attended the funeral, which, as appears among his memorandums, was on the 23d of January, 1759.” It is clear, from all these letters, that he did not personally attend on that occasion, and the memo-

place. If you want any directions, Mr. Howard⁴ will advise you. The twenty pounds I could not get a bill for to-night, but will send it on Saturday. I am, my dear, your affectionate servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

“6th Feb. 1759.”

“DEAR MISS,—I have no reason to forbear writing, but that it makes my heart heavy, and I had nothing particular to say which might not be delayed to the next post; but had no thoughts of ceasing to correspond with my dear Lucy, the only person now left in the world with whom I think myself connected. There needed not my dear mother's desire, for every heart must lean to somebody, and I have nobody but you; in whom I put all my little affairs with too much confidence to desire you to keep receipts as you prudently proposed.

“If you and Kitty will keep the house, I think I shall like it best. Kitty may carry on the trade for herself, keeping her own stock apart, and laying aside any money that she receives for any of the goods, which her good mistress has left behind her. I do not see, if this scheme be followed, any need of appraising the books. My mother's debts, dear mother, I suppose I may pay with little difficulty; and the little trade may go silently forward. I fancy Kitty can do nothing better; and I shall not want to put her out of a house, where she has lived so long, and with so much virtue. I am very sorry that she is ill, and earnestly hope that she will soon recover; let her know that I have the highest value for her, and would do any thing for her advantage. Let her think of this proposal. I do not see any likelier method by which she may pass the remaining part of her life in quietness and competence.

“You must have what part of the house you please, while you are inclined to stay in it; but I flatter myself with the hope that you and I shall some time pass our days together. I am very solitary and comfortless, but will not invite you to come hither till I can have hope of making you live here so as not to dislike your situation. Pray, my dearest, write to me as often as you can. I am, dear madam, your affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

random mentioned must have referred to the date or expenses of the funeral, and not to his own presence. *Rasselas* was not *written*, nor of course, it may be presumed, *sold*, till two months later.—ED.]

⁴ [Mr. Howard was in the law, and resided in the Close. He was grandfather of the present lady of Sir Robert Wilmot, Bart. of Osmaston, near Derby.—HARWOOD.]

[No. 41 of the *Idler*, though it takes the character of a letter to the authour, was written by Johnson himself on his mother's death, and may be supposed to describe as pathetically his sentiments on the separation of friends and relations.]

["TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.
"1st March, 1759².

"DEAR MADAM,—I thought your last letter long in coming; and did not require or expect such an inventory of little things as you have sent me. I could have taken your word for a matter of much greater value. I am glad that Kitty is better; let her be paid first, as my dear, dear mother ordered, and then let me know at once the sum necessary to discharge her other debts, and I will send it you very soon.

"I beg, my dear, that you would act for me without the least scruple, for I can repose myself very confidently upon your prudence, and hope we shall never have reason to love each other less. I shall take it very kindly if you make it a rule to write to me once at least every week, for I am now very desolate, and am loth to be universally forgotten. I am, dear sweet, your affectionate servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

Ed. Soon after his mother's death, he wrote his "*RASSELAS, PRINCE OF AEBYSSINIA*": [which he modestly calls, in a subsequent letter to Miss Porter, "a little story-book"] concerning the publication of which Sir John Hawkins guesses vaguely and idly³, instead of having taken the trouble to inform himself with authentic precision. Not to trouble my readers with a repetition of the knight's reveries, I have to mention, that the late Mr. Strahan the printer told me, that Johnson wrote it, that with the profits he might defray the expense of his mother's funeral, and pay some little debts which she had left. He told Sir Joshua Reynolds, that he composed it in the evenings of one week⁴, sent it to the press

¹ [But it is observable that the *Idlers* which now bear the dates of the 13th and 20th January are on trivial subjects, and are even written in a vein of pleasantry.—ED.]

² [Johnson had written the figure 8 instead of 9, which is evidently a mistake.—HARWOOD. See *ante*, p. 144.—ED.]

³ [Sir John Hawkins does not "guess vaguely and idly," but after saying that there were vague reports on the subject, he gives an account substantially the same as Mr. Boswell's. The only difference is, that Sir J. Hawkins says that he had before meditated such a work, the execution of which was now accelerated by the spur of necessity.—ED.]

⁴ *RASSELAS* was published in March or April, 1759.—BOSWELL.

in portions as it was written, and had never since read it over⁵. Mr. Strahan, Mr. Johnston, and Mr. Dodsley, purchased it for a hundred pounds, but afterwards paid him twenty-five pounds more, when it came to a second edition.

Considering the large sums which have been received for compilations, and works requiring not much more genius than compilations, we cannot but wonder at the very low price which he was content to receive for this admirable performance; which, though he had written nothing else, would have rendered his name immortal in the world of literature. None of his writings has been so extensively diffused over Europe; for it has been translated into most, if not all, of the modern languages. This tale, with all the charms of oriental imagery, and all the force and beauty of which the English language is capable, leads us through the most important scenes of human life, and shows us that this stage of our being is full of "vanity and vexation of spirit." To those who look no further than the present life, or who maintain that human nature has not fallen from the state in which it was created, the instruction of this sublime story will be of no avail. But they who think justly, and feel with strong sensibility, will listen with eagerness and admiration to its truth and wisdom. Voltaire's *CANDIDE*, written to refute the system of Optimism, which it has accomplished with brilliant success, is wonderfully similar in its plan and conduct to Johnson's *RASSELAS*; insomuch, that I have heard Johnson say, that if they had not been published so closely one after the other that there was not time for imitation, it would have been in vain to deny that the scheme of that which came latest was taken from the other. Though the proposition illustrated by both these works was the same, namely, that in our present state there is more evil than good, the intention of the writers was very different. Voltaire, I am afraid, meant only by wanton profaneness to obtain a sportive victory over religion, and to discredit the belief of a superintending Providence: Johnson meant, by showing the unsatisfactory nature of things temporal, to direct the hopes of man to things eternal. *Rasselas*, as was observed to me by a very accomplished lady, may be considered as a more enlarged and more deeply philosophical discourse in prose, upon the interesting truth, which in his "*Vanity of Human Wishes*," he had so successfully enforced in verse.

The fund of thinking which this work contains is such, that almost every sentence

⁵ See under June 2, 1781. Finding it then accidentally in a chaise with Mr. Boswell, he read it eagerly.—This was doubtless long after his declaration to Sir Joshua Reynolds.—MALONE.

of it may furnish a subject of long meditation. I am not satisfied if a year passes without my having read it through; and at every perusal, my admiration of the mind which produced it is so highly raised, that I can scarcely believe that I had the honour of enjoying the intimacy of such a man.

I restrain myself from quoting passages from this excellent work, or even referring to them, because I should not know what to select, or, rather, what to omit. I shall, however, transcribe one, as it shows how well he could state the arguments of those who believe in the appearance of departed spirits; a doctrine which it is a mistake to suppose that he himself ever positively held:

“If all your fear be of apparitions (said the prince), I will promise you safety: there is no danger from the dead; he that is once buried will be seen no more.

“That the dead are seen no more (said Imlac), I will not undertake to maintain, against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages, and of all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth¹; those that never heard of one another, would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience can make credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers, can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues, confess it by their fears.”

Notwithstanding my high admiration of *Rasselas*, I will not maintain that the “morbid melancholy” in Johnson’s constitution may not, perhaps, have made life appear to him more insipid and unhappy than it generally is: for I am sure that he had less enjoyment from it than I have. Yet, whatever additional shade his own particular sensations may have thrown on his representation of life, attentive observation and close inquiry have convinced me, that there is too much reality in the gloomy picture. The truth, however, is, that we judge of the happiness and misery of life differently at different times, according to the state of our changeable frame. I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady, educated in France: “*Ma foi, monsieur, notre bonheur depend de la façon que notre sang circule.*” This have I learnt from a

pretty hard course of experience, and would, from sincere benevolence, impress upon all who honour this book with a perusal, that until a steady conviction is obtained, that the present life is an imperfect state, and only a passage to a better, if we comply with the divine scheme of progressive improvement; and also that it is a part of the mysterious plan of Providence, that intellectual beings must “be made perfect through suffering;” there will be a continual recurrence of disappointment and uneasiness. But if we walk with hope in “the mid-day sun” of revelation, our temper and disposition will be such, that the comforts and enjoyments in our way will be relished, while we patiently support the inconveniences and pains. After much speculation and various reasonings, I acknowledge myself convinced of the truth of Voltaire’s conclusion, “*Après tout c’est un monde passable.*” But we must not think too deeply:

“————— where ignorance is bliss,
’Tis folly to be wise,”

is, in many respects, more than poetically just. Let us cultivate, under the command of good principles, “*la theorie des sensations agreables*,” and, as Mr. Burke once admirably counselled a grave and anxious gentleman, “live pleasant.”

The effect of *Rasselas*, and of Johnson’s other moral tales, is thus beautifully illustrated by Mr. Courtenay:

“Impressive truth, in splendid fiction drest,
Checks the vain wish, and calms the troubled breast;
O’er the dark mind a light celestial throws,
And soothes the angry passions to repose;
As oil effus’d illumines and smooths the deep,
When round the bark the foaming surges sweep.”

It will be recollected, that during all this year he carried on his *Idler*. This paper was in such high estimation before it was collected into volumes, that it was seized on with avidity by various publishers of newspapers and magazines, to enrich their publications. Johnson, to put a stop to this unfair proceeding, wrote for the *Universal Chronicle* the following advertisement; in which there is, perhaps, more pomp of words than the occasion demanded:

“London, Jan. 5, 1759. ADVERTISEMENT. The proprietors of the paper entitled ‘*The Idler*,’ having found that those essays are inserted in the newspapers and magazines with so little regard to justice or decency, that the *Universal Chronicle*, in which they first appear, is not always mentioned, think it necessary to declare to the

had some meaning, or he would hardly have quoted them; but what that meaning is the editor cannot guess.—Ed.]

¹ [This is a mere sophism; all ages and all nations are not agreed on this point, though such a belief may have existed in particular persons, in all ages and all nations. He might as well have said that insanity was the natural and true state of the human mind, because it has existed in all nations and all ages.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Boswell no doubt fancied these words

publishers of those collections, that however patiently they have hitherto endured these injuries, made yet more injurious by contempt, they have now determined to endure them no longer. They have already seen essays, for which a very large price is paid, transferred, with the most shameless rapacity, into the weekly or monthly compilations, and their right, at least for the present, alienated from them, before they could themselves be said to enjoy it. But they would not willingly be thought to want tenderness, even for men by whom no tenderness hath been shown. The past is without remedy, and shall be without resentment. But those who have been thus busy with their sickles in the fields of their neighbours are henceforward to take notice, that the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever shall, without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our papers, is to expect that we shall vindicate our due, by the means which justice prescribes, and which are warranted by the immemorial prescriptions of honourable trade. We shall lay hold, in our turn, on their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide margin and diffuse typography, contract them into a narrow space, and sell them at an humble price; yet not with a view of growing rich by confiscations, for we think not much better of money got by punishment than by crimes. We shall therefore, when our losses are repaid, give what profit shall remain to the *Magdelens*; for we know not who can be more properly taxed for the support of penitent prostitutes, than prostitutes in whom there yet appears neither penitence nor shame."

No doubt he was also proceeding, though slowly, in his edition of Shakspeare. He, however, from that liberality which never failed, when called upon to assist other labourers in literature, found time to translate, for Mrs. Lenox's English version of Brumoy, "A Dissertation on the Greek Comedy†" and "The General Conclusion of the Book† 1."

An inquiry into the state of foreign countries was an object that seems at all times to have interested Johnson. Hence Mr. Newbery found no great difficulty in persuading him to write the introduction* to a collection of voyages and travels published by him under the title of "The World Displayed:" the first volume of which appeared this year, and the remaining volumes in subsequent years.

¹ [In Mr. Park's edition of the *Noble Authours* (vol. iv. p. 259), it is stated that Mrs. Lenox's Translation of Brumoy's Greek Theatre had a "Preface," written by Lord Orrery; who also translated "*The Discourse upon the Theatre of the Greeks, the Origin of Tragedy, and the Parallel of the Theatres,*" but he cites no authority.—ED.]

I would ascribe to this year the following letter to a son of one of his early friends at Lichfield, Mr. Joseph Simpson, barrister, and authour of a tract, entitled "Reflections on the Study of the Law."

"TO JOSEPH SIMPSON, ESQ.

"DEAR SIR,—Your father's inexorability not only grieves but amazes me: he is your father; he was always accounted a wise man; nor do I remember any thing to the disadvantage of his good nature; but in his refusal to assist you there is neither good nature, fatherhood, nor wisdom. It is the practice of good nature to overlook faults which have already, by the consequences, punished the delinquent. It is natural for a father to think more favourably than others of his children; and it is always wise to give assistance, while a little help will prevent the necessity of greater.

"If you married imprudently, you miscarried at your own hazard, at an age when you had a right of choice. It would be hard if the man might not choose his own wife, who has a right to plead before the judges of his country.

"If your imprudence has ended in difficulties and inconveniences, you are yourself to support them; and, with the help of a little better health, you would support them and conquer them. Surely, that want which accident and sickness produce is to be supported in every region of humanity, though there were neither friends nor fathers in the world. You have certainly from your father the highest claim of charity, though none of right: and therefore I would counsel you to omit no decent nor manly degree of importunity. Your debts in the whole are not large, and of the whole but a small part is troublesome. Small debts are like small shot; they are rattling on every side, and can scarcely be escaped without a wound: great debts are like cannon; of loud noise, but little danger. You must, therefore, be enabled to discharge petty debts, that you may have leisure, with security, to struggle with the rest. Neither the great nor little debts disgrace you. I am sure you have my esteem for the courage with which you contracted them, and the spirit with which you endure them. I wish my esteem could be of more use. I have been invited, or have invited myself, to several parts of the kingdom; and will not incommode my dear Lucy by coming to Lichfield, while her present lodging is of any use to her². I hope, in a few days, to be at leisure, and to make

² [She resided in the house which, by his mother's death, was now become the property of Johnson. It appears that there was not accommodation for an additional inmate.—ED.]

visits. Whither I shall fly is matter of no importance. A man unconnected is at home every where; unless he may be said to be at home no where. I am sorry, dear sir, that where you have parents, a man of your merits should not have a home. I wish I could give it you. I am, my dear sir, affectionately yours,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

He now refreshed himself by an excursion to Oxford, of which the following short characteristical notice, in his own words, is preserved:

“—— is now making tea for me. I have been in my gown ever since I came here¹. It was, at my first coming, quite new and handsome. I have swum thrice, which I had disused for many years. I have proposed to Vansittart² climbing over the wall, but he has refused me. And I have clapped my hands till they are sore, at Dr. King’s speech³.”

His negro servant, Francis Barber, having left him, and been some time at sea, not pressed as has been supposed, but with his own consent, it appears from a letter to John Wilkes, Esq. from Dr. Smollett, that his master kindly interested himself in procuring his release from a state of life of which Johnson always expressed the utmost abhorrence. He once said, “No man will be a sailor who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for being in a ship is being in a jail, with the chance of being drowned.” And at another time, “A man in a jail has more room, better food, and commonly better company.” The letter was as follows:

Aug. 31, 1773.

“Chelsea, 16th March, 1759.

DEAR SIR,—I am again your petitioner, in behalf of that great CHAM⁴ of literature,

¹ [Lord Stowell informs me that he prided himself in being, during his visits to Oxford, accurately academic in all points; and he wore his gown almost ostentatiously.—ED.]

² See *ante*, p. 136, and *post*, vol. ii. p. 000. ED.]

³ [Dr. King’s speech at the installation of the Earl of Westmoreland as chancellor of the university.—ED.]

⁴ In my first edition this word was printed *Chum*, as it appears in one of Mr. Wilkes’s Miscellanies, and I animadverted on Dr. Smollett’s ignorance; for which let me propitiate the *manes* of that ingenious and benevolent gentleman. CHUM was certainly a mistaken reading for CHAM, the title of the Sovereign of Tartary, which is well applied “Johnson, the Monarch of Literature;” and was an epithet familiar to

Samuel Johnson. His black servant, whose name is Francis Barber, has been pressed on board the *Stag* frigate, Captain Angel, and our lexicographer is in great distress. He says the boy is a sickly lad, of a delicate frame, and particularly subject to a malady in his throat, which renders him very unfit for his majesty’s service. You know what matter of animosity the said Johnson has against you: and I dare say you desire no other opportunity of resenting it, than that of laying him under an obligation. He was humble enough to desire my assistance on this occasion, though he and I were never eater-cousins; and I gave him to understand that I would make application to my friend Mr. Wilkes, who, perhaps, by his interest with Dr. Hay and Mr. Elliot, might be able to procure the discharge of his lacquey. It would be superfluous to say more on the subject, which I leave to your own consideration; but I cannot let slip this opportunity of declaring that I am, with the most inviolable esteem and attachment, dear sir, your affectionate, obliged, humble servant,

“T. SMOLLETT.”

Mr. Wilkes, who upon all occasions has acted, as a private gentleman, with most polite liberality, applied to his friend Sir George Hay, then one of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty; and Francis Barber was discharged⁵, as he has told me, without any wish of his own. He found his old master in Chambers in the Inner temple, and returned to his service.

[The date of Dr. Johnson’s first acquaintance with Mrs. Montagu is not ascertained, but it probably began about this period. We find, in this year, the first of the many applications which he is known to have made to the extensive and unwearied charity of that excellent woman.]

Smollett. See “Roderick Random,” chap. 56. For this correction I am indebted to Lord Palmerston, whose talents and literary acquirements accord well with his respectable pedigree of Temple.—BOSWELL.

After the publication of the second edition of this work, the author was furnished by Mr. Abercrombie, of Philadelphia, with the copy of a letter written by Dr. John Armstrong, the poet, to Dr. Smollett, at Leghorn, containing the following paragraph:

“As to the K. Bench patriot, it is hard to say from what motive he published a letter of yours asking some trifling favour of him in behalf of somebody for whom the great CHAM of literature, Mr. Johnson, had interested himself.”—MALONE.

⁵ [He was not discharged till June, 1760. How the discharge (if, indeed, it was granted on this application) came to be so long delayed does not appear.—ED.]

[“DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU¹.

“9th June, 1759.

Montagu
MSS.

“MADAM.—I am desired by Mrs. Williams to sign receipts with her name for the subscribers which you have been pleased to procure, and to return her humble thanks for your favour, which was conferred with all the grace that elegance can add to beneficence. I am, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

What particular new scheme of life Johnson had in view this year, I have not discovered; but that he meditated one of some sort, is clear from his private devotions, in which we find, [24th March,] “the change of outward things which I am now to make;” and “Grant me the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that the course which I am now beginning may proceed according to thy laws, and end in the enjoyment of thy favour.” But he did not, in fact, make any external or visible change.

Ed. [The change of life of which Mr. Boswell could discover no trace was probably the breaking up his establishment in Gough-square, where he had resided for ten years, and retiring to chambers in Staple-inn; while Mrs. Williams went into lodgings. This economical arrangement, as we learn from the following letter, communicated by Mrs. Pearson, through Dr. Harwood, took place just at this period.

“TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

“23d March, 1759.

Pearson
MSS.

“DEAR MADAM,—I beg your pardon for having so long omitted to write. One thing or other has put me off. I have this day moved my things, and you are now to direct to me at Staple-inn, London. I hope, my dear, you are well, and Kitty mends. I wish her success in her trade. I am going to publish a little story book,² which I will send you when it is out. Write to me, my dearest girl, for I am always glad to hear from you, I am, my dear, your humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

¹ [This and several other letters, which will be found in the proper places, (marked in the margin *Montagu MSS.*), the Editor owes to the kindness and liberality of the present Lord Rokeby, the nephew and heir of Mrs. Montagu, and the Editor of her *Letters*—a work which the literary world desires to see continued. It is necessary to request the attention of the reader to the warm terms in which Johnson so frequently expresses his admiration and esteem for Mrs. Montagu, as we shall see that he afterwards took another tone.—Ed.]

² [Johnson here alludes to his “*Rasselas*.”—HARWOOD.]

At this time there being a competition among the architects of London to be employed in the building of Blackfriars-bridge, a question was very warmly agitated whether semicircular or elliptical arches were preferable. In the design offered by Mr. Mylne, the elliptical form was adopted, and therefore it was the great object of his rivals to attack it. Johnson's regard for his friend Mr. Gwyn induced him to engage in this controversy against Mr. Mylne³; and

³ Sir John Hawkins has given a long detail of it, in that manner vulgarly, but significantly, called *rigmarole*; in which, amidst an ostentatious exhibition of arts and artists, he talks of “proportions of a column being taken from that of the human figure, and *adjusted by Nature*—masculine and feminine—in a man, *sesquioctave* of the head, and in a woman *sesquinonal*; nor has he failed to introduce a jargon of musical terms, which do not seem much to correspond with the subject, but serve to make up the heterogeneous mass. To follow the knight through all this, would be an useless fatigue to myself, and not a little disgusting to my readers. I shall, therefore, only make a few remarks upon his statement.—He seems to exult in having detected Johnson in procuring “from a person eminently skilled in mathematicks and the principles of architecture, answers to a string of questions drawn up by himself, touching the comparative strength of semicircular and elliptical arches.” Now I cannot conceive how Johnson could have acted more wisely. Sir John complains that the opinion of that excellent mathematician, Mr. Thomas Simpson, did not preponderate in favour of the semicircular arch. But he should have known, that however eminent Mr. Simpson was in the higher parts of abstract mathematical science, he was little versed in mixed and practical mechanics. Mr. Muller, of Woolwich Academy, the scholastic father of all the great engineers which this country has employed for forty years, decided the question by declaring clearly in favour of the elliptical arch.

It is ungraciously suggested, that Johnson's motive for opposing Mr. Mylne's scheme may have been his prejudice against him as a native of North Britain; when in truth, as has been stated, he gave the aid of his able pen to a *friend*, who was one of the candidates; and so far was he from having any illiberal antipathy to Mr. Mylne, that he afterwards lived with that gentleman upon very agreeable terms of acquaintance, and dined with him at his house. Sir John Hawkins, indeed, gives full vent to his own prejudice in abusing Blackfriars-bridge, calling it “an edifice, in which beauty and symmetry are in vain sought for; by which the citizens of London have perpetuated their own disgrace, and subjected a whole nation to the reproach of foreigners.” Whoever has contemplated *placido lumine*, this stately, elegant, and airy structure, which has so fine an effect, especially on approaching the capital on that quarter, must wonder at such unjust and ill-tempered censure; and I appeal to all foreigners of good taste, whether this bridge be not one of the

after being at considerable pains to study the subject, he wrote three several letters in the *Gazetteer*, in opposition to his plan.

If it should be remarked that this was a controversy which lay quite out of Johnson's way, let it be remembered, that after all, his employing his powers of reasoning and eloquence upon a subject which he had studied on the moment, is not more strange than what we often observe in lawyers, who, as *Quicquid agunt homines* is the matter of lawsuits, are sometimes obliged to pick up a temporary knowledge of an art or science, of which they understood nothing till their brief was delivered, and appear to be much masters of it. In like manner, members of the legislature frequently introduce and expatiate upon subjects of which they have informed themselves for the occasion.

[“DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER.
“10th May, 1759.

Pearson MSS. “DEAR MADAM,—I am almost ashamed to tell you that all your letters came safe, and that I have been always very well, but hindered, I hardly know how, from writing. I sent, last week, some of my works, one for you, one for your aunt Hunter, who was with my poor dear mother when she died, one for Mr. Howard, and one for Kitty.

“I beg you, my dear, to write often to me, and tell me how you like my little book. I am, dear love, your affectionate humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

[“DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.
“Gray's-inn, 17th Dec. 1759.

Montagu MSS. “MADAM,—Goodness so conspicuous as yours will be often solicited, and perhaps sometimes solicited by those who have little pretension to your favour. It is now my turn to introduce a petitioner, but such as I have reason to believe you will think worthy of your notice. Mrs. Ogle, who kept the musick-room in Soho-square, a woman who

most distinguished ornaments of London. As to the stability of the fabrick, it is certain that the city of London took every precaution to have the best Portland stone for it; but as this is to be found in the quarries belonging to the public, under the direction of the lords of the treasury, it so happened that parliamentary interest, which is often the bane of fair pursuits, thwarted their endeavours. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, it is well known that not only has Blackfriars-bridge never sunk either in its foundation or in its arches, which were so much the subject of contest, but any injuries which it has suffered from the effects of severe frosts have been already, in some measure, repaired with sounder stone, and every necessary renewal can be completed at a moderate expense.—BOSWELL.

struggles with great industry for the support of eight children, hopes by a benefit concert to set herself free from a few debts, which she cannot otherwise discharge. She has, I know not why, so high an opinion of me as to believe that you will pay less regard to her application than to mine. You know, madam, I am sure you know, how hard it is to deny, and therefore would not wonder at my compliance, though I were to suppress a motive which you know not, the vanity of being supposed to be of any importance to Mrs. Montagu. But though I may be willing to see the world deceived for my advantage, I am not deceived myself, for I know that Mrs. Ogle will owe whatever favours she shall receive from the patronage which we humbly entreat on this occasion, much more to your compassion for honesty in distress, than to the request of, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

In 1760, he wrote “an Address of the Painters to George III. on his Accession to the Throne of these Kingdoms †,” which no monarch ever ascended with more sincere congratulations from his people. Two generations of foreign princes had prepared their minds to rejoice in having again a king, who gloried in being “born a Briton.” He also wrote for Mr. Baretti the Dedication ‡ of his Italian and English Dictionary, to the Marquis of Abreu, then envoy-extraordinary from Spain at the court of Great Britain.

Johnson was now either very idle, or very busy with his Shakspeare; for I can find no other publick composition by him except an Introduction to the proceedings of the Committee for clothing the French Prisoners*; one of the many proofs that he was ever awake to the calls of humanity; and an account which he gave in the Gentleman's Magazine of Mr. Tytler's acute and able vindication of Mary, Queen of Scots*. The generosity of Johnson's feelings shine forth in the following sentence¹: “It has now been fashionable, for near half a century, to defame and vilify the house of Stuart, and to exalt and magnify the reign of Elizabeth. The Stuarts have found few apologists, for the dead cannot pay for praise; and who will, without reward, oppose the tide of popularity? Yet there remains still among us, not wholly extinguished, a zeal for truth, a desire of establishing right in opposition to fashion.”

[The following memorandum, made on his birth-day in this year, Ed.

¹ [This sentence may be generous, but it is not very logical. Elizabeth was surely as dead as the Stuarts, and could no more *pay for praise* than they could.—Ed.]

may be quoted as an example of the rules and resolutions which he was in the habit of making, for the guidance of his moral conduct and literary studies: the fourth item seems obscure and strange:

“Sept. 18.

“Resolved, D. (eo) j (*wante*),

- “To combat notions of obligation.
- “To apply to study.
- “To reclaim imaginations.
- “To consult the resolves on Tetty’s coffin.
- “To rise early.
- “To study religion.
- “To go to church.
- “To drink less strong liquors.
- “To keep a journal.
- “To oppose laziness, by doing what is to be done tomorrow.
- “Rise as early as I can.
- “Send for books for Hist. of War.
- “Put books in order.
- “Scheme of life.”]

In this year I have not discovered a single private letter written by him to any of his friends. It should seem that he had at this period a floating intention of writing a history of the recent and wonderful successes of the British arms in all quarters of the globe; for among the [foregoing] resolutions or memorandums, there is, “Send for books for Hist. of War.” How much is it to be regretted that this intention was not fulfilled. His majestick expression would have carried down to the latest posterity the glorious achievements of his country, with the same fervent glow which they produced on the mind at the time. He would have been under no temptation to deviate in any degree from truth, which he held very sacred, or to take a licence, which a learned divine told me he once seemed, in a conversation, jocularly to allow to historians, “There are (said he) inexcusable lies, and consecrated lies. For instance, we are told that on the arrival of the news of the unfortunate battle of Fontenoy, every heart beat, and every eye was in tears. Now we know that no man eat his dinner the worse, but there *should* have been all this concern; and to say there *was* (smiling), may be reckoned a consecrated lie.”

This year Mr. Murphy, having thought himself ill-treated by the Reverend Dr. Franklin, who was one of the writers of “The Critical Review,” published an indignant vindication in “A Poetical Epistle to Samuel Johnson, A. M. 1.” in which he

¹ [It seems strange and very inexcusable that Mr. Murphy did not acknowledge that this poetical epistle was an imitation of Boileau’s *Épître à Molière*. I subjoin a few couplets from both

compliments Johnson in a just and elegant manner:

“Transcendent Genius! whose prolifick vein
Ne’er knew the frigid poet’s toil and pain;
To whom APOLLO opens all his store,
And every Muse presents her sacred lore;
Say, pow’rful JOHNSON, whence thy verse is
fraught

With so much grace, such energy of thought;
Whether thy JUVENAL instructs the age
In chaster numbers, and new points his rage;
Or fair IRENE sees, alas! too late
Her innocence exchanged for guilty state;
Whate’er you write, in every golden line
Sublimity and elegance combine;
Thy nervous phrase impresses every soul,
While harmony gives rapture to the whole.”

Again, towards the conclusion:

“Thou then, my friend, who see’st the dang’rous
strife

In which some demon bids me plunge my life,
To the Aonian fount direct my feet,
Say, where the Nine thy lonely musings meet?
Where warbles to thy ear the sacred throng,
Thy moral sense, thy dignity of song?
Tell, for you can, by what unerring art
You wake to finer feelings every heart;
In each bright page some truth important give,
And bid to future times thy RAMBLER live.”

I take this opportunity to relate the manner in which an acquaintance first commenced between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Murphy. During the publication of “The Gray’s-inn Journal,” a periodical paper which was successfully carried on by Mr. Murphy alone, when a very young man, he happened to be in the country with Mr. Foote; and having mentioned that he was obliged to go to London in order to get ready for the press one of the numbers of that journal, Foote said to him, “You need not go on that account. Here is a French magazine, in which you will find a very pretty oriental tale; translate that, and send it to your printer.” Mr. Murphy having read the tale, was highly pleased with it, and followed Foote’s advice. When he returned to town, this tale was pointed out to him in “The Rambler,” from whence it had been trans-

Boileau and Murphy, which will show how little the epistle of the latter is entitled to the character of originality—in fact, such an *unacknowledged* use of an author is almost plagiarism.

*Rare et fameux esprit, dont la fertile veine
Iznore, ou criant, le travail et la peine.
Transcendent genius! whose prolifick vein
Ne’er knew the frigid poet’s toil and pain.*

*Souvent j’ai beau r’ver du matin jusqu’au soir,
Quand je veux dire blanc, la quinteuse dit noir.
In feverish toil I pass the weary night,
And when I would say black, rhyme answers white.*

*On peut que, enfin, tes soins y seroient superflus,
Moli re, ensi gne moi l’art de ne rimer plus.
And since I ne’er can learn thy classic lore,
Instruct me, Johnson, how to write no more!—Ed.]*

lated into the French magazine. Mr. Murphy then waited upon Johnson, to explain this curious incident. His talents, literature, and gentleman-like manners, were soon perceived by Johnson, and a friendship was formed, which was never broken¹.

¹ When Mr. Murphy first became acquainted with Dr. Johnson, he was about thirty-one years old. He died at Knightsbridge, June 18, 1805, it is believed in his eighty-second year.

In an account of this gentleman, published recently after his death, he is reported to have said, that "he was but *twenty-one*, when he had the impudence to write a periodical paper, during the time that Johnson was publishing "the Rambler."—In a subsequent page, in which Mr. Boswell gives an account of his first introduction to Johnson, will be found a striking instance of the incorrectness of Mr. Murphy's memory; and the assertion above-mentioned, if indeed he made it, which is by no means improbable, furnishes an additional proof of his inaccuracy; for both the facts asserted are unfounded. He appears to have been eight years older than twenty-one, when he began the *Gray's-Inn Journal*; and that paper, instead of running a race with Johnson's production, did not appear till after the closing of the *Rambler*, which ended March 14, 1752. The first number of the *Gray's-Inn Journal* made its appearance about seven months afterwards, in a newspaper of the time, called the *Craftsman*, October 21, 1752; and in that form the first forty-nine numbers were given to the publick. On Saturday, Sept. 29, 1753, it assumed a new form; and was published as a distinct periodical paper, and in that shape it continued to be published till the 21st of Sept. 1754, when it finally closed; forming in the whole one hundred and one *Essays*, in the folio copy. The extraordinary paper mentioned in the text is No. 38 of the second series, published on June 15, 1754; which is a re-translation from the French version of Johnson's *Rambler*, No. 190. It was omitted in the re-publication of these *Essays* in two volumes, 12mo. in which one hundred and four are found, and in which the papers are not always dated on the days when they really appeared; so that the motto prefixed to this Anglo-Gallick Eastern tale, *obscuris vera involvens*, might very properly have been prefixed to this work, when re-published. Mr. Murphy did not, I believe, wait on Johnson recently after the publication of this adumbration of one of his *Ramblers*, as seems to be stated in the text; for, in his concluding *Essay*, Sept. 21, 1754, we find the following paragraph:

"Besides, why may not a person rather choose an air of bold negligence, than the obscure diligence of pedants and writers of affected phraseology? For my part, I have always thought an easy style more eligible than a pompous diction, lifted up by metaphor, amplified by epithet, and dignified by too frequent insertions of the Latin idiom." It is probable that the *Rambler* was here intended to be censured, and that the author, when he wrote it, was not acquainted with Johnson, whom, from his first introduction, he endeavoured to conciliate. Their acquaintance; there-

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.
"18th Oct. 1760.

"DEAR SIR,—You that travel about the world have more materials for letters than I who stay at home; and should, therefore, write with frequency equal to your opportunities. I should be glad to have all England surveyed by you, if you would impart your observations in narratives as agreeable as your last. Knowledge is always to be wished to those who can communicate it well. While you have been riding and running, and seeing the tombs of the learned, and the camps of the valiant, I have only staid at home, and intended to do great things, which I have not done. Beau² went away to Cheshire, and has not yet found his way back. Chambers passed the vacation at Oxford.

"I am very sincerely solicitous for the preservation or curing of Mr. Langton's sight, and am glad that the chirurgeon at Coventry gives him so much hope. Mr. Sharpe is of opinion that the tedious maturation of the cataract is a vulgar error³, and that it may be removed as soon as it is formed. This notion deserves to be considered; I doubt whether it be universally true; but if it be true in some cases, and those cases can be distinguished, it may save a long and uncomfortable delay.

"Of dear Mrs. Langton you give me no account; which is the less friendly, as you know how highly I think of her, and how much I interest myself in her health. I suppose you told her of my opinion, and likewise suppose it was not followed; however, I still believe it to be right.

"Let me hear from you again, wherever you are, or whatever you are doing; whether you wander or sit still, plant trees or make *Rusticks*⁴, play with your sisters or muse alone; and in return I will tell you the success of Sheridan, who at this instant is playing Cato, and has already played Richard twice. He had more company the second than the first night, and will make, I

fore, it may be presumed, did not commence till towards the end of this year 1754. Murphy, however, had highly praised Johnson in the preceding year, No. 14 of the second series, Dec. 22, 1753.—MALONE. [It seems uncandid in Mr. Malone to insinuate a charge of falsehood against Mr. Murphy on the *hearsay* of an anonymous writer. Mr. Murphy, who in 1786 republished the *Gray's-Inn Journal*, with the original date of the first number, 21st Oct. 1752, never could have said that it was contemporaneous with the *Rambler*.—Ed.]

² Mr. Beauclerk.—BOSWELL.

³ [Mr. Sharpe seems to have once been of a different opinion on this point, See *ante*, p. 100.—Ed.]

⁴ *Essays* with that title, written about this time by Mr. Langton, but not published.

believe, a good figure in the whole, though his faults seem to be very many; some of natural deficiency, and some of laborious affectation. He has, I think, no power of assuming either that dignity or elegance which some men, who have little of either in common life, can exhibit on the stage. His voice when strained is displeasing, and when low is not always heard. He seems to think too much on the audience, and turns his face too often to the galleries.

"However, I wish him well; and among other reasons, because I like his wife¹.

"Make haste to write to, dear sir, your most affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1761 Johnson appears to have done little. He was still, no doubt, proceeding in his edition of Shakspeare; but what advances he made in it cannot be ascertained. He certainly was at this time not active; for, in his scrupulous examination of himself on Easter eve, he laments, in his too rigorous mode of censuring his own conduct, that his life, since the communion of the preceding Easter, had been "dissipated and

Pr and
Med. p. 44.

useless." He, however, contributed this year the Preface * to "Rolt's Dictionary of Trade and Commerce," in which he displays such a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the subject, as might lead the reader to think that its author had devoted all his life to it. I asked him, whether he knew much of Rolt, and of his work. "Sir (said he), I never saw the man, and never read the book. The booksellers wanted a Preface to a Dictionary of Trade and Commerce. I knew very well what such a Dictionary should be, and I wrote a Preface accordingly." Rolt, who wrote a great deal for the booksellers, was, as Johnson told me, a singular character. Though not in the least acquainted with him, he used to say, "I am just come from Sam. Johnson." This was a sufficient specimen of his vanity and impudence. But he gave a more eminent

¹ Mrs. Sheridan was authour of "Memoirs of Miss Sydney Biddulph," a novel of great merit, and of some other pieces.—BOSWELL. [Her last work is, perhaps, her best—Nourjahad, an eastern tale: in which a pure morality is inculcated, with a great deal of fancy and considerable force. No wonder that Dr. Johnson should have liked her! Dr. Parr, in a letter to Mr. Moore, published in his Life of R. B. Sheridan (vol. i. p. 11), thus mentions her: "I once or twice met his mother—she was quite celestial! both her virtues and her genius were highly esteemed." This amiable and accomplished woman died at Blois, in September, 1766, as Mr. Moore states, and as is proved by a letter of Mr. Sheridan's, deploring that event, dated in October, 1766; though the Biog. Dict., and other authorities, placed her death in 1767.—ED.]

proof of it in our sister kingdom, as Dr. Johnson informed me. When Akenside's "Pleasures of the Imagination" first came out, he did not put his name to the poem. Rolt went over to Dublin, published an edition of it, and put his own name to it. Upon the fame of this he lived for several months, being entertained at the best tables as "the ingenious Mr. Rolt²." His conversation, indeed, did not discover much of the fire of a poet; but it was recollected that both Addison and Thomson were equally dull till excited by wine. Akenside having been informed of this imposition, vindicated his right by publishing the poem with its real author's name. Several instances of such literary fraud have been detected. The Reverend Dr. Campbell, of St. Andrew's, wrote "An Inquiry into the original of Moral Virtue," the manuscript of which he sent to Mr. Innes, a clergyman in England, who was his countryman and acquaintance. Innes published it with his own name to it; and before the imposition was discovered, obtained considerable promotion, as a reward of his merit³. The celebrated Dr. Hugh Blair, and his cousin Mr. George Ballantine, when students in divinity, wrote a poem, entitled "The Resurrection," copies of which were handed about in manuscript. They were at length very much surprised to see a pompous edition of it in folio, dedicated to the Princess Dowager of Wales, by a Dr. Douglas, as his own. Some years ago a little novel, entitled "The Man of Feeling," was assumed by Mr. Eccles, a young Irish clergyman, who was afterwards drowned near Bath⁴. He had been at the pains to transcribe the

² I have had inquiry made in Ireland as to this story, but do not find it recollected there. I give it on the authority of Dr. Johnson, to which may be added, that of the "Biographical Dictionary," and "Biographia Dramatica;" in both of which it has stood many years. Mr. Malone observes, that the truth probably is, not that an edition was published with Rolt's name in the title-page, but, that the poem being then anonymous, Rolt acquiesced in its being attributed to him in conversation.—BOSWELL. [In the late edition of the Biographical Dictionary, the foregoing story is indeed noticed, but with an observation that it has been completely refuted. Richard Rolt died in March, 1770.—ED.]

³ I have both the books. Innes was the clergyman who brought Psalmanazar to England, and was an accomplice in his extraordinary fiction.—BOSWELL.

⁴ ["Died, the Rev. Mr. Eccles, at Bath. In attempting to save a boy, whom he saw sinking in the Avon, he, together with the youth, were both drowned."—Gent. Mag. Aug. 15, 1777. And in the magazine for the next month are some verses on this event, with an epitaph, of which the first line is,

Beneath this stone the "man of feeling" lies.—ED.]

whole book, with blottings, interlineations, and corrections, that it might be shown to several people as an original. It was, in truth, the production of Mr. Henry Mackenzie, an attorney in the Exchequer at Edinburgh, who is the authour of several other ingenious pieces; but the belief with regard to Mr. Eccles became so general, that it was thought necessary for Messieurs Strahan and Cadell to publish an advertisement in the newspapers, contradicting the report, and mentioning that they purchased the copyright of Mr. Mackenzie. I can conceive this kind of fraud to be very easily practised with successful effrontery. The *filiation* of a literary performance is difficult of proof; seldom is there any witness present at its birth. A man, either in confidence or by improper means, obtains possession of a copy of it in manuscript, and boldly publishes it as his own. The true authour, in many cases, may not be able to make his title clear. Johnson, indeed, from the peculiar features of his literary offspring, might bid defiance to any attempt to appropriate them to others:

“But Shakspeare’s magick could not copied be;
Within that circle none durst walk but he.”

“[DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER.
“Inner Temple-lane, 13th Jan. 1761.

PEARSON MSS. “DEAREST MADAM,—I ought to have begun the new year with repairing the omissions of the last, and to have told you sooner, what I can always tell you with truth, that I wish you long life and happiness, always increasing till it shall end at last in the happiness of Heaven.

“I hope, my dear, you are well; I am at present pretty much disordered by a cold and cough; I have just been blooded, and hope I shall be better.

“Pray give my love to Kitty. I should be glad to hear that she goes on well. I am, my dearest dear, your most affectionate servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

He this year lent his friendly assistance to correct and improve a pamphlet written by Mr. Gwyn, the architect, entitled “Thoughts on the Coronation of George III.”*

Johnson had now for some years admitted Mr. Baretto to his intimacy; nor did their friendship cease upon their being separated by Baretto’s revisiting his native country, as appears from Johnson’s letters to him.

“TO MR JOSEPH BARETTI, AT MILAN¹.
“(London), 10th June, 1761.

“You reproach me very often with parsimony of writing; but you may discover by

the extent of my paper, that I design to recompense rarity by length. A short letter to a distant friend is, in my opinion, an insult like that of a slight bow or cursory salutation; a proof of unwillingness to do much, even where there is a necessity of doing something. Yet it must be remembered, that he who continues the same course of life in the same place will have little to tell. One week and one year are very like one another. The silent changes made by time are not always perceived; and if they are not perceived, cannot be recounted. I have risen and lain down, talked and mused, while you have roved over a considerable part of Europe; yet I have not envied my Baretto any of his pleasures, though, perhaps, I have envied others his company: and I am glad to have other nations made acquainted with the character of the English, by a traveller who has so nicely inspected our manners, and so successfully studied our literature. I received your kind letter from Falmouth, in which you gave me notice of your departure for Lisbon; and another from Lisbon, in which you told me, that you were to leave Portugal in a few days. To either of these how could any answer be returned? I have had a third from Turin, complaining that I have not answered the former. Your English style still continues in its purity and vigour. With vigour your genius will supply it: but its purity must be continued by close attention. To use two languages familiarly, and without contaminating one by the other, is very difficult; and to use more than two, is hardly to be hoped. The praises which some have received for their multiplicity of languages may be sufficient to excite industry, but can hardly generate confidence.

“I know not whether I can heartily rejoice at the kind reception which you have found, or at the popularity to which you are exalted. I am willing that your merit should be distinguished; but cannot wish that your affections may be gained. I would have you happy wherever you are: yet I would have you wish to return to England. If ever you visit us again you will find the kindness of your friends undiminished. To tell you how many inquiries are made after you would be tedious, or if not tedious, would be vain; because you may be told in a very few words, that all who knew you wish you well; and that all that you embraced at your departure will caress you at your return: therefore do not let Italian academicians nor Italian ladies drive us from your

to Mr. Baretto, which are among the very best he ever wrote, were communicated to the proprietors of that instructive and elegant monthly miscellany, *The European Magazine*, in which they first appeared.—BOSWELL.

¹ The originals of Dr. Johnson’s three letters

thoughts. You may find among us what you will leave behind, soft smiles and easy sonnets. Yet I shall not wonder if all our invitations should be rejected; for there is a pleasure in being considerable at home, which is not easily resisted.

“By conducting Mr. Southwell¹ to Venice, you fulfilled, I know, the original contract: yet I would wish you not wholly to lose him from your notice, but to recommend him to such acquaintance as may best secure him from suffering by his own follies, and to take such general care both of his safety and his interest as may come within your power. His relations will thank you for any such gratuitous attention: at least they will not blame you for any evil that may happen, whether they thank you or not for any good.

“You know that we have a new king and a new parliament. Of the new parliament Fitzherbert² is a member. We were so weary of our old king, that we are much pleased with his successor; of whom we are so much inclined to hope great things, that most of us begin already to believe them. The young man is hitherto blameless; but it would be unreasonable to expect much from the immaturity of juvenile years, and the ignorance of princely education. He has been long in the hands of the Scots, and has already favoured them more than the English will contentedly endure. But, perhaps, he scarcely knows whom he has distinguished, or whom he has disgusted.

“The artists have instituted a yearly exhibition of pictures and statues, in imitation, as I am told, of foreign academies. This year was the second exhibition. They please themselves much with the multitude of spectators, and imagine that the English school will rise in reputation. Reynolds is without a rival, and continues to add thousands to thousands, which he deserves, among other excellencies, by retaining his kindness for Baretti. This exhibition has filled the heads of the artists and lovers of art. Surely life, it be not long, is tedious, since we are forced to call in the assistance of so many trifles to rid us of our time, of that time which never can return.

“I know my Baretti will not be satisfied with a letter in which I give him no account of myself: yet what account shall I give him? I have not, since the day of our separation, suffered or done any thing considerable. The only change in my way of life is, that I have frequented the theatre more than in former seasons. But I have gone thither only to escape from myself.

¹ [Probably, the Hon. Thomas Arthur Southwell, afterwards second Viscount Southwell, who was born in 1742, and succeeded his father in 1780.—Ed.]

² For Derby. See *ante*, p. 29.

We have had many new farces, and the comedy called ‘The Jealous Wife,’ which, though not written with much genius, was yet so well adapted to the stage, and so well exhibited by the actors, that it was crowded for near twenty nights. I am disgressing from myself to the playhouse; but a barren plan must be filled with episodes. Of myself I have nothing to say, but that I have hitherto lived without the concurrence of my own judgment; yet I continue to flatter myself, that when you return, you will find me mended. I do not wonder that where the monastick life is permitted, every order finds votaries, and every monastery inhabitants. Men will submit to any rule, by which they may be exempted from the tyranny of caprice and of chance. They are glad to supply by external authority their own want of constancy and resolution, and court the government of others, when long experience has convinced them of their own inability to govern themselves. If I were to visit Italy, my curiosity would be more attracted by convents than by palaces; though I am afraid that I should find expectation in both places equally disappointed, and life in both places supported with impatience and quitted with reluctance. That it must be so soon quitted, is a powerful remedy against impatience; but what shall free us from reluctance? Those who have endeavoured to teach us to die well, have taught few to die willingly: yet I cannot but hope that a good life might end at last in a contented death.

“You see to what a train of thought I am drawn by the mention of myself. Let me now turn my attention upon you. I hope you take care to keep an exact journal, and to register all occurrences and observations; for your friends here expect such a book of travels as has not been often seen. You have given us good specimens in your letters from Lisbon. I wish you had staid longer in Spain, for no country is less known to the rest of Europe; but the quickness of your discernment must make amends for the celerity of your motions. He that knows which way to direct his views, sees much in a little time.

“Write to me very often, and I will not neglect to write to you; and I may perhaps, in time, get something to write: at least you will know by my letters, whatever else they may have or want, that I continue to be your most affectionate friend,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

[The classification in the foregoing letter of the art of painting and the exhibition of its productions among the trifles with which mankind endeavour to get rid of time, will excite the surprise of some readers; but] [of the beauties of

Ed.

Hawk. painting, notwithstanding the many
p. 318. eulogiums on that art which, after
the commencement of his friendship with
Sir Joshua Reynolds, he inserted in his
writings, he had not the least conception;
and the notice of this defect led Sir J.
Hawkins to mention the following fact.
One evening, at the club, Hawkins came in
with a small roll of prints, which, in the af-
ternoon, he had picked up: they were land-
scapes of Perelle, and laying it down with
his hat, Johnson's curiosity prompted him
to take it up and unroll it: he viewed the
prints severally with great attention, and
asked Hawkins what sort of pleasure such
things could afford him: he replied that, as
representations of nature, containing an as-
semblage of such particulars as render rural
scenes delightful, they presented to his
mind the objects themselves, and that his
imagination realised the prospect before him.
Johnson said, that was more than *his* would
do, for that in his whole life he was never
capable of discerning the least resemblance
of any kind between a picture and the sub-
ject it was intended to represent.

To the delights of music, he was equally
insensible: neither voice nor instrument,
nor the harmony of concordant sounds, had
power over his affections, or even to engage
his attention. Of music in general, he has
been heard to say, "it excites in my mind
no ideas, and hinders me from contemplat-
ing my own;" and of a fine singer, or in-
strumental performer, that "he had the
merit of a Canary-bird." Not that his
hearing was so defective as to account for
this insensibility, but he laboured under the
misfortune which he has noted in the life
of Barretier, and is common to more per-
sons than in this musical age are willing to
confess it, of wanting that additional sense
or faculty which renders music grateful to
the human ear.]

In 1762 he wrote for the Reverend Dr.
Kennedy, Rector of Bradley in Derbyshire,
in a strain of very courtly elegance, a Ded-
ication to the King* of that gentleman's
work, entitled "A complete System of As-
tronomical Chronology, unfolding the Scrip-
tures." He had certainly looked at this
work before it was printed; for the con-
cluding paragraph is undoubtedly of his
composition, of which let my readers judge:

"Thus have I endeavoured to free reli-
gion and history from the darkness of a dis-
puted and uncertain chronology; from diffi-
culties which have hitherto appeared insur-
perable, and darkness which no luminary of
learning has hitherto been able to dissipate.
I have established the truth of the Mosaical
account, by evidence which no transcription
can corrupt, no negligence can lose, and no
interest can pervert. I have shown that
the universe bears witness to the inspira-

tion of its historian, by the revolution of its
orbs and the succession of its seasons: *that
the stars in their courses fight against in-
credulity, that the works of God give hourly
confirmation to the law, the prophets,
and the gospel, of which one day telleth an-
other, and one night certifieth another;* and
that the validity of the sacred writings never
can be denied, while the moon shall in-
crease and wane, and the sun shall know
his going down."

He this year wrote also the Dedication †
to the Earl of Middlesex of Mrs. Lenox's
"Female Quixote," and the Preface to the
"Catalogue of the Artists' Exhibition †."

The following letter, which, on account
of its intrinsic merit, it would have been
unjust both to Johnson and the publick to
have withheld, was obtained for me by the
solicitation of my friend Mr. Seward:

"TO DR. (NOW SIR GEORGE) STAUNTON¹.
"1st June, 1762.

"DEAR SIR,—I make haste to answer
your kind letter, in hope of hearing again
from you before you leave us. I cannot
but regret that a man of your qualifications
should find it necessary to seek an establish-
ment in Guadaloupe, which if a peace should
restore to the French, I shall think it some
alleviation of the loss, that it must restore
likewise Dr. Staunton to the English.

"It is a melancholy consideration, that
so much of our time is necessarily to be

¹ [George Leonard Staunton was born in Gal-
way, in Ireland, in 1737, and having adopted the
profession of medicine, which he studied in
France, he came to London in 1760, where he
wrote for the periodical publications of the day,
and formed an acquaintance with Dr. Johnson.
In 1762 he went to the West Indies, where he
practised as a physician for a short time, and by
that and some civil offices, accumulated a compe-
tent fortune, which he invested in estates in the
island of Granada. He returned to England in
1770; but, in 1772, again went to Granada,
where he was appointed attorney-general, and
made the valuable acquaintance of Lord Macart-
ney, who became governor of that island in 1774.
By the capture of Granada by the French
in 1779, Lord Macartney lost his government,
and Staunton his property. He returned to Eng-
land with, it is supposed, little of the wreck of
his fortune. He, however, had acquired Lord
Macartney's friendship, and he accompanied his
lordship to Madras in 1781; and for his distin-
guished services during his official residence there
had a pension of 500*l.* per annum settled on him,
in 1784, by the East India company, and was
created a baronet. When Lord Macartney was
selected for the celebrated embassy to China,
Sir George was named to accompany him as
secretary and minister plenipotentiary. His splen-
did account of that embassy is well known. He
died in London, 14th January, 1801, and was
buried in Westminster Abbey.—Ed.]

spent upon the care of living, and that we can seldom obtain ease in one respect but by resigning it in another: yet I suppose we are by this dispensation not less happy in the whole, than if the spontaneous bounty of Nature poured all that we want into our hands. A few, if they were left thus to themselves, would, perhaps, spend their time in laudable pursuits; but the greater part would prey upon the quiet of each other, or, in the want of other objects, would prey upon themselves.

“This, however, is our condition, which we must improve and solace as we can: and though we cannot choose always our place of residence, we may in every place find rational amusements, and possess in every place the comforts of piety and a pure conscience.

“In America there is little to be observed except natural curiosities. The new world must have many vegetables and animals with which philosophers are but little acquainted. I hope you will furnish yourself with some books of natural history, and some glasses and other instruments of observation. Trust as little as you can to report; examine all you can by your own senses. I do not doubt but you will be able to add much to knowledge, and, perhaps, to medicine. Wild nations trust to simples; and, perhaps the Peruvian bark is not the only specific which those extensive regions may afford us.

“Wherever you are, and whatever be your fortune, be certain, dear sir, that you carry with you my kind wishes; and that whether you return hither or stay in the other hemisphere, to hear that you are happy will give pleasure to sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

A lady having at this time solicited him to obtain the Archbishop of Canterbury's patronage to have her son sent to the University, one of those solicitations which are too frequent, where people, anxious for a particular object, do not consider propriety, or the opportunity which the persons whom they solicit have to assist them, he wrote to her the following answer; with a copy of which I am favoured by the Reverend Dr. Farmer, Master of Emanuel College, Cambridge.

“8th June, 1762.

“MADAM,—I hope you will believe that my delay in answering your letter could proceed only from my unwillingness to destroy any hope that you had formed. Hope is itself a species of happiness, and, perhaps, the chief happiness which this world affords: but like all other pleasures immoderately enjoyed, the excesses of hope must

be expiated by pain; and expectations immoderately indulged, must end in disappointment. If it be asked, what is the improper expectation which it is dangerous to indulge, experience will quickly answer, that it is such expectation as is dictated not by reason, but by desire; expectation raised, not by the common occurrences of life, but by the wants of the expectant; an expectation that requires the common course of things to be changed, and the general rules of action to be broken.

“When you made your request to me, you should have considered, madam, what you were asking. You ask me to solicit a great man to whom I never spoke, for a young person whom I had never seen, upon a supposition which I had no means of knowing to be true. There is no reason why, amongst all the great, I should choose to supplicate the archbishop, nor why, among all the possible objects of his bounty, the archbishop should choose your son. I know, madam, how unwillingly conviction is admitted, when interest opposes it; but surely, madam, you must allow, that there is no reason why that should be done by me, which every other man may do with equal reason, and which, indeed, no man can do properly, without some very particular relation both to the archbishop and to you. If I could help you in this exigence by any proper means, it would give me pleasure; but this proposal is so very remote from usual methods, that I cannot comply with it, but at the risk of such answer and suspicions as I believe you do not wish me to undergo.

“I have seen your son this morning; he seems a pretty youth, and will, perhaps, find some better friend than I can procure him; but though he should at last miss the University, he may still be wise, useful, and happy. I am, madam, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. JOSEPH BARETTI, AT MILAN.

“London, 20th July, 1762.

“SIR,—However justly you may accuse me for want of punctuality in correspondence, I am not so far lost in negligence as to omit the opportunity of writing to you, which Mr. Beauclerk's passage through Milan affords me.

“I suppose you received the *Idlers*, and I intend that you shall soon receive *Shakespeare*, that you may explain his works to the ladies of Italy, and tell them the story of the editor, among the other strange narratives with which your long residence in this unknown region has supplied you.

“As you have now been long away, I suppose your curiosity may pant for some news of your old friends. Miss Williams and I live much as we did. Miss Cot-

terel still continues to cling to Mrs. Porter¹, and Charlotte is now big of the fourth child. Mr. Reynolds gets six thousands a year. Levet is lately married, not without much suspicion that he has been wretchedly cheated in his match. Mr. Chambers is gone this day, for the first time, the circuit with the judges. Mr. Richardson is dead of an apoplexy, and his second daughter² has married a merchant.

“My vanity or my kindness, makes me flatter myself, that you would rather hear of me than of those whom I have mentioned; but of myself I have very little which I care to tell. Last winter I went down to my native town, where I found the streets much narrower and shorter than I thought I had left them, inhabited by a new race of people, to whom I was very little known³. My play-fellows were grown old, and forced me to suspect that I was no longer young. My only remaining friend⁴ has changed his principles, and was become the tool of the predominant faction. My daughter-in-law, from whom I expected most, and whom I met with sincere benevolence, has lost the beauty and gaiety of youth, without having gained much of the wisdom of age. I wandered about for five days, and took the first convenient opportunity of returning to a place, where, if there is not much happiness, there is, at least, such a diversity of good and evil, that slight vexations do not fix upon the heart.

“I think in a few weeks to try another excursion; though to what end? Let me know, my Baretti, what has been the result of your return to your own country: whether time has made any alteration for the better, and whether, when the first raptures of salutation were over, you did not find your thoughts confessed their disappointment.

“Moral sentences appear ostentatious and tumid, when they have no greater occasions than the journey of a wit to his own town: yet such pleasures and such pains make up the general mass of life; and as nothing is little to him that feels it with great sensibility, a mind able to see common incidents in their real state is disposed by very common incidents to very serious contemplations. Let us trust that a time will come, when the present moment shall be no longer irksome; when we shall not

¹ [See *ante*, p. 103. *n.* Miss Charlotte Cotterel appears to have married the Rev. John Lewis, A. M., who became Dean of Ossory, in Ireland, in 1755. He died about 1782.—Ed.]

² [Martha (his chief amanuensis) married Edward Bridgen, 24th April, 1762.—Ed.]

³ [All this supports the opinion that he had not visited Lichfield between 1737 and 1761.—Ed.]

⁴ [Probably Dr. Taylor of Ashbourn.—Ed.]

border all our happiness from hope, which at last is to end in disappointment.

“I beg that you will show Mr. Beauclerk all the civilities which you have in your power; for he has always been kind to me.

“I have lately seen Mr. Stratico, Professor of Padua, who has told me of your quarrel with an Abbot of the Celestine order; but had not the particulars very ready in his memory. When you write to Mr. Marsili, let him know that I remember him with kindness.

“May you, my Baretti, be very happy at Milan, or some other place nearer to, sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

The accession of George the Third to the throne of these kingdoms opened a new and brighter prospect to men of literary merit, who had been honoured with no mark of royal favour in the preceding reign. His present majesty's education in this country, as well as his taste and beneficence, prompted him to be the patron of science and the arts; and early this year Johnson having been represented to him as a very learned and good man, without any certain provision, his majesty was pleased to grant him a pension of three hundred pounds a year. The Earl of Bute, who was then prime minister, had the honour to announce this instance of his sovereign's bounty, concerning which, many and various stories, all equally erroneous, have been propagated; maliciously representing it as a political bribe to Johnson, to desert his avowed principles and become the tool of a government which he had held to be founded in usurpation. I have taken care to have it in my power to refute them from the most authentick information. Lord Bute told me, that Mr. Wedderburne, now Lord Loughborough, was the person who first mentioned this subject to him. Lord Loughborough told me, that the pension was granted to Johnson solely as the reward of his literary merit, without any stipulation whatever, or even tacit understanding that he should write for administration. His lordship added, that he was confident the political tracts which Johnson afterwards did write, as they were entirely consonant with his own opinions, would have been written by him, though no pension had been granted to him⁵.

⁵ [This seems hardly consistent with some admitted facts. One, at least, of these pamphlets, *the Patriot*, was “called for” by his political friends (see *post*, letter to Mr. Boswell, 26th Nov. 1774); and two of the others were (see *post*, letter to Langton, 20th March, 1771, and 21st March, 1775) submitted to the revision and correction of ministers.—Ed.]

Mr. Thomas Sheridan and Mr. Murphy, who then lived a good deal both with him and Mr. Wedderburne, told me, that they previously talked with Johnson upon this matter, and it was perfectly understood by all parties that the pension was merely honorary. Sir Joshua Reynolds told me, that Johnson called on him after his majesty's intention had been notified to him, and said he wished to consult his friends as to the propriety of his accepting this mark of the royal favour, after the definitions which he had given in his Dictionary of *pension* and *pensioner*. He said he should not have Sir Joshua's answer till next day, when he would call again, and desired he might think of it. Sir Joshua answered that he was clear to give his opinion then, that there could be no objection to his receiving from the king a reward for literary merit; and that certainly the definitions in his Dictionary were not applicable to him. Johnson, it should seem, was satisfied, for he did not call again till he had accepted the pension, and had waited on Lord Bute to thank him. He then told Sir Joshua that Lord Bute said to him expressly, "It is not given you for any thing you are to do, but for what you have done!" His lordship, he said, behaved in the handsomest manner. He repeated the words twice, that he might be sure Johnson heard them, and thus set his mind perfectly at ease. This nobleman, who has been so virulently abused, acted with great honour in this instance, and displayed a mind truly liberal. A minister of a more narrow and selfish disposition would have availed himself of such an opportunity to fix an implied obligation on a man of Johnson's powerful talents to give him his support².

Mr. Murphy³ and the late Mr. Sheridan severally contended for the distinction of

¹ This was said by Lord Bute, as Dr. Burney was informed by Johnson himself, in answer to a question which he put, previously to his acceptance of the intended bounty: "Pray, my lord, what am I expected to do for this pension?" —MALONE.

² [Such favours are never conferred under *express* conditions of future servility—the phrases used on this occasion have been employed in all similar cases, and they are here insisted on by Mr. Boswell to cover or extenuate the inconsistency of Johnson's conduct with his unlucky definitions of *pension* and *pensioner*.—ED.]

³ [This is not correct. Mr. Murphy did not "contest *this* distinction" with Mr. Sheridan. He claimed, we see, not the first suggestion to Lord Loughborough, but the first notice *from* his lordship to Johnson. It is to be feared, that Mr. Boswell's misrepresentation was prompted by his anxiety to diminish the importance of Sheridan's services, which Johnson himself so ungratefully required. See *post*, p. 175, &c.—ED.]

having been the first who mentioned to Mr. Wedderburne that Johnson ought to have a pension. When I spoke of this to Lord Loughborough, wishing to know if he recollected the prime mover in the business, he said, "All his friends assisted:" and when I told him that Mr. Sheridan strenuously asserted his claim to it, his lordship said, "He rang the bell." And it is but just to add, that Mr. Sheridan told me, that when he communicated to Dr. Johnson that a pension was to be granted him, he replied in a fervour of gratitude, "The English language does not afford me terms adequate to my feelings on this occasion. I must have recourse to the French. I am *penetré* with his majesty's goodness." When I repeated this to Dr. Johnson, he did not contradict it.

[Mr. Murphy relates, (Essay, p. 92) that Lord Loughborough, who, perhaps, was originally a mover in the business, had authority to mention it. He was well acquainted with Johnson; but, having heard much of his independent spirit, and of the downfall of Osborne, the bookseller, he did not know but his benevolence might be rewarded with a folio on his head. He desired the author of these memoirs to undertake the task. This writer thought the opportunity of doing so much good the most happy incident in his life. He went, without delay, to the chambers in the Inner Temple-lane, which, in fact, were the abode of wretchedness. By slow and studied approaches the message was disclosed. Johnson made a long pause: he asked if it was seriously intended? He fell into a profound meditation, and his own definition of a pensioner occurred to him. He was told, "that he, at least, did not come within the definition." He desired to meet next day, and dine at the Mitre tavern. At that meeting he gave up all his scruples. On the following day Lord Loughborough conducted him to the Earl of Bute.]

His definitions of *pension* and *pensioner*, partly founded on the satirical verses of Pope, which he quotes, may be generally true; and yet every body must allow, that there may be, and have been, instances of pensions given and received upon liberal and honourable terms. Thus, then, it is clear, that there was nothing inconsistent or humiliating in Johnson's accepting of a pension so unconditionally and so honourably offered to him.

But I shall not detain my readers longer by any words of my own, on a subject on which I am happily enabled, by the favour of the Earl of Bute, to present them with what Johnson himself wrote; his lordship having been pleased to communicate to me a copy of the following letter to his late father, which does great honour both to

the writer, and to the noble person to whom it is addressed :

“ TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF BUTE.

“ 20th July, 1762.

“ MY LORD,—When the bills¹ were yesterday delivered to me by Mr. Wedderburne, I was informed by him of the future favours which his majesty has, by your lordship’s recommendation, been induced to intend for me.

“ Bounty always receives part of its value from the manner in which it is bestowed; your lordship’s kindness includes every circumstance that can gratify delicacy, or enforce obligation. You have conferred your favours on a man who has neither alliance nor interest², who has not merited them by services, nor courted them by officiousness; you have spared him the shame of solicitation, and the anxiety of suspense.

“ What has been thus elegantly given, will, I hope, not be reproachfully enjoyed; I shall endeavour to give your lordship the only recompence which generosity desired—the gratification of finding that your benefits are not improperly bestowed. I am, my lord, your lordship’s most obliged, most obedient, and most humble servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

[The addition of three hundred pounds a year, to what Johnson was able to earn by the ordinary exercise of his talents, raised him to a state of comparative affluence, and afforded him the means of assisting many whose real or pretended wants had formerly excited his compassion. He now practised a rule which he often recommended to his friends, always to carry some loose money to give to beggars, imitating therein, though certainly without intending it, that good but weak man, old Mr. Whiston, who has been seen distributing, in the streets, money to beggars on each hand of him, till his pocket was nearly exhausted.]

[When he was in the habit of visiting Lichfield, towards the latter part of his life, he was accustomed, on his arrival, to deposit with Miss Porter as

¹ [It does not appear what *bills* these were: evidently something distinct from the pension, yet probably of the same nature, as the words “future favours” seems to imply that there had been some *present* favour.—Ed.]

² [These are the phrases by which a man endeavours to deceive himself and the world. Johnson would dignify himself by attributing his pension to the spontaneous patronage of Lord Bute, passing over in silence Sheridan and Mr. Wedderburne, whose *solicitation* and *interest* undoubtedly led to the grant of the pension.—Ed.]

much cash as would pay his expenses back to London. He could not trust himself with his own money, as he felt himself unable to resist the importunity of the numerous claimants on his benevolence.]

[Severity towards the poor was, in Dr. Johnson’s opinion (as is visible in his *Life of Addison* particularly), an undoubted and constant attendant or consequence upon whiggism³; and he was not contented with giving them relief, he wished to add also indulgence. He loved the poor, says Mrs. Piozzi, as I never yet saw any one else do, with an earnest desire to make them happy. What signifies, says some one, giving halfpence to common beggars? they only lay it out in gin or tobacco. “And why should they be denied such sweeteners of their existence (says Johnson)? it is surely very savage to refuse them every possible avenue to pleasure, reckoned too coarse for our own acceptance. Life is a pill which none of us can bear to swallow without gilding; yet for the poor we delight in stripping it still barer, and are not ashamed to show even visible displeasure, if ever the bitter taste is taken from their mouths.” In pursuance of these principles he nursed whole nests of people in his house, where the lame, the blind, the sick, and the sorrowful, found a sure retreat from all the evils whence his little income could secure them—and at the time when he commonly spent the middle of the week at Streatham, he kept his numerous family in Fleet-street upon a settled allowance; but returned to them every Saturday, to give them three good dinners, and his company, before he came back to Mr. Thralls’s on the Monday night—treating them with the same, or perhaps more ceremonious civility, than he would have done by as many people of fashion.]

This year, his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, paid a visit of some weeks to his native county, Devonshire, in which he was accompanied by Johnson, who was much pleased with this jaunt, and declared he had derived from it a great accession of new ideas. He was entertained at the seats of several noblemen and gentlemen in the west of England; but the greatest part of this time was passed at Plymouth, where the magnificence of the navy, the ship-building and all its circumstances, afforded him a grand subject of contemplation. At

³ [That Johnson may, in conversation, have made this strange and almost unintelligible charge against the whigs is possible: but if by the allusion to the *Life of Addison* is meant the observation on the character of Sir Andrew Freeport, Mrs. Piozzi has misrepresented the matter. It is “the spirit of unfeeling commerce,” and not of *whiggism*, that Johnson observes upon.—Ed.]

one of these seats Dr. Anyat, physician in London, told me he happened to meet him. In order to amuse him till dinner should be ready, he was taken out to walk in the garden. The master of the house thinking it proper to introduce something scientifick into the conversation, addressed him thus: "Are you a botanist, Dr. Johnson?" "No, sir," answered Johnson, "I am not a botanist; and (alluding, no doubt, to his near-sightedness), should I wish to become a botanist, I must first turn myself into a reptile." The commissioner¹ of the dock-yard paid him the compliment of ordering the yacht to convey him and his friend to the Eddystone, to which they accordingly sailed. But the weather was so tempestuous that they could not land.

Reynolds and he were at this time the guests of Dr. Mudge, the celebrated surgeon, and now physician of that place, not more distinguished for quickness of parts and variety of knowledge, than loved and esteemed for his amiable manners; and here Johnson formed an acquaintance with Dr. Mudge's father², that very eminent divine, the Rev. Zachariah Mudge, prebendary of Exeter, who was idolised in the west, both for his excellence as a preacher and the uniform perfect propriety of his private conduct. He preached a sermon purposely that Johnson might hear him; and we shall see afterwards that Johnson honoured his memory by drawing his character. While Johnson was at Plymouth, he saw a great many of its inhabitants, and was not sparing of his very entertaining conversation. It was here that he made that frank and truly original confession, that "ignorance, pure ignorance," was the cause of a wrong definition in his Dictionary of the word *pastern* [the knee of a horse], to the no small surprise of the lady who put the question to him; who having the most profound reverence for his character, so as almost to suppose him endowed with infallibility, expected to hear an explanation of what, to be sure, seemed strange to a common reader), drawn from some deep-learned source with which she was unacquainted.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom I was obliged for my information concerning this excursion, mentions a very characteristic anecdote of Johnson while at Plymouth. Having observed, that in consequence of the dock-yard a new town had arisen about two miles off as a rival to the old; and knowing from his sagacity, and just observation of human nature, that it is certain if

a man hates at all, he will hate his next neighbour; he concluded that this new and rising town could not but excite the envy and jealousy of the old, in which conjecture he was very soon confirmed; he therefore set himself resolutely on the side of the old town, the *established* town, in which his lot was cast, considering it as a kind of duty to *stand by* it. He accordingly entered warmly into its interests, and upon every occasion talked of the *Dockers*, as the inhabitants of the new town were called, as upstarts and aliens. Plymouth is very plentifully supplied with water by a river brought into it from a great distance, which is so abundant that it runs to waste in the town. The Dock, or Newtown, being totally destitute of water, petitioned Plymouth that a small portion of the conduit might be permitted to go to them, and this was now under consideration. Johnson, affecting to entertain the passions of the place, was violent in opposition; and half-laughing at himself for his pretended zeal, where he had no concern, exclaimed, "No, no! I am against the *Dockers*³; I am a Plymouth man. Rogues! let them die of thirst. They shall not have a drop!"

Lord Macartney obligingly favoured me with a copy of the following letter, in his own handwriting, from the original, which was found, by the present Earl of Bute, among his father's papers.

"TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF BUTE.

"Temple-lane, 3d Nov. 1762.

"MY LORD,—That generosity by which I was recommended to the favour of his majesty will not be offended at a solicitation necessary to make that favour permanent and effectual.

"The pension appointed to be paid me at Michaelmas I have not received, and know not where or from whom I am to ask it. I beg, therefore, that your lordship will be pleased to supply Mr. Wedderburne with such directions as may be necessary, which,

³ A friend of mine once heard him, during this visit, exclaim with the utmost vehemence, "I HATE a Docker."—BLAKEWAY. [This feud happily subsided, but the *Dockers* continued to our own days dissatisfied with being considered as a mere appendage to *Plymouth*; and they solicited and obtained, in 1823, the king's royal licence that the town of *Plymouth-Dock* should be hereafter called *Devonport*—a name singularly ill-chosen on the part of the *Dockers*—for it happens, ludicrously enough, that the port of *Plymouth* is wholly within the county of Devon; while Hamoaze, the port of Dock, is equally in Devon and *Cornwall*. So that the *Dockers* have assumed a name which could properly belong only to the antagonist town; and, to crown the blunder, the *separate* name was given just when the increase of buildings had completed the *union* of the two towns.—ED.]

¹ [Captain Francis Rogers.—ED.]

² [Mr. Thomas Mudge, the ingenious watch-maker in Fleet-street, who made considerable improvements in time-keepers, and wrote a book on that subject, was another son of Mr. Zachariah Mudge.—HALL.]

I believe, his friendship will make him think it no trouble to convey to me.

“To interrupt your lordship, at a time like this, with such petty difficulties, is improper and unseasonable; but your knowledge of the world has long since taught you, that every man’s affairs, however little, are important to himself. Every man hopes that he shall escape neglect; and, with reason, may every man, whose vices do not preclude his claim, expect favour from that beneficence which has been extended to, my lord, your lordship’s most obliged, &c. “SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO MR. JOSEPH BARETTI, AT MILAN.
“London, 21 Dec. 1762.

“STR,—You are not to suppose, with all your conviction of my idleness, that I have passed all this time without writing to my Baretta. I gave a letter to Mr. Beauclerk, who, in my opinion, and in his own, was hastening to Naples for the recovery of his health; but he has stopped at Paris, and I know not when he will proceed. Langton is with him.

“I will not trouble you with speculations about peace and war. The good or ill success of battles and embassies extends itself to a very small part of domestick life: we all have good and evil, which we feel more sensibly than our petty part of publick miscarriage or prosperity. I am sorry for your disappointment, with which you seem more touched than I should expect a man of your resolution and experience to have been, did I not know that general truths are seldom applied to particular occasions; and that the fallacy of our self-love extends itself as wide as our interest or affections. Every man believes that mistresses are unfaithful, and patrons capricious; but he excepts his own mistress, and his own patron. We have all learned that greatness is negligent and contemptuous, and that in courts life is often languished away in ungratified expectation; but he that approaches greatness, or glitters in a court, imagines that destiny has at last exempted him from the common lot.

“Do not let such evils overwhelm you as thousands have suffered and thousands have surmounted; but turn your thoughts with vigour to some other plan of life, and keep always in your mind, that, with due submission to Providence, a man of genius has been seldom ruined but by himself. Your patron’s weakness or insensibility will finally do you little hurt, if he is not assisted by your own passions. Of your love I know not the propriety, nor can estimate the power; but in love, as in every other passion of which hope is the essence, we ought always to remember the uncertainty of events. There is, indeed,

nothing that so much seduces reason from vigilance, as the thought of passing life with an amiable woman; and if all would happen that a lover fancies, I know not what other terrestrial happiness would deserve pursuit. But love and marriage are different states. Those who are to suffer the evils together¹, and to suffer often for the sake of one another, soon lose that tenderness of look, and that benevolence of mind, which arose from the participation of unmingled pleasure and successive amusement. A woman, we are sure, will not be always fair; we are not sure she will always be virtuous; and man cannot retain through life that respect and assiduity by which he pleases for a day or for a month. I do not, however, pretend to have discovered that life has any thing more to be desired than a prudent and virtuous marriage; therefore know not what counsel to give you.

“If you can quit your imagination of love and greatness, and leave your hopes of preferment and bridal raptures to try once more the fortune of literature and industry, the way through France is now open. We flatter ourselves that we shall cultivate, with great diligence, the arts of peace; and every man will be welcome among us who can teach us any thing we do not know. For your part, you will find all your old friends willing to receive you.

“Reynolds still continues to increase in reputation and in riches. Miss Williams, who very much loves you, goes on in the old way. Miss Cotterel is still with Mrs. Porter. Miss Charlotte is married to Dean Lewis, and has three children. Mr. Levett has married a street-walker. But the gazette of my narration must now arrive to tell you, that Bathurst went physician to the army, and died at the Havannah.

“I know not whether I have not sent you word that Huggins² and Richardson are

¹ Johnson probably wrote “the evils of life together.” The words in Italicks, however, are not found in Baretta’s original edition of this letter, but they may have been omitted inadvertently either in his transcript or at the press.—MALONE.

² [Huggins, the translator of Ariosto. His enmity to Baretta and Johnson will be explained by the following extract from a MS. letter of Dr. Warton to his brother, dated Winsdale, 23th April, 1755.

“He (Huggins) abuses Baretta infernally, and says that he *run off* with a *gold watch* (you remember the *present*); that he one day lent Baretta the watch to know when to return from a walk to dinner, and could never get it afterwards; that he applied to him in London; that after many excuses Baretta skulked, and then got Johnson to write to Mr. Huggins a suppliant letter; that this letter stopped Huggins awhile, while Baretta got a *protection* from the Sardinian ambassador; that *then* Johnson had the assurance

both dead. When we see our enemies and friends gliding away before us, let us not forget that we are subject to the general law of mortality, and shall soon be where our doom will be fixed for ever.—I pray God to bless you, and am, sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

“Write soon. SAM. JOHNSON.”

In 1763 he furnished to “The Poetical Calendar,” published by Fawkes and Woty, a character of Collins*, which he afterwards engrafted into his entire life of that admirable poet, in the collection of lives which he wrote for the body of English poetry, formed and published by the booksellers of London. His account of the melancholy depression with which Collins was severely afflicted, and which brought him to his grave, is, I think, one of the most tender and interesting passages in the whole series of his writings¹. He also favoured Mr. Hoole with the Dedication of his translations of Tasso to the Queen*, which is so happily conceived and elegantly expressed, that I cannot but point it out to the peculiar notice of my readers².

to write him, Huggins, a sneering letter, defying his power to touch Baretti; and then Huggins applied to Sir Thomas Robinson, secretary of state, to get the ambassador to revoke his protection, which he did; and that, at last, with great difficulty, the watch was got from a pawnbroker's, to whom Baretti had sold it.

“What a strange story, and how difficult to be believed, especially considering who it comes from! Huggins wanted to get an approbation of his translation from Johnson; but Johnson would not, though Huggins says 't was only to get money from him. To crown all, he says that Baretti wanted to poison Croker. This makes the whole improbable, but crowns the story. Are not these rich anecdotes? I told Jones, and commissioned him to tell St. John the whole truth. Dr. Brown, ——'s neighbour, got Ariosto for Queen's. By some means or other, Johnson must know this story of Huggins. How infamous is it, if it should be false!” Baretti had been employed by Huggins to revise his translation.

The person whom Huggins accused Baretti of an attempt to poison was the Rev. Temple Henry Croker, the author of several works, and amongst others of a translation of Ariosto's *Orlando*, published in 1755, and of his *Satires*, in 1759.—ED.]

¹ [We have seen *ante*, p. 119, the peculiar sympathy which probably gave such pathos to Johnson's account of the mental infirmities of Collins.—ED.]

² “MADAM,—To approach the high and illustrious has been in all ages the privilege of poets; and though translators cannot justly claim the same honour, yet they naturally follow their authors as attendants; and I hope that in return for having enabled Tasso to diffuse his fame through the British dominions, I may be introduced by him to the presence of your majesty.

[“TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.
12th April, 1763.

“MY DEAR,—The newspaper has informed me of the death of Captain Porter. I know not what to say to you, condolent or consolatory, beyond the common considerations which I suppose you have proposed to others, and know how to apply to yourself. In all afflictions the first relief is to be asked of God.

“I wish to be informed in what condition your brother's death has left your fortune; if he has bequeathed you competence or plenty, I shall sincerely rejoice; if you are in any distress or difficulty, I will endeavour to make what I have, or what I can get, sufficient for us both.—I am, madam, yours affectionately,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

I shall now present my readers with some *Collectanea*³, obligingly furnished to me by the Rev. Dr. Maxwell, of Falkland, in Ireland⁴, some time assistant

“Tasso has a peculiar claim to your majesty's favour, as follower and panegyrist of the house of Este, which has one common ancestor with the house of Hanover; and in reviewing his life, it is not easy to forbear a wish that he had lived in a happier time, when he might among the descendants of that illustrious family have found a more liberal and potent patronage.

“I cannot but observe, madam, how unequal reward is proportioned to merit, when I reflect that the happiness which was withheld from Tasso is reserved for me; and that the poem which once hardly procured to its author the countenance of the princes of Ferrara, has attracted to its translator the favourable notice of a British queen.

“Had this been the fate of Tasso, he would have been able to have celebrated the condescension of your majesty in nobler language, but could not have felt it with more ardent gratitude than, madam, your majesty's most faithful and devoted servant.”—BOSWELL.

³ [Mr. Boswell had inserted these *Collectanea* under 1770, to supply the blank occasioned by his not having visited London that year; but as many of Dr. Maxwell's anecdotes appear to relate to a period antecedent to the commencement of Mr. Boswell's personal acquaintance in 1763, it has been thought better to remove them to this place.—ED.]

⁴ [Dr. William Maxwell was the son of Dr. John Maxwell, Archdeacon of Downe, in Ireland, and cousin of the Honourable Henry Maxwell, Bishop of Dromore in 1765, and of Meath in 1766, from whom he obtained preferment; but having a considerable property of his own, he resigned the living when, as it is said, his residence was insisted on; and he fixed himself in Bath, where he died so late as 1818, at the age of 87. Although, as has been just stated, most of the anecdotes probably refer to the period when Johnson resided in the Temple, Maxwell must

preacher at the Temple, and for many years the social friend of Johnson, who spoke of him with a very kind regard.

“My acquaintance with that great and venerable character commenced in the year 1754. I was introduced to him by Mr. Grierson¹, his majesty’s printer at Dublin, a gentleman of uncommon learning, and great wit and vivacity. Mr. Grierson died in Germany, at the age of twenty-seven. Dr. Johnson highly respected his abilities, and often observed, that he possessed more extensive knowledge than any man of his years he had ever known. His industry was equal to his talents; and he particularly excelled in every species of philological learning, and was, perhaps, the best critick of the age he lived in.

“I must always remember with gratitude my obligation to Mr. Grierson, for the honour and happiness of Dr. Johnson’s acquaintance and friendship, which continued uninterrupted and undiminished to his death; a connexion, that was at once the pride and happiness of my life.

“What pity it is, that so much wit and good sense as Johnson continually exhibited in conversation should perish unrecorded! Few persons quitted his company without perceiving themselves wiser and better than they were before. On serious subjects he flashed the most interesting conviction upon his auditors; and upon lighter topicks, you might have supposed—*Albano musas de monte locutas*.

“Though I can hope to add but little to the celebrity of so exalted a character, by any communications I can furnish, yet out of pure respect to his memory, I will venture to transmit to you some anecdotes concerning him, which fell under my own observation. The very *minutiæ* of such a character must be interesting, and may be compared to the filings of diamonds.

“In politicks he was deemed a Tory, but certainly was not so in the obnoxious or party sense of the term; for while he assert-

have kept up occasional intercourse with him, as some of them undoubtedly refer to a later time. Dr. Maxwell was very proud of his acquaintance with Johnson, and affected to imitate his style of conversation.—ED.]

¹ Son of the learned Mrs. Grierson, who was patronized by the late Lord Granville, and was the editor of several of the classicks.—BOSWELL. Her edition of Tacitus, with the notes of Ryckius, in three volumes, 8vo. 1730, was dedicated in very elegant Latin [from her own pen] to John, Lord Carteret (afterwards Earl Granville), by whom she was patronized during his residence in Ireland as lord-lieutenant between 1724 and 1730.—MALONE. [Lord Carteret gave her family the lucrative patent office of king’s printer in Ireland, still enjoyed by her descendants. She was very beautiful, as well as learned.—ED.]

ed the legal and salutary prerogatives of the crown, he no less respected the constitutional liberties of the people. Whiggism, at the time of the Revolution, he said, was accompanied with certain principles; but latterly, as a mere party distinction under Walpole and the Pelhams, was no better than the politicks of stockjobbers, and the religion of infidels.

“He detested the idea of governing by parliamentary corruption, and asserted most strenuously, that a prince steadily and conspicuously pursuing the interests of his people, could not fail of parliamentary concurrence. A prince of ability, he contended, might and should be the directing soul and spirit of his own administration; in short, his own minister and not the mere head of a party; and then, and not till then, would the royal dignity be sincerely respected.

“Johnson seemed to think that a certain degree of crown influence² over the houses of parliament (not meaning a corrupt and shameful dependence) was very salutary, nay, even necessary, in our mixed government. ‘For,’ said he, ‘if the members were under no crown influence, and disqualified from receiving any gratification from court, and resembled, as they possibly might, Pym and Haslerig, and other stubborn and sturdy members of the long parliament, the wheels of government would be totally obstructed. Such men would oppose, merely to show their power, from envy, jealousy, and perversity of disposition; and not gaining themselves, would hate and oppose all who did: not loving the person of the prince, and conceiving they owed him little gratitude, from the mere spirit of insolence and contradiction, they would oppose and thwart him upon all occasions.’

“The inseparable imperfection annexed to all human governments consisted, he said, in not being able to create a sufficient fund of virtue and principle to carry the laws into due and effectual execution. Wisdom might plan, but virtue alone could execute. And where could sufficient virtue be found? A variety of delegated, and often discretionary powers must be intrusted somewhere; which, if not governed by integrity and conscience, would necessarily be abused, till at last the constable would sell his for a shilling.

“This excellent person was sometimes charged with abetting slavish and arbitrary principles of government. Nothing in my opinion could be a grosser calumny and misrepresentation; for how can it be rationally supposed, that he should adopt such pernicious

² On the necessity of crown influence, see *Boucher’s Sermons on the American Revolution*, p. 218; and *Paley’s Moral Philosophy*, B. VI. c. vii. p. 491, 4to. there quoted.—BLAKEWAY.

cious and absurd opinions, who supported his philosophical character with so much dignity, was extremely jealous of his personal liberty and independence, and could not brook the smallest appearance of neglect or insult, even from the highest personages?

“But let us view him in some instances of more familiar life.

“His general mode of life, during my acquaintance, seemed to be pretty uniform. About twelve o'clock I commonly visited him, and frequently found him in bed, or declaiming over his tea, which he drank very plentifully. He generally had a levee of morning visitors, chiefly men of letters; Hawkesworth, Goldsmith, Murphy, Langton, Steevens, Beauclerk, &c. &c. and sometimes learned ladies; particularly I remember a French lady¹ of wit and fashion doing him the honour of a visit. He seemed to me to be considered as a kind of publick oracle, whom every body thought they had a right to visit and consult; and doubtless they were well rewarded. I never could discover how he found time for his compositions. He declaimed all the morning, then went to dinner at a tavern, where he commonly staid late, and then drank his tea at some friend's house, over which he loitered a great while, but seldom took supper. I fancy he must have read and wrote chiefly in the night, for I can scarcely recollect that he ever refused going with me to a tavern, and he often went to Ranelagh, which he deemed a place of innocent recreation.

“He frequently gave all the silver in his pocket to the poor, who watched him, between his house and the tavern where he dined. He walked the streets all hours, and said he was never robbed, for the rogues knew he had little money, nor had the appearance of having much.

“Though the most accessible and communicative man alive, yet when he suspected he was invited to be exhibited, he constantly spurned the invitation.

“Two young women from Staffordshire visited him when I was present, to consult him on the subject of Methodism, to which they were inclined. ‘Come (said he, you pretty fools, dine with Maxwell and me at the Mitre, and we will talk over that subject;’ which they did, and after dinner he took one of them upon his knee, and fondled her for half an hour together.

“Upon a visit to me at a country lodging near Twickenham, he asked what sort of society I had there. I told him but indifferent, as they chiefly consisted of opulent traders, retired from business. He said, he never much liked that class of people; ‘For, sir (said he), they have lost the

civility of tradesmen, without acquiring the manners of gentlemen.’

“Johnson was much attached to London²: he observed, that a man stored his mind better there than any where else; and that in remote situations a man's body might be feasted, but his mind was starved, and his faculties apt to degenerate, from want of exercise and competition. No place (he said) cured a man's vanity or arrogance so well as London; for as no man was either great or good *per se*, but as compared with others not so good or great, he was sure to find in the metropolis many his equals, and some his superiours. He observed, that a man in London was in less danger of falling in love indiscreetly, than any where else; for there the difficulty of deciding between the conflicting pretensions of a vast variety of objects kept him safe. He told me, that he had frequently been offered country preferment, if he would consent to take orders; but he could not leave the improved society of the capital, or consent to exchange the exhilarating joys and splendid decorations of publick life, for the obscurity, insipidity, and uniformity of remote situations.

“Speaking of³ Mr. Harte, Canon of Windsor, and writer of ‘The History of Gustavus Adolphus,’ he much commended him as a scholar, and a man of the most

² Montaigne had the same affection for Paris, which Johnson had for London.—“Je l'aime tendrement (says he in his Essay on Vanity), jusque à ses verrues et à ses taches. Je ne suis François, que par cette grande cité, grande en peuples, grande en félicité de son assiette, mais sur tout grande et incomparable en variété et diversité des commoditez: la gloire de la France, et l'un des plus nobles ornemens du monde.” Vol. iii. p. 321, edit. Amsterdam, 1781.—BLAKEWAY.

³ [Walter Harte, born about 1707, A. M. of St. Mary Hall, in Oxford, was tutor to Lord Chesterfield's natural son, Mr. Stanhope, and was by his lordship's interest made Canon of Windsor; he died in 1774. Some doubt is thrown in the Biographical Dictionary on the dates of his birth and of some of his earlier publications, from a Walter Harte having graduated A. M. in 1720; but they were clearly not the same persons: there were, as Dr. Hall informs, no less than four Hartes who might have been living at the same time, viz. Walter Harte, Pemb. Coll. A. M. 5th May, 1674; Thomas Harte, Pemb. Coll. A. M. 19th Ap. 1681; Walter Harte, Pemb. Coll. A. M. 30th June, 1720; and Walter Harte, St. Mary Hall, A. M. 21st Jan. 1730: the latter was doubtless the poet and historian; the first Walter was probably his father; who the other two Hartes were does not appear; but the date of 1730 for the historian's degree of A. M. removes all the difficulties started in the Biog. Dictionary. See more of Harte, *post*, 30th March, 1780.—Ed.]

¹ No doubt Madame de Boufflers. See *post*, p. 188.—Ed.]

companionable talents he had ever known. He said, the defects in his history proceeded not from imbecility, but from toppery.

“He loved, he said, the old black letter books; they were rich in matter, though their style was inelegant; wonderfully so, considering how conversant the writers were with the best models of antiquity.

“Burton’s ‘Anatomy of Melancholy,’ he said, was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise.

“He frequently exhorted me to set about writing a History of Ireland, and archly remarked, there had been some good Irish writers, and that one Irishman might at least aspire to be equal to another. He had great compassion for the miseries and distresses of the Irish nation, particularly the Papists; and severely reprobated the barbarous debilitating policy of the British government, which, he said, was the most detestable mode of persecution. To a gentleman, who hinted such policy might be necessary to support the authority of the English government, he replied by saying, ‘Let the authority of the English government perish, rather than be maintained by iniquity. Better would it be to restrain the turbulence of the natives by the authority of the sword, and to make them amenable to law and justice by an effectual and vigorous police, than to grind them to powder by all manner of disabilities and incapacities. Better (said he) to hang or drown people at once, than by an unrelenting persecution to beggar and starve them.’ The moderation and humanity of the present times have, in some measure, justified the wisdom of his observations.

“Dr. Johnson was often accused of prejudices, nay, antipathy, with regard to the natives of Scotland¹. Surely, so illiberal a prejudice never entered his mind: and it is well known, many natives of that respectable country possessed a large share in his esteem: nor were any of them ever excluded from his good offices as far as opportunity permitted. True it is, he considered the Scotch, nationally, as a crafty, designing people, eagerly attentive to their own interest, and too apt to overlook the claims and pretensions of other people. ‘While they confine their benevolence, in a manner, exclusively to those of their own country, they expect to share in the good offices of other people. Now (said Johnson) this princi-

¹ [It would be curious to know when his antipathy to Scotland became so strong, and what the cause of it was. If we could give any credit to the story told by Dr. M’Nichol and Miss Seaward as to one of his uncles (see *ante*, p. 11. n.), it would account for this prejudice; yet many of his early friends and associates were Scots.—Ed.]

ple is either right or wrong; if right, we should do well to imitate such conduct; if wrong, we cannot too much detest it.’

“Being solicited to compose a funeral sermon for the daughter of a tradesman, he naturally inquired into the character of the deceased; and being told she was remarkable for her humility and condescension to inferiours, he observed, that those were very laudable qualities, but it might not be so easy to discover who the lady’s inferiours were.

“Of a certain player² he remarked, that his conversation usually threatened and announced more than it performed; that he fed you with a continual renovation of hope, to end in a constant succession of disappointment.

“When exasperated by contradiction, he was apt to treat his opponent with too much acrimony: as, ‘Sir, you don’t see your way through that question:—’ ‘Sir, you talk the language of ignorance.’ On my observing to him that a certain gentleman had remained silent the whole evening, in the midst of a very brilliant and learned society, ‘Sir (said he), the conversation overflowed, and drowned him.’

“His philosophy, though austere and solemn, was by no means morose and cynical, and never blunted the laudable sensibilities of his character, or exempted him from the influence of the tender passions. Want of tenderness, he always alleged, was want of parts, and was no less a proof of stupidity than depravity.

“Speaking of Mr. Hanway, who published ‘An Eight Days’ Journey from London to Portsmouth,’ ‘Jonas (said he) acquired some reputation by travelling abroad³, but lost it all by travelling at home.’

“Of the passion of love he remarked, that its violence and ill effects were much exaggerated; for who knows any real sufferings on that head, more than from the exorbitancy of any other passion?

“He much commended⁴, ‘Law’s Serious Call,’ which he said was the finest piece of hortatory theology in any language. ‘Law (said he) fell latterly into the reveries of

² [No doubt, Mr. Sheridan.—Ed.]

³ [He had published “*An Account of the British Trade over the Caspian Sea, with Travels through Russia, Persia, Germany, and Holland.*” These travels contain very curious details of the then state of Persia.—Ed.]

⁴ [William Law was born 1686, entered in 1705 of Em. Col. Camb., Fellow in 1711, and A. M. in 1712. On the accession of the Hanover family he refused the oaths. He was tutor to Mr. Gibbon’s father, at Putney, and finally retired with two pious ladies, Mrs. Hutchinson and Mrs. Gibbon, the aunt of the historian, to a kind of conventual seclusion at King’s-cliffe, his native place: he died in 1761.—Ed.]

Jacob Behmen¹, whom Law alleged to have been somewhat in the same state with St. Paul, and to have seen *unutterable things*. Were it even so (said Johnson), Jacob would have resembled St. Paul still more, by not attempting to utter them.²

"He observed, that the established clergy in general did not preach plain enough; and that polished periods and glittering sentences flew over the heads of the common people, without any impression upon their hearts. Something might be necessary, he observed, to excite the affections of the common people, who were sunk in languor and lethargy, and therefore he supposed that the new concomitants of methodism might probably produce so desirable an effect. The mind, like the body, he observed, delighted in change and novelty, and, even in religion itself, courted new appearances and modifications. Whatever might be thought of some methodist teachers, he said, he could scarcely doubt the sincerity of that man, who travelled nine hundred miles in a month, and preached twelve times a week; for no adequate reward, merely temporal, could be given for such indefatigable labour.

"Of Dr. Priestley's theological works², he remarked, that they tended to unsettle every thing, and yet settled nothing.

"He was much affected by the death of his mother, and wrote to me to come and assist him to compose his mind, which indeed I found extremely agitated. He lamented that all serious and religious conversation was banished from the society of men, and yet great advantages might be derived from it. All acknowledged, he said, what hardly any body practised, the obligations we were under of making the concerns of eternity the governing principles of our lives. Every man, he observed, at last wishes for retreat: he sees his expectations frustrated in the world, and begins to wean himself from it, and to prepare for everlasting separation.

"He observed, that the influence of London now extended every where, and that from all manner of communication being

opened, there shortly would be no remains of the ancient simplicity, or places of cheap retreat to be found.

"He was no admirer of blank verse, and said it always failed, unless sustained by the dignity of the subject. In blank verse, he said, the language suffered more distortion, to keep it out of prose, than any inconvenience or limitation to be apprehended from the shackles and circumspection of rhyme.

"He reproved me once for saying grace without mention of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and hoped in future I would be more mindful of the apostolical injunction³.

"He refused to go out of a room before me at Mr. Langton's house, saying, he hoped he knew his rank better than to presume to take place of a doctor in divinity. I mention such little anecdotes, merely to show the peculiar turn and habit of his mind.

"He used frequently to observe, that there was more to be endured than enjoyed, in the general condition of human life; and frequently quoted those lines of Dryden:

"Strange cozenage! none would live past years
again,
Yet all hope pleasure from what still remain."

For his part, he said, he never passed that week in his life which he would wish to repeat, were an angel to make the proposal to him.

"He was of opinion, that the English nation cultivated both their soil and their reason better than any other people; but admitted that the French, though not the highest, perhaps, in any department of literature, yet in every department were very high. Intellectual pre-eminence, he observed, was the highest superiority; and that every nation derived their highest reputation from the splendour and dignity of their writers. Voltaire, he said, was a good narrator, and that his principal merit consisted in a happy selection and arrangement of circumstances.

"Speaking of the French novels, compared with Richardson's, he said, they might be pretty baubles, but a wren was not an eagle.

"In a Latin conversation with the Pere Boscovich⁴, at the house of Mrs. Chol-

¹ [A German fanatic, born near Gortitz, in Upper Lusatia, in 1575. He wrote a multitude of religious works, all very mystical. He probably was deranged, and died in an ecstatic vision in 1624. Mr. Law passed many of the latter years of his life in translating Behmen's works, four volumes of which were published after Mr. Law's death.—Ed.]

² [None of Dr. Priestley's theological works were published at the time when it is supposed Dr. Maxwell's *intimacy* with Johnson terminated by his return to Ireland, which seems to have been about 1765 or 1766, so that this and such passages must be referred to his subsequent occasional visits to London.—Ed.]

³ [Alluding probably to 5th Ephesians, v. 20, "*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"—Ed.]

⁴ [See *post*, December, 1775, where Mr. Murphy states, that this, or a similar conversation took place in the house of Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury.—Ed.]

mondely, I heard him maintain the superiority of Sir Isaac Newton over all foreign philosophers¹, with a dignity and eloquence that surprised that learned foreigner. It being observed to him, that a rage for every thing English prevailed much in France, after Lord Chatham's glorious war, he said, he did not wonder at it, for that we had drubbed those fellows into a proper reverence for us, and that their national petulance required periodical chastisement.

"Lord Lyttelton's² Dialogues he deemed a nugatory performance. 'That man,' said he, 'sat down to write a book, to tell the world what the world had all his life been telling him.

"Somebody observing that the Scotch Highlanders, in the year 1745, had made surprising efforts, considering their numerous wants and disadvantages: 'Yes, sir,' said he, 'their wants were numerous: but you have not mentioned the greatest of them all—the want of law³.

"Speaking of the *inward light*, to which some methodists pretended, he said, it was a principle utterly incompatible with social or civil security. 'If a man,' said he, 'pretends to a principle of action of which I can know nothing, nay, not so much as that he has it, but only that he pretends to it; how can I tell what that person may be prompted to do? When a person professes to be governed by a written ascertained law, I can then know where to find him.'

"The poem of Fingal, he said, was a mere unconnected rhapsody, a tiresome repetition of the same images. 'In vain shall we look for the *lucidus ordo*, where there is neither end nor object, design or moral, *nec certa recurrit imago*.'

"Being asked by a young nobleman, what was become of the gallantry and military spirit of the old English nobility, he replied, 'Why, my lord, I'll tell you what is become of it: it is gone into the city to look for a fortune.'

¹ In a Discourse by Sir William Jones, addressed to the Asiatick Society, February 24, 1785, is the following passage:

"One of the most sagacious men in this age, who continues, I hope, to improve and adorn it, Samuel Johnson, remarked in my hearing, that if Newton had flourished in ancient Greece, he would have been worshipped as a divinity."—MALONE.

² [We shall hereafter see more of Johnson's low opinion of Lord Lyttelton.—Ed.]

³ [It is not very clear what was meant: *law*, *abstractedly*, would be one of the least wants of an invading army. Johnson perhaps meant either that their greatest want was, that they had not the law on their side, or that they had not the means of enforcing *discipline* by law.—Ed.]

"Speaking of a dull tiresome fellow, whom he chanced to meet, he said, 'That fellow seems to me to possess but one idea, and that is a wrong one.'

"Much inquiry having been made concerning a gentleman who had quitted a company where Johnson was, and no information being obtained, at last Johnson observed, that 'he did not care to speak ill of any man behind his back, but he believed the gentleman was an *attorney*.'

"He spoke with much contempt of the notice taken of Woodhouse⁴, the poetical shoemaker. He said it was all vanity and childishness; and that such objects were, to those who patronized them, mere mirrors of their own superiority. 'They had better,' said he, 'furnish the man with good implements for his trade, than raise subscriptions for his poems. He may make an excellent shoemaker, but can never make a good poet. A schoolboy's exercise may be a pretty thing for a schoolboy; but it is no treat for a man.'

"Speaking of Boetius, who was the favourite writer of the middle ages, he said it was very surprising that, upon such a subject, and in such a situation, he should be *magis philosophus quam Christianus*.

"Speaking of Arthur Murphy, whom he very much loved, 'I don't know,' said he, 'that Arthur can be classed with the very first dramatick writers; yet at present I doubt much whether we have any thing superior to Arthur.'

"Speaking of the national debt, he said, it was an idle dream to suppose that the country could sink under it. Let the publick creditors be ever so clamorous, the interest of millions must ever prevail over that of thousands⁵.

"Of Dr. Kennicott's Collations⁶, he ob-

⁴ [There is an account of this *poetical prodigy*, as he was called, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1764, p. 289. He was brought into notice by Shenston.—Ed.]

⁵ [He meant evidently that if the interest of millions—the country at large—required that the national debt should be spunged off, it would prevail over the interest of thousands—the holders of stock.—Ed.]

⁶ [Dr. Benjamin Kennicott—born in 1718, A. M. and Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford, in 1750, and D. D. in 1760—having distinguished himself by a learned dissertation on the state of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, was, about 1759, persuaded by Archbishop Secker, and encouraged by a large subscription, to undertake a collation of all the Hebrew MSS. of the Old Testament. The first volume of his learned labour was, however, not published till 1776; and the second, with a general dissertation, completed the work in 1783. He was Radcliffe librarian, and canon of Christ Church, in which cathedral he was buried in 1783.—Ed.]

served, that though the text should not be much mended thereby, yet it was no small advantage to know that we had as good a text as the most consummate industry and diligence could procure.

“Johnson observed, that so many objections might be made to every thing, that nothing could overcome them but the necessity of doing something. No man would be of any profession, as simply opposed to not being of it; but every one must do something.

“He remarked, that a London parish was a very comfortless thing: for the clergyman seldom knew the face of one out of ten of his parishioners.

“Of the late Mr. Mallet he spoke with no great respect; said, he was ready for any dirty job: that he had wrote against Byng at the instigation of the ministry, and was equally ready to write for him, provided he found his account in it.

“A gentleman who had been very unhappy in marriage, married immediately after his wife died: Johnson said, it was the triumph of hope over experience.

“He observed, that a man of sense and education should meet a suitable companion in a wife. It was a miserable thing when the conversation could only be such as, whether the mutton should be boiled or roasted, and probably a dispute about that.

“He did not approve of late marriages, observing that more was lost in point of time, than compensated for by any possible advantages. Even ill assorted marriages were preferable to cheerless celibacy.

“Of old Sheridan he remarked, that he neither wanted parts nor literature; but that his vanity and Quixotism obscured his merits.

“He said, foppery was never cured; it was the bad stamina of the mind, which, like those of the body, were never rectified: once a coxcomb, and always a coxcomb.

“Being told that Gilbert Cooper called him the Caliban of literature; ‘Well,’ said he, ‘I must dub him the Punchinello!’

“Speaking of the old Earl of Cork and Orrery, he said, ‘that man spent his life in catching at an object (literary eminence), which he had not power to grasp.

“To find a substitution for violated morality, he said, was the leading feature in all perversions of religion.

“He often used to quote, with great pathos, those fine lines of Virgil:

‘Optima quæque dies miseris mortalibus ævi
Prima fugit; subeunt morbi tristisque senectus
Et labor, et duræ rapit inclementia mortis.’

3 Geor. 64.

“Speaking of Homer, whom he venerated as the prince of poets², Johnson remarked that the advice given to Diomed³ by his father, when he sent him to the Trojan war, was the noblest exhortation that could be instanced in any heathen writer, and comprised in a single line:

Αἴψα ἀριστεύειν, καὶ ὑπερβῆσον ἐμμεναι ἄλλωι :

which, if I recollect well, is translated by Dr. Clarke thus: *semper appetere præstantissima, et omnibus aliis antecellere.*

“He observed, ‘it was a most mortifying reflection for any man to consider, *what he had done*, compared with *what he might have done*.’

“He said few people had intellectual resources sufficient to forego the pleasures of wine: They could not otherwise contrive how to fill the interval between dinner and supper.

“He went with me one Sunday, to hear my old master, Gregory Sharpe⁴, preach at the Temple.—In the prefatory prayer, Sharpe ranted about *liberty*, as a blessing most fervently to be implored, and its continuance prayed for. Johnson observed that our *liberty* was in no sort of danger:—he would have done much better to pray against our *licentiousness*.

“One evening at Mrs. Montagu’s, where a splendid company was assembled, consisting of the most eminent literary characters. I thought he seemed highly pleased with the respect and attention that were shown him, and asked him, on our return home, if he was not highly *gratified* by his visit. ‘No, sir,’ said he, ‘not highly *gratified*; yet I do not recollect to have passed many evenings *with fewer objections*.’

“Though of no high extraction himself, he had much respect for birth and family, especially among ladies. He said, ‘adventitious accomplishments may be possess-

² [Johnson’s usual seal, at least at one time of his life, was a head of Homer, as appears from the envelopes of his letters.—ED.]

³ Dr. Maxwell’s memory has deceived him. Glaucus is the person who received this counsel; and Clarke’s translation of the passage (Il. x. l. 208), is as follows:

‘Ut semper fortissime rem gererem, et superior virtute essem aliis.’—JAMES BOSWELL.

⁴ [Gregory Sharpe, D. D. F. R. S. and F. A. S., born in 1713. He published some religious works, and several critical essays on the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages. Dr. Maxwell calls him his “old master,” because Dr. Sharpe was *master of the Temple* when Maxwell was assistant preacher. Dr. Sharpe died in the Temple-house in 1771.—ED.]

¹ [John Gilbert Cooper, Esq. author of a good deal of prose and verse, but best known as the author of a Life of Socrates, and a consequent dispute with Bishop Warburton. Cooper was in person short and squab; hence Johnson’s allusion to *Punch*. He died in 1769.]

ed by all ranks; but one may easily distinguish the *born gentlewoman*."

"He said, 'the poor in England were better provided for, than in any other country of the same extent: he did not mean little cantons, or petty republicks. Where a great proportion of the people,' said he, 'are suffered to languish in helpless misery, that country must be ill policed, and wretchedly governed: a decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization. Gentlemen of education,' he observed, 'were pretty much the same in all countries; the condition of the lower orders, the poor especially, was the true mark of national discrimination.'

"When the corn laws were in agitation in Ireland, by which that country has been enabled not only to feed itself, but to export corn to a large amount; Sir Thomas Robinson¹ observed, that those laws might be prejudicial to the corn-trade of England. 'Sir Thomas,' said he, 'you talk the language of a savage: what, sir, would you prevent any people from feeding themselves, if by any honest means they can do it?'

"It being mentioned, that Garrick assisted Dr. Browne², the authour of the 'Estimate,' in some dramatick composition, 'No, sir,' said Johnson; 'he would no more suffer Garrick to write a line in his play, than he would suffer him to mount his pulpit.'

"Speaking of Burke³, he said, 'It was commonly observed he spoke too often in parliament; but nobody could say he did not speak well, though too frequently and too familiarly.'

"Speaking of economy, he remarked, it was hardly worth while to save anxiously twenty pounds a year. If a man could save to that degree, so as to enable him to assume a different rank in society, then, indeed, it might answer some purpose.

"He observed, a principal source of erroneous judgment was viewing things partially and only on *one side*; as for instance, *fortune-hunters*, when they contemplated the fortunes *singly and separately*, it was a daz-

zling and tempting object; but when they came to possess the wives and their fortunes *together*, they began to suspect they had not made quite so good a bargain.

"Speaking of the late Duke of Northumberland⁴ living very magnificently when Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, somebody remarked, it would be difficult to find a suitable successor to him: 'then,' exclaimed Johnson, '*he is only fit to succeed himself*.'

"He advised me, if possible, to have a good orchard. He knew, he said, a clergyman of small income, who brought up a family very reputably, which he chiefly fed with apple dumplings⁵.

"He said he had known several good scholars among the Irish gentlemen; but scarcely any of them correct in *quantity*. He extended the same observation to Scotland.

"Speaking of a certain prelate⁶, who exerted himself very laudably in building churches and parsonage-houses; 'however,' said he, 'I do not find that he is esteemed a man of much professional learning, or a liberal patron of it;—yet, it is well where a man possesses any strong positive excellence.—Few have all kinds of merit belonging to their character. We must not examine matters too deeply.—No, sir, a *fallible being will fail somewhere*.'

"Talking of the Irish clergy, he said, 'Swift was a man of great parts, and the instrument of much good to his country.—Berkeley was a profound scholar, as well as a man of fine imagination; but Usher⁷,' he

⁴ [Sir Hugh Smithson, who, by his marriage with the daughter of Algernon, Duke of Somerset, became second Earl of Northumberland of the new creation, was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1763 to 1765; he was created a duke in 1766.—Ed.]

⁵ [This seems a strange resource. Perhaps Dr. Maxwell, at the interval of so many years, did not perfectly recollect Dr. Johnson's statement.—Ed.]

⁶ [Probably Dr. Richard Robinson, Bishop of Killaloe in 1751, of Ferns in 1759, of Kildare in 1761; Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland from 1765 to 1795. He was created Lord Rokeby in 1777, with remainder to the issue of his cousin, Matthew Robinson, of West Layton, two of whose sons have successively succeeded to that title. He built what is called Canterbury-gate, and the adjacent quadrangle, in Christ-Church, Oxford.—Ed.]

⁷ [The Irish church has too long neglected to pay its debt of gratitude to Usher; but the University of Dublin has at length determined to print at its press the works of her "great luminary." The edition and the care of prefixing a life of the prelate, is confided to the able hands of Dr. Charles Elrington, regius professor of divinity in that university.—Ed.]

¹ [The elder brother of the first Lord Rokeby, called *Long Sir Thomas Robinson*, on account of his height, and to distinguish him from Sir Thomas Robinson, first Lord Grantham. See *post*, p. 196.—Ed.]

² [Dr. John Browne, born in 1715; A. B. of St. John's, Cambridge, in 1735, and D. D. in 1755; besides his celebrated "Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times,"—a work which, in one year, ran through seven editions, and is now forgotten,—and several religious and miscellaneous works, he was the authour of two tragedies, *Barbarossa* and *Athelstan*. He was a man of considerable but irregular genius; and he died insane, by his own hand, in 1766.—Ed.]

³ [Mr. Burke came into parliament in 1765.—Ed.]

said, 'was the great luminary of the Irish church; and a greater,' he added, 'no church could boast of; at least in modern times.'

"We dined *tête-à-tête* at the Mitre, as I was preparing to return to Ireland, after an absence of many years. I regretted much leaving London, where I had formed many agreeable connexions: 'Sir,' said he, 'I do n't wonder at it: no man, fond of letters, leaves London without regret. But remember, sir, you have seen and enjoyed a great deal:—you have seen life in its highest decorations, and the world has nothing new to exhibit.—No man is so well qualified to leave publick life as he who has long tried it and known it well. We are always hankering after untried situations, and imagining greater felicity from them than they can afford. No, sir, knowledge and virtue may be acquired in all countries, and your local consequence will make you some amends for the intellectual gratifications you relinquish.' Then he quoted the following lines with great pathos:

'He who has early known the pomps of state,
(For things unknown, 'tis ignorance to condemn);
And after having view'd the gaudy bait,
Can boldly say, the trifle I contain;
With such a one contented could I live,
Contented could I die.'¹—

¹ Being desirous to trace these verses to the fountain head, after having in vain turned over several of our elder poets with the hope of lighting on them, I applied to Dr. Maxwell, now resident at Bath, for the purpose of ascertaining their author: but that gentleman could furnish no aid on this occasion. At length the lines have been discovered by the authour's second son, Mr. James Boswell, in the London Magazine for July, 1732, where they form part of a poem on RETIREMENT, there published anonymously, but in fact (as he afterwards found) copied with some slight variations from one of Walsh's smaller poems, entitled "The Retirement;" and they exhibit another proof of what has been elsewhere observed by the authour of the work before us, that Johnson retained in his memory fragments of obscure or neglected poetry. In quoting verses of that description, he appears by a slight variation to have sometimes given him a moral turn, and to have dexterously adapted them to his own sentiments, where the original had a very different tendency. Thus, in the present instance (as Mr. J. Boswell observes to me), "the authour of the poem above mentioned exhibits himself as having retired to the country, to avoid the vain follies of a town life,—ambition, avarice, and the pursuit of pleasure, contrasted with the enjoyments of the country, and the delightful conversation that the brooks, &c. furnish; which he holds to be infinitely more pleasing and instructive than any which towns afford. He is then led to consider the weakness of the human mind, and after lamenting that he (the writer) who is neither en-

"He then took a most affecting leaveoff me; said, he knew it was a point of *duty* that called me away.—'We shall all be sorry to lose you,' said he; '*laudo tamen.*'"—MAXWELL.

This is to me a memorable year; for in it I had the happiness to obtain the acquaintance of that extraordinary man whose memoirs I am now writing; an acquaintance which I shall ever esteem as one of the most fortunate circumstances in my life. Though then but two-and-twenty, I had

slaved by avarice, ambition, or pleasure, has yet made himself a slave to *love*, he thus proceeds:

'If this dire passion never will be done,
If beauty always must my heart enthral,
O, rather let me be enslaved by *one*,
Than madly thus become a slave to all:

'One who has early known the pomp of state,
(For things unknown, 'tis ignorance to condemn),
And, after having view'd the gaudy bait,
Can, coldly say, the trifle I contain;

'In her blest arms contented could I live,
Contented could I die. But, O my mind
Imaginary scenes of bliss deceive
With hopes of joys impossible to find.'

Another instance of Johnson's retaining in his memory verses by obscure authours is given [*post*, 27th August, 1773], where, in consequence of hearing a girl spinning in a chamber over that in which he was sitting, he repeated these lines, which he said were written by one Giffard, a clergyman; but the poem in which they are introduced has hitherto been undiscovered:

'Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound;
All at her work the village maiden sings;
Nor while she turns the giddy wheel around,
Revolves the sad vicissitude of things.'

In the autumn of 1782, when he was at Brightelmstone, he frequently accompanied Mr. Philip Metcalfe in his chaise, to take the air; and the conversation in one of their excursions happening to turn on a celebrated historian, since deceased, he repeated, with great precision, some verses, as very characteristic of that gentleman. These furnish another proof of what has been above observed; for they are found in a very obscure quarter, among some anonymous poems appended to the second volume of a collection frequently printed by Lintot, under the title of POPE'S MISCELLANIES:

"See how the wand'ring Danube flows,
Realms and religions parting;
A friend to all true christian foes,
To Peter, Jack, and Martin.

"Now Protestant, and Papist now,
Not constant long to either,
At length an infidel does grow,
And ends his journey neither.

"Thus many a youth I've known set out,
Half Protestant, half Papist,
And rambling long the world about,
Turn infidel or atheist."

In reciting these verses, I have no doubt that Johnson substituted some word for *infidel*, in the second stanza, to avoid the disagreeable repetition of the same expression.—MALONE.

for several years read his works with delight and instruction, and had the highest reverence for their authour, which had grown up in my fancy into a kind of mysterious veneration, by figuring to myself a state of solemn elevated abstraction, in which I supposed him to live in the immense metropolis of London. Mr. Gentleman¹, a native of Ireland, who passed some years in Scotland as a player, and as an instructor in the English language, a man whose talents and worth were depressed by misfortunes, had given me a representation of the figure and manner of **DICTIONARY JOHNSON!** as he was then generally called²; and during my first visit to London, which was for three months in 1760, Mr. Derrick the poet³, who was Gentleman's friend and countryman, flattered me with hopes that he would introduce me to Johnson, an honour of which I was very ambitious. But he never found an opportunity; which made me doubt that he had promised to do what was not in his power; till Johnson some years afterwards told me, "Derrick, sir, might very well have introduced you. I had a kindness for Derrick, and am sorry he is dead."

In the summer of 1761, Mr. Thomas Sheridan was at Edinburgh, and delivered lectures upon the English Language and Publick Speaking to large and respectable audiences. I was often in his company, and

¹ [Francis Gentleman was born in 1728, and educated in Dublin. His father was an officer in the army, and he, at the age of fifteen, obtained a commission in the same regiment; on the reduction, at the peace of 1748, he lost this profession, and adopted that of the stage, both as an author and an actor; in neither of which did he attain any eminence. He died in December, 1784; having, in the later course of his life, experienced "all the hardships of a wandering actor, and all the disappointments of a friendless author."—ED.]

² As great men of antiquity, such as Scipio *Africanus*, had an epithet added to their names, in consequence of some celebrated action, so my illustrious friend was often called **DICTIONARY JOHNSON**, from that wonderful achievement of genius and labour, his "Dictionary of the English Language;" the merit of which I contemplate with more and more admiration.—**BOSWELL.** [Boswell himself was at one time anxious to be called *Corsica* Boswell. See *post*, September, 1769.—ED.]

³ [Samuel Derrick was an Irishman, born about 1724; he was apprenticed to a linendraper, but abandoned trade for the stage and literature; he made, at least, one attempt as actor, but failed; as an authour he was more successful, but is now almost equally forgotten. He succeeded Nash as master of the ceremonies at Bath; but his extravagance and irregularities always kept him poor, and he died in 1760 in very necessitous circumstances.—ED.]

heard him frequently expatiate upon Johnson's extraordinary knowledge, talents, and virtues, repeat his pointed sayings, describe his particularities, and boast of his being his guest sometimes till two or three in the morning. At his house I hoped to have many opportunities of seeing the sage, as Mr. Sheridan obligingly assured me I should not be disappointed.

When I returned to London in the end of 1762, to my surprise and regret I found an irreconcilable difference had taken place between Johnson and Sheridan. A pension of two hundred pounds a year had been given to Sheridan. Johnson, who, as has been already mentioned, thought slightly of Sheridan's art, upon hearing that he was also pensioned, exclaimed, "What! have they given *him* a pension? Then it is time for me to give up *mine*." Whether this proceeded from a momentary indignation, as if it were an affront to his exalted merit that a player should be rewarded in the same manner with him, or was the sudden effect of a fit of peevishness, it was unluckily⁴ said, and, indeed, cannot be justified. Mr. Sheridan's pension was granted to him not as a player, but as a sufferer⁵

⁴ [*Unluckily* is too mild a term; it was ungrateful as well as arrogant, for we have seen that Sheridan had no small share in obtaining Johnson his pension—*he rang the bell*, as Lord Loughborough admitted. Nor was Johnson's, as Mr. Boswell represents it, a *sudden* fit of peevishness: too many instances will occur in the following pages of the continued and studied contumely with which Johnson pursued Sheridan.—ED.]

⁵ [Mr. Boswell, in his tenderness to the *amour propre* of Doctor Johnson, cannot bear to admit that Sheridan's *literary* character had any thing to do with the pension, and no doubt he endeavoured to soften Johnson's resentment by giving, as he does in the above passage, this favour a *political* colour; but there seems no reason to believe that Sheridan's pension was given to him as a sufferer by a play-house riot. It was probably granted (*et hinc ille lacrymæ*) on the same motive as Johnson's own, namely, the desire of the king and Lord Bute to distinguish the commencement of the new reign by a patronage of literature. Indeed this is rendered almost certain by the following passages of the letters of Mrs. Sheridan to Mr. White:

London, Feb. 25th, 1762.—"Mr. Sheridan's Dissertation is, you see, addressed to Lord Bute. It has been as well received by him as we could possibly wish, and even beyond the expectation of our friends. He expressed himself highly pleased with the design, and sent Mr. Sheridan word that it should receive all countenance and encouragement."

London, March 30, 1762.—"I believe I told you in my last that Lord Bute had received the Dissertation and Address very well, and promised the plan all countenance and encouragement."

in the cause of government when he was manager of the Theatre Royal in Ireland, when parties ran high in 1753. And it must also be allowed that he was a man of literature, and had considerably improved the arts of reading and speaking with distinctness and propriety.

Besides, Johnson should have recollected that Mr. Sheridan taught pronunciation¹ to Mr. Alexander Wedderburne, whose sister was married to Sir Harry Erskine, an intimate friend of Lord Bute, who was the favourite of the king; and surely the most outrageous whig will not maintain, that whatever ought to be the principle in the disposal of offices, a pension ought never to be granted from any bias of court connexion. Mr. Macklin, indeed, shared with Mr. Sheridan the honour of instructing Mr. Wedderburne²; and though it was too late in life for a Caledonian to acquire the genuine English cadence, yet so successful were Mr. Wedderburne's instructors, and his own unabating endeavours, that he got rid of the coarse part of his Scotch accent, retaining only as much of the "native wood-note wild," as to mark his country; which, if any Scotchman should affect to forget, I should heartily despise him. Notwithstanding the difficulties which are to be encountered by those who have not had the advantage of an English education, he by degrees formed a mode of speaking, to which Englishmen do not deny the praise of elegance. Hence his distinguished oratory, which he exerted in his own country as an advocate in the court of session, and a ruling elder of the *kirk*, has had its fame and ample reward,

London, 29, 1792.—"Mr. Sheridan is now, as I mentioned to you formerly, busied in the English Dictionary, which he is encouraged to pursue with the more alacrity as his majesty has vouchsafed him such a mark of royal favour. I suppose you have heard that he has granted him a pension of 200l. a year, merely as an encouragement to his undertaking, and this without solicitation, which makes it the more valuable."—*White's Misc. Novæ*, p. 104. 107. 111.—Ed.]

¹ [In all this pretended defence of Sheridan's pension, it is easy to see that Boswell is infected with Johnson's spirit, and does all he can to depreciate the motives of the grant. He seems also inclined to sneer a little at his own countryman, Lord Loughborough, forgetting that, even if he had committed the offence (which is not proved) of suggesting Sheridan's pension, he had actually procured Johnson's.—Ed.]

² [This is an odd coincidence. A Scotchman who wishes to learn a pure English pronunciation employs one preceptor who happens to be an Irishman, and afterwards another, likewise an Irishman, and this Irish-taught Scot becomes—and mainly by his oratory—one of the chief ornaments of the English senate, and the first subject in the British empire.—Ed.]

in much higher spheres. When I look back on this noble person at Edinburgh, in situations so unworthy of his brilliant powers, and behold LORD LOUGHBOROUGH at London, the change seems almost like one of the metamorphoses in Ovid, and as his two preceptors, by refining his utterance, gave currency to his talents, we may say in the words of that poet, "*Nam vos mutastis.*"

I have dwelt the longer upon this remarkable instance of successful parts and assiduity; because it affords animating encouragement to other gentlemen of North Britain to try their fortunes in the southern part of the island, where they may hope to gratify their utmost ambition; and now that we are one people by the Union, it would surely be illiberal to maintain, that they have not an equal title with the natives of any other part of his majesty's dominions.

Johnson complained that a man who disliked him repeated his sarcasm to Mr. Sheridan, without telling him what followed, which was, that after a pause he added, "However, I am glad that Mr. Sheridan has a pension, for he is a very good man." Sheridan could never forgive his hasty contemptuous expression. It rankled in his mind; and though I informed him of all that Johnson said, and that he would be very glad to meet him amicably, he positively declined repeated offers which I made, and once went off abruptly from a house where he and I were engaged to dine, because he was told that Johnson was to be there. I have no sympathetic feeling with such persevering resentment³. It is painful when there is a breach between those who have lived together socially and cordially; and I wonder that there is not, in all such cases, a mutual wish that it should be healed. I could perceive that Mr. Sheridan was *by no means satisfied*⁴ with Johnson's acknowledging him to be a good man. That could not soothe his injured vanity. I could not but smile, at the same time that I was offended, to observe Sheridan in the Life of Swift, which he afterwards published, attempting, in the writings of his resentment, to depreciate Johnson, by characterising him as "A writer of gigantic fame, in these days of little men:" that very Johnson whom he once so highly admired and venerated⁵.

³ [But Johnson seems to have kept it alive by persevering sarcasms.—Ed.]

⁴ [Why should he have been? His goodness had nothing to say to the question. Sheridan's pension was granted to him for his literary character, and Johnson's following up his insolent attack on his talents by a supercilious acknowledgment that he was nevertheless a very good man, was an additional insult.—Ed.]

⁵ [This would have been very slight retaliation.]

This rupture with Sheridan deprived Johnson of one of his most agreeable resources for amusement in his lonely evenings; for Sheridan's well-informed, animated, and bustling mind never suffered conversation to stagnate; and Mrs. Sheridan was a most agreeable companion to an intellectual man. She was sensible, ingenious, unassuming, yet communicative. I recollect, with satisfaction, many pleasing hours which I passed with her under the hospitable roof of her husband, who was to me a very kind friend. Her novel, entitled "Memoirs of Miss Sydney Biddulph," contains an excellent moral, while it inculcates a future state of retribution¹; and

tion; but, in truth, Mr. Boswell is not quite fair in representing it as an attempt at retaliation on Sheridan's own account. Dr. Johnson had depreciated the talents and character of Dr. Swift, not merely in conversation, but in his *Lives of the Poets*. Sheridan, in his *Life of Swift*, advocated the cause of the dean, for whom he had a natural and hereditary veneration; and though he observed on Johnson's criticisms and censures with a severity sharpened probably by his personal feelings, he treated him on all other points with *moderation and respect*.—Ed.]

¹ My position has been very well illustrated by Mr. Belsham of Bedford, in his Essay on Dramatick Poetry. "The fashionable doctrines (says he) both of moralists and critics in these times is, that virtue and happiness are constant concomitants; and it is regarded as a kind of dramatick impiety to maintain that virtue should not be rewarded, nor vice punished in the last scene of the last act of every tragedy. This conduct in our modern poets is, however, in my opinion, extremely injudicious; for it labours in vain to inculcate a doctrine in theory, which every one knows to be false in fact, viz. that virtue in real life is always productive of happiness, and vice of misery. Thus Congreve concludes the tragedy of 'The Mourning Bride' with the following foolish couplet:

'For blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And, though a late, a sure reward succeeds.'

"When a man eminently virtuous, a Brutus, a Cato, or a Socrates, finally sinks under the pressure of accumulated misfortune, we are not only led to entertain a more indignant hatred of vice than if he rose from his distress, but we are inevitably induced to cherish the sublime idea that a day of future retribution will arrive when he shall receive not merely poetical, but real and substantial justice." *Essays Philosophical, Historical, and Literary*, London, 1791, Vol. II. 8vo. p. 317.

This is well reasoned and well expressed. I wish, indeed, that the ingenious authour had not thought it necessary to introduce any *instance* of "a man eminently virtuous;" as he would then have avoided mentioning such a ruffian as Brutus under that description. Mr. Belsham discovers in his "Essays" so much reading and thinking, and good composition, that I regret his

what it teaches is impressed upon the mind by a series of as deep distress as can affect humanity, in the amiable and pious heroine who goes to her grave unrelieved, but resigned, and full of hope of "heaven's mercy." Johnson paid her this high compliment upon it: "I know not, madam, that you have a right, upon moral principles, to make your readers suffer so much."

Mr. Thomas Davies the actor, who then kept a bookseller's shop in Russell-street, Covent-garden², told me that Johnson was very much his friend, and came frequently to his house, where he more than once invited me to meet him: but by some unlucky accident or other he was prevented from coming to us.

Mr. Thomas Davies was a man of good understanding and talents, with the advantage of a liberal education. Though somewhat pompous, he was an entertaining companion; and his literary performances have no inconsiderable share of merit. He was a friendly and very hospitable man. Both he and his wife (who has been celebrated³ for her beauty), though upon the stage for many years, maintained an uniform decency of character; and Johnson esteemed them, and lived in as easy an intimacy with them as with any family which he used to visit. Mr. Davies recollected several of Johnson's remarkable sayings, and was one of the best of the many imitators of his voice and manner, while relating them. He increased my impatience more and more to see the extraordinary man whose works I highly valued, and whose conversation was reported to be so peculiarly excellent.

At last, on Monday the 16th of May, when I was sitting in Mr. Davies's back

not having been fortunate enough to be educated a member of our excellent national establishment. Had he not been nursed in nonconformity, he probably would not have been tainted with those heresies (as I sincerely, and on no slight investigation, think them) both in religion and politics, which, while I read, I am sure, with candour, I cannot read without offence.—BOSWELL.

² No. 8.—The very place where I was fortunate enough to be introduced to the illustrious subject of this work deserves to be particularly marked. I never pass by it without feeling reverence and regret.—BOSWELL.

³ [By Churchill, in the *Rosciad*, where, rather in contempt of Davies than out of compliment to his wife, he exclaims,

"———on my life,
That Davies has a very pretty wife."

Davies's pompous manner of reciting his part the satirist describes with more force than delicacy:

"He mouths a sentence as curs mouth a bone."

This sarcasm drove, it is said, (*post*, 7th April, 1778), poor Davies from the stage.—Ed.]

parlour, after having drank tea with him and Mrs. Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop¹; and Mr. Davies having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us, he announced his awful approach to me somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost. "Look, my lord, it comes." I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his Dictionary, in the attitude of sitting in his easy chair in deep meditation; which was the first picture his friend did for him, which Sir Joshua very kindly presented to me, and from which an engraving has been made for this work. Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, "Don't tell him where I come from." "From Scotland," cried Davies, roguishly. "Mr. Johnson (said I), I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to soothe and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression "come from Scotland," which I used in the sense of being of that country; and, as if I had said that I had come away from it, or left it, retorted, "That, sir, I find is what a very great many of

¹ Mr. Murphy, in his "Essay on the Life and Genius of Dr. Johnson, has given an account of this meeting considerably different from mine, I am persuaded without any consciousness of error. His memory, at the end of near thirty years, has undoubtedly deceived him, and he supposes himself to have been present at a scene, which he has probably heard inaccurately described by others. In my note *taken on the very day*, in which I am confident I marked every thing material that passed, no mention is made of this gentleman; and I am sure, that I should not have omitted one so well known in the literary world. It may easily be imagined that this my first interview with Dr. Johnson, with all its circumstances, made a strong impression on my mind, and would be registered with peculiar attention.—BOSWELL.

It is remarkable, that in the editions of Murphy's Life of Johnson, published subsequently to the appearance of this note, in 1791, he never corrected the misstatement here mentioned.—MALONE.

[This is an error on the part of Mr. Malone. This note was not in Boswell's first edition, published in 1791, and indeed could not be, as Murphy's Life was not published till 1793.—ED.]

your countrymen cannot help." This stroke stunned me a good deal; and when we had set down, I felt myself not a little embarrassed, and apprehensive of what might come next. He then addressed himself to Davies: "What do you think of Garrick? He has refused me an order for the play for Miss Williams, because he knows the house will be full, and that an order will be worth three shillings." Eager to take any opening to get into conversation with him, I ventured to say, "O, sir, I cannot think Mr. Garrick would grudge such a trifle to you." "Sir, (said he, with a stern look), I have known David Garrick longer than you have done: and I know no right you have to talk to me on the subject." Perhaps I deserved this check; for it was rather presumptuous in me, an entire stranger, to express any doubt of the justice of his animadversion upon his old acquaintance and pupil². I now felt myself much mortified, and began to think that the hope which I had long indulged of obtaining his acquaintance was blasted. And, in truth, had not my ardour been uncommonly strong, and my resolution uncommonly persevering, so rough a reception might have deterred me for ever from making any further attempts. Fortunately, however, I remained upon the field not wholly discomfited; and was soon rewarded by hearing some of his conversation, of which I preserved the following short minute, without marking the questions and observations by which it was produced.

"People (he remarked) may be taken in once, who imagine that an authour is greater in private life than other men. Uncommon parts require uncommon opportunities for their exertion.

"In barbarous society, superiority of parts is of real consequence. Great strength or great wisdom is of much value to an individual. But in more polished times there are people to do every thing for money; and then there are a number of other superiorities, such as those of birth and fortune, and rank, that dissipate men's attention, and leave no extraordinary share of respect

² That this was a *momentary* sally against Garrick there can be no doubt; for at Johnson's desire he had, some years before, given a benefit-night at his theatre to this very person, by which she had got two hundred pounds. Johnson, indeed, upon all other occasions, when I was in his company, praised the very liberal charity of Garrick. I once mentioned to him, "It is observed, sir, that you attack Garrick yourself, but will suffer nobody else to do it." Johnson, (smiling) "Why, sir, that is true."—BOSWELL.

[These *sallies* are of too frequent recurrence to allow us to receive Boswell's apologetical assertion that they were *momentary*.—ED.]

for personal and intellectual superiority. This is wisely ordered by Providence, to preserve some equality among mankind."

"Sir, this book ('The Elements of Criticism', which he had taken up), is a pretty essay, and deserves to be held in some estimation, though much of it is chimerical."

Speaking of one² who with more than ordinary boldness attacked publick measures and the royal family, he said, "I think he is safe from the law, but he is an abusive scoundrel; and instead of applying to my lord chief justice to punish him, I would send half a dozen footmen and have him well ducked."

"The notion of liberty amuses the people of England, and helps to keep off the *tedium vite*. When a butcher tells you that *his heart bleeds for his country*, he has, in fact, no uneasy feeling."

"Sheridan will not succeed at Bath with his oratory. Ridicule has gone down before him, and, I doubt, Derrick is his enemy³."

"Derrick may do very well, as long as he can outrun his character; but the moment his character gets up with him, it is all over."

It is, however, but just to record, that some years afterwards, when I reminded him of this sarcasm, he said, "Well, but Derrick has now got a character that he need not run away from."

I was highly pleased with the extraordinary vigour of his conversation, and regretted that I was drawn away from it by an engagement at another place. I had for a part of the evening been left alone with him, and had ventured to make an observation now and then, which he received very civilly; so that I was satisfied that though there was a roughness in his manner, there was no ill-nature in his disposition. Davies followed me to the door, and when I complained to him a little of the hard blows which the great man had given me, he kindly took upon him to console me by saying, "Don't be uneasy. I can see he likes you very well."

A few days afterwards I called on Davies, and asked him if he thought I might take the liberty of waiting on Mr. Johnson at his chambers in the Temple. He said I certainly might, and that Mr. Johnson would take it as a compliment. So on Tuesday the 24th of May, after having

been enlightened by the witty sallies of Messieurs Thornton, Wilkes, Churchill, and Lloyd, with whom I had passed the morning, I boldly repaired to Johnson. His chambers were on the first floor of No. 1, Inner Temple-lane, and I entered them with an impression given me by the Rev. Dr. Blair of Edinburgh, who had been introduced to him not long before, and described his having "found the giant in his pen;" an expression which, when I came to be pretty well acquainted with Johnson, I repeated to him, and he was diverted at this picturesque account of himself. Dr. Blair had been presented to him by Dr. James Fordyce. At this time the controversy concerning the pieces published by Mr. James Macpherson, as translations from Ossian, was at its height. Johnson had all along denied their authenticity; and, what was still more provoking to their admirers, maintained that they had no merit. The subject having been introduced by Dr. Fordyce, Dr. Blair, relying on the internal evidence of their antiquity, asked Dr. Johnson whether he thought any man of a modern age could have written such poems? Johnson replied, "Yes, sir, many men, many women, and many children." Johnson, at this time, did not know that Dr. Blair had just published a Dissertation, not only defending their authenticity, but seriously ranking them with the poems of Homer and Virgil; and when he was afterwards informed of this circumstance, he expressed some displeasure at Dr. Fordyce's having suggested the topic, and said, "I am not sorry that they got thus much for their pains. Sir, it was like leading one to talk of a book, when the authour is concealed behind the door."

He received me very courteously; but, it must be confessed, that his apartment, and furniture, and morning dress, were sufficiently uncouth. His brown suit of clothes looked very rusty; he had on a little old shrivelled unpowdered wig, which was too small for his head; his shirt-neck and knees of his breeches were loose, his black worsted stockings ill drawn up; and he had a pair of unbuckled shoes by way of slippers. But all these slovenly particularities were forgotten the moment that he began to talk. Some gentlemen, whom I do not recollect, were sitting with him; and when they went away, I also rose; but he said to me, "Nay, don't go." "Sir," said I, "I am afraid that I intrude upon you. It is benevolent to allow me to sit and hear you." He seemed pleased with this compliment, which I sincerely paid him, and answered, "Sir, I am obliged to any man who visits me." I have preserved the following short minute of what passed this day.

"Madness frequently discovers itself

¹ [By Henry Home, Lord Kames.—ED.]

² [Mr. Wilkes, no doubt. Boswell was a friend and, *personally*, an admirer of Wilkes, and therefore concealed the name.—ED.]

³ Mr. Sheridan was then reading lectures upon oratory at Bath, where Derrick was master of the ceremonies; or, as the phrase is, king.—BOSWELL.

merely by unnecessary deviation from the usual modes of the world. My poor friend Smart showed the disturbance of his mind, by falling upon his knees, and saying his prayers in the street, or in any other unusual place. Now although, rationally speaking, it is greater madness not to pray at all, than to pray as Smart did, I am afraid there are so many who do not pray, that their understanding is not called in question."

Concerning this unfortunate poet, Christopher Smart, who was confined in a madhouse, he had, at another time, the following conversation with Dr. Burney. BURNLEY. "How does poor Smart do, sir; is he likely to recover?" JOHNSON. "It seems as if his mind had ceased to struggle with the disease; for he grows fat upon it." BURNLEY. "Perhaps, sir, that may be from want of exercise?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; he has partly as much exercise as he used to have, for he digs in the garden. Indeed, before his confinement, he used for exercise to walk to the alehouse: but he was *carried* back again. I did not think he ought to be shut up. His infirmities were not noxious to society. He insisted on people praying with him; and I'd as lief pray with Kit Smart as any one else. Another charge was, that he did not love clean linen; and I have no passion for it."

Johnson continued, "Mankind have a great aversion to intellectual labour¹; but even supposing knowledge to be easily attainable, more people would be content to be ignorant than would take even a little trouble to acquire it.

"The morality of an action depends on the motive from which we act. If I fling half a crown to a beggar with intention to break his head, and he picks it up and buys victuals with it, the physical effect is good; but with respect to me, the action is very wrong. So, religious exercises, if not performed with an intention to please God, avail us nothing. As our Saviour says of those who perform them from other motives, 'Verily they have their reward.'

"The Christian religion has very strong evidences. It, indeed, appears in some degree strange to reason; but in history we have undoubted facts, against which, in reasoning *à priori*, we have more arguments than we have for them; but then, testimony has great weight, and casts the balance. I would recommend to every man whose faith is yet unsettled, Grotius, Dr. Pearson, and Dr. Clarke."

Talking of Garrick, he said, "He is the first man in the world for sprightly conversation."

When I rose a second time, he again pressed me to stay, which I did.

¹ [See *post*, 30th July, 1763, an opinion somewhat different.—ED.]

He told me, that he generally went abroad at four in the afternoon, and seldom came home till two in the morning. I took the liberty to ask if he did not think it wrong to live thus, and not make more use of his great talents. He owned it was a bad habit. On reviewing, at the distance of many years, my journal of this period, I wonder how, at my first visit, I ventured to talk to him so freely, and that he bore it with so much indulgence.

Before we parted, he was so good as to promise to favour me with his company one evening at my lodgings; and, as I took my leave, shook me cordially by the hand. It is almost needless to add, that I felt no little elation at having now so happily established an acquaintance of which I had been so long ambitious.

My readers will, I trust, excuse me for being thus minutely circumstantial, when it is considered that the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson was to me a most valuable acquisition, and laid the foundation of whatever instruction and entertainment they may receive from my collections concerning the great subject of the work which they are now perusing.

I did not visit him again till Monday, June 13, at which time I recollect no part of his conversation, except that when I told him I had been to see Johnson² ride upon three horses, he said, "Such a man, sir, should be encouraged; for his performances show the extent of the human powers in one instance, and thus tend to raise our opinion of the faculties of man. He shows what may be attained by persevering application; so that every man may hope, that by giving as much application, although perhaps he may never ride three horses at a time, or dance upon a wire, yet he may be equally expert in whatever profession he has chosen to pursue."

He again shook me by the hand at parting, and asked me why I did not come oftener to him. Trusting that I was now in his good graces, I answered, that he had not given me much encouragement, and reminded him of the check I had received from him at our first interview. "Poh, poh! (said he, with a complacent smile), never mind these things. Come to me as often as you can. I shall be glad to see you."

I had learnt that his place of frequent resort was the Mitre tavern in Fleet-street, where he loved to sit up late, and I begged

² ["In the year 1762 one Johnson, an Irishman, exhibited many feats of activity in horsemanship, and was, it is believed, the first performer in that time in or about London. He was an active clever fellow in his way, and seemed to be patronised by Mr. Burke, then a student in the Temple."—*Prior's Life of Burke*, vol. i. p. 124.—ED.]

I might be allowed to pass an evening with him there soon, which he promised I should. A few days afterwards I met him near Temple-bar, about one o'clock in the morning, and asked if he would then go to the Mitre. "Sir (said he), it is too late; they won't let us in. But I'll go with you another night with all my heart."

A revolution of some importance in my plan of life had just taken place; for instead of procuring a commission in the foot-guards, which was my own inclination, I had, in compliance with my father's wishes, agreed to study the law, and was soon to set out for Utrecht, to hear the lectures of an excellent civilian in that university, and then to proceed on my travels. Though very desirous of obtaining Dr. Johnson's advice and instructions on the mode of pursuing my studies, I was at this time so occupied, shall I call it? or so dissipated by the amusements of London, that our next meeting was not till Saturday, June 25, when happening to dine at Clifton's eating-house, in Butcher-row, I was surprised to perceive Johnson come in and take his seat at another table. The mode of dining, or rather being fed, at such houses in London, is well known to many to be particularly unsocial, as there is no ordinary, or united company, but each person has his own mess, and is under no obligation to hold any intercourse with any one. A liberal and full-minded man, however, who loves to talk, will break through this churlish and unsocial restraint. Johnson and an Irish gentleman got into a dispute concerning the cause of some part of mankind being black. "Why, sir (said Johnson), it has been accounted for in three ways: either by supposing that they are the posterity of Ham, who was cursed; or that God at first created two kinds of men, one black and another white; or that by the heat of the sun the skin is scorched, and so acquires a sooty hue. This matter has been much canvassed among naturalists, but has never been brought to any certain issue." What the Irishman said is totally obliterated from my mind; but I remember that he became very warm and intemperate in his expressions: upon which Johnson rose, and quietly walked away. When he had retired, his antagonist took his revenge, as he thought, by saying, "He has a most ungainly figure, and an affectation of pomposity unworthy of a man of genius."

Johnson had not observed that I was in the room. I followed him, however, and he agreed to meet me in the evening at the Mitre. I called on him, and we went thither at nine. We had a good supper, and port wine, of which he then sometimes drank a bottle. The orthodox high-church sound of the Mitre,—the figure and manner of the

celebrated Samuel Johnson,—the extraordinary power and precision of his conversation, and the pride arising from finding myself admitted as his companion, produced a variety of sensations, and a pleasing elevation of mind beyond what I had ever before experienced. I find in my Journal the following minute of our conversation, which, though it will give but a very faint notion of what passed, is, in some degree, a valuable record; and it will be curious in this view, as showing how habitual to his mind were some opinions which appear in his works.

"Colley Cibber¹, sir, was by no means a blockhead: but by arrogating to himself too much, he was in danger of losing that degree of estimation to which he was entitled. His friends gave out that he *intended* his birthday Odes should be bad: but that was not the case, sir; for he kept them many months by him, and a few years before he died he showed me one of them, with great solicitude to render it as perfect as might be, and I made some corrections, to which he was not very willing to submit. I remember the following couplet in allusion to the king himself.

'Perch'd on the eagle's soaring wing,
The lowly linnet loves to sing.'

Sir, he had heard something of the fabulous tale of the wren sitting upon the eagle's wing, and he had applied it to a linnet. Cibber's familiar style, however, was better than that which Whitehead has assumed. *Grand* nonsense is insupportable. Whitehead is but a little man to inscribe verses to *players*²."

I did not presume to controvert this censure, which was tinged with his prejudice against players, but I could not help thinking that a dramatick poet might with propriety pay a compliment to an eminent performer, as Whitehead has very happily done in his verses to Mr. Garrick.

"Sir, I do not think Gray a first-rate po-

¹ [Colley Cibber was born in 1671, bore arms in favour of the revolution, and soon after went on the stage as an actor. In 1695 he appeared as a writer of comedies with great and deserved success. He quitted the stage in 1730, on being appointed poet laureate, and died in 1757. His *Memoirs of his own Life* is not only a very amusing collection of theatrical anecdotes, but shows considerable power of observation and delineation of character.—Ed.]

² [This was a sneer aimed, it is to be feared, more at Garrick (to whom the verses were inscribed) than at Whitehead. William Whitehead, born about 1715, was the fashionable poet of a day, when Horace's exclusion of *mediocritas* was forgotten. He succeeded Cibber as laureate in 1757. He died in 1785. He must not be confounded with Paul Whitehead, no better poet, and a much less estimable man.—Ed.]

et. He has not a bold imagination, nor much command of words. The obscurity in which he has involved himself will not persuade us that he is sublime. His Elegy in a churchyard has a happy selection of images¹, but I don't like what are called his great things. His ode which begins

'Ruin seize thee, ruthless king,
Confusion on thy banners wait!'

has been celebrated for its abruptness, and plunging into the subject all at once. But such arts as these have no merit, unless when they are original. We admire them only once; and this abruptness has nothing new in it. We have had it often before. Nay, we have it in the old song of Johnny Armstrong:

'Is there ever a man in all Scotland,
From the highest estate to the lowest degree, &c.'

And then, sir,

'Yes, there is a man in Westmoreland,
And Johnny Armstrong they do him call.'

There, now, you plunge at once into the subject. You have no previous narration to lead you to it.—The two next lines in that ode are, I think, very good:

'Though fann'd by conquest's crimson wing,
T' mock the air with idle state?'

Here let it be observed, that although his opinion of Gray's poetry was widely different from mine, and I believe from that of most men of taste, by whom it is with justice highly admired, there is certainly much absurdity in the clamour which has been raised, as if he had been culpably injurious to the merit of that bard, and had been actuated by envy. Alas! ye little short-sighted criticks, could Johnson be envious of the talents of any of his contemporaries²? That his opinion on this subject was what in private and in public he uniformly expressed, regardless of what others might think, we may wonder, and perhaps regret; but it is shallow and unjust to charge him with expressing what he did not think.

¹ [And surely a happy selection of *expressions*. What does it then want? As to the criticism and quotations which follow, they might be pardonable in loose conversation; but Johnson, unluckily for his own reputation, has preserved them in his criticism on Gray, in the *Lives of the Poets*.—Ed.]

² My friend Mr. Malone, in his valuable comments on Shakspeare, has traced in that great poet the *disjecta membra* of these lines.—BOSWELL.

³ [Even under the penalty of being called *little* and *short-sighted*, it is impossible not to give an affirmative answer to Mr. Boswell's interrogatory. The evidence of the envious disposition of this otherwise great and amiable man seems too frequent and too flagrant to be doubted.—Ed.]

Finding him in a placid humour, and wishing to avail myself of the opportunity which I fortunately had of consulting a sage, to hear whose wisdom, I conceived, in the ardour of youthful imagination, that men filled with a noble enthusiasm for intellectual improvement would gladly have resorted from distant lands; I opened my mind to him ingenuously, and gave him a little sketch of my life, to which he was pleased to listen with great attention.

I acknowledged, that though educated very strictly in the principles of religion, I had for sometime been misled into a certain degree of infidelity; but that I was come now to a better way of thinking, and was fully satisfied of the truth of the Christian revelation, though I was not clear as to every point considered to be orthodox. Being at all times a curious examiner of the human mind, and pleased with an undisguised display of what had passed in it, he called to me with warmth, "Give me your hand; I have taken a liking to you." He then began to descant upon the force of testimony, and the little we could know of final causes; so that the objections of, why was it so? or why was it not so? ought not to disturb us: adding, that he himself had at one period been guilty of a temporary neglect of religion, but that it was not the result of argument, but mere absence of thought.

After having given credit to reports of his bigotry, I was agreeably surprised when he expressed the following very liberal sentiment, which has the additional value of obviating an objection to our holy religion, founded upon the discordant tenets of Christians themselves: "For my part, sir, I think all Christians, whether papists or protestants, agree in the essential articles, and that their differences are trivial, and rather political than religious."

We talked of belief in ghosts. He said, "Sir, I make a distinction between what a man may experience by the mere strength of his imagination, and what imagination cannot possibly produce. Thus, suppose I should think that I saw a form, and heard a voice cry, 'Johnson, you are a very wicked fellow, and unless you repent you will certainly be punished;' my own unworthiness is so deeply impressed upon my mind, that I might *imagine* I thus saw and heard, and therefore I should not believe that an external communication had been made to me. But if a form should appear, and a voice should tell me that a particular man had died at a particular place, and a particular hour, a fact which I had no apprehension of, nor any means of knowing, and this fact, with all its circumstances, should afterwards be unquestionably proved, I should, in that case, be persuaded that I had supernatural intelligence imparted to me."

Here it is proper, once for all, to give a true and fair statement of Johnson's way of thinking upon the question, whether departed spirits are ever permitted to appear in this world, or in any way to operate upon human life. He has been ignorantly misrepresented as weakly credulous upon that subject; and therefore, though I feel an inclination to disdain and treat with silent contempt so foolish a notion concerning my illustrious friend, yet, as I find it has gained ground, it is necessary to refute it. The real fact then is, that Johnson had a very philosophical mind, and such a rational respect for testimony, as to make him submit his understanding to what was authentically proved, though he could not comprehend why it was so. Being thus disposed, he was willing to inquire into the truth of any relation of supernatural agency, a general belief of which has prevailed in all nations and ages. But so far was he from being a dupe of implicit faith, that he examined the matter with a jealous attention, and no man was more ready to refute its falsehood when he had discovered it. Churchill, in his poem entitled "The Ghost," availed himself of the absurd credulity imputed to Johnson, and drew a caricature of him under the name of "Pomposo," representing him as one of the believers of the story of a ghost in Cock-lane, which, in the year 1762, had gained very general credit in London. Many of my readers, I am convinced, are to this hour under an impression that Johnson was thus foolishly deceived. It will therefore surprise¹ them a good deal when they are informed upon undoubted authority, that Johnson was one of those by whom the imposture was detected. The story had become so popular, that he thought it should be investigated; and in this research he was assisted by the Rev. Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, the great detector of impostures; who informs me, that after the gentlemen who went and examined into the evidence were satisfied of its falsity, Johnson wrote in their presence an account of it, which was published in the newspapers, and Gentleman's Magazine, and undeceived the world².

¹ [No rational man doubted that inquiry would lead to detection; men only wondered that Dr. Johnson should so far give countenance to this flimsy imposition as to think a solemn inquiry necessary.—Ed.]

² The account was as follows: "On the night of the 1st of February, many gentlemen, eminent for their rank and character, were, by the invitation of the Rev. Mr. Aldrich, of Clerkenwell, assembled at his house, for the examination of the noises supposed to be made by a departed spirit, for the detection of some enormous crime.

"About ten at night the gentlemen met in the chamber in which the girl, supposed to be dis-

[Mr. Saunders Welch³, his intimate friend, would have dissuaded him from his purpose of visiting this place, urging, that it would expose him to ridicule; but all his arguments had no effect. What Mr. Welch foretold, in his advice to Johnson, touching this imposture, was now verified: he was censured for his credulity; his wisdom was arraigned, and his religious opinions resolved into superstition.

Nor was this all: that facetious gentleman, Mr. Foote, who, upon the strength and success of his satirical vein in comedy, had assumed the name of the modern Aristophanes, and at his theatre had long entertained the town with caricatures of living persons, with all their singularities and weaknesses, thought that Johnson at this time was become a fit subject for ridicule,

turbed by a spirit, had, with proper caution, been put to bed by several ladies. They sat rather more than an hour, and hearing nothing, went down stairs, when they interrogated the father of the girl, who denied, in the strongest terms, any knowledge or belief of fraud.

"The supposed spirit had before publicly promised, by an affirmative knock, that it would attend one of the gentlemen into the vault under the church of St. John, Clerkenwell, where the body is deposited, and give a token of her presence there, by a knock upon her coffin; it was therefore determined to make this trial of the existence or veracity of the supposed spirit.

"While they were inquiring and deliberating, they were summoned into the girl's chamber by some ladies who were near her bed, and who had heard knocks and scratches. When the gentlemen entered, the girl declared that she felt the spirit like a mouse upon her back, and was required to hold her hands out of bed. From that time, though the spirit was very solemnly required to manifest its existence by appearance, by impression on the hand or body of any present, by scratches, knocks, or any other agency, no evidence of any preternatural power was exhibited.

"The spirit was then very seriously advertised, that the person to whom the promise was made of striking the coffin was then about to visit the vault, and that the performance of the promise was then claimed. The company at one o'clock went into the church, and the gentleman to whom the promise was made went with another into the vault. The spirit was solemnly required to perform its promise, but nothing more than silence ensued: the person supposed to be accused by the spirit then went down with several others, but no effect was perceived. Upon their return they examined the girl, but could draw no confession from her. Between two and three she desired and was permitted to go home with her father.

"It is, therefore, the opinion of the whole assembly, that the child has some art of making or counterfeiting a particular noise, and that there is no agency of any higher cause."

³ [See *post*, February, 1778.—Ed.]

and that an exhibition of him in a drama written for the purpose, in which himself should represent Johnson, and in his mien, his garb, and his speech, should display all his comic powers, would yield him a golden harvest. Johnson was apprized of his intention; and gave Mr. Foote to understand, that the licence under which he was permitted to entertain the town would not justify the liberties he was accustomed to take with private characters, and that if he persisted in his design, he would, by a severe chastisement of his representative on the stage, and in the face of the whole audience, convince the world, that, whatever were his infirmities, or even his foibles, they should not be made the sport of the publick, or the means of gain to any one of his profession. Foote, upon this intimation, had discretion enough to desist from his purpose. Johnson entertained no resentment against him, and they were ever after friends.]

Our conversation proceeded. "Sir," said he, "I am a friend to subordination, as most conducive to the happiness of society. There is a reciprocal pleasure in governing and being governed."

"Dr. Goldsmith is one of the first men we now have as an authour, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right."

I mentioned Mallet's tragedy of "ELVIRA," which had been acted the preceding winter at Drury-lane, and that the honourable Andrew Erskine¹, Mr. Dempster²,

¹ [Third son of the fifth Earl of Kellie, born in 1736. He published some letters and poems, addressed to Mr. Boswell; and died in 1793.—Ed.]

² [George Dempster, of Dunnichen, secretary to the Order of the Thistle. He was a man of talents and very agreeable manners. Burns mentions him more than once with eulogy: As Mr. Dempster lived a good deal in Johnson's society, the reader may be glad to see the following slipshod but characteristic epitaph (communicated to me by Sir Walter Scott), which he made on himself when eighty-five, though affecting, even at that age, to look forward to a still greater longevity) he supposes himself to have lived to 93.

"Pray for the soul
Of deceased George Dempster,
In his youth a great fool,
In his old age a gamester*.
What you're curious to know
On this tomb you shall see;—
Life's thread he let go
When just ninety-three.
So sound was his bottom,
His acquaintance all wondered
How old Nick had got him
Till he lived out the hundred.

* *Gameter*, Scottie's, may rhyme with *Dempster*. He, however, only played for trifles; indeed the whole is a mere *badinage*.—W. SCOTT.

and myself, had joined in writing a pamphlet, entitled "Critical Strictures," against it³. That the mildness of Dempster's disposition had, however, relented; and he had candidly said, "We have hardly a right to abuse this tragedy; for bad as it is, how vain should either of us be to write one not near so good." JOHNSON. "Why no, sir; this is not just reasoning. You *may* abuse a tragedy, though you cannot write one. You may scold a carpenter who has made you a bad table, though you cannot make a table. It is not your trade to make tables."

When I talked to him of the paternal estate to which I was heir, he said, "Sir, let me tell you, that to be a Scotch landlord, where you have a number of families dependent upon you, and attached to you, is, perhaps, as high a situation as humanity can arrive at. A merchant upon the Change of London, with a hundred thousand pounds, is nothing; an English duke, with an immense fortune, is nothing: he has no tenants who consider themselves as under his patriarchal care, and who will follow him into the field upon an emergency."

His notions of the dignity of a Scotch landlord had been formed upon what he had heard of the highland chiefs; for it is long since a lowland landlord has been so curtailed in his feudal authority, that he has little more influence over his tenants than an English landlord; and of late years most of the highland chiefs have destroyed, by means too well known, the princely power which they once enjoyed.

He proceeded: "Your going abroad, sir, and breaking off idle habits, may be of great importance to you. I would go where there are courts and learned men. There is a great deal of Spain, that has not been

To his money concerns
He paid little attention,
First selling his land,
Then pawning his pension.
But his precious time
He much better did manage,—
To the end of his line
From his earliest nonage,
He divided his hours
Into two equal parts,
And spent one-half in sleeping,
The other at *cartes*.*

Mr. Dempster was, for near thirty years, member for the Perth district of burghs. He was also an East India director. He died about 1790.—Ed.]

³ The Critical Review, in which Mallet himself sometimes wrote, characterised this pamphlet as "the crude efforts of envy, petulance, and self-conceit." There being thus three epithets, we the three authours had a humorous contention how each should be appropriated.—BOSWELL.

* [The Scotch, in familiar life, retain many French words (tokens of their early intercourse with France), and among others *cartes* for *cards*.—Ed.]



Dr. Goldsmith

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perambulated. I would have you go thither. A man of inferior talents to yours may furnish us with useful observations upon that country." His supposing me, at that period of life, capable of writing an account of my travels that would deserve to be read, elated me not a little.

I appeal to every impartial reader whether this faithful detail of his frankness, complacency, and kindness to a young man, a stranger and a Scotchman, does not refute the unjust opinion of the harshness of his general demeanour. His occasional reproofs of folly, impudence, or impiety, and even the sudden sallies of his constitutional irritability of temper, which have been preserved for the poignancy of their wit, have produced that opinion among those who have not considered that such instances, though collected by Mrs. Piozzi into a small volume¹, and read over in a few hours, were, in fact, scattered through a long series of years: years in which his time was chiefly spent in instructing and delighting mankind by his writings and conversation, in acts of piety to God, and good-will to men.

I complained to him that I had not yet acquired much knowledge; and asked his advice as to my studies. He said, "Don't talk of study now. I will give you a plan; but it will require some time to consider of it." "It is very good in you," I replied, "to allow me to be with you thus. Had it been foretold to me some years ago that I should pass an evening with the author of the *RAMBLER*, how should I have exulted!" What I then expressed was sincerely from the heart. He was satisfied that it was, and cordially answered, "Sir, I am glad we have met. I hope we shall pass many evenings, and mornings too, together." We finished a couple of bottles of port, and sat till between one and two in the morning.

He wrote this year in the *Critical Review* the account of "*Telemachus, a Mask*," by the Reverend George Graham, of Eton College. The subject of this beautiful poem was particularly interesting to Johnson, who had much experience of "the conflict of opposite principles," which he describes as "The contention between pleasure and virtue, a struggle which will always be continued while the present system of nature shall subsist; nor can history or poetry exhibit more than pleasure triumphing over virtue, and virtue subjecting pleasure."

¹ [Mr. Boswell, here and elsewhere, hints blame against Mrs. Piozzi for repeating Johnson's asperities. Any one who examines the two works will find that Boswell relates *ten times* as many as the lady. No one could honestly relate Johnson's conversation without giving such sallies.—ED.]

As Dr. Oliver Goldsmith will frequently appear in this narrative, I shall endeavour to make my readers in some degree acquainted with his singular character. He was a native of Ireland, and a contemporary with Mr. Burke, at Trinity College, Dublin, but did not then give much promise of future celebrity². He, however, observed to Mr. Malone, that, "though he made no great figure in mathematicks, which was a study in much repute there, he could turn an ode of Horace into English better than any of them." He afterwards studied physick at Edinburgh, and upon the continent; and, I have been informed, was enabled to pursue his travels on foot, partly by demanding at Universities to enter the lists as a disputant, by which, according to the custom of many of them, he was entitled to the premium of a crown, when luckily for him his challenge was not accepted; so that, as I once observed to Dr. Johnson, he *disputed* his passage through Europe. He then came to England, and was employed successively in the capacities of an usher to an academy, a corrector of the press, a reviewer, and a writer for a newspaper. He had sagacity enough to cultivate assiduously the acquaintance of Johnson, and his faculties were gradually enlarged by the contemplation of such a model. To me and many others it appeared that he studiously copied the manner of Johnson, though, indeed, upon a smaller scale.

At this time I think he had published nothing with his name, though it was pretty generally known that *one Dr. Goldsmith* was the author of "*An Inquiry into the present State of polite Learning in Europe*," and of "*The Citizen of the World*," a series of letters supposed to be written from London by a Chinese³. No man had the art of displaying with more advantage, as a writer, whatever literary acquisitions he made. "*Nihil quod tetigit non ornavit*."⁴ His mind resembled a fertile but thin soil.

² Goldsmith got a premium at a Christmas examination in Trinity College, Dublin, which I have seen.—KEARNEY.

A premium obtained at the Christmas examination is generally more honourable than any other, because it ascertains the person who receives it to be the first in literary merit. At the other examinations, the person thus distinguished may be only the second in merit; he who has previously obtained the same honorary reward sometimes receiving a written certificate that *he* was the best answerer, it being a rule that not more than one premium should be adjudged to the same person in one year. See *ante*, p. 137.—MALONE.

³ He had also published, in 1759, "*The BEE*," being essays on the most interesting subjects.—MALONE.

⁴ See his epitaph in Westminster Abbey, written by Dr. Johnson.—BOSWELL.

There was a quick, but not a strong vegetation, of whatever chanced to be thrown upon it. No deep root could be struck. The oak of the forest did not grow there: but the elegant shrubbery and the fragrant parterre appeared in gay succession. It has been generally circulated and believed that he was a mere fool in conversation; but, in truth, this has been greatly exaggerated. He has, no doubt, a more than common share of that hurry of ideas which we often find in his countrymen, and which sometimes produces a laughable confusion in expressing them. He was very much what the French call *un étourdi*, and from vanity and an eager desire of being conspicuous wherever he was, he frequently talked carelessly without knowledge of the subject, or even without thought. His person was short, his countenance coarse and vulgar, his deportment that of a scholar awkwardly affecting the easy gentleman. Those who were in any way distinguished excited envy in him to so ridiculous an excess, that the instances of it are hardly credible. When accompanying two beautiful young ladies² with their mother on a tour in France, he was seriously angry that more attention was paid to them than to him; and once at the exhibition of the *Fantoccini* in London, when those who sat next him observed with what dexterity a puppet was made to toss a pike, he could not bear that it should have such praise, and exclaimed with some warmth, "Pshaw! I can do it better myself!"³

¹ In allusion to this, Mr. Horace Walpole, who admired his writings, said he was "an inspired idiot;" and Garrick described him as one

"——— for shortness call'd Noll,
Who wrote like an angel, and talk'd like poor Poll."

Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned to me that he frequently heard Goldsmith talk warmly of the pleasure of being liked, and observe how hard it would be if literary excellence should preclude a man from that satisfaction, which he perceived it often did, from the envy which attended it; and therefore Sir Joshua was convinced that he was intentionally more absurd, in order to lessen himself in social intercourse, trusting that his character would be sufficiently supported by his works. If it indeed was his intention to appear absurd in company, he was often very successful. But with due deference to Sir Joshua's ingenuity, I think the conjecture too refined.—BOSWELL.

² Miss Hornecks, one of whom is now married to Henry Banbury, esq. and the other to Colonel Gwyn.—BOSWELL.

³ He went home with Mr. Burke to supper; and broke his shin by attempting to exhibit to the company how much better he could jump over a stick than the puppets.—BOSWELL. [Colonel O'Moore, of Cloghan Castle in Ireland, told the Editor an amusing instance of the mingled vanity and

[He affected Johnson's style and manner of conversation, and, when he had uttered, as he often would, a laboured sentence, so tumid as to be scarce intelligible, would ask, if that was not truly Johnsonian; yet he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts; and once entreated a friend to desist from praising him, "for in doing so," said he, "you harrow up my very soul."]

Hawk.
p. 416-
420.

He had some wit, but no humour, and never told a story but he spoiled it. The following anecdotes will convey some idea of the style and manner of his conversation:

He was used to say he could play on the German-flute as well as most men;—at other times, as well as any man living; and in his poem of the Traveller, has hinted at this attainment; but, in truth, he understood not the character in which musick is written, and played on that instrument, as many of the vulgar do, merely by ear. Roubiliac, the sculptor, a merry fellow, once heard him play, and minding to put a trick on him, pretended to be so charmed with his performance, that he entreated him to repeat the air, that he might write it down.

simplicity of Goldsmith, which (though perhaps coloured a little, as *anecdotes* too often are) is characteristic at least of the opinion which his best friends entertained of Goldsmith. One afternoon, as Colonel O'Moore and Mr. Burke were going to dine with Sir Joshua Reynolds, they observed Goldsmith (also on his way to Sir Joshua's) standing near a crowd of people, who were staring and shouting at some foreign women in the windows of one of the houses in Leicester-square. "Observe Goldsmith," said Mr. Burke to O'Moore, "and mark what passes between him and me by-and-by at Sir Joshua's." They passed on, and arrived before Goldsmith, who came soon after, and Mr. Burke affected to receive him very coolly. This seemed to vex poor Goldsmith, who begged Mr. Burke would tell him how he had had the misfortune to offend him. Burke appeared very reluctant to speak, but, after a good deal of pressing, said, "that he was really ashamed to keep up an intimacy with one who could be guilty of such monstrous indiscretions as Goldsmith had just exhibited in the square." Goldsmith, with great earnestness, protested he was unconscious of what was meant: "Why," said Burke, "did you not exclaim, as you were looking up at those women, what stupid beasts the crowd must be for staring with such admiration at those *painted jzebels*; while a man of your talents passed by unnoticed?" Goldsmith was horror-struck and said, "Surely, surely, my dear friend, I did not say so?" "Nay," replied Burke, "if you had not said so, how should I have known it?" "That's true," answered Goldsmith, with great humility: "I am very sorry—it was very foolish: I do recollect that something of the kind passed through my mind, but I did not think I had uttered it."—Ed.]

Goldsmith readily consenting, Roubiliac called for paper, and scored thereon a few five-lined staves, which having done, Goldsmith proceeded to play, and Roubiliac to write; but his writing was only such random notes on the lines and spaces as any one might set down who had ever inspected a page of musick. When they had both done, Roubiliac showed the paper to Goldsmith, who, looking it over with seeming great attention, said it was very correct, and that if he had not seen him do it, he never could have believed his friend capable of writing musick after him.

He would frequently preface a story thus: "I'll now tell you a story of myself, which some people laugh at, and some do not."

At the breaking up of an evening at a tavern, he entreated the company to sit down, and told them if they would call for another bottle, they should hear one of his bon-mots. They agreed, and he began thus: "I was once told that Sheridan, the player, in order to improve himself in stage gestures, had looking-glasses, to the number of ten, hung about his room, and that he practised before them; upon which I said, then there were ten ugly fellows together." The company were all silent. He asked, why they did not laugh? which, they not doing, he, without tasting the wine, left the room in anger.

He once complained to a friend in these words: "Mr. Martinelli is a rude man; I said, in his hearing, that there were no good writers among the Italians, and he said to one that sat near him, that I was very ignorant."

"People," said he, "are greatly mistaken in me. A notion goes about, that when I am silent, I mean to be impudent; but I assure you, gentlemen, my silence arises from bashfulness."

Sir John Hawkins having one day a call to wait on the late duke, then earl, of Northumberland, found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room. Hawkins asked what had brought him there: he replied, an invitation from his lordship. Hawkins made his business as short as he could, and, as a reason, mentioned, that Goldsmith was waiting without. The earl asked if he was acquainted with him. He told him he was, adding what he thought likely to recommend him. Hawkins retired, and staid in the outer room to take Goldsmith home, and, upon his coming out, asked him the result of his conversation. "His lordship," says he, "told me he had read my poem (meaning the Traveller), and was much delighted with it; that he was going Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and that, hearing that I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any

kindness." "And what did you answer," asked Hawkins, "to this gracious offer?" "Why," said he, "I could say nothing, but that I had a brother there, a clergyman, that stood in need of help. As for myself, I have no dependence on the promises of great men; I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not, inclined to forsake them for others."

Thus adds Hawkins, did this idiot¹, in the affairs of the world, trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman [Nugent, Lord Clare], whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis.

While Hawkins was writing the History of Musick, Goldsmith, at the club, communicated to him some curious matter, which the former desired he would reduce to writing; he promised to do so, and desired to see Hawkins at his chambers. He called on him there; Goldsmith stepped into a closed, and tore out of a printed book six leaves that contained what he had mentioned.

His poems are replete with fine moral sentiments, and bespeak a great dignity of mind; yet he had no sense of the shame, nor dread of the evils, of poverty.]

He, I am afraid, had no settled system of any sort, so that his conduct must not be strictly scrutinized: but his affections were social and generous, and when he had money he gave it away very liberally. His desire of imaginary consequence predominated over his attention to truth. When he began to rise into notice, he said he had a brother who was Dean of Durham², a fiction so easily detected, that it is wonderful how he should have been so inconsiderate as to hazard it. He boasted to me at this time of the power of his pen in commanding money, which I believe was true in a certain degree, though in the instance he gave he was by no means correct. He told me that he had sold a novel for four hundred pounds. This was his "Vicar of Wakefield." But Johnson informed me, that he had made the bargain for Goldsmith, and the price was sixty pounds. "And, sir," said he, "a sufficient price too, when it was sold; for then the fame of

¹ [It is hard on poor Goldsmith to be called an *idiot* for what, in another man, would have been applauded as disinterestedness and magnanimity.—Ed.]

² I am willing to hope that there may have been some mistake as to this anecdote, though I had it from a dignitary of the church. Dr. Isaac Goldsmith, his near relation, was Dean of Cloyne in 1747.—BOSWELL.

Goldsmith had not been elevated, as it afterwards was, by his 'Traveller;' and the bookseller had such faint hopes of profit by his bargain, that he kept the manuscript by him a long time, and did not publish it till after the 'Traveller' had appeared. Then, to be sure, it was accidentally worth more money."

Mrs. Piozzi and Sir John Hawkins¹ have strangely mis-stated the history of Goldsmith's situation and Johnson's friendly interference, when this novel was sold. I shall give it authentically from Johnson's own exact narration:

"I received one morning a message from poor Goldsmith that he was in great distress, and as it was not in his power to come to me, begging that I would come to him as soon as possible. I sent him a guinea, and promised to come to him directly. I accordingly went as soon as I was dressed, and found that his landlady had arrested him for his rent, at which he was in a violent passion. I perceived that he had already changed my guinea, and had got a bottle of madeira and a glass before him. I put the cork into the bottle, desired he would be calm, and began to talk to him of the means by which he might be extricated. He then told me that he had a novel ready for the press, which he produced to me. I looked into it, and saw its merit; told the landlady I should soon return, and having gone to a bookseller, sold it for sixty pounds. I brought Goldsmith the money, and he discharged his rent, not without railing his landlady in a high tone for having used him so ill."

¹ [How Mr. Boswell, who affects such extreme accuracy, should say that Hawkins has *strangely mis-stated* this affair is very surprising; what Hawkins says (*Life*, p. 420), is merely that, under a pressing necessity, he wrote the Vicar of Wakefield, and sold it to Newbury for 40*l*. Hawkins's account is not in any respect inconsistent with Boswell's; and the difference between the prices stated, even if Hawkins be in error, is surely not sufficient to justify the charge of a *strange mis-statement*.—Ed.]

² It may not be improper to annex here Mrs. Piozzi's account of this transaction, in her own words, as a specimen of the *extreme inaccuracy* with which all her anecdotes of Dr. Johnson are related, or rather discoloured and *distorted*. "I have forgotten the year, but it could scarcely, I think, be later than 1765 or 1766, that he was called *abruptly from our house after dinner*, and returning *in about three hours*, said he had been with an enraged author, whose landlady pressed him for payment within doors, while the bailiffs beset him without; that he was *drinking himself drunk with madeira*, to drown care, and fretting over a novel, which, when *finished*, was to be his *whole fortune*, but he could not get it done for distraction, nor could he step out of doors to offer it for sale. Mr. Johnson, therefore,

Here let me not forget the curious anecdote³, referred to by Dr. Maxwell, which was related to me by Mr. Beauclerk, and which I shall endeavour to exhibit as well as I can in that gentleman's lively manner; and, in justice to him, it is proper to add, that Dr. Johnson told me I might rely both on the correctness of his memory, and the fidelity of his narrative. "When Madame de Boufflers⁴ was first in England (said Beauclerk), she was desirous to see Johnson. I accordingly went with her to his chambers in the Temple, where she was entertained with his conversation for some time. When our visit was over, she and I left him, and were got into Inner Temple-

sent away the bottle, and went to the bookseller, recommending the performance, and *desiring some immediate relief*; which when he brought back to the writer, he called the woman of the house directly to partake of punch, and pass their time in merriment."—*Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*, p. 119.—BOSWELL. [It is hardly fair to give this as a proof of Mrs. Piozzi's inaccuracy in all her anecdotes. We have seen some instances, and shall see more, in which Dr. Johnson, according even to Mr. Boswell's report, told an anecdote different ways, and how can we be sure that he did not do so in the present case? The greatest discrepancy between the two stories is the *time* of the day at which it happened; and, unluckily, the admitted fact of the *bottle of madeira* seems to render Mrs. Piozzi's version the more probable of the two. If, according to Mr. Boswell's account, Goldsmith had, *in the morning*, changed Johnson's charitable guinea for the purpose of getting a bottle of madeira, we cannot complain that Mrs. Piozzi's represents him as "*drinking himself drunk with madeira*;" which Mr. Boswell thinks so violently inaccurate, as to deserve being marked in italics.—Ed.]

³ [Mr. Boswell had placed this anecdote under 1775: it is thought right to introduce it near the date of the event.—Ed.]

⁴ [La Comtesse de Boufflers was the mistress of the Prince de Conti, and aspired to be his wife; she was a bel-esprit, and in that character thought it necessary to be an *Anglomane* and to visit England in the summer of 1763. Horace Walpole says of her, in a letter to Montagu, 17th May, 1763, "Madame de Boufflers will, I think, die a martyr to a taste (for seeing sights), which she fancied she had, and finds she had not. Never having stirred ten miles from Paris, and having only rolled in an easy coach from one hotel to another on a gliding pavement, she is already worn out by being hurried from morning till night from one sight to another. She rises every morning so fatigued with the toils of the preceding day, that she has not strength, if she had inclination, to observe the *least* or the *finest* things she sees." One of the *sights*, which this inquisitive traveller was taken to see, was Dr. Johnson, and a strange sight it seems that it was. Madame de Boufflers visited England a second time on the melancholy necessity of the emigration.—Ed.]

lane, when all at once I heard a noise like thunder. This was occasioned by Johnson, who, it seems, upon a little recollection, had taken it into his head that he ought to have done the honours of his literary residence to a foreign lady of quality, and, eager to show himself a man of gallantry, was hurrying down the staircase in violent agitation. He overtook us before we reached the Temple-gate, and, brushing in between me and Madame de Boufflers, seized her hand, and conducted her to her coach. His dress was a rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes by way of slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose. A considerable crowd of people gathered round, and were not a little struck by this singular appearance."

My next meeting with Johnson was on Friday, the 1st of July, when he and I and Dr. Goldsmith supped at the Mitre. I was before this time pretty well acquainted with Goldsmith, who was one of the brightest ornaments of the Johnsonian school¹. Goldsmith's respectful attachment to Johnson was then at its height; for his own literary reputation had not yet distinguished him so much as to excite a vain desire of competition with his great master. He had increased my admiration of the goodness of Johnson's heart, by incidental remarks in the course of conversation, such as, when I mentioned Mr. Levet, whom he entertained under his roof. "He is poor and honest, which is recommendation enough to Johnson;" and when I wondered that he was very kind to a man of whom I had heard a very bad character, "He is now become miserable, and that ensures the protection of Johnson."

Goldsmith attempted this evening to maintain, I suppose from an affectation of paradox, "that knowledge was not desirable on its own account, for it often was a source of unhappiness." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that knowledge may in some cases produce unhappiness, I allow. But upon the whole, knowledge, *per se*, is certainly an object which every man would wish to attain, although, perhaps, he may not take the trouble necessary for attaining it."

Dr. John Campbell, the celebrated² polit-

¹ [Mr. Boswell, as has been already observed, imagined that all the literary men in England were mere planets moving round and borrowing light from his great luminary, Johnson. Goldsmith was an ornament of the Johnsonian society, but in what respect can he be said to have belonged to the Johnsonian school? The style of his writings, the turn of his mind, the habits of his life, were, in almost every point, strikingly dissimilar from Johnson's.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Boswell a little exaggerates the literary station of his countryman, Dr. Campbell; who

tical and biographical writer, being mentioned, Johnson said, "Campbell is a man of much knowledge, and has a good share of imagination. His '*Hermippus Redivivus*' is very entertaining, as an account of the hermetick philosophy, and as furnishing a curious history of the extravagancies of the human mind. If it were merely imaginary, it would be nothing at all. Campbell is not always rigidly careful of truth in his conversation; but I do not believe there is any thing of this carelessness in his books. Campbell is a good man, a pious man. I am afraid he has not been in the inside of a church for many years³; but he never passes a church without pulling off his hat. This shows that he has good principles. I used to go pretty often

was, no doubt, an able, industrious, and very voluminous writer, but hardly can be designated as "*the celebrated*." His *Lives of the Admirals* is the only one of his almost innumerable publications that is still called for; his last and most extensive work, "*A Political Survey of Britain*," published in 1774, has become, from the change of circumstances, almost obsolete, but at the time deserved more reputation than it obtained. He was born in 1708, and died in 1775.—Ed.]

³ I am inclined to think that he was misinformed as to this circumstance. I own I am jealous for my worthy friend Dr. John Campbell. For though Milton could without remorse absent himself from publick worship, I cannot. On the contrary, I have the same habitual impressions upon my mind, with those of a truly venerable judge, who said to Mr. Langton, "Friend Langton, if I have not been at church on Sunday, I do not feel myself easy." Dr. Campbell was a sincerely religious man. Lord Macartney, who is eminent for his variety of knowledge, and attention to men of talents, and knew him well, told me, that when he called on him in a morning, he found him reading a chapter in the Greek New Testament, which he informed his lordship was his constant practice. The quantity of Dr. Campbell's composition is almost incredible, and his labours brought him large profits. Dr. Joseph Warton told me that Johnson said of him, "He is the richest author that ever grazed the common of literature." [Mr. Boswell quotes this *dictum* as if it was evidence only of Dr. Campbell's *wealth*; he probably did not see that it characterised his *celebrated* friend, by no very complimentary allusion, as *grazing the common* of literature. The strange story of Campbell's "pulling off his hat whenever he *passed* a church, though he had not been for many years *inside* one," must have arisen from some error. Johnson could hardly have seriously told such an absurdity. It is well known, that the members of the kirk of Scotland do not think it necessary to uncover on entering places of worship, though the lower classes sometimes show a kind of superstitious veneration for burial-places: perhaps Dr. Campbell may, in conversation with Johnson, have alluded to those circumstances, and thus given occasion to this whimsical misapprehension.—Ed.]

to Campbell's on a Sunday evening, till I began to consider that the shoals of Scotchmen who flocked about him might probably say, when any thing of mine was well done, 'Ay, ay, he has learnt this of CAWMELL !' "

He talked very contemptuously of Churchill's poetry, observing, that "it had a temporary currency, only from its audacity of abuse, and being filled with living names, and that it would sink into oblivion." I ventured to hint that he was not quite a fair judge, as Churchill had attacked him violently. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, I am a very fair judge. He did not attack me violently till he found I did not like his poetry; and his attack on me shall not prevent me from continuing to say what I think of him, from an apprehension that it may be ascribed to resentment. No, sir, I called the fellow a blockhead at first, and I will call him a blockhead still. However, I will acknowledge that I have a better opinion of him now than I once had; for he has shown more fertility than I expected. To be sure, he is a tree that cannot produce good fruit: he only bears crabs. But, sir, a tree that produces a great many crabs is better than a tree which produces only a few."

In this depreciation of Churchill's poetry I could not agree with him. It is very true that the greatest part of it is upon the topicks of the day, on which account, as it brought him great fame and profit at the time, it must proportionably slide out of the publick attention as other occasional objects succeed. But Churchill had extraordinary vigour both of thought and expression. His portraits of the players will ever be valuable to the true lovers of the drama; and his strong caricatures of several eminent men of his age will not be forgotten by the curious. Let me add, that there are in his works many passages which are of a general nature; and his "Prophecy of Famine" is a poem of no ordinary merit. It is, indeed, falsely injurious to Scotland; but therefore may be allowed a greater share of invention.

Bonnell Thornton had just published a burlesque "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day," adapted to the ancient British musick, viz. the salt box, the jew's-harp, the marrow-bones and cleaver, the hum-strum or hurdy-gurdy, &c. Johnson praised its humour, and seemed much diverted with it. He repeated the following passage:

"In strains more exalted the Salt-box shall join,
And clattering and battering and elapping combine;
With a rap and a tap, while the hollow side sounds,
Up and down leaps the flap, and with rattling rebounds¹."

¹ In 1769 I set for Smart and Newbury, Thom-

I mentioned the periodical paper called "The Connoisseur." He said it wanted matter.—No doubt it had not the deep thinking of Johnson's writings. But surely it has just views of the surface of life, and a very sprightly manner. His opinion of *The World* was not much higher than of *The Connoisseur*.

Let me here apologize for the imperfect manner in which I am obliged to exhibit Johnson's conversation at this period. In the early part of my acquaintance with him, I was so wrapt in admiration of his extraordinary colloquial talents, and so little accustomed to his peculiar mode of expression, that I found it extremely difficult to recollect and record his conversation with its genuine vigour and vivacity. In progress of time, when my mind was, as it were, *strongly impregnated with the Johnsonian æther*, I could, with much more facility and exactness, carry in my memory and commit to paper the exuberant variety of his wisdom and wit.

At this time *Miss Williams*, as she was called, though she did not reside with him in the Temple under his roof, but had lodgings in Bolt-court, Fleet-street, had so much of his attention, that he every night drank tea with her before he went home, however late it might be, and she always sat up for him. This, it may be fairly conjectured, was not alone a proof of his regard for *her*, but of his own unwillingness to go into solitude, before that unseasonable hour at which he had habituated himself to expect the oblivion of repose. Dr. Goldsmith, being a privileged man, went with him this night, strutting away, and calling to me with an air of superiority, like that of an esoterick over an exoterick disciple of a sage of antiquity², "I go to Miss Williams." I

ton's burlesque Ode on St. Cecilia's day. It was performed at Ranelagh in masks, to a very crowded audience, as I was told; for I then resided in Norfolk. Beard sung the salt-box song, which was admirably accompanied on that instrument by Brent, the fencing-master, and father of Miss Brent, the celebrated singer; Skeggs on the broomstick, as bassoon; and a remarkable performer on the Jew's-harp,—"Buzzing twangs the iron lyre." Cleavers were cast in bell-metal for this entertainment. All the performers of the old woman's oratory, employed by Foote, were, I believe, employed at Ranelagh, on this occasion.—BURNEY. [In the original edition of this ode now before the editor, the date on the title-page is 1749, a mistake, no doubt, for 1769. For the use to which Dr. Burney put it, as a burlesque vehicle for musick, it is very well; but as a literary production, it seems without object or meaning. It has not even the low merit of being a parody; the best line is that on the jew's-harp, above quoted—"Buzzing twangs the iron lyre."—Ed.]

² [It may perhaps not be unnecessary to some readers to explain that the ancient philosophers

confess, I then envied him this mighty privilege, of which he seemed so proud; but it was not long before I obtained the same mark of distinction.

On Tuesday, the 5th of July, I again visited Johnson. He told me he had looked into the poems of a pretty voluminous writer, Mr. (now Dr.) John Ogilvie, one of the presbyterian ministers of Scotland, which had lately come out, but could find nothing in them. BOSWELL. "Is there not imagination in them, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, there is in them what *was* imagination, but it is no more imagination in *him*, than sound is sound in the echo. And his diction too is not his own. We have long ago seen *white-robed innocence*, and *flower-bespangled meads*."

Talking of London, he observed, "Sir, if you wish to have a just notion of the magnitude of this city, you must not be satisfied with seeing its great streets and squares, but must survey the innumerable little lanes and courts. It is not in the showy evolutions of buildings, but in the multiplicity of human habitations which are crowded together, that the wonderful immensity of London consists."—I have often amused myself with thinking how different a place London is to different people. They, whose narrow minds are contracted to the consideration of some one particular pursuit, view it only through that medium. A politician thinks of it merely as the seat of government in its different departments; a grazier, as a vast market for cattle; a mercantile man, as a place where a prodigious deal of business is done upon 'Change; a dramatick enthusiast, as the grand scene of theatrical entertainments; a man of pleasure, as an assemblage of taverns, and the great emporium for ladies of easy virtue. But the intellectual man is struck with it, as comprehending the whole of human life in all its variety, the contemplation of which is inexhaustible.

["DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER.

5th July, 1763.

"MY DEAREST DEAR,—I am extremely glad that so much prudence and virtue as yours is at last rewarded with so large a fortune¹, and doubt not but that the excellence which you have shown in circumstances of difficulty will continue the same in the convenience of wealth.

"I have not written to you sooner, having nothing to say, which you would not

were supposed to have two sets of tenets—one, the *exoteric*, external, or public doctrines—the other the *esoteric*, the internal, or secret doctrine, which were reserved for the more favoured few.—ED.]

¹ [Miss Porter had just received a legacy of 10,000*l.* by the death of her brother.—ED.]

easily suppose,—nothing but that I love you and wish you happy, of which you may be always assured, whether I write or not.

"I have had an inflammation in my eyes, but it is much better, and will be, I hope, soon quite well.

"Be so good as to let me know whether you design to stay at Lichfield this summer; if you do, I purpose to come down. I shall bring Frank with me, so that Kitty must contrive to make two beds, or get a servant's bed at the Three Crowns, which may be as well. As I suppose she may want sheets and table-linen, and such things, I have sent ten pounds, which she may lay out in conveniences. I will pay her for her board what you think proper; I think a guinea a week for me and the boy.

"Be pleased to give my love to Kitty.—I am, my dearest love, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."]

On Wednesday, July 6, he was engaged to sup with me at my lodgings in Downing-street, Westminster. But on the preceding night my landlord having behaved very rudely to me and some company who were with me, I resolved not to remain another night in his house. I was exceedingly uneasy at the awkward appearance I supposed I should make to Johnson and the other gentlemen whom I had invited, not being able to receive them at home, and being obliged to order supper at the Mitre: I went to Johnson in the morning, and talked of it as of a serious distress. He laughed, and said, "Consider, sir, how insignificant this will appear a twelvemonth hence." Were this consideration to be applied to most of the little vexatious incidents of life, by which our quiet is too often disturbed, it would prevent many painful sensations. I have tried it frequently with good effect. "There is nothing (continued he) in this mighty misfortune; nay, we shall be better at the Mitre." I told him that I had been at Sir John Fielding's office, complaining of my landlord, and had been informed, that though I had taken my lodgings for a year, I might, upon proof of his bad behaviour, quit them when I pleased, without being under an obligation to pay rent for any longer time than while I possessed them. The fertility of Johnson's mind could show itself even upon so small a matter as this. "Why, sir (said he), I suppose this must be the law, since you have been told so in Bow-street. But, if your landlord could hold you to your bargain, and the lodgings should be yours for a year, you may certainly use them as you think fit². So, sir, you may quarter two life-

² [Certainly not; you must use them according to the contract, expressed or implied, under which

guardmen upon him; or you may send the greatest scoundrel you can find into your apartments; or you may say that you want to make some experiments in natural philosophy, and may burn a large quantity of assafœtida in his house."

I had as my guests this evening at the Mitre tavern, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Thomas Davies, Mr. Eccles¹, an Irish gentleman, for whose agreeable company I was obliged to Mr. Davies, and the Reverend Mr. John Ogilvie², who was desirous of being in company with my illustrious friend, while I, in my turn, was proud to have the honour of showing one of my countrymen upon what easy terms Johnson permitted me to live with him.

Goldsmith, as usual, endeavoured, with too much eagerness, to *shine*, and disputed very warmly with Johnson against the well known maxim of the British constitution, "the king can do no wrong;" affirming, that "what was morally false could not be politically true; and as the king might, in the exercise of his regal power, command and cause the doing of what was wrong, it certainly might be said, in sense and in reason, that he could do wrong." JOHNSON. "Sir, you are to consider, that in our constitution, according to its true principles, the king is the head, he is supreme; he is above every thing, and there is no power by which he can be tried. Therefore it is, sir, that we hold the king can do no wrong; that whatever may happen to be wrong in government may not be above our reach, by being ascribed to majesty. Redress is always to be had against oppression, by punishing the immediate agents. The king, though he should command, cannot force a judge to condemn a man unjustly; therefore it is the judge whom

you have hired them. If a landlord breaks his part of the contract, the law will relieve the other party; but the latter is not at liberty to take such violent and illegal steps as Johnson suggests.—Ed.]

¹ [Isaac Ambrose Eccles, Esq. of Cromroe, in the county of Wicklow, in Ireland: he published one or two plays of Shakspeare, with notes.—Ed.]

² The northern bard mentioned page 191. When I asked Dr. Johnson's permission to introduce him, he obligingly agreed; adding, however, with a sly pleasantry, "but he must give us none of his poetry." It is remarkable that Johnson and Churchill, however much they differed in other points, agreed on this subject. See Churchill's "Journey." It is, however, but justice to Dr. Ogilvie to observe, that his "Day of Judgment" has no inconsiderable share of merit.—BOSWELL. [Boswell's *naïveté* in thinking it remarkable that two persons should agree in disliking the poetry of his northern bard is amusing: it might have been more remarkable if two had agreed in liking it.—Ed.]

we prosecute and punish. Political institutions are formed upon the consideration of what will most frequently tend to the good of the whole, although now and then exceptions may occur. Thus it is better in general that a nation should have a supreme legislative power, although it may at times be abused. And then, sir, there is this consideration, that *if the abuse be enormous, Nature will rise up, and claiming her original rights, overturn a corrupt political system.*" I mark this animated sentence with peculiar pleasure, as a noble instance of that truly dignified spirit of freedom which ever glowed in his heart, though he was charged with slavish tenets by superficial observers; because he was at all times indignant against that false patriotism, that pretended love of freedom, that unruly restlessness, which is inconsistent with the stable authority of any good government.

This generous sentiment, which he uttered with great fervour, struck me exceedingly, and stirred my blood to that pitch of fancied resistance, the possibility of which I am glad to keep in mind, but to which I trust I never shall be forced.

"Great abilities," said he, "are not requisite for an historian; for in historical composition, all the greatest powers of the human mind are quiescent. He has facts ready to his hand: so there is no exercise of invention. Imagination is not required in any high degree: only about as much as is used in the lower kinds of poetry. Some penetration, accuracy, and colouring, will fit a man for the task, if he can give the application which is necessary."

"Bayle's Dictionary is a very useful work for those to consult who love the biographical part of literature, which is what I love most."

Talking of the eminent writers in Queen Anne's reign, he observed, "I think Dr. Arbuthnot the first man among them. He was the most universal genius, being an excellent physician, a man of deep learning, and a man of much humour. Mr. Addison was, to be sure, a great man: his learning was not profound; but his morality, his humour, and his elegance of writing, set him very high."

Mr. Ogilvie was unlucky enough to choose for the topic of his conversation the praises of his native country. He began with saying, that there was very rich land around Edinburgh. Goldsmith, who had studied physick there, contradicted this, very untruly, with a sneering laugh. Disconcerted a little by this, Mr. Ogilvie then took a new ground, where, I suppose, he thought himself perfectly safe; for he observed, that Scotland had a great many noble wild prospects. JOHNSON. "I believe, sir, you have a great many. Norway, too, has noble

wild prospects; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England!" This unexpected and pointed sally produced a roar of applause. After all, however, those who admire the rude grandeur of nature

cannot deny it to Caledonia. Mrs. Piozzi, p. 204-205. Brooke¹ received an answer not unlike this, when expatiating on the accumulation of sublime and beautiful objects, which form the fine prospect up the river St. Lawrence in North America: "Come, madam (says Dr. Johnson), confess that nothing ever equalled your pleasure in seeing that sight reversed; and finding yourself looking at the happy prospect down the river St. Lawrence." The truth is, he hated to hear about prospects and views, and laying out ground, and taste in gardening: "That was the best garden (he said) which produced most roots and fruits; and that water was most to be prized which contained most fish." He used to laugh at Shenstone most unmercifully for not caring whether there was any thing good to eat in the streams he was so fond of. Walking in a wood when it rained was, Mrs. Piozzi thought, the only rural image which pleased his fancy.

He loved the sight of fine forest-trees, however, and detested Brighthelmstone Downs, "because it was a country so truly desolate (he said), that if one had a mind to hang one's self for desperation at being obliged to live there, it would be difficult to find a tree on which to fasten the rope."

On Saturday, July 9, I found Johnson surrounded with a numerous levee, but have not preserved any part of his conversation.

"DR. JOHNSON TO MISS LUCY PORTER.

"12th of July, 1763.

"MY DEAREST LOVE,—I had forgotten my debt to poor Kitty; pray let her have the note, and do what you can for her, for she has been always very good. I will help her to a little more money if she wants it, and will write. I intend that she shall have the use of the house as long as she and I live.

"That there should not be room for me at the house is some disappointment to me, but the matter is not very great. I am sor-

¹ [Frances Moore, wife of the Rev. Mr. Brooke, chaplain to the forces in Canada, whither she accompanied him, and wrote a novel called *Emily Montague*. She afterwards produced several dramatic pieces, one of which, *Rosina*, still keeps the stage. She is said to have been much esteemed by Johnson. She died in 1789.—Ed.]

ry you have had your head filled with building² for many reasons.

"It was not necessary to settle immediately for life at any one place; you might have staid and seen more of the world.

"You will not have your work done, as you do not understand it, but at twice the value.

"You might have hired a house at half the interest of the money for which you build it, if your house cost you a thousand pounds. You might have the Palace for twenty pounds, and make forty of your thousand pounds; so in twenty years you would have saved forty pounds, and still have had your thousand. I am, dear dear, yours, &c. "SAM. JOHNSON."]

On the 14th we had another evening by ourselves at the Mitre. It happening to be a very rainy night, I made some commonplace observations on the relaxation of nerves and depressions of spirits which such weather occasioned³; adding, however, that it was good for the vegetable creation. Johnson, who, as we have already seen⁴, denied that the temperature of the air had any influence on the human frame, answered, with a smile of ridicule, "Why, yes, sir, it is good for vegetables, and for the animals who eat those vegetables, and for the animals who eat those animals." This observation of his aptly enough introduced a good supper; and I soon forgot, in Johnson's company, the influence of a moist atmosphere.

[Though Dr. Johnson owed his Piozzi, p. 160. very life to air and exercise, given him when his organs of respiration could scarcely play, in the year 1766, yet he ever persisted in the notion, that neither of them had any thing to do with health. "People live as long," said he, "in Pepper-alley as on Salisbury plain; and they live so much

² [Miss Porter laid out nearly one-third of her legacy in building a handsome house at Lichfield.—Ed.]

³ Johnson would suffer none of his friends to fill up chasms in conversation with remarks on the weather: "Let us not talk of the weather."—BURNBY. [The French, who rally us for talking of the weather, have a proverbial saying, which shows that they are also driven to the same resource—to describe an idle conversation they say, "*Parler de la pluie et du beau temps.*" One may here also remark another little inconsistency of our neighbours on this point—they make themselves merry with our English fogs, protesting that there is no such thing in France. Yet, when they made their descriptive revolutionary calendar, they denominated one month *Brumaire*. A Cockney could not have told a severer truth of his own climate.—Ed.]

⁴ [See ante, p. 142.—Ed.]

happier, that an inhabitant of the first world, if he turned cottager, starve his understanding for want of conversation, and perish in a state of mental inferiority.”]

Feeling myself now quite at ease as his companion, though I had all possible reverence for him, I expressed a regret that I could not be easy with my father, though he was not much older than Johnson, and certainly however respectable had not more learning and greater abilities to depress me. I asked him the reason of this. JOHNSON. “Why, sir, I am a man of the world. I live in the world, and I take, in some degree, the colour of the world as it moves along. Your father is a judge in a remote part of the island, and all his notions are taken from the old world. Besides, sir, there must always be a struggle between a father and a son, while one aims at power and the other at independence.” I said I was afraid my father would force me to be a lawyer. JOHNSON. “Sir, you need not be afraid of his forcing you to be a laborious practising lawyer; that is not in his power. For as the proverb says, ‘One man may lead a horse to the water, but twenty cannot make him drink.’ He may be displeased that you are not what he wishes you to be; but that displeasure will not go far. If he insists only on your having as much law as is necessary for a man of property, and then endeavours to get you into parliament, he is quite in the right.”

He enlarged very convincingly upon the excellence of rhyme over blank verse in English poetry. I mentioned to him that Dr. Adam Smith, in his lectures upon composition, when I studied under him in the college of Glasgow, had maintained the same opinion strenuously, and I repeated some of his arguments. JOHNSON. “Sir, I was once¹ in company with Smith, and we did not take to each other; but had I known that he loved rhyme as much as you tell me he does, I should have *HUGGED* him.”

Talking of those who denied the truth of Christianity, he said, “It is always easy to be on the negative side. If a man were now to deny that there is salt upon the table, you could not reduce him to an absurdity. Come, let us try this a little further. I deny that Canada is taken, and I can sup-

¹ Adam Smith was admitted to THE CLUB on the 1st December, 1775, which, all things considered, would have appeared remarkable enough; but on inquiry of Mr. Hatchett, now treasurer of that society, he informs me, that the members present on that evening were only Messrs. Beauclerk, Jones, Gibbon, and Sir J. Reynolds. Dr. Barnard was admitted at the same time. Johnson was probably at Streatham. In 1777 it was resolved that not less than *seven* should make a quorum, which is still the rule.—Ed.]

port my denial by pretty good arguments. The French are a much more numerous people than we; and it is not likely that they would allow us to take it. ‘But the ministry have assured us, in all the formality of the Gazette, that it is taken.’ Very true. But the ministry have put us to an enormous expense by the war in America, and it is their interest to persuade us that we have got something for our money. ‘But the fact is confirmed by thousands of men who were at the taking of it.’ Ay, but these men have still more interest in deceiving us. ‘They don’t want that you should think the French have beat them, but that they have beat the French. Now suppose you should go over and find that it really is taken, that would only satisfy yourself; for when you come home we will not believe you. We will say, you have been bribed. Yet, sir, notwithstanding all these plausible objections, we have no doubt that Canada is really ours. Such is the weight of common testimony. How much stronger are the evidences of the Christian religion!’

“Idleness is a disease which must be combated; but I would not advise a rigid adherence to a particular plan of study². I myself have never persisted in any plan for two days together. A man ought to read just as inclination leads him: for what he reads as a task will do him little good. A young man should read five hours in a day, and so may acquire a great deal of knowledge.”

To a man of vigorous intellect and ardent curiosity like his own, reading without a regular plan may be beneficial; though even such a man must submit to it, if he would attain a full understanding of any of the sciences³.

To such a degree of unrestrained frankness had he now accustomed me, that in the course of this evening I talked of the numerous reflections which had been thrown out against him on account of his having accepted a pension from his present majesty. “Why, sir,” said he, with a hearty laugh, “it is a mighty foolish noise that they make⁴. I have accepted of a pension as a reward which has been thought due to my literary merit; and now that I have this pension, I am the same man in every respect that I have ever been; I retain the same principles. It is true, that I cannot now curse (smiling) the house of Hanover; nor would it be decent for me to drink King

² [See *post*, his letter to Mr. George Strahan, 25th May, 1765.—Ed.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 20.—Ed.]

⁴ When I mentioned the same idle clamour to him several years afterwards, he said, with a smile, “I wish my pension were twice as large, that they might make twice as much noise.”—BOSWELL.

James's health in the wine that King George gives me money to pay for. But, sir, I think that the pleasure of cursing the house of Hanover, and drinking King James's health, are amply overbalanced by three hundred pounds a year."

There was here, most certainly, an affectation of more Jacobitism than he really had; and indeed an intention of admitting, for the moment, in a much greater extent than it really existed, the charge of disaffection imputed to him by the world, merely for the purpose of showing how dexterously he could repel an attack, even though he were placed in the most disadvantageous position; for I have heard him declare, that if holding up his right hand would have secured victory at Culloden to Prince Charles's army, he was not sure he would have held it up; so little confidence had he in the right claimed by the house of Stuart, and so fearful was he of the consequences of another revolution on the throne of Great Britain; and Mr. Topham Beauclerk assured me, he had heard him say this before he had his pension. At another time he said to Mr. Langton, "Nothing has ever offered, that has made it worth my while to consider the question fully." He, however, also said to the same gentleman, talking of King James the Second, "It was become impossible for him to reign any longer in this country." He no doubt had an early attachment to the house of Stuart; but his zeal had cooled as his reason strengthened. Indeed I heard him once say, "that after the death of a violent whig, with whom he used to contend with great eagerness, he felt his toryism much abated." I suppose he meant Mr. Walmsley¹.

Yet there is no doubt that at earlier periods he was wont often to exercise both his pleasantry and ingenuity in talking Jacobitism. My much respected friend, Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, has favoured me with the following admirable instance from his lordship's own recollection. One day when dining at old Mr. Langton's, where Miss Roberts, his niece, was one of the company, Johnson, with his usual complacent attention to the fair sex, took her by the hand, and said, "My dear, I hope you are a Jacobite." Old Mr. Langton, though a high and steady tory, was attached to the present royal family, seemed offended, and asked Johnson, with great warmth, what he could mean by putting such a question to his niece? "Why, sir,

(said Johnson), I meant no offence to your niece, I meant her a great compliment. A Jacobite, sir, believes in the divine right of kings. He that believes in the divine right of kings believes in a divinity. A Jacobite believes in the divine right of bishops. He that believes in the divine right of bishops believes in the divine authority of the Christian religion. Therefore, sir, a Jacobite is neither an atheist nor a deist. That cannot be said of a whig; for *whiggism is a negation of all principle*²."

He advised me, when abroad, to be as much as I could with the professors in the universities, and with the clergy; for from their conversation I might expect the best accounts of every thing in whatever country I should be, with the additional advantage of keeping my learning alive.

It will be observed, that when giving me advice as to my travels, Dr. Johnson did not dwell upon cities, and palaces, and pictures, and shows, and Arcadian scenes. He was of Lord Essex's³ opinion who advises his kinsman Roger Earl of Rutland, "rather to go a hundred miles to speak with one wise man, than five miles to see a fair town⁴."

I described to him an impudent fellow from Scotland, who affected to be a savage, and railed at all established systems. JOHNSON. "There is nothing surprising in this, sir. He wants to make himself conspicuous. He would tumble in a hogsty, as long as you looked at him and called to come out. But let him alone, never mind him, and he'll soon give it over."

I added that the same person maintained that there was no distinction between virtue and vice. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if the fellow does not think as he speaks, he is lying; and I see not what honour he can propose to himself from having the character of a liar. But if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, sir, when he leaves our houses, let us count our spoons."

Sir David Dalrymple⁵ now one of the

² He used to tell, with great humour, from my relation to him, the following little story of my early years, which was literally true: "Boswell, in the year 1745, was a fine boy, wore a white cockade, and prayed for King James, till one of his uncles (General Cochran) gave him a shilling on condition that he would pray for King George, which he accordingly did. So you see (says Boswell) that *whigs of all ages are made the same way*."—BOSWELL.

³ [The celebrated and unfortunate Earl of Essex.—ED.]

⁴ [Letter to Rutland on Travel, 16mo. 1596.—BOSWELL.]

⁵ [This learned and excellent person was born in 1726; educated at Eton, and afterwards at Utrecht; called to the Scotch bar, in 1748; a lord

¹ [It seems unlikely that he and Mr. Walmsley could have had much intercourse since Johnson removed to London, in 1737: it was more probably some member of the Ivy-lane club, Dyer, M'Ghie, or Barker, whose political and religious tenets were what Johnson would have called whiggish.—ED.]

judges of Scotland by the title of Lord Hailes, had contributed much to increase my high opinion of Johnson, on account of his writings, long before I attained to a personal acquaintance with him; I, in return, had informed Johnson of Sir David's eminent character for learning and religion; and Johnson was so much pleased, that at one of our evening meetings he gave him for his toast. I at this time kept up a very frequent correspondence with Sir David; and I read to Dr. Johnson to-night the following passage from the letter which I had last received from him:

"It gives me pleasure to think that you have obtained the friendship of Mr. Samuel Johnson. He is one of the best moral writers which England has produced. At the same time, I envy you the free and undisguised converse with such a man. May I beg you to present my best respects to him, and to assure him of the veneration which I entertain for the authour of the Rambler and of *Rasselas*? Let me recommend this last work to you; with the Rambler you certainly are acquainted. In *Rasselas* you will see a tender-hearted operator, who probes the wound only to heal it. Swift, on the contrary, mangles human nature. He cuts and slashes, as if he took pleasure in the operation, like the tyrant who said, *Ita feri ut sentiat emori.*" Johnson seemed to be much gratified by this just and well-turned compliment.

He recommended to me to keep a journal of my life, full and unreserved. He said it would be a very good exercise, and would yield me great satisfaction when the particulars were faded from my remembrance. I was uncommonly fortunate in having had a previous coincidence of opinion with him upon this subject, for I had kept such a journal for some time; and it was no small pleasure to me to have this to tell him, and to receive his approbation. He counselled me to keep it private, and said I might surely have a friend who would burn it in case of my death. From this habit I have been enabled to give the world so many anecdotes, which would otherwise have been lost to posterity. I mentioned that I was afraid I put into my journal too many little incidents. JOHNSON. "There is nothing, sir, too little for so little a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible."

Next morning Mr. Dempster happened to call on me, and was so much struck even with the imperfect account which I gave

of session in 1766. He died in 1792. He wrote some papers in the *World* and *Mirror*, and published several original tracts on religious, historical, and antiquarian subjects, and republished a great many more.—ED.]

him of Dr. Johnson's conversation, that to his honour be it recorded, when I complained that drinking port and sitting up late with him affected my nerves for some time after, he said, "One had better be palsied at eighteen than not keep company with such a man."

On Tuesday, July 18, I found tall Sir Thomas Robinson sitting with Johnson. Sir Thomas said, that the King of Prussia valued himself upon three things;—upon being a hero, a musician, and an authour. JOHNSON. "Pretty well, sir, for one man. As to his being an authour, I have not looked at his poetry; but his prose is poor stuff. He writes just as you may suppose Voltaire's footboy to do, who has been his amanuensis. He has such parts as the valet might have, and about as much of the colouring of the style as might be got by transcribing his works." When I was at Ferney, I repeated this to Voltaire, in order to reconcile him somewhat to Johnson, whom he, in affecting the English mode of expression, had previously characterised as "a superstitious dog;" but after hearing such a criticism on Frederick the Great, with whom he was then on bad terms, he exclaimed, "An honest fellow!"

But I think the criticism much too severe; for the "Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg" are written as well as many works of that kind. His poetry, for the style of which he himself makes a frank apology, "*jargonnant un François barbare,*" though fraught with pernicious ravings of infidelity, has, in many places, great animation, and in some a pathetick tenderness.

Upon this contemptuous animadversion on the King of Prussia, I observed to Johnson, "It would seem then, sir, that much less parts are necessary to make a King, than to make an authour: for the King of Prussia is confessedly the greatest king now in Europe, yet you think he makes a very poor figure as an authour."

Mr. Levet this day showed me Dr. Johnson's library, which was contained in two garrets over his chambers, where Lintot, son of the celebrated bookseller of that name, had formerly his warehouse. I found a number of good books, but very dusty and in great confusion. The floor was strewn with manuscript leaves, in Johnson's own handwriting, which I beheld with a degree of veneration, supposing they perhaps might contain portions of the Rambler, or of *Rasselas*. I observed an apparatus for chymical experiments, of which Johnson was all his life very fond. The place seemed to be very favourable for retirement and meditation. Johnson told me, that he went up thither without mentioning it to his servant when he wanted to study, secure from interruption; for he would not allow his

servant to say he was not at home when he really was. "A servant's strict regard for truth," said he, "must be weakened by such a practice. A philosopher may know that it is merely a form of denial; but few servants are such nice distinguishers. If I accustom a servant to tell a lie for me, have I not reason to apprehend that he will tell many lies for himself?" I am, however, satisfied that every servant, of any degree of intelligence, understands saying his master is not at home, not at all as the affirmation of a fact, but as customary words, intimating that his master wishes not to be seen; so that there can be no bad effect from it.

Mr. Temple, now vicar of St. Gluvias, Cornwall, who had been my intimate friend for many years, had at this time chambers in Farrar's buildings, at the bottom of Inner Temple-lane, which he kindly lent me upon my quitting my lodgings, he being to return to Trinity-hall, Cambridge. I found them particularly convenient for me, as they were so near Dr. Johnson's.

On Wednesday, July 20, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Dempster, and my uncle Dr. Boswell, who happened to be now in London, supped with me at these chambers. JOHNSON. "Pity is not natural to man. Children are always cruel. Savages are always cruel. Pity is acquired and improved by the cultivation of reason. We may have uneasy sensations from seeing a creature in distress, without pity; for we have not pity unless we wish to relieve them. When I am on my way to dine with a friend, and finding it late, have bid the coachman make haste, if I happen to attend when he whips his horses, I may feel unpleasantly that the animals are put to pain, but I do not wish him to desist. No, sir, I wish him to drive on."

Mr. Alexander Donaldson, bookseller, of Edinburgh, had for some time opened a shop in London, and sold his cheap editions of the most popular English books, in defiance of the supposed common-law right of *Literary Property*. Johnson, though he concurred in the opinion which was afterwards sanctioned by a judgment of the

¹ [Johnson's antithesis between pity and cruelty is not exact, and the argument (such as it is) drawn from it, is therefore inconclusive. Pity is as natural to man as any other emotion of the mind. The Bishop of Ferns observes, that children are said to be *cruel*, when it would be more just to say that they are *ignorant*—they do not know that they give pain. Nor are savages cruel in the sense here used, for cruelty's sake; they use cruel means to attain an object, because they know no other mode of accomplishing the object; and so far is pity from being acquired solely by the cultivation of reason, that reason is one of the checks upon the pity natural to mankind.—Ed.]

house of lords, that there was no such right, was at this time very angry that the booksellers of London, for whom he uniformly professed much regard, should suffer from an invasion of what they had ever considered to be secure; and he was loud and violent against Mr. Donaldson. "He is a fellow who takes advantage of the law to injure his brethren; for notwithstanding that the statute secures only fourteen years of exclusive right, it has always been understood by the *trade*, that he who buys the copyright of a book from the author obtains a perpetual property; and upon that belief, numberless bargains are made to transfer that property after the expiration of the statutory term. Now Donaldson, I say, takes advantage here of people who have really an equitable title from usage; and if we consider how few of the books, of which they buy the property, succeed so well as to bring profit, we should be of opinion that the term of fourteen years is too short; it should be sixty years." DEMPSTER. "Donaldson, sir, is anxious for the encouragement of literature. He reduces the price of books, so that poor students may buy them." JOHNSON (laughing). "Well, sir, allowing that to be his motive, he is no better than Robin Hood, who robbed the rich in order to give to the poor."

It is remarkable, that when the great question concerning literary property came to be ultimately tried before the supreme tribunal of this country, in consequence of the very spirited exertions² of Mr. Donaldson, Dr. Johnson was zealous against a perpetuity; but he thought that the term of the exclusive right of authors should be considerably enlarged. He was then for granting a hundred years.

The conversation now turned upon Mr. David Hume's style. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, his style is not English; the structure of his sentences is French. Now the French structure and the English structure may, in the nature of things, be equally good. But if you allow that the English language is established, he is wrong. My name might originally have been Nicholson, as well as Johnson; but were you to call me Nicholson now, you would call me very absurdly."

Rousseau's treatise on the inequality of mankind was at this time a fashionable topic. It gave rise to an observation by Mr. Dempster, that the advantages of fortune and rank were nothing to a wise man, who ought to value only merit. JOHNSON.

² [It savours of that nationality which Mr. Boswell was so anxious to disclaim, to talk thus eulogistically of "the very spirited exertions" of a piratical bookseller.—Ed.]

“If man were a savage, living in the woods by himself, this might be true; but in civilized society we all depend upon each other, and our happiness is very much owing to the good opinion of mankind. Now, sir, in civilized society, external advantages make us more respected. A man with a good coat upon his back meets with a better reception than he who has a bad one. Sir, you may analyse this, and say what is there in it? But that will avail you nothing, for it is a part of a general system. Pound St. Paul’s church into atoms, and consider any single atom; it is, to be sure, good for nothing: but put all these atoms together, and you have St. Paul’s church. So it is with human felicity, which is made up of many ingredients, each of which may be shown to be very insignificant. In civilized society, personal merit will not serve you so much as money will. Sir, you may make the experiment. Go into the street and give one man a lecture on morality, and another a shilling, and see which will respect you most. If you wish only to support nature, Sir William Petty fixes your allowance at three pounds a year; but as times are much altered, let us call it six pounds. This sum will fill your belly, shelter you from the weather, and even get you a strong lasting coat, supposing it to be made of good bull’s hide. Now, sir, all beyond this is artificial, and is desired in order to obtain a greater degree of respect from our fellow-creatures. And, sir, if six hundred pounds a year procure a man more consequence, and, of course, more happiness than six pounds a year, the same proportion will hold as to six thousand, and so on, as far as opulence can be carried. Perhaps he who has a large fortune may not be so happy as he who has a small one; but that must proceed from other causes than from his having the large fortune: for, *cæteris paribus*, he who is rich in a civilized society, must be happier than he who is poor; as riches, if properly used (and it is a man’s own fault if they are not), must be productive of the highest advantages. Money, to be sure, of itself is of no use: for its only use is to part with it. Rousseau, and all those who deal in paradoxes, are led away by a childish desire of novelty¹. When I was a boy, I used always to choose the wrong side of a debate², because most ingenious things, that is to say, most new things, could be

said upon it. Sir, there is nothing for which you may not muster up more plausible arguments, than those which are urged against wealth and other external advantages. Why, now, there is stealing; why should it be thought a crime? When we consider by what unjust methods property has been often acquired, and that what was unjustly got it must be unjust to keep, where is the harm in one man’s taking the property of another from him? Besides, sir, when we consider the bad use that many people make of their property, and how much better use the thief may make of it, it may be defended as a very allowable practice. Yet, sir, the experience of mankind has discovered stealing to be so very bad a thing, that they make no scruple to hang a man for it. When I was running about this town a very poor fellow, I was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty; but I was, at the same time, very sorry to be poor. Sir, all the arguments which are brought to represent poverty as no evil, show it to be evidently a great evil. You never find people labouring to convince you that you may live very happily upon a plentiful fortune. So you hear people talking how miserable a king must be; and yet they all wish to be in his place.”

It was suggested that kings must be unhappy because they are deprived of the greatest of all satisfactions, easy and unreserved society. JOHNSON. “That is an ill-founded notion. Being a king does not exclude a man from such society. Great kings have always been social. The king of Prussia, the only great king at present, is very social. Charles the Second, the last king of England who was a man of parts, was social; and our Henrys and Edwards were all social³.”

Mr. Dempster having endeavoured to maintain that intrinsic merit *ought* to make the only distinction amongst mankind: JOHNSON. “Why, sir, mankind have found that this cannot be. How shall we determine the proportion of intrinsic merit? Were that to be the only distinction amongst mankind, we should soon quarrel about the degrees of it. Were all distinctions abolished, the strongest would not long acquiesce, but would endeavour to obtain a superiority by their bodily strength. But, sir, as subordination is very necessary for society, and contentions for superiority very dangerous, mankind, that is to say, all civilized nations, have settled it upon a plain invariable principle. A man

¹ Johnson told Dr. Burney that Goldsmith said, when he first began to write, he determined to commit to paper nothing but what was *new*; but he afterwards found that what was *new* was generally false, and from that time was no longer solicitous about novelty.—BURNNEY.

² [This boyish practice appears to have adhered, in some degree, to the *man*.—ED.]

³ [This opinion has received strong confirmation from his late majesty, George the Fourth, whose natural abilities were undoubtedly very considerable, whose reign was eminently glorious, and whose private life was amiable and social.—ED.]

is born to hereditary rank; or, his being appointed to certain offices gives him a certain rank. Subordination tends greatly to human happiness. Were we all upon an equality, we should have no other enjoyment than mere animal pleasure."

I said, I consider distinction of rank to be of so much importance in civilized society, that if I were asked on the same day to dine with the first duke in England, and with the first man in Britain for genius, I should hesitate which to prefer. JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir, if you were to dine only once, and it were never to be known where you dined, you would choose rather to dine with the first man for genius; but to gain most respect, you should dine with the first duke in England. For nine people in ten that you meet with would have a higher opinion of you for having dined with a duke; and the great genius himself would receive you better, because you had been with the great duke."

He took care to guard himself against any possible suspicion that his settled principles of reverence for rank and respect for wealth were at all owing to mean or interested motives; for he asserted his own independence as a literary man. "No man," said he, "who ever lived by literature, has lived more independently than I have done." He said he had taken longer time than he needed to have done in composing his Dictionary. He received our compliments upon that great work with complacency, and told us that the academy *della Crusca* could scarcely believe that it was done by one man.

Next morning I found him alone, and have preserved the following fragments of his conversation. Of a gentleman¹ who was mentioned, he said, "I have not met with any man for a long time who has given me such general displeasure. He is totally unfixed in his principles, and wants to puzzle other people." I said his principles had been poisoned by a noted infidel writer, but that he was, nevertheless, a benevolent good man. JOHNSON. "We can have no dependence upon that instinctive, that constitutional goodness which is not founded upon principle. I grant you that such a man may be a very amiable member of society. I can conceive him placed in such a situation that he is not much tempted to deviate from what is right; and as every man prefers virtue, when there is not some strong incitement to transgress its precepts, I can conceive him doing nothing wrong. But if such a man stood in need of money, I should not like to trust

him; and I should certainly not trust him with young ladies, for *there* there is always temptation. Hume, and other sceptical innovators, are vain men, and will gratify themselves at any expense. Truth will not afford sufficient food to their vanity; so they have betaken themselves to error. Truth, sir, is a cow which will yield such people no more milk, and so they are gone to milk the bull. If I could have allowed myself to gratify my vanity at the expense of truth, what fame might I have acquired? Every thing which Hume has advanced against Christianity had passed through my mind long before he wrote. Always remember this, that after a system is well settled upon positive evidence, a few partial objections ought not to shake it. The human mind is so limited, that it cannot take in all the parts of a subject, so that there may be objections raised against any thing. There are objections against a *plenum*, and objections against a *vacuum*; yet one of them must certainly be true."

I mentioned Hume's argument against the belief of miracles, that it is more probable that the witnesses to the truth of them are mistaken, or speak falsely, than that the miracles should be true. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the great difficulty of proving miracles should make us very cautious in believing them. But let us consider; although God has made nature to operate by certain fixed laws, yet it is not unreasonable to think that he may suspend those laws, in order to establish a system highly advantageous to mankind. Now the Christian religion is a most beneficial system, as it gives us light and certainty where we were before in darkness and doubt. The miracles which prove it are attested by men who had no interest in deceiving us; but who, on the contrary, were told that they should suffer persecution, and did actually lay down their lives in confirmation of the truth of the facts which they asserted. Indeed, for some centuries the heathens did not pretend to deny the miracles; but said they were performed by the aid of evil spirits. This is a circumstance of great weight. Then, sir, when we take the proofs derived from prophecies which have been so exactly fulfilled, we have most satisfactory evidence. Supposing a miracle possible, as to which, in my opinion, there can be no doubt, we have as strong evidence for the miracles in support of Christianity, as the nature of the thing admits."

At night, Mr. Johnson and I supped in a private room at the Turk's-head coffee-house, in the Strand. "I encourage this house," said he, "for the mistress of it is a good civil woman, and has not much business."

¹ [Probably Mr. Dempster, whose share in the preceding conversation was very likely to have displeased Johnson. The "infidel writer" is no doubt Dempster's countryman, Mr. Hume.—ED.]

“Sir, I love the acquaintance of young people; because, in the first place, I don’t like to think myself growing old. In the next place, young acquaintances must last longest, if they do last; and then, sir, young men have more virtue than old men; they have more generous sentiments in every respect. I love the young dogs of this age, they have more wit and humour and knowledge of life than we had¹; but then the dogs are not so good scholars. Sir, in my early years I read very hard. It is a sad reflection, but a true one, that I knew almost as much at eighteen as I do now². My judgment, to be sure, was not so good; but I had all the facts. I remember very well, when I was at Oxford, an old gentleman said to me, ‘Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task.’”

This account of his reading, given by himself in plain words, sufficiently confirms what I have already advanced upon the disputed question as to his application. It reconciles any seeming inconsistency in his way of talking upon it at different times; and shows that idleness and reading hard were with him relative terms, the import of which, as used by him, must be gathered from a comparison with what scholars of different degrees of ardour and assiduity have been known to do. And let it be remembered, that he was now talking spontaneously, and expressing his genuine sentiments; whereas at other times he might be induced, from his spirit of contradiction, or more properly from his love of argumentative contest, to speak lightly of his own application to study. It is pleasing to consider that the old gentleman’s gloomy prophesy of the irksomeness of books to men of an advanced age, which is too often fulfilled, was so far from being verified in Johnson, that his ardour for literature never failed, and his last writings had more ease and vivacity than any of his earlier productions.

He mentioned it to me now, for the first time, that he had been distressed by melancholy, and for that reason had been obliged to fly from study and meditation to the dissipating variety of life. Against melanco-

ly he recommended constant occupation of mind, a great deal of exercise, moderation in eating and drinking, and especially to shun drinking at night³. He said melancholy people were apt to fly to intemperance for relief, but that it sunk them much deeper in misery. He observed, that labouring men who work hard, and live sparingly, are seldom or never troubled with low spirits.

He again insisted on the duty of maintaining subordination of rank. “Sir, I would no more deprive a nobleman of his respect than of his money. I consider myself as acting a part in the great system of society, and I do to others as I would have them to do to me. I would behave to a nobleman as I should expect he would behave to me, were I a nobleman and he Sam. Johnson. Sir, there is one Mrs. Macaulay⁴ in this town, a great republican. One day when I was at her house, I put on a very grave countenance, and said to her, ‘Madam, I am now become a convert to your way of thinking, I am convinced that all mankind are upon an equal footing; and to give you an unquestionable proof, madam, that I am in earnest, here is a very sensible, civil, well-behaved fellow-citizen, your footman; I desire that he may be allowed to sit down and dine with us.’ I thus, sir, showed her the absurdity of the levelling doctrine. She has never liked me since. Sir, your levellers wish to level *down* as far as themselves; but they cannot bear levelling *up* to themselves. They would all have some people under them; why not then have some people above them?” I mentioned a certain authour⁵ who disgusted me by his forwardness, and by showing no deference to noblemen into whose company he was admitted. JOHNSON. “Suppose a shoemaker should claim an equality with him, as he does with a lord: how he would stare. ‘Why, sir, do you stare? (says the shoemaker) I do great service to society. ’Tis true I am paid for doing it; but so are you, sir; and I am sorry to say it, better paid than I am, for doing something not so necessary. For mankind could do better without your books, than without my shoes.’ Thus, sir, there would be a perpetual struggle for precedence were there no fixed invariable rules for the distinction of rank which creates no jealousy, as it is allowed to be accidental.”

He said, Dr. Joseph Warton was a very agreeable man, and his “Essay on the

¹ [The justice of this assertion may be doubted. Johnson was comparing men of such a rank and station as he now met, with the narrow, provincial, and inferior society in which his own youth was spent.—ED.]

² His great period of study was from the age of twelve to that of eighteen; as he told Mr. Langton, who gave me this information.—MALONE. [He went to Oxford in his nineteenth year, and seems to have translated the Messiah when he had been there not quite three months. See *ante*, p. 21, *note*.—ED.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 39, *note*.—ED.]

⁴ This *one* Mrs. Macaulay was the same personage who afterwards made herself so much known as “the celebrated female historian.” [See *ante*, p. 102.—ED.]

⁵ [Something of this kind has been imputed to Goldsmith.—ED.]

Genius and Writings of Pope," a very pleasing book. I wondered that he delayed so long to give us the continuation of it. **JOHNSON.** "Why, sir, I suppose he finds himself a little disappointed, at not having been able to persuade the world to be of his opinion as to Pope."

We have now been favoured with the concluding volume, in which, to use a parliamentary expression, he has *explained*, so as not to appear quite so adverse to the opinion of the world, concerning Pope, as was at first thought; and we must all agree, that his work is a most valuable accession to English literature.

A writer¹ of deserved eminence being mentioned, Johnson said, "Why, sir, he is a man of good parts, but being originally poor, he has got a love of mean company and low jocularitv; a very bad thing, sir. To laugh is good, and to talk is good. But you ought no more to think it enough if you laugh, than you are to think it enough if you talk. You may laugh in as many ways as you talk; and surely every way of talking that is practised cannot be esteemed."

I spoke of Sir James Macdonald² as a young man of most distinguished merit, who united the highest reputation at Eton and Oxford, with the patriarchal spirit of a great highland chieftain. I mentioned that Sir James had said to me, that he had never seen Mr. Johnson, but he had a great respect for him, though at the same time it was mixed with some degree of terror. **JOHNSON.** "Sir, if he were to be acquainted with me, it might lessen both."

The mention of this gentleman led us to talk of the Western Islands of Scotland, to visit which he expressed a wish that then appeared to me a very romantick fancy, which I little thought would be afterwards realised. He told me that his father had put Martin's account of those islands into his hands when he was very young, and that he was highly pleased with it; that he was particularly struck with the St. Kilda man's notion that the high church of Glasgow had been hollowed out of a rock³; a circumstance to which old Mr. Johnson had directed his attention. He said he would

¹ [It is not easy to say who was here meant. Murphy, who was born poor, was distinguished for elegance of manners and conversation; and Fielding, who could not have been spoken of as alive in 1763, was born to better prospects, though he kept low company; and had it been Goldsmith, Boswell would probably have had no scruple in naming him.—Ed.]

² [See *post*, 27th March, 1772, and 5th September, 1773.—Ed.]

³ [In the *Spectator*, No. 50, Addison makes the Indian king suppose that St. Paul's was carved out of a rock.—Ed.]

go to the Hebrides with me, when I returned from my travels, unless some very good companion should offer when I was absent, which he did not think probable; adding, "There are few people whom I take so much to as you." And when I talked of my leaving England, he said with a very affectionate air, "My dear Boswell, I should be very unhappy at parting, did I think we were not to meet again." I cannot too often remind my readers, that although such instances of his kindness are doubtless very flattering to me, yet I hope my recording them will be ascribed to a better motive than to vanity; for they afford unquestionable evidence of his tenderness and complacency, which some, while they were forced to acknowledge his great powers, have been so strenuous to deny.

He maintained that a boy at school was the happiest of human beings. I supported a different opinion, from which I have never yet varied, that a man is happier: and I enlarged upon the anxiety and sufferings which are endured at school. **JOHNSON.** Ah! sir, a boy's being flogged is not so severe as a man's having the hiss of the world against him. Men have a solicitude about fame; and the greater share they have of it, the more afraid they are of losing it." I silently asked myself, "Is it possible that the great SAMUEL JOHNSON really entertains any such apprehension, and is not confident that his exalted fame is established upon a foundation never to be shaken?"

He this evening drank a bumper to Sir David Dalrymple, [afterwards Lord Hailes,] "as a man of worth, a scholar, and a wit." "I have (said he) never heard of him, except from you; but let him know my opinion of him: for he does not show himself much in the world, he should have the praise of the few who hear of him."

On Tuesday, July 26, I found Mr. Johnson alone. It was a very wet day, and I again complained of the disagreeable effects of such weather⁴. **JOHNSON.** "Sir, this is all imagination which physicians encourage; for man lives in air, as a fish lives in water; so that if the atmosphere press heavy from above, there is an equal resistance from below. To be sure, bad weather is hard upon people who are obliged to be abroad; and men cannot labour so well in the open air in bad weather, as in good; but, sir, a smith or a tailor, whose work is within doors, will surely do as much in rainy weather, as in fair. Some very delicate frames, indeed, may be affected by wet weather; but not common constitutions."

We talked of the education of children; and I asked him what he thought was best to teach them first. **JOHNSON.** "Sir, it

⁴ [See *ante* pp. 142 and 193.—Ed.]

is no matter what you teach them first, any more than what leg you shall put into your breeches first. Sir, you may stand disputing which is best to put in first, but in the mean time your breech is bare. Sir, while you are considering which of two things you should teach your child first, another boy has learnt them both."

On Thursday, July 28, we again supped in private at the Turk's-head coffee-house. JOHNSON. "Swift has a higher reputation than he deserves. His excellence is strong sense; for his humour, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether the 'Tale of a Tub' be his; for he never owned it, and it is much above his usual manner."¹

"Thomson, I think, had as much of the poet about him as most writers. Every thing appeared to him through the medium of his favourite pursuit. He could not have viewed those two candles burning but with a poetical eye.

"Has not ————² a great deal of wit, sir?" JOHNSON. "I do not think so, sir. He is, indeed, continually attempting wit, but he fails. And I have no more pleasure in hearing a man attempting wit, and failing, than in seeing a man trying to leap over a ditch and tumbling into it."

He laughed heartily when I mentioned to him a saying of his concerning Mr. Thomas Sheridan, which Foote took a wicked pleasure to circulate. "Why, sir, Sherry is dull, naturally dull; but it must have taken him a great deal of pains to become what we now see him. Such an excess of stupidity, sir, is not in nature."—"So (said he), I allowed him all his own merit."

He now added, "Sheridan cannot bear me. I bring his declamation to a point. I ask him a plain question, 'What do you

¹ This opinion was given by him more at large at a subsequent period. See *post*, 16th Aug. 1773.—BOSWELL. [How could Johnson doubt that Swift was the author of the *Tale of a Tub*, when, as he himself relates in his *Life of Swift*, "No other claimants can be produced; and when Archbishop Sharpe and the Duchess of Somerset, by showing it to Queen Anne, debarred Swift of a bishoprick, *he did not deny it.*" We have, moreover, Swift's own acknowledgment of it, in his letter to Ben. Tooke the printer, 29th June, 1710.—ED.]

² [There is no doubt that this blank must be filled with the name of Mr. Burke. See *post*, 15th Aug. and 15th Sept. 1773, and 25th April, 1778.—ED.]

³ [He endeavours to assign a reason for Sheridan's dissatisfaction very different from the true one; there is even reason to suppose, from Mr. Boswell's own account, that Johnson and Sheridan never met after Johnson's insult to Sheridan on the subject of the pension. See *ante*, p. 176.—ED.]

mean to teach?" Besides, sir, what influence can Mr. Sheridan have upon the language of this great country, by his narrow exertions? Sir, it is burning a farthing candle at Dover, to show light at Calais."

Talking of a young man who was uneasy from thinking that he was very deficient in learning and knowledge, he said, "A man has no reason to complain who holds a middle place, and has many below him, and perhaps he has not six of his years above him; perhaps not one. Though he may not know any thing perfectly, the general mass of knowledge that he has acquired is considerable. Time will do for him all that is wanting."

The conversation then took a philosophical turn. JOHNSON. "Human experience, which is constantly contradicting theory, is the great test of truth. A system built upon the discoveries of a great many minds is always of more strength, than what is produced by the mere workings of any one mind, which, of itself, can do little. There is not so poor a book in the world that would not be a prodigious effort were it wrought out entirely by a single mind, without the aid of prior investigators. The French writers are superficial, because they are not scholars, and so proceed upon the mere power of their own minds; and we see how very little power they have."

"As to the Christian religion, sir, besides the strong evidence which we have for it, there is a balance in its favour from the number of great men who have been convinced of its truth, after a serious consideration of the question. Grotius was an acute man, a lawyer, a man accustomed to examine evidence, and he was convinced. Grotius was not a recluse, but a man of the world, who certainly had no bias to the side of religion. Sir Isaac Newton⁴ set out an infidel, and came to be a very firm believer."

He this evening again recommended to me to perambulate Spain⁵. I said it would

⁴ [Where, the Bishop of Ferns asks, did Johnson learn this? It is true that Dr. Horsely declined publishing some papers on religious subjects which Newton left behind him—some have suspected that they were tainted with Unitarianism; others (probably from a consideration of his work on the Revelations) believed that they were in a strain of mysticism not (in the opinion of his friends) worthy of so great a genius; and the recent publication of his two letters to Locke, in a style of infantine simplicity (see *Lord King's Life of Locke*), give additional colour to this latter opinion: but for Johnson's assertion that he *set out* an infidel, there appears no authority, and all the inferences are the other way.—ED.]

⁵ I fully intended to have followed advice of such weight; but having staid much longer both in Germany and Italy than I proposed to do, and

amuse him to get a letter from me dated at Salamanca. JOHNSON. "I love the university of Salamanca; for when the Spaniards were in doubt as to the lawfulness of their conquering America, the university of Salamanca gave it as their opinion that it was not lawful." He spoke this with great emotion, and with that generous warmth which dictated the lines in his "London," against Spanish encroachment.

I expressed my opinion of my friend Derrick as but a *poor* writer! JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir, he is: but are you to consider that his being a literary man has got for him all that he has. It has made him king of Bath. Sir, he has nothing to say for himself but that he is a writer. Had he not been a writer, he must have been sweeping the crossings in the streets, and asking halfpence from every body that passed."

In justice, however, to the memory of Mr. Derrick, who was my first tutor in the ways of London, and showed me the town in all its variety of departments both literary and sportive, the particulars of which Dr. Johnson advised me to put in writing, it is proper to mention what Johnson, at

a subsequent period, said of him both as a writer and editor: "Sir,

I have often said, that if Derrick's letters had been written by one of a more established name, they would have been thought very pretty letters." And, 27 Aug. 1773. "I sent Derrick to Dryden's relations to gather materials for his life; and I believe he got all that I myself should have got."

Poor Derrick! I remember him with kindness. Yet I cannot withhold from my readers a pleasant humorous sally which could not have hurt him had he been alive, and now is perfectly harmless. In his collection of poems, there is one upon entering the harbour of Dublin, his native city, after a long absence. It begins thus:

"Eblana! much loved city, hail!
Where first I saw the light of day."

And after a solemn reflection on his being "numbered with forgotten dead," there is the following stanza:

"Unless my lines protract my fame,
And those, who chance to read them, cry,
I knew him! Derrick was his name,
In yonder tomb his ashes lie:"

which was thus happily parodied by Mr. John Home, to whom we owe the beautiful and pathetick tragedy of Douglas:

having also visited Corsica, I found that I had exceeded the time allowed me by my father, and hastened to France in my way homewards.—BOSWELL.

¹ [Call ye that backing your friends?—ED.]

"Unless my *deeds* protract my fame,
And he who passes sadly sings,
I knew him! Derrick was his name,
On yonder tree his carcass swings!"

I doubt much whether the amiable and ingenious authour of these burlesque lines will recollect them; for they were produced extempore one evening while he and I were walking together in the dining room at Eglintoune Castle, in 1760, and I have never mentioned them to him since.

Johnson said once to me, "Sir, I honour Derrick for his presence of mind. One night, when Floyd², another poor authour, was wandering about the streets in the night, he found Derrick fast asleep upon a bulk; upon being suddenly waked, Derrick started up: 'My dear Floyd, I am sorry to see you in this destitute state: will you go home with me to my lodgings?'"

I again begged his advice as to my method of study at Utrecht. "Come," said he, "let us make a day of it. Let us go down to Greenwich and dine, and talk of it there." The following Saturday was fixed for this excursion.

As we walked along the Strand to-night arm in arm, a woman of the town accosted us, in the usual enticing manner. "No, no, my girl," said Johnson; "it won't do." He however, did not treat her with harshness; and we talked of the wretched life of such women, and agreed, that much more misery than happiness, upon the whole, is produced by illicit commerce between the sexes.

On Saturday, July 30, Dr. Johnson and I took a sculler at the Temple-stairs, and set out for Greenwich. I asked him if he really thought a knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages an essential requisite to a good education. JOHNSON. "Most certainly, sir; for those who know them have a very great advantage over those who do not. Nay, sir, it is wonderful what a difference learning makes upon people even in the common intercourse of life, which does not appear to be much connected with it." "And yet," said I, "people go through the world very well, and carry on the business of life to good advantage, without learning." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that may be true in cases where learning cannot possibly be of any use; for instance, this boy rows us as well without learning, as if he could sing the song of Orpheus to the Argonauts, who were the first sailors." He then called to the boy, "What would

² He published a biographical work, containing an account of eminent writers, in three volumes, 8vo.

³ [No great presence of mind; for Floyd would naturally have accepted the proposal, and then Derrick would have been doubly exposed.—ED.]

you give, my lad, to know about the Argonauts?" "Sir," said the boy, "I would give what I have." Johnson was much pleased with his answer, and we gave him a double fare. Dr. Johnson then turning to me, "Sir," said he, "a desire of knowledge is the natural feeling of mankind; and every human being whose mind is not debauched, will be willing to give all that he has to get knowledge."

We landed at the Old Swan¹, and walked to Billings-gate, where we took oars, and moved smoothly along the silver Thames. It was a very fine day. We were entertained with the immense number and variety of ships that were lying at anchor, and with the beautiful country on each side of the river.

I talked of preaching, and of the great success which those called methodists² have.

¹ [The erection of a new London bridge may render it useful to observe that with the ebb-tide it is dangerous to pass through, or *shoot*, as it is called, the arches of the old bridge: passengers, therefore, land above the bridge, and walk to some wharf below it.—Ed.]

² All who are acquainted with the history of religion (the most important, surely, that concerns the human mind), know that the appellation of *Methodists* was first given to a society of students in the university of Oxford, who, about the year 1730, were distinguished by an earnest and *methodical* attention to devout exercises. This disposition of mind is not a novelty, or peculiar to any sect, but has been and still may be found, in many Christians of every denomination. Johnson himself was, in a dignified manner, a methodist. In his *Rambler*, No. 110, he mentions with respect "the whole discipline of regulated piety;" and in his "Prayers and Meditations," many instances occur of his anxious examination into his spiritual state. That this religious earnestness, and in particular an observation of the influence of the Holy Spirit, has sometimes degenerated into folly, and sometimes been counterfeited for base purposes, cannot be denied. But it is not, therefore, fair to decry it when genuine. The principal argument in reason and good sense against methodism is, that it tends to debase human nature, and prevent the generous exertions of goodness, by an unworthy supposition that God will pay no regard to them; although it is positively said in the scriptures, that he "will reward every man according to his works." But I am happy to have it in my power to do justice to those whom it is the fashion to ridicule, without any knowledge of their tenets; and this I can do by quoting a passage from one of their best apologists, Mr. Milner, who thus expresses their doctrine upon this subject: "Justified by faith, renewed in his faculties, and constrained by the love of Christ, their believer moves in the sphere of love and gratitude, and all his *duties* flow more or less from this principle. And though they are *accumulating* for him in heaven a treasure of bliss proportioned to his faithfulness and activity, and it is by no means inconsistent with his

Johnson. "Sir, it is owing to their expressing themselves in a plain and familiar manner, which is the only way to do good to the common people, and which clergymen of genius and learning ought to do from a principle of duty, when it is suited to their congregations; a practice, for which they will be praised by men of sense. To insist against drunkenness as a crime, because it debases reason, the noblest faculty of man, would be of no service to the common people: but to tell them that they may die in a fit of drunkenness, and show them how dreadful that would be, cannot fail to make a deep impression. Sir, when your Scotch clergy give up their homely manner, religion will soon decay in that country." Let this observation, as Johnson meant it, be ever remembered.

I was much pleased to find myself with Johnson at Greenwich, which he celebrates in his "London" as a favourite scene. I had the poem in my pocket, and read the lines aloud with enthusiasm:

"On Thames's banks in silent thought we stood,
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood:
Pleased with the seat which gave ELIZA birth,
We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth."

He remarked that the structure of Greenwich hospital was too magnificent for a place of charity, and that its parts were too much detached, to make one great whole³.

Buchanan, he said, was a very fine poet; and observed, that he was the first who complimented a lady, by ascribing to her the different perfections of the heathen goddesses⁴; but that Johnstone⁵ improved upon

principles to feel the force of this consideration, yet love itself sweetens every duty to his mind; and he thinks there is no absurdity in his feeling the love of God as the grand commanding principle of his life. *Essays on several religious Subjects, &c. by Joseph Milner, A. M. master of the grammar school of Kingston-upon-Hull, 1789. p. 11.—BOSWELL.* [Mr. Joseph Milner was brother of Dr. Isaac Milner, who died Dean of Carlisle.—Ed.]

³ [A very just criticism, which, considering Johnson's defective vision, and his consequent imperfect judgment on all the fine arts, may be suspected to have been suggested to him by his friend Mr. Gwynne, the architect.—Ed.]

⁴ [See *post*, sub. 30th March, 1783.—Ed.]

⁵ Epigram, Lib. II. "In Elizabeth. Angliæ Reg."—I suspect that the author's memory here deceived him, and that Johnson said, "the first modern poet;" for there is a well known Epigram in the *ANTHOLOGIA*, containing this kind of eulogy.—MALONE.

⁶ [Arthur Johnstone, born near Aberdeen in 1587, an elegant Latin poet. His principal works are a volume of epigrams, (in which is to be found that to which Dr. Johnson alludes,) and a Latin paraphrase of the Psalms. He died at Oxford in 1641.—Ed.]

this, by making his lady, at the same time, free from their defects.

He dwelt upon Buchanan's elegant verses to Mary, Queen of Scots, *Nympha Caledonia*, &c. and spoke with enthusiasm of the beauty of Latin verse. "All the modern languages (said he) cannot furnish so melodious a line as

"*Formosam resonare doces Amarillida silvas.*"

Afterwards he entered upon the business of the day, which was to give me his advice as to a course of study. And here I am to mention with much regret, that my record of what he said is miserably scanty. I recollect with admiration an animating blaze of eloquence, which roused every intellectual power in me to the highest pitch, but must have dazzled me so much, that my memory could not preserve the substance of his discourse; for the note which I find of it is no more than this:—"He ran over the grand scale of human knowledge; advised me to select some particular branch to excel in, but to acquire a little of every kind." The defect of my minutes will be fully supplied by a long letter upon the subject, which he favoured me with, after I had been some time at Utrecht, and which my readers will have the pleasure to peruse in its proper place.

We walked in the evening in Greenwich park. He asked me, I suppose, by way of trying my disposition, "Is not this very fine?" Having no exquisite relish of the beauties of nature, and being more delighted with "the busy hum of men," I answered "Yes, sir; but not equal to Fleet-street." JOHNSON. "You are right, sir."

I am aware that many of my readers may censure my want of taste. Let me, however, shelter myself under the authority of a very fashionable baronet¹ in the brilliant world, who, on his attention being called to the fragrance of a May evening in the country observed, "This may be very well; but for my part I prefer the smell of a flambeau at the playhouse."

We staid so long at Greenwich, that our sail up the river, in our return to London, was by no means so pleasant as in the morning; for the night air was so cold that

¹ My friend Sir Michael Le Fleming. This gentleman, with all his experience of sprightly and elegant life, inherits, with the beautiful family domain, no inconsiderable share of that love of literature which distinguished his venerable grandfather, the Bishop of Carlisle. He one day observed to me, of Dr. Johnson, in a felicity of phrase, "There is a blunt dignity about him on every occasion."—BOSWELL.

Sir Michael Le Fleming died of an apoplectick fit, while conversing at the Admiralty with Lord Howick (now the Earl Grey), May 19, 1806.—MALONE.

it made me shiver. I was the more sensible of it from having sat up all the night before recollecting and writing in my Journal what I thought worthy of preservation; an exertion which, during the first part of my acquaintance with Johnson, I frequently made. I remember having sat up four nights in one week, without being much incommoded in the daytime.

Johnson, whose robust frame was not in the least affected by the cold, scolded me, as if my shivering had been a paltry effeminacy, saying, "Why do you shiver?" Sir William Scott², of the commons, told me, that when he complained of a head-ache in the post-chaise, as they were travelling together to Scotland, Johnson treated him in the same manner: "At your age, sir, I had no head-ache." It is not easy to make allowance for sensations in others, which we ourselves have not at the time. We must all have experienced how very differently we are affected by the complaints of our neighbours, when we are well and when we are ill. In full health, we can scarcely believe that they suffer much; so faint is the image of pain upon our imagination: when softened by sickness we readily sympathize with the sufferings of others.

We concluded the day at the Turk's-head coffee-house very socially. He was pleased to listen to a particular account which I give him of my family, and of its hereditary estate, as to the extent and population of which he asked questions, and made calculations; recommending, at the same time, a liberal kindness to the tenantry, as people over whom the proprietor was placed by Providence. He took delight in hearing my description of the romantick seat of my ancestors. "I must be there, sir (said he), and we will live in the old castle; and if there is not a room in it remaining, we will build one." I was highly flattered, but could scarcely indulge a hope that Auchinleck would indeed be honoured by his presence, and celebrated by a description, as it afterwards was, in his "Journey to the Western Islands."

After we had again talked of my setting out for Holland, he said, "I must see thee out of England; I will accompany you to Harwich." I could not find words to express what I felt upon this unexpected and very great mark of his affectionate regard.

Next day, Sunday, July 31, I told him I had been that morning at a meeting of the people called Quakers, where I had heard a woman preach. JOHNSON. "Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on

² [Now Lord Stowell, who accompanied Dr. Johnson from Newcastle to Edinburgh in 1773.—ED.]

his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all."

On Tuesday, August 2, (the day of my departure from London having been fixed for the 5th,) Dr. Johnson did me the honour to pass a part of the morning with me at my chambers. He said, that "he always felt an inclination to do nothing." I observed, that it was strange to think that the most indolent man in Britain had written the most laborious work, **THE ENGLISH DICTIONARY**.

I mentioned an imprudent publication, by a certain friend of his, at an early period of life, and asked him if he thought it would hurt him. JOHNSON. "No, sir, not much. It may, perhaps, be mentioned at an election."

I had now made good my title to be a privileged man, and was carried by him in the evening to drink tea with Miss Williams, whom, though under the misfortune of having lost her sight, I found to be agreeable in conversation; for she had a variety of literature, and expressed herself well; but her peculiar value was the intimacy in which she had long lived with Johnson, by which she was well acquainted with his habits, and knew how to lead him on to talk.

After tea he carried me to what he called his walk, which was a long narrow paved court in the neighbourhood, overshadowed by some trees. There we sauntered a considerable time; and I complained to him that my love of London and of his company was such, that I shrunk almost from the thought of going away even to travel, which is generally so much desired by young men. He roused me by manly and spirited conversation. He advised me, when settled in any place abroad, to study with an eagerness after knowledge, and to apply to Greek an hour every day; and when I was moving about, to read diligently the great book of mankind.

On Wednesday, August 3, we had our last social evening at the Turk's-head cof-

¹ [This probably alludes to Mr. Burke's "*Vindication of Natural Society*," a work published in 1756, in a happy imitation of Lord Bolingbroke's style, and in an ironical adoption of his principles: the whole was so well done that it at first passed as a genuine work of Lord Bolingbroke's, and subsequently as the serious and (as in style and imagery it certainly is) splendid exposition of the principles of one of his disciples. Lord Chesterfield and Bishop Warburton are stated to have been so deceived; and it would seem from the passage in the text, that Johnson and Boswell were in the same error. In 1765, Mr. Burke reprinted this piece, with a preface, in which he throws off altogether the mask of irony. Mr. Boswell calls him a *friend of Johnson's*, for he himself had not yet met Mr. Burke.—ED.]

fee-house, before my setting out for foreign parts. I had the misfortune, before we parted, to irritate him unintentionally. I mentioned to him how common it was in the world to tell absurd stories of him, and to ascribe to him very strange sayings. JOHNSON. "What do they make me say, sir?" BOSWELL. "Why, sir, as an instance very strange indeed (laughing heartily as I spoke), David Hume told me, you said that you would stand before a battery of cannon to restore the convocation to its full powers." Little did I apprehend that he had actually said this: but I was soon convinced of my error; for, with a determined look, he thundered out, "And would I not, sir? Shall the presbyterian *kirk* of Scotland have its general assembly, and the church of England be denied its convocation?²?" He was walking up and down the room while I told him the anecdote; but when he uttered this explosion of high-church zeal, he had come close to my chair, and his eyes flashed with indignation. I bowed to the storm, and diverted the force of it, by leading him to expatiate on the influence which religion derived from maintaining the church with great external respectability.

I must not omit to mention that he this year wrote the *Life of Ascham* †, and the dedication to the Earl of Shaftsbury †, prefixed to the edition of that writer's English works, published by Mr. Bennet.

[Johnson was in fact the editor of this work, as appears from the following letter: Harwood MSS.]

"MR. T. DAVIES TO THE REV. EDM. BETTESWORTH.

"Russel-Street, 3d Feb. 1763.³

"REVEREND SIR,—I take the liberty to send you Roger Ascham's works in English; he is generally esteemed one of the most eminent writers of the days of Queen Elizabeth. Though Mr. Bennet's name

² [It must be confessed, that the existing practice relative to convocations is an absurd anomaly; the convocation is summoned to meet when parliament does, but its meeting is a mere form, and it neither does nor dare do any business. It is a solemn farce. The historical inquirer sees, in the tradition of the convocation, the analogy between the British parliament and convocation and the old *états généraux* of France.—ED.]

³ [Such is the date, as Dr. Harwood originally read it, and it agrees with that of the publication of the book, but is inconsistent with the mention of Johnson by the title of *Doctor*, who had not even the Dublin degree till 1765. Dr. Harwood, on re-examining the MS., observes that the last figure is almost illegible, and *may* have been a 3, 7, or 9.—ED.]—[On farther examination of the MS., the editor is satisfied that the date is right, but that *Dr.* has been since substituted for *Mr.*—ED.]

is in the title, the editor was in reality Dr. Johnson, the authour of the Rambler, who wrote the life of the authour, and added several notes, besides those of Mr. Upton. Dr. Johnson gave it to Mr. Bennet, for his advantage. I charge you no more than book-seller's price, 10s. 6d.; it will be advertised at 12s. If not agreeable will take it again. I am, reverend sir, your most obedient humble servant,
 "THOMAS DAVIES."

On Friday, August 5, we set out early in the morning in the Harwich stage-coach. A fat elderly gentlewoman, and a young Dutchman, seemed the most inclined among us to conversation. At the inn where we dined, the gentlewoman said that she had done her best to educate her children; and particularly that she had never suffered them to be a moment idle. JOHNSON. "I wish, madam, you would educate me too; for I have been an idle fellow all my life." "I am sure, (said she), you have not been idle." JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, it is very true; and that gentleman there (pointing to me) has been idle. He was idle at Edinburgh. His father sent him to Glasgow, where he continued to be idle. He then came to London, where he has been very idle; and now he is going to Utrecht, where he will be as idle as ever." I asked him privately how he could expose me so. JOHNSON. "Poh, poh! (said he) they know nothing about you, and will think of it no more." In the afternoon the gentlewoman talked violently against the Roman Catholics, and of the horrors of the inquisition. To the utter astonishment of all the passengers but myself, who knew that he could talk upon any side of a question, he defended the inquisition, and maintained, that "false doctrine should be checked on its first appearance; that the civil power should unite with the church in punishing those who dare to attack the established religion, and that such only were punished by the inquisition." He had in his pocket "*Pomponius Mela da Situ Orbis*," in which he read occasionally, and seemed very intent upon ancient geography. Though by no means niggardly, his attention to what was generally right was so minute, that having observed at one of the stages that I ostentatiously gave a shilling to the coachman, when the custom was for each passenger to give only sixpence, he took me aside and scolded me, saying that what I had done would make the coachman dissatisfied with all the rest of the passengers, who gave him no more than his due. This was a just reprimand; for in whatever way a man may indulge his generosity or his vanity in spending his money, for the sake of others he ought not to raise the price of any article for which there is a constant demand.

He talked of Mr. Blacklock's¹ poetry, so far as it was descriptive of visible objects: and observed that "as its authour had the misfortune to be blind, we may be absolutely sure that such passages are combinations of what he has remembered of the works of other writers who could see. That foolish fellow Spence has laboured to explain philosophically how Blacklock may have done, by means of his own faculties, what it is impossible he should do. The solution, as I have given it, is plain. Suppose I know a man to be so lame that he is absolutely incapable to move himself, and I find him in a different room from that in which I left him; shall I puzzle myself with idle conjectures, that, perhaps, his nerves have by some unknown change all at once become effective? No, sir, it is clear how he got into a different room; he was *carried*."

Having stopped a night at Colchester, Johnson talked of that town with veneration, for having stood a siege for Charles the First. The Dutchman alone now remained with us. He spoke English tolerably well; and thinking to recommend himself to us by expatiating on the superiority of the criminal jurisprudence of this country over that of Holland, he inveighed against the barbarity of putting an accused person to the torture, in order to force a confession. But Johnson was as ready for this, as for the inquisition. "Why, sir, you do not, I find, understand the law of your own country. To torture in Holland is considered as a favour to an accused person; for no man is put to the torture there, unless there is as much evidence against him as would amount to conviction in England. An accused person among you, therefore, has one chance more to escape punishment than those who are tried among us²."

¹ [Dr. Thomas Blacklock was born in 1721; he totally lost his sight by the small-pox at the age of six years, but was nevertheless a descriptive poet. He died in 1791. "We may conclude," says his biographer, "with Denina, on his *Discorso della Letteratura*, that Blacklock will appear to posterity a fable, as to us he is a *prodigy*. It will be thought a fiction, that a man blind from his infancy, besides having made himself master of various foreign languages, should be a great poet in his own, and without having hardly seen the light, should be so remarkably happy in description." Johnson, no doubt, gives the true solution of Blacklock's power, which was *memory* and not *miracle*; and, mark the result! who now *quotes*, nay, who *reads* a line of Blacklock?—ED.]

² [Is it possible that Johnson can be right? If the guilt be *proved*, can the law of any civilized country ask *more* than proof, and ask it under the extreme yet most doubtful sanction of *torture*? If the Editor has not forgotten all he has ever read of the law of Holland, Johnson must have been mistaken. Johnson's position is to be found in

At supper this night he talked of good eating with uncommon satisfaction. "Some people," said he, "have a foolish way of not minding or pretending not to mind what they eat. For my part, I mind my belly very studiously, and very carefully; for I look upon it, that he who does not mind his belly, will hardly mind any thing else." He now appeared to me *Jean Bull philosophe*; and he was for the moment, not only serious, but vehement. Yet I have heard him, upon other occasions, talk with great contempt of people who were anxious to gratify their palates; and the 206th number of his *Rambler* is a masterly essay against gulosity. His practice, indeed, I must acknowledge, may be considered as casting the balance of his different opinions upon this subject; for I never knew any man who relished good eating more than he did. When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment; his looks seemed riveted to his plate; nor would he, unless when in very high company, say one word, or even pay the least attention to what was said by others, till he had satisfied his appetite; which was so fierce, and indulged with such intemperance, that while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible. To those whose sensations were delicate, this could not but be disgusting¹; and it was doubtless not very suitable to the character of a philosopher, who should be distinguished by self-command. But it must be owned, that Johnson, though he could be rigidly *abstemious*, was not a *temperate* man either in eating or drinking. He could refrain², but he could not use moderately. He told me that he had fasted two days without inconvenience, and that he had never been hungry but once. They who beheld with wonder how much he eat upon all occasions, when his dinner was to his taste, could not easily conceive what he must have meant by hunger; and not only was he remarkable for the extraordinary quantity which he eat, but he was, or affected to be, a man of very nice discernment in the science of cookery. He used to descant critically on the dishes which had been at table where he had dined or supped, and to recollect very minutely what he had liked. I remember when he was in Scotland, his praising "*Gordon's palate*" (a dish of pa-

Lord Kames's *History of Man*, book iii. sec. 12.—Ed.]

¹ [See *ante*, p. 115. n.—Ed.]

² [If hypercritically examined, *refrain* is not, perhaps, the word which exactly gives Mr. Boswell's meaning. The late Mr. Richard Warton, Secretary of the Treasury, and author of the poem of *Roncesvalles*, used to express the idea with more verbal accuracy, by saying that he could *abstain*, but found it hard to *refrain*.—Ed.]

lates at the honourable Alexander Gordon's) with a warmth of expression which might have done honour to more important subjects. "As for Maclaurin's imitation of a *made dish*, it was a wretched attempt³." He about the same time was so much displeased with the performance of a nobleman's French cook, that he exclaimed with vehemence, "I'd throw such a rascal into the river:" and he then proceeded to alarm a lady at whose house he was to sup, by the following manifesto of his skill: "I madam, who live at a variety of good tables, am a much better judge of cookery than any person who has a very tolerable cook, but lives much at home; for his palate is gradually adapted to the taste of his cook: whereas, madam, in trying by a wider range, I can more exquisitely judge." When invited to dine, even with an intimate friend, he was not pleased if something better than a plain dinner was not prepared for him. I have heard him say on such an occasion, "this was a good dinner enough, to be sure; but it was not a dinner to *ask* a man to." On the other hand, he was wont to express, with great glee, his satisfaction when he had been entertained quite to his mind. One day when he had dined with his neighbour and landlord, in Bolt-court, Mr. Allen, the printer, whose old housekeeper had studied his taste in every thing, he pronounced this eulogy: "Sir, we could not have had a better dinner had there been a *synod of cooks*."

[Johnson's notions about eating, however, were nothing less than delicate; a leg of pork boiled till it dropped from the bone, a veal pie with plums and sugar, or the outside cut of a salt buttock of beef, were his favourite dainties: with regard to drink, his liking was for the strongest, as it was not the flavour, but the effect he sought for, and professed to desire; and when Mrs. Piozzi first knew him, he used to pour *capillaire* into his port wine. For the last twelve years, however, he left off all fermented liquors. To make himself some amends indeed, he took his chocolate liberally, pouring in large quantities of cream, or even melted butter; and was so fond of fruit, that though he would eat seven or eight large peaches of a morning before breakfast began, and treated them with proportionate attention after dinner again, yet he has been heard

Piozzi,
p. 78, 79.

³ [On returning to Edinburgh, after the tour to the Hebrides, he dined one day at Mr. Maclaurin's, and supped at the Honourable Alexander Gordon's: the former was son of the celebrated mathematician, and, in 1787, became a Lord of Session, by the title of Lord Dreghorn; the latter was third son of the second Earl of Aberdeen, and, in 1788, he also was made a Lord of Session, and took the title of Lord Rockville.—Ed.]

to protest, that he never had quite as much as he wished of wall-fruit, except once in his life, and that was when he and the Thrales were all together at Ombersley, the seat of Lord Sandys; and yet when his Irish friend Grierson, hearing him enumerate the qualities necessary to the formation of a *poet*, began a comical parody upon his ornamented harangue in praise of a *cook*, concluding with this observation, that he who dressed a good dinner was a more excellent and more useful member of society than he who wrote a good poem. "And in this opinion," said Dr. Johnson, in reply, "all the dogs in the town will join you."

Mrs. Piozzi also relates that he used often to say in her hearing, perhaps for her edification, "that wherever the dinner is ill got up there is poverty, or there is avarice, or there is stupidity; in short, the family is somehow grossly wrong: for," continued he, "a man seldom thinks with more earnestness of any thing than he does of his dinner: and if he cannot get that well dressed, he should be suspected of inaccuracy in other things." One day, when he was speaking upon the subject, Mrs. Piozzi asked him, if he ever huffed his wife about his dinner? "So often," replied he, "that at last she called to me, when about to say grace, and said, 'Nay, hold, Mr. Johnson, and do not make a farce of thanking God for a dinner which in a few minutes you will pronounce not eatable.'"]

While we were left by ourselves, after the Dutchman had gone to bed, Dr. Johnson talked of that studied behaviour which many have recommended and practised. He disapproved of it; and said, "I never considered whether I should be a grave man, or a merry man, but just let inclination, for the time, have its course."

He flattered me with some hopes that he would, in the course of the following summer, come over to Holland, and accompany me in a tour through the Netherlands.

I teased him with fanciful apprehensions of unhappiness. A moth having fluttered round the candle, and burnt itself, he laid hold of this little incident to admonish me; saying, with a sly look, and in a solemn but a quiet tone, "That creature was its own tormentor, and I believe its name was *BOSWELL*."

Next day we got to Harwich, to dinner; and my passage in the packet-boat to Helvoetsluys being secured, and my baggage put on board, we dined at our inn by ourselves. I happened to say, it would be *terrible* if he should not find a speedy opportunity of returning to London, and be confined in so dull a place. JOHNSON. "DON'T, sir, accustom yourself to use big words

for little matters¹. It would *not* be *terrible*, though I *were* to be detained some time here." The practice of using words of disproportionate magnitude, is, no doubt, too frequent every where; but, I think, most remarkable among the French, of which, all who have travelled in France must have been struck with innumerable instances. We went and looked at the church, and having gone into it, and walked up to the altar, Johnson, whose piety was constant and fervent, sent me to my knees, saying, "Now that you are going to leave your native country, recommend yourself to the protection of your CREATOR and REDEEMER."

After we came out of the church, we stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkeley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in the universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impossible to refute it. I never shall forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his foot with mighty force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, "I refute it *thus*." This was a stout exemplification of the *first truths of Père Bouffier*, or the *original principles* of Reid and of Beattie; without admitting which, we can no more argue in metaphysics, than we can argue in mathematics without axioms. To me it is not conceivable how Berkeley can be answered by pure reasoning; but I know that the nice and difficult task was to have been undertaken by one² of the most luminous minds of the present age, had not politics "turned him from calm philosophy

¹ [This advice comes drolly from the writer, who makes a young lady talk of "the *cosmetic discipline*," "a regular *lustration* with bean-flower water, and the use of a pommade to *discuss* pimples and clear *discoloration*."—*Ramb. No.* 130: while a young gentleman tells us of "the *flaccid sides* of a football having swelled out into stiffness and extension."—*No.* 117. And it is equally amusing to find Mr. Boswell, after his various defences of Johnson's *grandiloquence*, attacking the little inflations of French conversation; straining at a gnat, after having swallowed a camel.—*Ed.*]

² Dr. Johnson seems to have been imperfectly acquainted with Berkeley's doctrine: as his experiment only proves that we have the sensation of solidity, which Berkeley did not deny. He admitted that we had sensations or ideas that are usually called sensible qualities, one of which is solidity: he only denied the existence of *matter*, i. e. an inert senseless substance, in which they are supposed to subsist. Johnson's exemplification concurs with the vulgar notion, that solidity is *matter*.—KEARNEY.

³ [Mr. Burke.—*Ed.*]

aside." What an admirable display of subtilty, united with brilliance, might his contending with Berkeley have afforded us! How must we, when we reflect on the loss of such an intellectual feast, regret that he should be characterised as the man,

"Who born for the universe narrow'd his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind?"

My revered friend walked down with me to the beach, where we embraced and parted with tenderness, and engaged to correspond by letters. I said, "I hope sir, you will not forget me in my absence." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, it is more likely you should forget me, than that I should forget you." As the vessel put out to sea, I kept my eyes upon him for a considerable time, while he remained rolling his majestic frame in his usual manner; and at last I perceived him walk back into the town, and he disappeared.

Utrecht seeming at first very dull to me, after the animated scenes of London, my spirits were grievously affected; and I wrote to Johnson a plaintive and desponding letter, to which he paid no regard. Afterwards, when I had acquired a firmer tone of mind, I wrote him a second letter, expressing much anxiety to hear from him. At length I received the following epistle, which was of important service to me, and, I trust, will be so to many others.

"A MR. BOSWELL,
a la Cour de l'Empereur, Utrecht.
London, 8th Dec., 1763.

"DEAR SIR,—You are not to think yourself forgotten, or criminally neglected, that you have had yet no letter from me. I love to see my friends, to hear from them, to talk to them, and to talk of them; but it is not without a considerable effort of resolution that I prevail upon myself to write. I would not, however, gratify my own indolence by the omission of any important duty, or any office of real kindness.

"To tell you that I am or am not well, that I have or have not been in the country, that I drank your health in the room in which we last sat together, and that your acquaintance continue to speak of you with their former kindness, topicks with which those letters are commonly filled which are written only for the sake of writing, I seldom shall think worth communicating; but if I can have it in my power to calm any harassing disquiet, to excite any virtuous desire, to rectify any important opinion, or fortify any generous resolution, you need

not doubt but I shall at least wish to prefer the pleasure of gratifying a friend much less esteemed than yourself, before the gloomy calm of idle vacancy. Whether I shall easily arrive at an exact punctuality of correspondence, I cannot tell. I shall, at present, expect that you will receive this in return for two which I have had from you. The first, indeed, gave me an account so hopeless of the state of your mind, that it hardly admitted or deserved an answer; by the second I was much better pleased; and the pleasure will still be increased by such a narrative of the progress of your studies, as may evince the continuance of an equal and rational application of your mind to some useful inquiry.

"You will, perhaps, wish to ask, what study I would recommend. I shall not speak of theology, because it ought not to be considered as a question whether you shall endeavour to know the will of God.

"I shall, therefore, consider only such studies as we are at liberty to pursue or to neglect; and of these I know not how you will make a better choice, than by studying the civil law, as your father advises, and the ancient languages, as you had determined for yourself; at least resolve, while you remain in any settled residence, to spend a certain number of hours every day amongst your books. The dissipation of thought of which you complain is nothing more than the vacillation of a mind suspended between different motives, and changing its direction as any motive gains or loses strength. If you can but kindle in your mind any strong desire, if you can but keep predominant any wish for some particular excellence or attainment, the gusts of imagination will break away, without any effect upon your conduct, and commonly without any traces left upon the memory.

"There lurks, perhaps, in every human heart a desire of distinction, which inclines every man first to hope, and then to believe, that nature has given him something peculiar to himself. This vanity makes one mind nurse aversions, and another actuate desires, till they rise by art much above their original state of power: and as affectation, in time, improves to habit, they at last tyrannise over him, who at first encouraged them only for show. Every desire is a viper in the bosom, who, while he was chill, was harmless; but when warmth gave him strength, exerted it in poison. You know a gentleman², who, when first he

¹ [In the latter years of his life Mr. Burke reversed the conduct which Goldsmith so elegantly reprehends, and gave up party for what he conceived to be the good of mankind.—Ed.]

² [This perhaps was meant for Mr. Langton, whose indolence and aversion from business Johnson often endeavored to correct; but Mr. Langton was very studious, and had attained a deep knowledge of Greek. The early dissipation seems to suit the character of Beauclerk, but his return to

set his foot in the gay world, as he prepared himself to whirl in the vortex of pleasure, imagined a total indifference and universal negligence to be the most agreeable concomitants of youth, and the strongest indication of an airy temper and a quick apprehension. Vacant to every object, and sensible of every impulse, he thought that all appearance of diligence would deduct something from the reputation of genius; and hoped that he should appear to attain, amidst all the ease of carelessness, and all the tumults of diversion, that knowledge and those accomplishments which mortals of the common fabric obtain only by mute abstraction and solitary drudgery. He tried this scheme of life awhile, was made weary of it by his sense and his virtue; he then wished to return to his studies; and finding long habits of idleness and pleasure harder to be cured than he expected, still willing to retain his claim to some extraordinary prerogatives, resolved the common consequences of irregularity into an unalterable degree of destiny, and concluded that nature had originally formed him incapable of rational employment.

“Let all such fancies, illusive and destructive, be banished henceforward from your thoughts for ever. Resolve, and keep your resolution; choose, and pursue your choice. If you spend this day in study, you will find yourself still more able to study to-morrow; not that you are to expect that you shall at once obtain a complete victory. Depravity is not very easily overcome. Resolution will sometimes relax, and diligence will sometimes be interrupted; but let no accidental surprise or deviation, whether short or long, dispose you to despondency. Consider these failings as incident to all mankind. Begin again where you left off, and endeavour to avoid the seducements that prevailed over you before.

“This, my dear Boswell, is advice, which, perhaps, has been often given you, and given you without effect. But this advice, if you will not take from others, you must take from your own reflections, if you purpose to do the duties of the station to which the bounty of providence has called you.

“Let me have a long letter from you as soon as you can. I hope you continue your journal, and enrich it with many observations upon the country in which you reside. It will be a favour if you can get me any books in the Frisick language, and can inquire how the poor are maintained in the Seven Provinces. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

I am sorry to observe, that neither in my own minutes, nor in my letters to Johnson which have been preserved by him, can I find any information how the poor are maintained in the Seven Provinces. But I shall extract from one of my letters what I learnt concerning the other subject of his curiosity.

“I have made all possible inquiry with respect to the Frisick language, and find that it has been less cultivated than any other of the northern dialects; a certain proof of which is their deficiency of books. Of the old Frisick there are no remains; except some ancient laws preserved by Schotanus in his ‘*Beschryvinge vandie Heerlykheid van Friesland*,’ and his ‘*Historia Frisica*.’ I have not yet been able to find these books. Professor Trotz, who formerly was of the university of Vrancken in Friesland, and is at present preparing an edition of all the Frisick laws, gave me this information. Of the modern Frisick, or what is spoken by the boors of this day, I have procured a specimen. It is Gisbert Japix’s ‘*Rymelerie*,’ which is the only book that they have. It is amazing that they have no translation of the Bible, no treatises of devotion, nor even any of the ballads and story-books which are so agreeable to country people. You shall have Japix by the first convenient opportunity. I doubt not to pick up Schotanus. Mynheer Trotz has promised me his assistance.”

Early in 1764 Johnson paid a visit to the Langton family, at their seat of Langton in Lincolnshire, where he passed some time, much to his satisfaction. His friend, Bennet Langton, it will not be doubted, did every thing in his power to make the place agreeable to so illustrious a guest; and the elder Mr. Langton and his lady, being fully capable of understanding his value, were not wanting in attention. He, however, told me, that old Mr. Langton, though a man of considerable learning¹, had so little allowance to make for his occasional “laxity of talk,” that because in the course of discussion he sometimes mentioned what might be said in favour of the peculiar tenets of the Romish church, he went to his grave believing him to be of that communion.

Johnson, during his stay at Langton, had the advantage of a good library, and saw several gentlemen of the neighbourhood. I have obtained from Mr. Langton the following particulars of this period.

He was now fully convinced that he could not have been satisfied with a country living; for talking of a respectable clergyman in Lincolnshire, he observed, “This man, sir,

² [See *post*, April, 1776, an anecdote that does not say much for Mr. Langton’s learning, or even his understanding.—Ed.]

the sobrieties of life did not take place so early as this date.—Ed.]

fills up the duties of his life well." I approve of him, but could not imitate him."

To a lady who endeavoured to vindicate herself from blame for neglecting social attention to worthy neighbours, by saying, "I would go to them if it would do them any good;" he said, "What good, madam, do you expect to have in your power to do them? It is showing them respect, and that is doing them good."

So socially accommodating was he, that once when Mr. Langton and he were driving together in a coach, and Mr. Langton complained of being sick, he insisted that they should go out, and sit on the back of it in the open air, which they did. And being sensible how strange the appearance must be, observed, that a countryman whom they saw in a field would probably be thinking, "If these two madmen should come down, what would become of me?"

Soon after his return to London, which was in February, was founded that CLUB which existed long without a name, but at Mr. Garrick's funeral became distinguished by the title of THE LITERARY CLUB. Sir Joshua Reynolds had the merit of being the first proposer of it, to which Johnson

[who called Sir Joshua their *Romulus*] acceded; and the original members were, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, Mr. Edmund Burke, Dr. Nugent, Mr. Beauchamp, Mr. Langton, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Chamier, and Sir John Hawkins.

[It was Johnson's original intention, that the number of this club should not exceed nine, but Mr. Dyer, a member of that in Ivy-lane before spoken of, and who for some years had been abroad, made his appearance among them and was cordially received.

The hours which Johnson spent in this society seemed to be the happiest of his life. He would often applaud his own sagacity in the selection of it, and was so constant at its meetings as never to absent himself. It is true he came late, but then he stayed late, for, as has been already said of him, he little regarded hours. The evening toast was the motto of Padre Paolo, "Esto Perpetua." A lady¹, distinguished by her beauty, and taste for literature, invited the club twice to a dinner at her house, which Hawkins alone was hindered from accepting. Curiosity was her motive, and possibly a desire of intermingling with their conversation the charms of her own. She affected to consider them as a set of literary men, and perhaps gave the first occasion for distinguishing the society by the name of the *Literary Club*, an appellation which it never assumed to itself.

At these meetings, Johnson, as indeed he

¹ [Probably Mrs. Montagu.—ED.]

did every where, led the conversation, yet was he far from arrogating to himself that superiority, which, some years before, he was disposed to contend for. He had seen enough of the world to know, that respect was not to be extorted, and began now to be satisfied with that degree of eminence to which his writings had exalted him. This change in his behaviour was remarked by those who were best acquainted with his character, and it rendered him an easy and delightful companion. The discourse was miscellaneous, but chiefly literally. Politics were alone excluded.] They met at the Turk's-head, in Gerrard-street, Soho, one evening in every week, at seven, and generally continued their conversation till a pretty late hour. [It was a supper-meeting then, on a Friday night, and Dr. Nugent, [who was a Roman Catholic,] would sometimes order an omelet; and Johnson felt very painful sensations at the sight of that dish soon after Nugent's death, and cried, "Ah, my poor dear friend, I shall never eat omelet with thee again!" quite in an agony². The truth is, nobody suffered more from pungent sorrow at a friend's death³ than Johnson, though he would suffer no one to complain of their losses in the same way. "For," said he, "we must either outlive our friends, you know, or our friends must outlive us; and I see no man that would hesitate about the choice." This club has been gradually increased to its present [1791] number, thirty-five. After about ten years, instead of supping weekly, it was resolved to dine together once a fortnight during the meeting of parliament. Their original tavern having been converted into a private house, they moved first to Prince's in Sackville-street, then to Le Telier's in Dover-street, and now meet at Parsloe's, St. James's-street⁴.

Sir John Hawkins represents himself as a "*seceder*" from this society, and assigns as the reason of his "*withdrawing*" himself from it, that its late hours were inconsistent with his domestic arrangements. In this he is not

² [This association of the *omelet* and the *agony*, so gravely told, is too characteristic, and, at all events, to droll to be omitted.—ED.]

³ [See, however, *post*, 28th March, 1776.—ED.]

⁴ The Club, some years after Mr. Boswell's death, removed (in 1799) from Parsloe's to the Thatched-house in St. James's-street, where they still continue to meet.—MALONE. [A paragraph of Mr. Boswell's text and a long note of Mr. Malone's, giving lists of the CLUB at several periods, are here omitted, as a full list of all its members, from its foundation to the present time, will be given in the appendix.—ED.]

accurate; for the fact was, that he one evening attacked Mr. Burke in so rude a manner, that all the company testified their displeasure; and at their next meeting his reception was such that he never came again¹.

He is equally inaccurate with respect to Mr. Garrick, of whom he says, "he trusted that the least intimation of a desire to come among us would procure him a ready admission;" but in this he was mistaken. Johnson consulted me upon it; and when I could find no objection to receiving him, exclaimed, "He will disturb us by his buffoonery;"—and afterwards so managed matters, that he was never formally proposed, and, by consequence, never admitted².

In justice both to Mr. Garrick and Dr. Johnson, I think it necessary to rectify this mis-statement. The truth is, that not very long after the institution of our club, Sir Joshua Reynolds was speaking of it to Garrick. "I like it much," said he; "I think I shall be of you." When Sir Joshua mentioned this to Dr. Johnson, he was much displeased with the actor's conceit. "He'll be of us," said Johnson; "how does he know we will permit him? the first duke in England has no right to hold such language." However, when Garrick was regularly proposed some time afterwards, Johnson, though he had taken a momentary offence at his arrogance, warmly and kindly supported him, and he was accordingly elected, was a most agreeable member, and continued to attend our meetings to the time of his death.

Mrs. Piozzi has also given a similar misrepresentation of Johnson's treatment of Garrick, in this particular, as if he had avowed it [to Mr. Thrale] in these contemptuous expressions: "If Garrick does apply, I'll black-ball him." ["Who, sir? Mr. Garrick? Your friend, your companion—black-ball him!" "Why, sir, I love my little David

Letters,
v. 2.
p. 387.

¹ From Sir Joshua Reynolds.—BOSWELL. The knight having refused to pay his portion of the reckoning for supper, because he usually eat no supper at home, Johnson observed, "Sir John, sir, is a very *unclubable* man."—BURNBY. [Here is some mistake. Hawkins was not knighted till long after he had left the club.—ED.]

² [Hawkins probably meant "never" while he himself belonged to the Club. But surely Mr. Boswell must have been conscious that his own words—"when Garrick was regularly proposed some time after, Johnson, though he had taken a momentary offence," &c.—do not give a fair account of the matter; for it was not till near ten years after the foundation of the Club that Garrick was admitted, and, as he died in the beginning of 1779, the Club enjoyed but for five years that agreeable society which, but for Johnson's opposition, they would probably have enjoyed for fourteen or fifteen.—ED.]

dearly, better than all or any of his flatterers do;] but, surely, one ought to sit in a society like ours,

'Unelbow'd by a gamester, pimp, or player.'"

I am happy to be enabled by such unquestionable authority as that of Sir Joshua Reynolds³, as well as from my own knowledge, to vindicate at once the heart of Johnson and the social merit of Garrick.

In this year, except what he may have done in revising Shakspeare, we do not find that he laboured much in literature. He wrote a review of Granger's "Sugar Cane," a poem, in the London Chronicle. He told me, that Dr. Percy wrote the greatest part of this review; but, I imagine, he did not recollect it distinctly, for it appears to be mostly, if not altogether, his own. He also wrote in the Critical Review an account of Goldsmith's excellent poem, "The Traveller."

The ease and independence to which he had at last attained by royal munificence increased his natural indolence. In his Meditations, he thus accuses himself:

"Good Friday, April 20, 1764. I have made no reformation; I have lived totally useless, more sensual in thought, and more addicted to wine and meat."

And next morning he thus feelingly complains:

"My indolence, since my last reception of the sacrament, has sunk into grosser sluggishness, and my dissipation spread into wilder negligence. My thoughts have been clouded with sensuality; and, except that from the beginning of this year I have, in some measure, forborne excess of strong drink, my appetites have predominated over my reason. A kind of strange oblivion has overspread me, so that I know not what has become of the last year; and perceive that incidents and intelligence pass over me without leaving any impression."

He then solemnly says,

"This is not the life to which heaven is promised."

And he earnestly resolves an amendment.

[Easter-day, 22d April, 1764.—"Having, before I went to bed, composed the foregoing meditation, and the following prayer; I tried to compose myself, but slept unquietly. I rose, took tea, and prayed for resolution and perseverance. Thought on Tetty, dear poor Tetty, with my eyes full.

³ [It does not appear how Sir Joshua Reynolds' authority can be made available in this case. The expression is stated to have been used to Mr. Thrale; and the fact, that Garrick was for near ten years excluded from the club, and the numberless occasions in which, according to Mr. Boswell's own account, Johnson spoke in the most contemptuous manner of Garrick, seem to give but too much colour to this sad story.—ED.]

“I went to church; came in at the first of the Psalms, and endeavored to attend the service, which I went through without perturbation. After sermon, I recommended Tetty in a prayer by herself; and my father, mother, brother, and Bathurst, in another. I did it only once, so far as it might be lawful for me.

“I then prayed for resolution and perseverance to amend my life. I received soon: the communicants were many. At the altar, it occurred to me that I ought to form some resolutions. I resolved, in the presence of God, but without a vow, to repel sinful thoughts, to study eight hours daily, and, I think, to go to church every Sunday, and read the Scriptures. I gave a shilling; and seeing a poor girl at the sacrament in a bedgown, gave her privately a crown, though I saw Hart’s Hymns in her hand. I prayed earnestly for amendment, and repeated my prayer at home. Dined with Miss [Williams]; went to prayers at church; went to ———¹, spent the evening not pleasantly. Avoided wine, and tempered a very few glasses with sherbet. Came home and prayed.

I saw at the sacrament a man meanly dressed, whom I have always seen there at Easter.”]

It was his custom to observe certain days with a pious abstraction: viz. New-year’s day, the day of his wife’s death, Good Friday, Easter-day, and his own birthday. He this year [on his birthday] says,

“I have now spent fifty-five years in resolving: having, from the earliest time almost that I can remember, been forming schemes of a better life. I have done nothing. The need of doing, therefore, is pressing, since the time of doing is short. O God, grant me to resolve aright, and to keep my resolutions, for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.”

Such a tenderness of conscience, such a fervent desire of improvement, will rarely be found. It is, surely, not decent in those who are hardened in indifference to spiritual improvement, to treat this pious anxiety of Johnson with contempt.

About this time he was afflicted with a very severe return of the hypochondriack disorder, which was ever lurking about him. He was so ill, as, notwithstanding his remarkable love of company, to be entirely averse to society, the most fatal symptom of that malady. Dr. Adams told me, that as an old friend he was admitted to visit him, and that he found him in a deplorable state, sighing, groaning, talking to himself,

¹ In the original MS., instead of this blank are the letters *Davi*, followed by some other letters, which are illegible. They, no doubt, meant either Davies the bookseller, or David Garrick; most likely the former.—HALL.

and restlessly walking from room to room. He then used this emphatical expression of the misery which he felt: “I would consent to have a limb amputated to recover my spirits.”

Talking to himself was, indeed, one of his singularities ever since I knew him². I was certain that he was frequently uttering pious ejaculations; for fragments of the Lord’s prayer have been distinctly overheard³. His friend, Mr. Thomas Davies, of whom Churchill says,

“That Davies has a very pretty wife,—”

when Dr. Johnson muttered, “lead us not into temptation,” used with waggish and gallant humour to whisper Mrs. Davies, “You, my dear, are the cause of this.”

He had another particularity, of which none of his friends ever ventured to ask an explanation. It appeared to me some superstitious habit which he had contracted early, and from which he had never called upon his reason to disentangle him. This was his anxious care to go out or in at a door or passage, by a certain number of steps from a certain point, or at least so as that either his right or his left foot (I am not certain which), should constantly make the first actual movement when he came close to the door or passage. Thus I conjecture: for I have, upon innumerable occasions, observed him suddenly stop, and then seem to count his steps with a deep earnestness; and when he had neglected or gone wrong in this sort of magical movement, I have seen him go back again, put himself in a proper posture to begin the ceremony, and, having gone through it, break from his abstraction, walk briskly on, and join his companion⁴. A strange instance of some-

² [See *post*, 12th Oct. 1773.—ED.]

³ It used to be imagined at Mr. Thrale’s, when Johnson retired to a window or corner of the room, by perceiving his lips in motion, and hearing a murmur without audible articulation, that he was praying; but this was not *always* the case, for I was once, perhaps unperceived by him, writing at a table, so near the place of his retreat, that I heard him repeating some lines in an ode of Horace, over and over again, as if by iteration to exercise the organs of speech, and fix the ode in his memory:

“Audiet cives accuisse ferrum
Quo graves *Persæ* melius perirent,
Audiet pugnas”

It was during the American war.—BURNLEY.

⁴ [The following anecdote, related by Mr. Whyte, affords another curious instance of this peculiarity:

“Mr. Sheridan at one time lived in Bedford-street, opposite Henrietta-street, which ranges with the south side of Covent-garden, so that the prospect lies open the whole way free of interruption. We were standing together at the drawing-room, expecting Johnson, who was to dine there. Mr.

thing of this nature, even when on horse-back, happened when he was in the Isle of Sky [12th Oct. 1773]. Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed him to go a good way about, rather than cross a particular alley in Leicester-field; but this Sir Joshua imputed to his having had some disagreeable recollection associated with it.

That the most minute singularities which belonged to him, and made very observable parts of his appearance and manner, may not be omitted, it is requisite to mention, that while talking or even musing as he sat in his chair, he commonly held his head to one side towards his right shoulder, and shook it in a tremulous manner, moving his body backwards and forwards, and rubbing his left knee in the same direction with the palm of his hand. In the intervals of articulating he made various sounds with his mouth; sometimes as if ruminating, or what is called chewing the cud, sometimes giving a half whistle, sometimes making his tongue play backwards from the roof of his mouth as if clucking like a hen, and sometimes protruding it against his upper gums in front, as if pronouncing quickly under his breath, *too, too, too*; all this accompanied sometimes with a thoughtful look, but more frequently with a smile. Generally when he had concluded a period, in the course of a dispute, by which time he was a good deal exhausted by violence and vociferation, he used to blow out his breath like a whale. This I suppose was a relief to his lungs; and seemed in him to be a contemptuous mode of expression, as if he had made the arguments of his opponent fly like chaff before the wind.

I am fully aware how very obvious an occasion I here give for the sneering jocular-ity of such as have no relish of an exact

Sheridan asked me, could I see the length of the garden? 'No, sir.' [Mr. Whyte was short-sighted.] 'Take out your opera-glass, Johnson is coming; you may know him by his gait.' I perceived him at a good distance, working along with a peculiar solemnity of deportment, and an awkward sort of measured step. At that time the broad flagging at each side the streets was not universally adopted, and stone posts were in fashion, to prevent the annoyance of carriages. Upon every post as he passed along, I could observe, he deliberately laid his hand; but missing one of them when he had got at some distance, he seemed suddenly to recollect himself, and immediately returning back, carefully performed the accustomed ceremony, and resumed his former course, not omitting one till he gained the crossing. This, Mr. Sheridan assured me, however odd it might appear, was his constant practice; but why or wherefore he could not inform me." *Miscell. Nova.* p. 49. See (*ante*, p. 56) his conduct at Mr. Banks's, which seems something of the same kind.—Ed.]

likeness; which, to render complete, he who draws it must not disdain the slightest strokes. But if wittlings should be inclined to attack this account, let them have the candour to quote what I have offered in my defence.

[“DR JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.
“London 10 Jan. 1764.

“MY DEAR,—I was in hopes that you would have written to me before this time, to tell me that your house was finished, and that you were happy in it. I am sure I wish you happy.

“By the carrier of this week you will receive a box, in which I have put some books, most of which were your poor dear mamma's, and a diamond ring¹, which I hope you will wear as my new year's gift. If you receive it with as much kindness as I send it, you will not slight it; you will be very fond of it.

“Pray give my service to Kitty, who, I hope, keeps pretty well. I know not now when I shall come down; I believe it will not be very soon. But I shall be glad to hear of you from time to time.

“I wish you, my dearest, many happy years; take what care you can of your health. I am, my dear, your affectionate humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

He was for some time in the summer at Easton Maudit Northamptonshire, on a visit to the Reverend Dr. Percy, now Bishop of Dromore. Whatever dissatisfaction he felt at what he considered as a slow progress in intellectual improvement, we find that his heart was tender, and his affections warm, as appears from the following very kind letter:

“TO JOSHUA REYNOLDS, ESQ. IN LEICESTER-FIELDS.

“DEAR SIR,—I did not hear of your sickness till I heard likewise of your recovery, and therefore escaped that part of your pain which every man must feel to whom you are known, as you are known to me.

“Having had no particular account of your disorder, I know not in what state it has left you. If the amusement of my company can exhilarate the languor of a slow recovery, I will not delay a day to come to you; for I know not how I can so effectually promote my own pleasure as by pleasing you, or my own interest as by preserving you, in whom, if I should lose you, I should lose almost the only man whom I call a friend.

“Pray let me hear of you from yourself,

¹ [This ring is now in the possession of Mrs. Pearson.—HARWOOD.]

or from dear Miss Reynolds¹. Make my compliments to Mr. Mudge. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,
 “SAM. JOHNSON.

“At the Rev. Mr. Percy’s, at Easton Maudit, Northamptonshire (by Castle Ashby), 19 Aug. 1764.”

Early in the year 1765 he paid a short visit to the university of Cambridge, with his friend Mr. Beauclerk. There is a lively picturesque account of his behaviour on this visit, in the Gentleman’s Magazine for March, 1785, being an extract of a letter² from the late Dr. John Sharp³.

“Cambridge, 1 March, 1765.

Gen. Mag. vol. 55. p. 173. [“As to Johnson, you will be surprised to hear that I have had him in the chair in which I am now writing. He has ascended my aerial citadel. He came down on a Saturday evening, with a Mr. Beauclerk, who has a friend at Trinity⁴ *Caliban*, you may be sure, was not roused from his lair before next day noon, and his breakfast probably kept him till night. I saw nothing of him, nor was he heard of by any one, till Monday afternoon, when I was sent for home to two gentlemen unknown. In conversation I made a strange *faux pas* about Burnaby Greene’s poem⁵, in which Johnson is drawn at full length]. He drank his large potation of tea with me, interrupted by many an indignant contradiction, and many a noble sentiment. [He had on a better wig than usual, but one whose curls were not, like Sir Cloudesley’s, formed for ‘eternal

buckle⁶.] Our conversation was chiefly on books, you may be sure. He was much pleased with a small Milton of mine, published in the author’s lifetime, and with the Greek epigram on his own effigy, of its being the picture, not of him, but of a bad painter. There are many manuscript stanzas, for aught I know, in Milton’s own handwriting, and several interlined hints and fragments. We were puzzled about one of the sonnets, which we thought was not to be found in Newton’s edition, and differed from all the printed ones. But Johnson cried, ‘No! no!’ repeated the whole sonnet instantly, *memoriter*, and showed it us in Newton’s book. After which he learnedly harangued on sonnet-writing, and its different numbers. He tells me he will come hither again quickly, and is promised ‘an habitation in Emanuel college.’ He went back to town next morning; but as it began to be known that he was in the university,] several persons got into his company the last evening at Trinity, where, about twelve, he began to be very great; stripped poor Mrs. Macaulay to the very skin, then gave her for his toast, and drank her in two bumpers.”

The strictness of his self-examination, and scrupulous Christian humility, appear in his pious meditation on Easter-day this year.

“I purpose again to partake of the blessed sacrament; yet when I consider how vainly I have hitherto resolved at this annual commemoration of my Saviour’s death, to regulate my life by his laws, I am almost afraid to renew my resolutions.”

“Since the last Easter I have reformed no evil habit; my time has been unprofitably spent, and seems as a dream that has left nothing behind. *My memory grows confused, and I know not how the days pass over me.* Good Lord, deliver me!”

The concluding words [of the last sentence] are very remarkable, and show that he laboured under a severe depression of spirits. [He proceeds:]

“I purpose to rise at eight, because, though I shall not yet rise early, it will be much earlier than I now rise, for I often lie till two, and will gain me much time, and tend to a conquest over idleness, and give time for other duties. I hope to rise yet earlier.”

“I invited home with me the man⁷ whose pious behaviour I had for several years observed on this day, and found him a kind of Methodist, full of texts, but ill-instructed. I talked to him with temper, and offered him twice wine, which he refused. I suf-

¹ Sir Joshua’s sister, for whom Johnson had a particular affection, and to whom he wrote many letters which I have seen, and which I am sorry her too nice delicacy will not permit to be published.—BOSWELL. [One will be found added by Mr. Malone, *post*, 21st July, 1781.—Of Miss Reynolds Johnson thought so highly, that he once said to Mrs. Piozzi, “I never knew but one mind which would bear a microscopical examination, and that is dear Miss Reynolds’s, and hers is very near to purity itself.” *Piozzi*, p. 68. Several others have reached the editor since this note was written.—Ed.]

² [Of this letter Mr. Boswell quotes only two short paragraphs, adding that “they are very characteristic,” but surely the rest is equally so.—Ed.]

³ [No doubt Dr. John Sharp, grandson of Sharp, Archbishop of York, and son of the Archdeacon of Durham, in which preferment he succeeded his father. He was a member of Trinity College, Cambridge. He died in 1792, aged 69.—Ed.]

⁴ Mr. Lister.—BOSWELL.

⁵ [Edward Burnaby, who took the name of Greene, published, in 1756, an imitation of the 10th Ep. of the first book of Horace. He died in 1788.—Ed.]

⁶ “Eternal buckle take in Parian stone.”—POPE.

⁷ [See *ante*, p. 214.—Ed.]

ferred him to go without the dinner which I had purposed to give him. I thought this day that there was something irregular and particular in his look and gesture; but having intended to invite him to acquaintance, and having a fit opportunity by finding him near my own seat after I had missed him, I did what I at first designed, and am sorry to have been so much disappointed. Let me not be prejudiced hereafter against the appearance of piety in mean persons, who, with indeterminate notions, and perverse or inelegant conversation, perhaps are doing all they can.”]

ED. [The following letter was addressed to the son of his friend Mr. Strahan, afterwards prebendary to Rochester, and the Editor of Johnson's *Prayers and Meditations*.

“TO MR. G. STRAHAN, UNIVER. COLL. OX.¹
 “25 May, 1765.

“DEAR SIR,—That I have answered neither of your letters you must not impute to any declension of good will, but merely to the want of something to say. I suppose you pursue your studies diligently, and diligence will seldom fail of success. Do not tire yourself so much with Greek one day as to be afraid of looking on it the next; but give it a certain portion of time, suppose four hours, and pass the rest of the day in Latin or English. I would have you learn French, and take in a literary journal once a month, which will accustom you to various subjects, and inform you what learning is going forward in the world. Do not omit to mingle some lighter books with those of more importance; that which is read *remisso animo* is often of great use, and takes great hold of the remembrance. However, take what course you will, if you be diligent you will be a scholar. I am, dear sir, yours affectionately,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

No man was more gratefully sensible of any kindness done to him than Johnson. There is a little circumstance in his diary this year, which shows him in a very amiable light.

“July 2.—I paid Mr. Simpson ten guineas, which he had formerly lent me in my necessity, and for which Tetty expressed her gratitude.”

“July 7.—I lent Mr. Simpson ten guineas more.”

Here he had a pleasing opportunity of doing the same kindness to an old friend, which he had formerly received from him. Indeed his liberality as to money was very

¹ [This letter has been communicated to Dr. Hall, for the use of this edition, by the kindness of the Rev. Charles Rose, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford.—ED.]

remarkable. The next article in his diary is,

“July 16th, I received seventy-five pounds². Lent Mr. Davies twenty-five.”

Trinity college, Dublin, at this time, surprised Johnson with a spontaneous compliment of the highest academical honours, by creating him doctor of laws. The diploma, which is in my possession, is as follows:

“OMNIBUS ad quos presentes literæ pervenerint, salutem. Nos Præpositus et Socii Seniores Collegii sacrosanctæ et individuae Trinitatis Reginae Elizabethæ juxta Dublin, testamur, Samueli Johnson, Armigero, ob egregiam scriptorum elegantiam et utilitatem, gratiam concessam fruisse pro gradu Doctoratus in utroque Jure, octavo die Julii, Anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo sexagesimo-quinto. In cujus rei testimonium singulorum manus et sigillum quo in hisce utimur apposuimus, vicesimo tertio die Julii, Anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo sexagesimo-quinto.

FRAN. ANDREWS. *Præps.*

GUL. CLEMENT. R. MURRAY.

THO. WILSON. ROBŪS LAW.

THO. LELAND. ³ MICH. KEARNEY.”

This unsolicited mark of distinction, conferred on so great a literary character, did much honour to the judgment and liberal spirit of that learned body. Johnson acknowledged the favour in a letter to Dr. Leland, one of their number; but I have not been able to obtain a copy of it.

[After the publication of the Malone. edition in 1804, a copy of this letter was communicated to Mr. Malone by John Leland, esq. son to the learned historian, to whom it is addressed.

“TO THE REV. DR. LELAND.

“Johnson's-court, Fleet-street,
 London, 17 Oct. 1765 ⁴.

“SIR,—Among the names subscribed to the degree which I have had the honour of receiving from the University of Dublin, I find none of which I have any personal knowledge but those of Dr. Andrews and yourself.

“Men can be estimated by those who know them not, only as they are represented by those who knew them; and therefore I flatter myself that I owe much of the

² [Probably a quarter's pension.—ED.]

³ [The same who has contributed some notes to the late editions of this work. He was the elder brother of the late Bishop of Ossory.—ED.]

⁴ [Hawkins and Murphy seem to think that the degree followed the publication of Shakspeare, but the former was, we see, in July (the annual Commencement), and the latter in October: Johnson's acknowledgment of the honour was perhaps postponed to the end of the academic vacation.—ED.]

pleasure which this distinction gives me to your concurrence with Dr. Andrews in recommending me to the learned society.

“Having desired the provost to return my general thanks to the university, I beg that you, sir, will accept my particular and immediate acknowledgments. I am, sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

[His great affection for our own universities, and particularly his attachment to Oxford, prevented Johnson from receiving this honour² as it was intended, and he never assumed the title which it conferred. He was as little pleased to be called Doctor in consequence of it, as he was with the title of *domine*, which a friend of his once incautiously addressed him by. He thought it alluded to his having been a schoolmaster; and though he has ably vindicated Milton from the reproach that Salmasius meant to fix on him, by saying that he was of that profession, he wished to have it forgot, that himself had ever been driven to it as the means of subsistence, and had failed in the attempt.]

He appears this year to have been seized with a temporary fit of ambition, for he had thoughts both of studying law, and of engaging in politics. His “Prayer before the Study of Law” is truly admirable:

“26 Sept. 1765.

“Almighty God, the giver of wisdom, without whose help resolutions are vain, without whose blessing study is ineffectual; enable me, if it be thy will, to attain such knowledge as may qualify me to direct the doubtful, and instruct the ignorant; to prevent wrongs and terminate contentions; and grant that I may use that knowledge which I shall attain, to thy glory and my own salvation, for Jesus Christ’s sake. Amen.”

His prayer in the view of becoming a politician is entitled “Engaging in POLITICKS with H—n,” no doubt, his friend, the Right Honourable William Gerard Hamilton³, for whom, during a long ac-

¹ I have not been able to recover the letter which Johnson wrote to Dr. Andrews on this occasion.—MALONE.

² [This is a mistake of Hawkins, which Murphy also adopts. Mr. Boswell states, (*post*, 7th April, 1775, *n.*) that Johnson, himself, never used the title of *Doctor* before his name, even after his Oxford degree.—ED.]

³ [Mr. Hamilton had been secretary to Lord Halifax as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and remained a short time with his successor, Lord Northumberland, but he resigned in 1764. Though he never spoke in parliament after this, his biographer informs us (perhaps on the authority of this passage), that he meditated taking an active part in political life; he, however, did not, and his al-

quaintance, he had a great esteem, and to whose conversation he once paid this high compliment: “I am very unwilling to be left alone, sir, and therefore I go with my company down the first pair of stairs, in some hopes that they may, perhaps, return again; I go with you, sir, as far as the street-door.” In what particular department he intended to engage⁴ does not appear, nor can Mr. Hamilton explain. His prayer is in general terms.

“Enlighten my understanding with knowledge of right, and govern my will by thy laws, that no deceit may mislead me, nor temptation corrupt me; that I may always endeavour to do good, and hinder evil.”

There is nothing upon the subject in his diary.

This year was distinguished by his being introduced into the family of Mr. Thrale, one of the most eminent brewers in England, and member of parliament for the borough of Southwark. Foreigners are not a little amazed, when they hear of brewers, distillers, and men in similar departments of trade, held forth as persons of considerable consequence. In this great commercial country it is natural that a situation which

liance with Johnson, whatever it was intended to be, seems to have produced little or nothing, at least that we know of. Mr. Hamilton died in 1796, at. 68.—ED.]

⁴ In the preface to a late collection of Mr. Hamilton’s Pieces, it has been observed, that our author was, by the generality of Johnson’s words, “led to suppose that he was seized with a temporary fit of ambition, and that hence he was induced to apply his thoughts to law and politics. But Mr. Boswell was certainly mistaken in this respect: and these words merely allude to Johnson’s having at that time entered into some engagement with Mr. Hamilton occasionally to furnish him with his sentiments on the great political topics which should be considered in parliament.” In consequence of this engagement, Johnson, in November, 1766, wrote a very valuable tract, entitled “Considerations on Corn,” which is printed as an appendix to the works of Mr. Hamilton, published by T. Payne in 1808.—MALONE. [It seems very improbable that so solemn a “prayer, on engaging in politics,” should have had no meaning. It were perhaps vain now to inquire after what Mr. Hamilton professed not to be able to explain; but we may be sure that it was, in Johnson’s opinion, no such trivial and casual assistance as is suggested in Mr. Malone’s note. From a letter to Miss Porter, (*post*, 14th January, 1766), it may be guessed, that this engagement was in some way connected with the parliamentary session, and it may have been an alliance to write pamphlets or paragraphs in favour of a particular line of politics. Whatever it was, it may be inferred, from the obscurity in which they have left it, that it was something which neither Hamilton nor Johnson chose to talk about.—ED.]

produces much wealth should be considered as very respectable; and, no doubt, honest industry is entitled to esteem. But, perhaps, the too rapid advances of men of low extraction tends to lessen the value of that distinction by birth and gentility, which has ever been found beneficial to the grand scheme of subordination. Johnson used to give this account of the rise of Mr. Thrale's father: "He worked at six shillings a week for twenty years in the great brewery, which afterwards was his own. The proprietor of it¹ had an only daughter, who was married to a nobleman. It was not fit that a peer should continue the business. On the old man's death, therefore, the brewery was to be sold. To find a purchaser for so large a property was a difficult matter; and, after some time, it was suggested, that it would be advisable to treat with Thrale, a sensible, active, honest man, who had been employed in the house, and to transfer the whole to him for thirty thousand pounds, security being taken upon the property. This was accordingly settled. In eleven years Thrale paid the purchase-money. He acquired a large fortune, and lived to be [high-sheriff of Surrey in 1733, and] member of parliament for Southwark² [in 1740.] But what was most remarkable was the liberality with which he used his riches. He gave his son and daughters the best education. The esteem which his good conduct procured him from the nobleman who had married his master's daughter made him be treated with much attention; and his son, both at school and at the university of Oxford, associated with young men of the first rank. His allowance from his father, after he left college, was splendid; not less than a thousand a year. This, in a man who had risen as old Thrale did, was a very extraordinary instance of generosity. He

¹ The predecessor of old Thrale was Edmund Halsey, esq.; the nobleman who married his daughter was Lord Cobham, great uncle of the Marquis of Buckingham. But, I believe, Dr. Johnson was mistaken in assigning so very low an origin to Mr. Thrale. The clerk of St. Alban's, a very aged man, told me, that he (the elder Thrale) married a sister of Mr. Halsey. It is at least certain that the family of Thrale was of some consideration in that town: in the abbey church is a handsome monument to the memory of Mr. John Thrale, late of London, merchant, who died in 1704, aged 54; Margaret, his wife, and three of their children who died young, between the years 1676 and 1690. The arms upon this monument are, paly of eight, gules and or, impaling, ermine, on a chief indented vert, three wolves' (or gryphons') heads, or, couped at the neck:—Crest on a ducal coronet, a tree, vert.—
BLAKEWAY.

² [He died in Ap. 1758, and his wife in 1760. —*Gent. Mag.*—Ed.]

used to say, 'If this young dog does not find so much after I am gone as he expects, let him remember that he has had a great deal in my own time.'"

The son, though in affluent circumstances, had good sense enough to carry on his his father's trade, which was of such extent, that I remember he once told me, he would not quit it for an annuity of ten thousand a year; "For (said he) that I get ten thousand a year by it, but it is an estate to a family." Having left daughters only, the property was sold for the immense sum of one hundred and thirty-five thousand pounds; a magnificent proof of what may be done by fair trade in a long period of time.

There may be some who think that a new system of gentility³ might be established, upon principles totally different from what have hitherto prevailed. Our present heraldy, it may be said, is suited to the barbarous times in which it had its origin. It is chiefly founded upon ferocious merit, upon military excellence. Why, in civilized times, we may be asked, should there not be rank and honours, upon principles, which, independent of long custom, are certainly not less worthy, and which, when once allowed to be connected with elevation and precedence, would obtain the same dignity in our imagination? Why should not the knowledge, the skill, the expertness, the assiduity, and the spirited hazards of trade and commerce, when crowned with success, be entitled to give those flattering distinctions by which mankind are so universally captivated?

Such are the specious, but false arguments for a proposition which always will find numerous advocates in a nation where men are every day starting up from obscurity to wealth. To refute them is needless. The general sense of mankind cries out with ir-

³ Mrs. Burney informs me that she heard Dr. Johnson say, "An English merchant is a new species of gentleman." He, perhaps, had in his mind the following ingenious passage in "The Conscious Lovers," Act iv. Scene ii. where Mr. Sealand thus addresses Sir John Bevil: "Give me leave to say, that we merchants are a species of gentry that have grown into the world this last century, and are as honourable, and almost as useful as you landed-folks, that have always thought yourselves so much above us; for your trading forsooth is extended no farther than a load of hay, or a fat ox. You are pleasant people indeed! because you are generally bred up to be lazy; therefore, I warrant you, industry is dishonourable."—BOSWELL. [If indeed Johnson called merchants a *new species of gentlemen*, he must have forgotten not only the merchants of Tyre who were "princes," and the Medici of Florence, but the Greshams, Cranfields, Osbornes, Duncombes, and so many others of England.—Ed.]

resistible force, “*Un gentilhomme est toujours gentilhomme*”¹.”

Mr. Thrale had married Miss Hesther Lynch Salusbury, of good Welsh extraction, a lady of lively talents, improved by education. That Johnson’s introduction into Mr. Thrale’s family, which contributed so much to the happiness of his life, was owing to her desire for his conversation, is a very probable and the general supposition; but it is not the truth. Mr. Murphy, who was intimate with Mr. Thrale, having spoken very highly of Dr. Johnson, he was requested to make them acquainted. This being mentioned to Johnson, he accepted of an invitation to dinner at Thrale’s, and was so much pleased with his reception, both by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale, and they so much pleased with him, that his invitations to their house were more and more frequent, till at last he became one of the family, and an apartment was appropriated to him, both in their house at Southwark, and in their villa at Streatham.

Johnson had a very sincere esteem for Mr. Thrale, as a man of excellent principles, a good scholar, well skilled in trade, of a sound understanding, and of manners such as presented the character of a plain independent English squire. [And when, as Mrs. Piozzi tells us, with an amiable glow of gratitude, any perplexity happened to disturb Mr. Thrale’s quiet, dear Dr. Johnson left him scarce a moment, and tried every artifice to amuse, as well as every argument to console him: nor is it more possible to describe than to forget his prudent, his pious attentions towards the man who had some years before certainly saved his valuable life, perhaps his reason.]

As this family will frequently be mentioned in the course of the following pages, and as a false notion has prevailed that Mr. Thrale was inferior, and in some degree insignificant, compared with Mrs. Thrale, it may be proper to give a true state of the case from the authority of Johnson himself in his own words.

“I know no man (said he), who is more master of his wife and family than Thrale. If he but holds up a finger, he is obeyed. It is a great mistake to suppose that she is above him in literary attainments. She is more flippant; but he has ten times her learning; he is a regular scholar; but her learning is that of a schoolboy in one of the lower forms.” My readers may naturally wish for some representation of the figures

of this couple². Mr. Thrale was tall, well proportioned, and stately. As for *madam* or *my mistress*, by which epithets Johnson used to mention Mrs. Thrale, she was short, plump, and brisk³. She has herself given us a lively view of the idea which Johnson had of her person, on her appearing before him in a dark-coloured gown: “You little creatures should never wear those sort of clothes, however; they are unsuitable in every way. What! have not all insects gay colours?” Mr. Thrale gave his wife a liberal indulgence, both in the choice of their company, and in the mode of entertaining them. He understood and valued Johnson, without remission, from their first acquaintance to the day of his death. Mrs. Thrale was enchanted with Johnson’s conversation for its own sake, and had also a very allowable vanity in appearing to be honoured with the attention of so celebrated a man.

Nothing could be more fortunate for Johnson than this connexion. He had at Mr. Thrale’s all the comforts and even luxuries of life: his melancholy was diverted, and his irregular habits lessened by association with an agreeable and well-ordered family. He was treated with the utmost respect and even affection. The vivacity of Mrs. Thrale’s literary talk roused him to cheerfulness and exertion, even when they were alone. But this was not often the case; for he found here a constant succession of what gave him the highest enjoyment, the society of the learned, the witty, and the eminent in every way, who were assembled in numerous companies; called forth his wonderful powers, and gratified him with admiration, to which no man could be insensible.

[Johnson formed, says Mr. Tyers, at Streatham a room for a library, and increased by his recommendation the number of books. Here he was to be found (himself a library) when a friend called upon him; and by him the friend was sure to be introduced to the dinner-table, which Mrs. Thrale knew how to spread with the utmost plenty and elegance, and which was often adorned with such guests, that to dine there was *epulis accumbere divum*. Of Mrs. Thrale, if mentioned at all, less cannot be said, than that in one of the *latest* opinions of Johnson, “If she was not the wisest woman in the world, she was undoubtedly one of the wittiest.” Besides a natural vivacity in conversation, she had reading enough, and

¹ [This dictum is, whatever be its value, not applicable to this case, where the question is *not* whether a gentleman can ever cease to be one, but whether a plebeian can ever *become* a gentleman.—Ed.]

² [The reader will not fail to observe the *tone* in which Mr. Boswell talks of “*this couple*.”—Ed.]

³ [She was twenty-five years of age, when this acquaintance commenced.—Ed.]

the "gods had made her poetical." Her poem of "The Three Warnings" (the subject she owned not to be original) is highly interesting and serious, and literally comes home to every body's business and bosom. She took, or caused such care to be taken of Johnson, during an illness of continuance, that Goldsmith told her, "he owed his recovery to her attention." She moreover taught him to lay up something of his income every year.]

[Johnson had also at Streatham opportunities of exercise, and the pleasure of airings and excursions. In the exercise of a coach he had great delight; it afforded him the indulgence of indolent postures, and, as it seems, the noise of it assisted his hearing.] [When

Mrs. Piozzi asked him why he doted on a coach so, he answered, that, "in the first place, the company were *shut in* with him *there*, and could not escape as out of a room; and, in the next place, he heard all that was said in a carriage."] [He was prevailed

on by Mr. Thrale to join in the pleasures of the chase, in which he showed himself a bold rider, for he either leaped, or broke through, the hedges that obstructed him. This he did, not because he was eager in the pursuit, but, as he said, to save the trouble of alighting and remounting. He did not derive the pleasure or benefit from riding that many do: it had no tendency to raise his spirits; and he once said that, in a journey on horseback, he fell asleep.]

[He certainly rode on Mr. Thrale's old hunter with a good firmness, and though he would follow the hounds fifty miles an end sometimes¹, would never own himself either tired or amused. "I have now learned," said he, "by hunting, to perceive that it is no diversion at all, nor ever takes a man out of himself for a moment: the dogs have less sagacity than I could have prevailed on myself to suppose; and the gentlemen often called to me not to ride over them. It is very strange and very melancholy, that the paucity of human pleasures should persuade us ever to call hunting one of them." He was however proud to be amongst the sportsmen; and Mrs. Piozzi thought no praise ever went so close to his heart, as when Mr. Hamilton called out one day upon Brighthelmstone Downs,

¹ [Mr. Boswell says, in another place, that Johnson *once* hunted; this seems more probable than Mrs. Piozzi's and Hawkins's statements, from which it would be inferred, that he hunted *habitually*. It seems hard to figure to one's self Dr. Johnson fairly joining in this violent and, to him, one would suppose, extravagant and dangerous amusement.—Ed.]

"Why, Johnson rides as well, for aught I see, as the most illiterate fellow in England."]

[Mrs. Piozzi's account of the commencement and progress of this acquaintance deserves to be preserved in her own words: ["The first time I ever saw this extraordinary man was in the year 1764, when Mr. Murphy, who had long been the friend and confidential intimate of Mr. Thrale, persuaded him to wish for Johnson's conversation, extolling it in terms which that of no other person could have deserved, till we were only in doubt how to obtain his company, and find an excuse for the invitation. The celebrity of Mr. Woodhouse, a shoemaker, whose verses were at that time the subject of common discourse, soon afforded a pretence, and Mr. Murphy brought Johnson to meet him, giving me a general caution not to be surprised at his figure, dress, or behaviour. What I recollect best of the day's talk was his earnestly recommending Addison's works to Mr. Woodhouse as a model for imitation. 'Give nights and days, sir,' said he, 'to the study of Addison, if you mean either to be a good writer, or, what is more worth, an honest man.' When I saw something like the same expression in his criticism on that author, lately published, [in the *Lives of the Poets*] I put him in mind of his past injunctions to the young poet, to which he replied, 'That he wished the shoemaker might have remembered them as well.' Mr. Johnson liked his new acquaintance so much, however, that from that time he dined with us every Thursday through the winter, and in the autumn of the next year he followed us to Brighthelmstone, whence we were gone before his arrival; so he was disappointed and enraged, and wrote us a letter expressive of anger, which we were desirous to pacify, and to obtain his company again if possible. Mr. Murphy brought him back to us again very kindly, and from that time his visits grew more frequent, till in the year 1766 his health, which he had always complained of, grew so exceedingly bad, that he could not stir out of his room in the court he inhabited for many *weeks* together—I think *months*.]

"Mr. Thrale's attentions and my own now became so acceptable to him, that he often lamented to us the horrible condition of his mind, which he said was nearly distracted; and though he charged *us* to make him odd solemn promises of secrecy on so strange² a subject, yet when we wait-

² [In the second month of his acquaintance with Mr. Boswell, we have seen that Johnson communicated to him his tendency to this infirmity, yet, though he could himself be so uncessa-

ed on him one morning, and heard him, in the most pathetick terms, beg the prayers of Dr. Delap¹, who had left him as we came in, I felt excessively affected with grief, and well remember that my husband involuntarily lifted up one hand to shut his mouth, from provocation at hearing a man so wildly proclaim what he could at last persuade no one to believe, and what, if true, would have been so very unfit to reveal.

“Mr. Thrale went away soon after, leaving me with him, and bidding me prevail on him to quit his close habitation in the court and come with us to Streatham, where I undertook the care of his health, and had the honour and happiness of contributing to its restoration.”]

In the October of this year he at length gave to the world his edition of Shakspeare. [He was insensible to Churchill's abuse; but the poem before mentioned had brought to remembrance, that his edition of Shakspeare had long been due. His friends took the alarm, and, by all the arts of reasoning and persuasion, laboured to convince him that having taken subscriptions for a work in which he had made no progress, his credit was at stake. He confessed he was culpable, and promised from time to time to begin a course of such reading as was necessary to qualify him for the work: this was no more than he had formerly done in an engagement with Coxeter², to whom he had bound himself to write the life of Shakspeare, but he never could be prevailed on to begin it, so that even now it was questioned whether his promises were to be relied on. For this reason Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some other of his friends, who were more concerned for his reputation than himself seemed to be, contrived to entangle him by a wager, or some other pecuniary engagement, to perform his task by a certain time.] This edition, if it had no other merit but that of producing his preface, in which the excellencies and de-

rily candid, we shall see with what frequency and severity he used to blame Boswell when he presumed to mention *his* own mental distresses.—Ed.]

¹ [Rector of Lewes in Sussex.—Ed.]

² Thomas Coxeter, Esq. who had also made a large collection of plays, and from whose manuscript notes the *Lives of the English Poets*, by Shiels and Cibber, were principally compiled. Mr. Coxeter was bred at Trinity College, Oxford, and died in London, April 17th, 1747, in his fifty-ninth year. A particular account of him may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1781, p. 173.—MALONE. [With regard to Cibber's or Shiels's *Lives of the Poets*, see *ante*, p. 75; and *post*, 10th April, 1776, where the subject is resumed.—Ed.]

fects of that immortal bard are displayed with a masterly hand, the nation would have had no reason to complain. A blind indiscriminate admiration of Shakspeare had exposed the British nation to the ridicule of foreigners. Johnson, by candidly admitting the faults of his poet, had the more credit in bestowing on him deserved and indisputable praise; and doubtless none of all his panegyristes have done him half so much honour. Their praise was like that of a counsel, upon his own side of the cause; Johnson's was like the grave, well considered, and impartial opinion of the judge, which falls from his lips with weight, and is received with reverence. What he did as a commentator has no small share of merit, though his researches were not so ample, and his investigations so acute, as they might have been; which we now certainly know from the labours of other able and ingenious criticks who have followed him. He has enriched his edition with a concise account of each play, and of its characteristick excellence. Many of his notes have illustrated obscurities in the text, and placed passages eminent for beauty in a more conspicuous light; and he has, in general, exhibited such a mode of annotation, as may be beneficial to all subsequent editors.

[Though he would sometimes divert himself by teasing Garrick by commendations on the tomb scene in the Mourning Bride, protesting that Shakspeare had in the same line of excellence nothing as good: “All which is strictly true,” he would add, “but that is no reason for supposing that Congreve is to stand in competition with Shakspeare: these fellows know not how to blame, or how to commend.” Somebody was praising Corneille one day in opposition to Shakspeare: “Corneille is to Shakspeare,” replied Johnson, “as a clipped hedge is to a forest.” When he talked of authours, his praise would fall spontaneously on such passages as are sure, in his own phrase, to leave something behind them useful on common occasions, or connected with common manners. It was not Lear cursing his daughters, or deprecating the storm, that he would quote with commendation, but Iago's ingenious malice and subtle revenge; or Prince Henry's gay compliances with the vices of Falstaff, whom he all the while despised. Those plays had indeed no rivals in Johnson's favour. “No man,” he said, “but Shakspeare could have drawn Sir John.”]

His Shakspeare was virulently attacked by Mr. William Kenrick, who obtained the degree of LL. D. from a Scotch university, and wrote for the booksellers in a great variety of branches. Though he

certainly was not without considerable merit, he wrote with so little regard to decency, and principles, and decorum, and in so hasty a manner, that his reputation was neither extensive nor lasting. I remember one evening, when some of his works were mentioned, Dr. Goldsmith said he had never heard of them; upon which Dr. Johnson observed, "Sir, he is one of the many who have made themselves *publick*, without making themselves *known*!"

A young student of Oxford, of the name of Barclay, wrote an answer to Kenrick's review of Johnson's Shakspeare. Johnson was at first angry that Kenrick's attack should have the credit of an answer. But afterwards, considering the young man's good intention, he kindly noticed him, and probably would have done more, had not the young man died.

In his preface to Shakspeare, Johnson treated Voltaire very contemptuously, observing, upon some of his remarks, "These are the petty cavils of petty minds." Voltaire, in revenge, made an attack upon Johnson, in one of his numerous literary sallies which I remember to have read; but there being no general index to his voluminous works, have searched in vain, and therefore cannot quote it.

Voltaire was an antagonist with whom I thought Johnson should not disdain to contend. I pressed him to answer. He said, he perhaps might; but he never did.

[He appears, in the course of this summer, to have paid a visit to Dr. Warton, at Winchester, and, on the publication of his Shakspeare, he addressed to him the following letter:]

["DR. JOHNSON TO DR. WARTON.

"9th Oct. 1765.

Wool's Life of Warton, p. 309. "DEAR SIR,—Mrs. Warton uses me hardly in supposing that I could forget so much kindness and civility as she showed me at Winchester.

I remember, likewise, our conversation about St. Cross². The desire of seeing her again will be one of the motives that will bring me into Hampshire.

"I have taken care of your book; being so far from doubting your subscription, that I think you have subscribed twice: you once paid your guinea into my own hand in the garret in Gough-square. When you light on your receipt, throw it on the fire; if you find a second receipt, you may have a second book.

"To tell the truth, as I felt no solicitude about this work, I receive no great comfort from its conclusion; but yet am well enough pleased that the publick has no farther claim upon me. I wish you would write more frequently to, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."]

Mr. Burney having occasion to write to Johnson for some receipts for subscriptions to his Shakspeare, which Johnson had omitted to deliver when the money was paid, he availed himself of that opportunity of thanking Johnson for the great pleasure which he had received from the perusal of his preface to Shakspeare; which, although it excited much clamour against him at first, is now justly ranked among the most excellent of his writings. To this letter Johnson returned the following answer:

"TO CHARLES BURNEY, ESQ. IN POLAND-STREET.

"16th Oct. 1765.

"SIR,—I am sorry that your kindness to me has brought upon you so much trouble, though you have taken care to abate that sorrow, by the pleasure which I receive from your approbation. I defend my criticism in the same manner with you. We must confess the faults of our favourite, to gain credit to our praise of his excellencies. He that claims, either in himself or for another, the honours of perfection, will surely injure the reputation which he designs to assist.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to your family. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

From one of his journals I transcribe what follows:

"At church, Oct.—65.

"To avoid all singularity; *Bonaventura*³.

"To come in before service, and compose my mind by meditation, or by reading some portions of scripture. *Tetty*.

"If I can hear the sermon, to attend to it, unless attention be more troublesome than useful.

"To consider the act of prayer as a reposal of myself upon God, and a resignation of all into his holy hand."

[Johnson had now arrived at the fifty-sixth year of his age, and had actually attained to that state of independence, which before he could only affect. He was now in possession of an income that freed him from the apprehensions of want, and exempted him from the neces-

Hawk. p. 446.

¹ [He died in June, 1779.—ED.]

² [The hospital of St. Cross, near Winchester, endowed formerly for the maintenance of 70 resident members, clergy and laity, with 100 out-pensioners; but, since the *dissolution*, reduced to 10 residents, with the master and chaplain, and 3 out-pensioners.—ED.]

³ He was probably proposing to himself the model of this excellent person, who, for his piety, was named *the Seraphick Doctor*.

sity of mental labour. He had discharged his obligations to the publick, and, with no incumbrance of a family, or any thing to control his wishes or desires, he had his mode of living to choose. Blest with what was to him a competence, he had it now in his power to study, to meditate, and to put in practice a variety of good resolutions, which, almost from his first entrance into life, he had been making.]

In 1764 and 1765 it should seem that Dr. Johnson was so busily employed with his edition of Shakspeare as to have had little leisure for any other literary exertion, or, indeed, even for private correspondence¹. He did not favour me with a single letter for more than two years, for which it will appear that he afterwards apologised.

Notwithstanding his long silence, I never omitted to write to him, when I had any thing worthy of communicating. I generally kept copies of my letters to him, that I might have a full view of our correspondence, and never be at a loss to understand any reference in his letters. He kept the greater part of mine very carefully; and a short time before his death was attentive enough to seal them up in bundles, and order them to be delivered to me, which was accordingly done. Amongst them I found one, of which I had not made a copy, and which I own I read with pleasure at the distance of almost twenty years. It is dated November, 1765, at the Palace of Paoli, in Corte, the capital of Corsica, and is full of generous enthusiasm. After giving a sketch of what I had seen and heard in that island, it proceeded thus: "I dare to call this a spirited tour. I dare to challenge your approbation."

This letter produced the following answer, which I found on my arrival at Paris.

"A MR. BOSWELL,
chez Mr. Waters, Banquier à Paris.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 14 Jan. 1766.

"DEAR SIR,—Apologies are seldom of any use. We will delay the reasons, good or bad, which have made me such a sparing and ungrateful correspondent. Be assured, for the present, that nothing has lessened either the esteem or love with which I dismissed you at Harwich.—Both have been

¹ [This trait is amusing: Mr. Boswell concludes that because Johnson did not, for two years, write to him, he wrote to nobody, and was exclusively occupied with his Shakspeare, though we have seen, that, in those years, he found time to pay visits to his friends in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire, and at Cambridge and Winchester. He also visited Brighton. If Mr. Boswell had been those two years in London, there can be no doubt that he would have found Johnson by no means absorbed in Shakspeare.—Ed.]

increased by all that I have been told of you by yourself, or others; and when you return, you will return to an unaltered, and, I hope, unalterable friend.

"All that you have to fear from me is the vexation of disappointing me. No man loves to frustrate expectations which have been formed in his favour; and the pleasure which I promise myself from your journals and remarks is so great, that perhaps no degree of attention or discernment will be sufficient to afford it.

"Come home, however, and take your chance. I long to see you, and to hear you; and hope that we shall not be so long separated again. Come home, and expect such welcome as is due to him, whom a wise and noble curiosity has led, where perhaps no native of this country ever was before.

"I have no news to tell you that can deserve your notice; nor would I willingly lessen the pleasure that any novelty may give you at your return. I am afraid we shall find it difficult to keep among us a mind which has been so long feasted with variety. But let us try what esteem and kindness can effect.

"As your father's liberality has indulged you with so long a ramble, I doubt not but you will think his sickness, or even his desire to see you, a sufficient reason for hastening your return. The longer we live, and the more we think, the higher value we learn to put on the friendship and tenderness of parents and of friends. Parents we can have but once; and he promises himself too much, who enters life with the expectation of finding many friends. Upon some motive, I hope, that you will be here soon; and am willing to think that it will be an inducement to your return, that it is sincerely desired by, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.
"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 14 Jan. 1766.

"DEAR MADAM,—The reason why I did not answer your letters was that I can please myself with no answer. I was loath that Kitty should leave the house till I had seen it once more, and yet for some reasons I cannot well come during the session of parliament². I am

² [The reasons which confined him to London, during the session of parliament, may be suspected to have had some connexion with his engagement in politics with Hamilton; and it must be confessed, that Mr. Hamilton's declaration, (*ante*, p. 218), that he could not explain what these allusions meant, looks like the evasion of a question which that gentleman did not wish, perhaps did not feel himself authorised, to answer unreservedly. It seems clear, that Johnson was employed by or with Hamilton in some course of political occupation, which obliged

unwilling to sell it, yet hardly know why. If it can be let, it should be repaired, and I purpose to let Kitty have part of the rent while we both live; and wish that you would get it surveyed, and let me know how much money will be necessary to fit it for a tenant. I would not have you stay longer than is convenient, and I thank you for your care of Kitty.

“Do not take my omission amiss. I am sorry for it, but know not what to say. You must act by your own prudence, and I shall be pleased. Write to me again; I do not design to neglect you any more. It is great pleasure for me to hear from you; but this whole affair is painful to me. I wish you, my dear, many happy years. Give my respects to Kitty. I am, dear madam, your most affectionate humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

Ed. [We find in a letter from Dr. Warton to his brother some account of Johnson and his society at this period.

“DR. WARTON TO MR. WARTON.

“22d Jan. 1766.

Mem. of Dr. W. P. 312. “I only dined with Johnson, who seemed cold¹ and indifferent, and scarce said any thing to me; perhaps he has heard what I said of his Shakespeare, or rather was offended at what I wrote to him—as he pleases. Of all solemn coxcombs, Goldsmith is the first; yet sensible—but affects to use Johnson’s hard words in conversation. We had a Mr. Dyer² who is a scholar and a gentleman. Garrick is entirely off from Johnson, and cannot, he says, forgive him his insinuating that he withheld his old editions, which were always open to him, nor I suppose his never mentioning him in all his works.”]

him to be in town during the session of parliament, and which Johnson thought likely to be of such continuance and importance, as to require his preparing for entering upon it by the solemnity of a prayer.—Ed.]

¹ [This slight coolness between Johnson and Joseph Warton was probably not serious. A subsequent difference, which arose out of a dispute at Sir Joshua Reynolds’s table, was more lasting.—Ed.]

² Samuel Dyer, Esq. a most learned and ingenious member of the Literary Club, for whose understanding and attainments Dr. Johnson had great respect. He died September 14, 1772. A more particular account of this gentleman may be found in a note on the *Life of Dryden*, p. 186, prefixed to the edition of that great writer’s prose works, in four volumes, 8vo. 1800: in which his character is vindicated, and the very unfavourable and unjust representation of it, given by Sir John Hawkins in his *Life of Johnson*, p. 222—232, is minutely examined.—MALONE. [Johnson paid Dyer a degree of deference he showed to nobody else.—Ed.]

I returned to London in February, and found Dr. Johnson in a good house in Johnson’s-court, Fleet-street, in which he had accommodated Miss Williams with an apartment on the ground floor, while Mr. Levett occupied his post in the garret: his faithful Francis was still attending upon him. [An upper room, which had the advantages of a good light and free air, he fitted up for a study, and furnished with books, chosen with so little regard to editions or their external appearance, as showed they were intended for use, and that he disdained the ostentation of learning. Here he was in a situation and circumstances that enabled him to enjoy the visits of his friends, and to receive them in a manner suitable to the rank and condition of many of them. A silver standish, and some useful plate, which he had been prevailed on to accept as pledges of kindness from some who most esteemed him, together with furniture that would not have disgraced a better dwelling, banished those appearances of squalid indigence, which, in his less happy days, disgusted those who came to see him. In one of his diaries he noted down a resolution to take a seat in the church: this he might possibly do about the time of this removal. The church he frequented was that of St. Clement Danes, which, though not his parish church, he preferred to that of the Temple, which latter Sir John Hawkins had recommended to him as being free from noise, and, in other respects, more commodious. His only reason was, that in the former he was best known. He was not constant in his attendance on divine worship; but, from an opinion peculiar to himself, and which he once intimated to me, seemed to wait for some secret impulse as a motive to it. The Sundays which he passed at home were, nevertheless, spent in private exercises of devotion, and sanctified by acts of charity of a singular kind: on that day he accepted of no invitation abroad, but gave a dinner to such of his poor friends as might else have gone without one. He had little now to conflict with but what he called his morbid melancholy, which, though oppressive, had its intermissions, and left him the free exercise of all his faculties, and the power of enjoying the conversation of his numerous friends and visitants. These reliefs he owed in a great measure to the use of opium³, which he was accustomed to

Hawk.
p. 452-4.

³ [As Boswell does not contradict this statement, it must be presumed to be true, and is therefore admitted into the text; but it will be seen that, many years after this, and even when labouring under his last fatal illness, Johnson had some scruples about the use of opium. Perhaps, if we are to give credit to Hawkins’s assertion, these later scruples may have arisen from his hav-

take in large quantities, the effect whereof was generally such an exhilaration of his spirits as he sometimes suspected for intoxication.

He received me with much kindness. The fragments of our first conversation, which I have preserved, are these: I told him that Voltaire, in a conversation with me, had distinguished Pope and Dryden thus:—"Pope drives a handsome chariot, with a couple of neat trim nags; Dryden a coach, and six stately horses¹." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the truth is, they both drive coaches and six; but Dryden's horses are either galloping or stumbling: Pope's go at a steady even trot²." He said of Goldsmith's "Traveller," which had been published in my absence, "There has not been so fine a poem since Pope's time."

And here it is proper to settle, with authentic precision, what has long floated in public report, as to Johnson's being himself the authour of a considerable part of that poem. Much, no doubt, both of the sentiments and expression were derived from conversation with him³, and it was certainly submitted to his friendly revision: but in the year 1783, he at my request marked with a pencil the lines which he had furnished, which are only line 420th,

"To stop too fearful, and too faint to go;"

and the concluding ten lines, except the last couplet but one, which I distinguish by the Italic character:

"How small of all that human hearts endure,
That part which kings or laws can cause or cure.
Still to ourselves in every place consign'd,
Our own felicity we make or find;
With secret course which no loud storms annoy,
Glides the smooth current of domestick joy:
*The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,
Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,*

ing formerly made too frequent use of this fascinating palliative.—ED.]

¹ It is remarkable that Mr. Gray has employed somewhat the same image to characterize Dryden. He indeed furnishes his car with but two horses; but they are of "ethereal race:"

"Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car,
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race, [pace."
With necks in thunder clothed, and long resounding
Ode on the Progress of Poesy.—BOSWELL.

² [Johnson, in the life of Pope, has made a comparison between him and Dryden, in the spirit of this correction of Voltaire's metaphor. It is one of the most beautiful critical passages in our language, and was probably suggested to Johnson's mind by this conversation, although he did not make use of the same illustration.—ED.]

³ [This rests on no authority whatever, and may well be doubted. The *Traveller* is a poem which, in a peculiar degree, seems written from the personal observation and feelings of its author.—ED.]

To men remote from power, but rarely known,
Leave reason, faith, and conscience, all our own."

He added, "These are all of which I can be sure." They bear a small proportion to the whole, which consists of four hundred and thirty-eight verses. Goldsmith, in the couplet which he inserted⁴, mentions *Luke* as a person well known, and superficial readers have passed it over quite smoothly; while those of more attention have been as much perplexed by *Luke* as by *Lydiat*, in "The Vanity of Human Wishes." The truth is, that Goldsmith himself was in a mistake. In the "*Respublica Hungarica*," there is an account of a desperate rebellion in the year 1514, headed by two brothers, of the name of *Zeck*, George and *Luke*." When it was quelled, *George*, not *Luke*, was punished by his head being encircled with a red hot iron crown: "*coronâ candescente ferreâ coronatur*." The same severity of torture was exercised on the Earl of Athol, one of the murderers of King James I. of Scotland⁵.

Dr. Johnson at the same time favoured me by marking the lines which he furnished to Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," which are only the last four:

"That trade's proud empire hastes to swift decay,
As ocean sweeps the labour'd mole away:
While self-dependent power can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky."

Talking of education, "People have now-days (said he) got a strange opinion that every thing should be taught by lectures. Now, I cannot see that lectures can do so much good as reading the books from which the lectures are taken. I know nothing that can be best taught by lectures, except where experiments are to be shown. You may teach chymistry by lectures:—you might teach making shoes by lectures!"

At night I supped with him at the Mitre tavern, that we might renew our social intimacy at the original place of meeting. But there was now a considerable difference in his way of living. Having had an illness⁶, in which he was advised to leave off wine, he had, from that period, continued

⁴ [This is a strange way of speaking of the lines of an author in *his own poem*—Johnson's were rather the *insertion*; and it must be observed that they could only have been alterations of, or substitutions for other lines, conveying, though perhaps in less effective language, the same or similar sentiments.—ED.]

⁵ On the iron crown, see Mr. Steevens's note 7, on act iv. scene i. of Richard III. It seems to be alluded to in Macbeth, act iv. scene i.: "Thy crown does sear," &c. See also *Gough's Camden*; vol. iii. p. 396.—BLAKEWAY.

⁶ [Probably the severe fit of hypochondria referred to *ante*, vol. i. p. 501.—ED.]

to abstain from it, and drank only water or lemonade.

I told him that a foreign friend of his¹, whom I had met with abroad, was so wretchedly perverted to infidelity, that he treated the hopes of immortality with brutal levity; and said, "As man dies like a dog, let him lie like a dog." JOHNSON. "If he dies like a dog, let him lie like a dog." I added, that this man said to me, "I hate mankind, for I think myself one of the best of them, and I know how bad I am." JOHNSON. "Sir, he must be very singular in his opinion, if he thinks himself one of the best of men; for none of his friends think him so."—He said, "No honest man could be a Deist; for no man could be so after a fair examination of the proofs of Christianity." I named Hume. JOHNSON. "No, sir; Hume owned to a clergyman in the bishoprick of Durham, that he had never read the New Testament with attention."—I mentioned Hume's notion, that all who are happy are equally happy; a little miss with a new gown at a dancing-school ball, a general at the head of a victorious army, and an orator after having made an eloquent speech in a great assembly. JOHNSON. "Sir, that all who are happy are equally happy, is not true. A peasant and a philosopher may be equally *satisfied* but not equally *happy*. Happiness consists in the multiplicity of agreeable consciousness. A peasant has not capacity for having equal happiness with a philosopher." I remember this very question very happily illustrated in opposition to Hume, by the Rev. Mr. Robert Brown, at Utrecht. "A small drinking-glass and a large one (said he) may be equally full, but the large one holds more than the small²."

¹ [Probably Baretto.—ED.]

² Bishop Hall, in discussing this subject, has the same image: "Yet so conceive of these heavenly degrees, that the least is glorious. *So do these vessels differ, that all are full.*"—*Epistles*, Dec. iii. cap. 6. "Of the different degrees of heavenly glory." This most learned and ingenious writer, however, was not the first who suggested this image; for it is found also in an old book entitled "A Work worth the reading," by Charles Gibbon, 4to. 1591. In the fifth dialogue of this work, in which the question debated is, "whether there be degrees of glorie in heaven, or difference of paines in hell," one of the speakers observes, that "no doubt in the world to come (where the least pleasure is unspeakable), it cannot be but that he which hath bin most afflicted here shall conceive and receive more exceeding joy than he which hath bin touched with lesse tribulation: and yet the joyes of heaven are fitlie compared to *vessels filled with licour, of all quantities*; for everie man shall have his full measure there." By "*all quantities*," this writer (who seems to refer to a still more ancient

Dr. Johnson was very kind this evening, and said to me, "You have now lived five-and-twenty years, and you have employed them well." "Alas, sir, (said I), I fear not. Do I know history? Do I know mathematics? Do I know law?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, though you may know no science so well as to be able to teach it, and no profession so well as to be able to follow it, your general mass of knowledge of books and men renders you very capable to make yourself master of any science, or fit yourself for any profession." I mentioned that a gay friend had advised me against being a lawyer, because I should be excelled by plodding blockheads. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, in the formulary and statutory part of law, a plodding blockhead may excel; but in the ingenious and rational part of it, a plodding blockhead can never excel."

I talked of the mode adopted by some to rise in the world, by courting great men³, and asked him whether he had ever submitted to it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I never was near enough to great men, to court them. You may be prudently attached to great men, and yet independent. You are not to do what you think wrong; and, sir, you are to calculate, and not pay too dear for what you get. You must not give a shilling's worth of court for sixpence worth of good. But if you can get a shilling's worth of good for sixpence worth of court, you are a fool if you do not pay court."

He said, "If convents should be allowed at all, they should only be retreats for persons unable to serve the publick, or who have served it. It is our first duty to serve society⁴; and after we have done that, we

author than himself), I suppose, means *different* quantities.—MALONE.

[All these illustrations, like most physical illustrations of moral subjects, are imperfect. A little miss and a great general are not *full* of the *same* liquor: the peasant's cup may be as full as the philosopher's, but one may be full of water and the other of wine. Moral and intellectual feelings are not to be estimated by *quantity* only, but by the quality also.—ED.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 50.—ED.]

⁴ [This observation has given offence, as if it seemed to sanction the postponement of the care of our salvation, until we should have performed all our duties to society; which would be, in fact, an adjournment *sine die*. But Dr. Johnson was talking of monastic retirement, and, from the context, as well as from his own practice, it is clear that he must have meant, that an *entire abstraction* from the world, and an *exclusive* dedication to *recluse* devotion, was not justifiable as long as any of our duties to society were unperformed. Bishop Taylor, who will not be suspected of worldliness, has a sentiment not dissimilar: "If our youth be chaste and temperate, moderate and industrious, proceeding, through a prudent and sober manhood, to a *religious* old age, then we

may attend wholly to the salvation of our own souls. A youthful passion for abstracted devotion should not be encouraged."

I introduced the subject of second sight, and other mysterious manifestations; the fulfilment of which, I suggested, might happen by chance. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, but they have happened so often¹, that mankind have agreed to think them not fortuitous."

I talked to him a great deal of what I had seen in Corsica, and of my intention to publish an account of it. He encouraged me by saying, "You cannot go to the bottom of the subject; but all that you tell us will be new to us. Give us as many anecdotes as you can."

Our next meeting at the Mitre was on Saturday the 15th of February, when I presented to him my old and most intimate friend, the Rev. Mr. Temple, then of Cambridge. I having mentioned that I had passed some time with Rousseau in his wild retreat, and having quoted some remark made by Mr. Wilkes, with whom I had spent many pleasant hours in Italy, Johnson said (sarcastically), "It seems, sir, you have kept very good company abroad, Rousseau and Wilkes?" Thinking it enough to defend one at a time, I said nothing as to my gay friend, but answered with a smile, "My dear sir, you don't call Rousseau bad company. Do you really think *him* a bad man?" JOHNSON. "Sir, if you are talking jestingly of this, I don't talk with you. If you mean to be serious, I think him one of the worst of men; a rascal, who ought to be hunted out of society, as he has been. Three or four nations have expelled him: and it is a shame that he is protected in this country." BOSWELL. "I don't deny, sir, but that his novel² may, perhaps, do harm; but I cannot think his intention was bad." JOHNSON. "Sir, that will not do. We cannot prove any man's intention to be bad.

have lived our whole duration, and shall never die."—*Holy Dying*, c. i. s. 3. Neither the bishop nor Dr. Johnson could mean that *youth and manhood* should not be *religious*, but that they should not be religious to the *exclusion* of the social duties of industry, prudence, &c. See *post*, 19th August, 1773, where Johnson quotes from Hesiod, a line which Bishop Taylor had probably in his mind.—ED.]

¹ [The fact seems rather to be, that they have happened so *seldom* that (however general *superstition* may be) there does not seem to be on record in the profane history of the world, one single well authenticated instance of such a manifestation—not one such instance as could command the full belief of rational men. Although Dr. Johnson generally leaned to the superstitious side of this question, it will be seen that he occasionally took a different and more rational view of it.—ED.]

² [*La Nouvelle Heloise*.—ED.]

You may shoot a man through the head, and say you intended to miss him; but the judge will order you to be hanged. An alleged want of intention, when evil is committed, will not be allowed in a court of justice. Rousseau, sir, is a very bad man. I would sooner sign a sentence for his transportation, than that of any felon who has gone from the Old Bailey these many years. Yes, I should like to have him work in the plantations." BOSWELL. "Sir, do you think him as bad a man as Voltaire?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is difficult to settle the proportion of iniquity between them."

This violence seemed very strange to me, who had read many of Rousseau's animated writings with great pleasure, and even edification; had been much pleased with his society, and was just come from the Continent, where he was very generally admired. Nor can I yet allow that he deserves the very severe censure which Johnson pronounced upon him. His absurd preference of savage to civilized life, and other singularities, are proofs rather of a defect in his understanding, than of any depravity in his heart³. And notwithstanding the unfavourable opinion which many worthy men have expressed of his "*Profession de Foi du Vicaire Savoyard*," I cannot help admiring it as the performance of a man full of sincere reverential submission to Divine Mystery, though beset with perplexing doubts: a state of mind to be viewed with pity rather than with anger.

On his favourite subject of subordination, Johnson said, "So far is it from being true that men are naturally equal, and no two people can be half an hour together, but one shall acquire an evident superiority over the other⁴."

I mentioned the advice given us by philosophers, to console ourselves, when distressed or embarrassed, by thinking of those who are in a worse situation than ourselves. This, I observed, could not apply to all, for

[The *Confessions* of this miserable man had not been at this time published. If we are to admit Mr. Boswell's distinction between the *understanding* and the *heart*, it would seem that his judgment on this point should be reversed, for Rousseau's understanding was sound enough when the folly and turpitude of his *heart* did not disorder it.—ED.]

⁴ [No mistake was ever greater, in terms or in substance, than that which affirms the *natural* equality of mankind. Men, on the contrary, are born so very unequal in capacities and powers, mental and corporeal, that it requires laws and the institutions of civil society to bring them to a state of *moral* equality. *Social* equality—that is, equality in property, power, rank, and respect—if it were miraculously established, could not maintain itself a week.—ED.]

there must be some who have nobody worse than they are. JOHNSON. "Why, to be sure, sir, there are; but they don't know it. There is no being so poor and so contemptible, who does not think there is somebody still poorer and still more contemptible."

As my stay in London at this time was very short, I had not many opportunities of being with Dr. Johnson; but I felt my veneration for him in no degree lessened, by my having seen *multorum hominum mores et urbes*. On the contrary, by having it in my power to compare him with many of the most celebrated persons of other countries, my admiration of his extraordinary mind was increased and confirmed.

The roughness, indeed, which sometimes appeared in his manners, was more striking to me now, from my having been accustomed to the studied smooth complying habits of the Continent; and I clearly recognized in him, not without respect for his honest conscientious zeal, the same indignant and sarcastical mode of treating every attempt to un hinge or weaken good principles.

One evening when a young gentleman teased him with an account of the infidelity of his servant, who, he said, would not believe the scriptures, because he could not read them in the original tongues, and be sure that they were not invented: "Why, foolish fellow," said Johnson, "has he any better authority for almost every thing that he believes?" BOSWELL. "Then the vulgar, sir, never can know they are right, but must submit themselves to the learned." JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir. The vulgar are the children of the state, and must be taught like children." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, a poor Turk must be a Mahometan, just as a poor Englishman must be a Christian?" JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir; and what then? This now is such stuff¹ as I used to talk to my mother, when I first began to think myself a clever fellow; and she ought to have whipt me for it."

Another evening Dr. Goldsmith and I called on him, with the hope of prevailing on him to sup with us at the Mitre. We found him indisposed, and resolved not to go abroad. "Come then," said Goldsmith, "we will not go to the Mitre to-night, since

[It may be suspected that Dr. Johnson called this "*childish stuff*," somewhat hastily, and from a desire of evading the subject; for, no doubt, the principle involved in Mr. Boswell's inquiries is one of very high importance, and of very great difficulty—difficulty so great, that Johnson himself, though, indeed (as we shall see, *post*, 7th May, 1773), sometimes led to talk seriously, and even warmly on the subject, seems unable to maintain the full extent of his principles by solid reason, and therefore ends the discussion either by ridicule or violence.—ED.]

we cannot have the *big man*² with us." Johnson then called for a bottle of port, of which Goldsmith and I partook, while our friend, now a water drinker, sat by us. GOLDSMITH. "I think, Mr. Johnson, you don't go near the theatres now. You give yourself no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had any thing to do with the stage." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, our tastes greatly alter. The lad does not care for the child's rattle, and the old man does not care for the young man's prostitute." GOLDSMITH. "Nay, sir; but your Muse was not a prostitute." JOHNSON. "I do not think she was. But as we advance in the journey of life we drop some of the things which have pleased us; whether it be that we are fatigued and don't choose to carry so many things any farther, or that we find other things which we like better." BOSWELL. "But, sir, why don't you give us something in some other way?" GOLDSMITH. "Ay, sir, we have a claim upon you." JOHNSON. "No, sir, I am not obliged to do any more. No man is obliged to do as much as he can do. A man is to have part of his life to himself. If a soldier has fought a good many campaigns, he is not to be blamed if he retires to ease and tranquillity. A physician who has practised long in a great city, may be excused, if he retires to a small town, and takes less practice. Now, sir, the good I can do by my conversation bears the same proportion to the good I can do by my writings, that the practice of a physician, retired to a small town, does to his practice in a great city." BOSWELL. "But I wonder, sir, you have not more pleasure in writing than in not writing." JOHNSON. "Sir, you *may* wonder³!"

He talked of making verses, and observed, "The great difficulty is, to know when you have made good ones. When composing, I have generally had them in my mind, perhaps fifty at a time, walking up and down in my room, and then I have written them down, and often, from laziness, have written only half lines. I have written a hundred lines in a day. I remember I wrote

² [These two little words may be observed as marks of Mr. Boswell's accuracy in reporting the expressions of his personages. It is a jocular Irish phrase, which, of all Johnson's acquaintances, no one, probably, but Goldsmith *could* have used.—ED.]

³ [This is another amusing trait of Mr. Boswell's accuracy and *bonne foi*. Can any thing be more comic than Johnson's affectation of superiority, even to the degree of supposing that Boswell would not dare to wonder without his special sanction, and the deference with which Boswell receives and records such gracious condescension?—ED.]

a hundred lines of 'The Vanity of Human Wishes' in a day. Doctor (turning to Goldsmith), I am not quite idle; I made one line t'other day; but I made no more." GOLDSMITH. "Let us hear it; we'll put a bad one to it." JOHNSON. "No, sir, I have forgot it."

Such specimens of the easy and playful conversation of the great Dr. Samuel Johnson are, I think, to be prized; as exhibiting the little varieties of a mind so enlarged and so powerful when objects of consequence required its exertions, and as giving us a minute knowledge of his character and modes of thinking.

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 9th March, 1766.

"DEAR SIR,—What your friends have done, that from your departure till now nothing has been heard of you, none of us are able to inform the rest; but as we are all neglected alike, no one thinks himself entitled to the privilege of complaint.

"I should have known nothing of you or of Langton, from the time that dear Miss Langton¹ left us, had not I met Mr. Simpson, of Lincoln, one day in the street, by whom I was informed that Mr. Langton, your mamma, and yourself, had been all ill, but that you were all recovered.

"That sickness should suspend your correspondence, I did not wonder; but hoped that it would be renewed at your recovery.

"Since you will not inform us where you are, or how you live, I know not whether you desire to know any thing of us. However, I will tell you that THE CLUB subsists; but we have the loss of Burke's company since he has been engaged in publick business² in which he has gained more reputation than perhaps any man at his (first) appearance ever gained before. He made two speeches in the house for repealing the stamp-act, which were publickly commended by Mr. Pitt, and have filled the town with wonder.

"Burke is a great man by nature, and is expected soon to attain civil greatness. I am grown greater too, for I have maintained the newspapers these many weeks³; and what is greater still, I have risen every morning since New-year's day, at about eight: when I was up, I have indeed done but little: yet it is no slight advancement to obtain for so many hours more the consciousness of being.

"I wish you were in my new study⁴; I

am now writing the first letter in it. I think it looks very pretty about me.

"Dyer is constant at THE CLUB; Hawkins is remiss; I am not over diligent. Dr. Nugent, Dr. Goldsmith, and Mr. Reynolds, are very constant. Mr. Lye⁵ is printing his Saxon and Gothick Dictionary: all THE CLUB subscribes.

"You will pay my respects to all my Lincolnshire friends. I am, dear sir, most affectionately yours, "SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 10th May, 1766.

"DEAR SIR,—In supposing that I should be more than commonly affected by the death of Peregrine Langton⁶, you were not mistaken; he was one of those whom I loved at once by instinct and by reason. I have seldom indulged more hope of any thing than of being able to improve our acquaintance to friendship. Many a time have I plac'd myself again at Langton, imagin'd the pleasure with which I should walk to Partney⁷ in a summer morning; but this is no longer possible. We must now endeavour to preserve what is left us—his example of piety and economy. I hope you make what inquiries you can, and write down what is told you. The little things which distinguish domestick characters are soon forgotten: if you delay to inquire, you will have no information; if you neglect to write, information will be vain⁸.

this kind in the prayer composed "on entering *Novum Museum*," two days previous to the date of this letter. *Prayers and Meditations*, 68.—HALL.]

⁵ [Edward Lye is stated, in the Biographical Dictionary, to have been born in 1704, probably by mistake for 1694. He was of Hart Hall, A. B. in 1716, and A. M. in 1722. He published the *Etymologicum Anglicanum* of Junius. His great work is that referred to above, the *Anglo-Saxon and Gothick Dictionary*, which he had finished, and it seems was printing, but he did not live to see the publication. He died in 1767, and the Dictionary was published by the Rev. Owen Manning in 1772.—ED.]

⁶ Mr. Langton's uncle.

⁷ The place of residence of Mr. Peregrine Langton.

⁸ Mr. Langton did not disregard this counsel, but wrote the following account, which he has been pleased to communicate to me:

"The circumstances of Mr. Peregrine Langton were these. He had an annuity for life of two hundred pounds per annum. He resided in a village in Lincolnshire: the rent of his house, with two or three small fields, was twenty-eight pounds; the county he lived in was not more than moderately cheap: his family consisted of a sister, who paid him eighteen pounds annually for her board, and a niece. The servants were two maids, and two men in livery. His common way of living, at his table, was three or four dishes;

¹ [Mr. Langton's eldest sister.—ED.]

² [Mr. Burke came into parliament under the auspices of the Marquis of Rockingham, in the year 1765.—ED.]

³ [Probably with criticisms on his Shakspeare.—ED.]

⁴ [He refers to some new accommodations of

“His art of life certainly deserves to be known and studied. He lived in plenty and elegance upon an income which to many

the appurtenances to his table were neat and handsome; he frequently entertained company at dinner, and then his table was well served with as many dishes as were usual at the tables of the other gentlemen in the neighbourhood. His own appearance, as to clothes, was genteelly neat and plain. He had always a postchaise, and kept three horses.

“Such, with the resources I have mentioned, was his way of living, which he did not suffer to employ his whole income; for he had always a sum of money lying by him for any extraordinary expenses that might arise. Some money he put into the stocks; at his death, the sum he had there amounted to one hundred and fifty pounds. He purchased out of his income his household furniture and linen, of which latter he had a very ample store; and, as I am assured by those that had very good means of knowing, not less than the tenth part of his income was set apart for charity: at the time of his death, the sum of twenty-five pounds was found, with a direction to be employed in such uses.

“He had laid down a plan of living proportioned to his income, and did not practise any extraordinary degree of parsimony, but endeavoured that in his family there should be plenty without waste. As an instance that this was his endeavour, it may be worth while to mention a method he took in regulating a proper allowance of malt liquor to be drunk in his family, that there might not be a deficiency, or any intemperate profusion:—On a complaint made that his allowance of a hogshhead in a month was not enough for his own family, he ordered the quantity of a hogshhead to be put into bottles, had it locked up from the servants, and distributed out, every day, eight quarts, which is the quantity each day at one hogshhead in a month; and told his servants, that if that did not suffice, he would allow them more; but, by this method, it appeared at once that the allowance was much more than sufficient for his small family; and this proved a clear conviction, that could not be answered, and saved all future dispute. He was, in general, very diligently and punctually attended and obeyed by his servants; he was very considerate as to the injunctions he gave, and explained them distinctly; and, at their first coming to his service, steadily exacted a close compliance with them, without any remission: and the servants finding this to be the case, soon grew habitually accustomed to the practice of their business, and then very little further attention was necessary. On extraordinary instances of good behaviour or diligent service, he was not wanting in particular encouragements and presents above their wages: it is remarkable that he would permit their relations to visit them, and stay at his house two or three days at a time.

“The wonder, with most that hear an account of his economy, will be, how he was able, with such an income, to do so much, especially when it is considered that he paid for every thing he had. He had no land, except the two or three small fields which I have said he rented; and, in-

would appear indigent, and to most scanty. How he lived, therefore, every man has an interest in knowing. His death, I hope, was peaceful; it was surely happy.

“I wish I had written sooner, lest, writing now, I should renew your grief; but I would not forbear saying what I have now said.

“This loss is, I hope, the only misfortune

stead of gaining any thing by their produce, I have reason to think he lost by them: however, they furnished him with no further assistance towards his housekeeping than grass for his horses (not hay, for that I know he bought), and for two cows. Every Monday morning he settled his family accounts, and so kept up a constant attention to the confining his expenses within his income; and to do it more exactly, compared those expenses with a computation he had made, how much that income would afford him every week and day of the year. One of his economical practices was, as soon as any repair was wanting in or about his house, to have it immediately performed. When he had money to spare, he chose to lay in a provision of linen or clothes, or any other necessaries; as then, he said, he could afford it, which he might not be so well able to do when the actual want came; in consequence of which method he had a considerable supply of necessary articles lying by him, beside what was in use.

“But the main particular that seems to have enabled him to do so much with his income, was, that he paid for every thing as soon as he had it, except alone what were current accounts, such as rent for his house, and servants' wages; and these he paid at the stated times with the utmost exactness. He gave notice to the tradesmen of the neighbouring market-towns that they should no longer have his custom, if they let any of his servants have any thing without their paying for it. Thus he put it out of his power to commit those imprudences to which those are liable that defer their payments by using their money some other way than where it ought to go. And whatever money he had by him, he knew that it was not demanded elsewhere, but that he might safely employ it as he pleased.

“His example was confined, by the sequestered place of his abode, to the observation of few, though his prudence and virtue would have made it valuable to all who could have known it. These few particulars, which I knew myself, or have obtained from those who lived with him, may afford instruction, and be an incentive to that wise art of living which he so successfully practised.”—BOSWELL. [With all our respect for Mr. Bennet Langton's acknowledged character for accuracy and veracity, there seems something, in the foregoing relation, absolutely incomprehensible—a house, a good table, frequent company, four servants (two of them men in livery), a carriage and three horses on 200*l.* a year! Economy and ready money payments will do much to diminish current expenses, but what effect can they have had on rent, taxes, wages, and other permanent charges of a respectable domestic establishment?—Ed.]

of a family to whom no misfortune at all should happen, if my wishes could avert it. Let me know how you all go on. Has Mr. Langton got him the little horse that I recommended? It would do him good to ride about his estate in fine weather.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to Mrs. Langton, and to dear Miss Langton, and Miss Di, and Miss Juliet, and to every body else.

"THE CLUB holds very well together. Monday is my night¹. I continue to rise tolerably well, and read more than I did. I hope something will yet come on it. I am, sir, your most affectionate servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

After I had been some time in Scotland, I mentioned to him in a letter that "On my first return to my native country, after some years of absence, I was told of a vast number of my acquaintance who were all gone to the land of forgetfulness, and I found myself like a man stalking over a field of battle, who every moment perceives some one lying dead." I complained of irresolution, and mentioned my having made a vow as a security for good conduct. I wrote to him again without being able to move his indolence: nor did I hear from him till he had received a copy of my inaugural Exercise, or Thesis in Civil Law, which I published at my admission as an advocate, as is the custom in Scotland. He then wrote to me as follows:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 21st August, 1766.

"DEAR SIR,—The reception of your Thesis put me in mind of my debt to you. Why did you *****². I will punish you for it, by telling you that your Latin wants correction³. In the beginning *Spei*,

¹ Of his being in the chair of the Literary Club, which at this time met once a week in the evening.—BOSWELL. [The day was soon after changed to Friday.—ED.]

² The passage omitted alluded to a private transaction.—BOSWELL.

³ This censure of my Latin relates to the dedication, which was as follows: "Viro nobilissimo ornatissimo, Joanni, Vicecomiti Mountstuart, atavis edito regibus, excelsæ familiæ de Bute *spei alteræ*; labente seculo, quum homines *nullius originis genus* æquare opibus aggrediuntur, sanguinis antiqui et illustris semper memori, natalium splendorem virtutibus augenti: ad publica populi conuitia jam legato; in optinatum vero magnæ Britannię senatu, jure hæreditario, olim consensuro: vim insitam variâ doctrinâ promovente, nec tamen se venditante, prædito: priscâ fide, animo liberrimo, et morum elegantia insigni: in Italiæ visitandæ itinere socio suo honoratissimo, hæc jurisprudentiæ primitias devinctissimæ amicitię et observantiæ, monumentum, D. D. C. Q. Jacobus Boswell."—BOSWELL.

alteræ, not to urge that it should be *primæ*, is not grammatical; *alteræ* should be *alteri*. In the next line you seem to use *genus* absolutely, for what we call *family*, that is, for *illustrious extraction*, I doubt without authority. *Homines nullius originis*, for *nullis orti majoribus*, or *nullo loco nati*, is, as I am afraid, barbarous.—Ruddiman is dead⁴.

"I have now vexed you enough, and will try to please you. Your resolution to obey your father I sincerely approve; but do not accustom yourself to enchain your volatility by vows; they will sometimes leave a thorn in your mind, which you will, perhaps, never be able to extract or eject. Take this warning; it is of great importance.

"The study of the law is what you very justly term it, copious and generous⁵; and in adding your name to its professors, you have done exactly what I always wished, when I wished you best. I hope that you will continue to pursue it vigorously and constantly. You gain, at least, what is no small advantage, security from those troublesome and wearisome discontents, which are always obtruding themselves upon a mind vacant, unemployed, and undetermined.

"You ought to think it no small inducement to diligence and perseverance, that they will please your father. We all live upon the hope of pleasing somebody, and the pleasure of pleasing ought to be greatest, and at last always will be greatest, when our endeavours are exerted in consequence of our duty.

"Life is not long, and too much of it must not pass in idle deliberation how it shall be spent: deliberation, which those who begin it by prudence, and continue it with subtilty, must, after long expense of thought, conclude by chance. To prefer one future mode of life to another, upon just reasons, requires faculties which it has not pleased our Creator to give us.

"If, therefore, the profession you have chosen has some unexpected inconveniences, console yourself by reflecting that no profession is without them; and that all the importunities and perplexities of business are softness and luxury, compared with the incessant cravings of vacancy, and the unsatisfactory expedience of idleness.

⁴ [He says *Ruddiman* (a great grammarian) is dead—as in former days it was said that *Priscian's head was broken*. *Ruddiman*, who was born in 1644, had died in 1757. See *ante*, p. 86.—ED.]

⁵ This alludes to the first sentence of the Proœmium of my Thesis. "Jurisprudentiæ studio nunum uberius, nullum generosius: in legibus enim agitandis, populorũ mores, variasque fortunæ vices ex quibus leges oriuntur, contemplari simul solemus."—BOSWELL.

‘Hæc sunt quæ nostrâ potui te voce monere;
Vade, age.’

“As to your History of Corsica, you have no materials which others have not, or may not have. You have, somehow or other, warmed your imagination. I wish there were some cure, like the lover’s leap, for all heads of which some single idea has obtained an unreasonable and irregular possession. Mind your own affairs, and leave the Corsicans to theirs.—I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

“Auchinleck, 6th Nov. 1766.

“MUCH ESTEEMED AND DEAR SIR,—I plead not guilty to 1 * * *

“Having thus, I hope, cleared myself of the charge brought against me, I presume you will not be displeas’d if I escape the punishment which you have decreed for me unheard. If you have discharged the arrows of criticism against an innocent man, you must rejoice to find they have missed him, or have not been pointed so as to wound him.

“To talk no longer in allegory, I am, with all deference, going to offer a few observations in defence of my Latin, which you have found fault with.

“You think I should have used *spei primæ*, instead of *spei alteræ*. *Spes* is, indeed, often used to express something on which we have a future dependence, as in Virg. Eclog. i. 1, 14.

‘————modo namque gemellos
Spem gregis ah! silice in nuda connixa reliquit.’
and in Georg. iii. 1. 473.

‘*Spemque gregemque simul,*

for the lambs and the sheep. Yet it is also used to express any thing on which we have a present dependence, and is well applied to a man of distinguished influence,—our support, our refuge on *præsidium*, as Horace calls Mæcenas. So, Æneid xii. l. 57, Queen Amata addresses her son-in-law, Turnus:—‘*Spes tu nunc una:*’ and he was then no future hope, for she adds,

‘————ecus imperiumque Latini
Te penes;’

which might have been said of my Lord Bute some years ago. Now I consider the present Earl of Bute to be ‘*excelsæ familiæ de Bute spes prima;*’ and my Lord Mountstuart, as his eldest son, to be ‘*spes altera.*’ So in Æneid xii. l. 168, after hav-

¹ The passage omitted explained the transaction to which the preceding letter had alluded.—
BOSWELL.

ing mentioned Pater Æneas, who was the *present spes*, the *reigning spes*, as my German friends would say, the *spes prima*, the poet adds,

‘Et juxta Ascanius, magnæ spes altera Romæ?’

“You think *alteræ* ungrammatical, and you tell me it should have been *alteri*. You must recollect, that in old times *alter* was declined regularly; and when the ancient fragments preserved in the *Juris Civilis Fontes* were written, it was certainly declined in the way that I use it. This, I should think, may protect a lawyer who writes *alteræ* in a dissertation upon part of his own science. But as I could hardly venture to quote fragments of old law to so classical a man as Mr. Johnson, I have not made an accurate search into these remains, to find examples of what I am able to produce in poetical composition. We find in Plaut. Rudens, act iii. scene 4,

‘Nam huic *alteræ* patria quæ sit profecto nescio.’

Plautus is, to be sure, an old comic writer; but in the days of Scipio and Lælius, we find Terent. Heautontim. act ii. scene 3.

‘————hoc ipsa in itinere *alteræ*
Dum narrat, forte audivi.’

“You doubt my having authority for using *genus* absolutely, for what we call *family*, that is, for *illustrious extraction*. Now I take *genus* in Latin to have much the same signification with *birth* in English; both in their primary meaning expressing simply descent, but both made to stand $\kappa\alpha\tau\ \epsilon\zeta\omicron\chi\eta\nu$ for noble descent. *Genus* is thus used in Hor. lib. ii. Sat. v. l. 8.

‘Et *genus* et virtus, nisi cum re, vilior alga est.’

And in lib. i. Epist. vi. l. 37.

‘Et *genus* et formam Regina pecunia donat.’

And in the celebrated contest between Ajax and Ulysses, Ovid’s Metamorph. lib. xiii. l. 140.

‘Nam *genus* et proavos, et quæ non fecimus ipsi,
Vix ea nostra voco.’

“*Homines nullius originis.* for *nullius orti majoribus*, or *hullo loco nati*, s. you are afraid, barbarous.’

² [It is very strange that Johnson, who in his letter quotes the Æneid, should not have recollected this obvious and decisive authority for *spes altera*, nor yet the remarkable use of these words, attributed to Cicero, by Servius and Donatus; the expressions of the latter are conclusive in Mr. Boswell’s favour:

“*At cum Cicero quosdam versus (Virgilio) audisset, in fine ait: ‘Magnæ spes altera Romæ. Quasi ipse lingua Latinæ spes prima fuisset et Maro futurus esset secunda.’*”
Donat. vit. Vir. § 41.—Ed.]

“*Origo* is used to signify extraction, as in Virg. *Æneid* i. 286.

‘*Nascetur pulchrâ Trojanus origine Cæsar:*’

and in *Æneid* x. l. 618,

‘*Ille tamen nostrâ deducit origine nomen.*’

And as *nullus* is used for obscure, it is not in the genius of the Latin language to write *nullius originis*, for obscure extraction?

“I have defended myself as well as I could.

“Might I venture to differ from you with regard to the utility of vows? I am sensible that it would be very dangerous to make vows rashly, and without a due consideration. But I cannot help thinking that they may often be of great advantage to one of a variable judgment and irregular inclinations. I always remember a passage in one of your letters to our Italian friend Baretti, where, talking of the monastick life, you say you do not wonder that serious men should put themselves under the protection of a religious order, when they have found how unable they are to take care of themselves. For my own part, without affecting to be a Socrates, I am sure I have a more than ordinary struggle to maintain with the *Evil Principle*; and all the methods I can devise are little enough to keep me tolerably steady in the paths of rectitude.

* * * * *

“I am ever, with the highest veneration, your affectionate humble servant,

“JAMES BOSWELL.”

Piozzi, p. 173, 174. [Much of Johnson’s eloquence and much of his logick were occasionally used to prevent men from making vows on trivial occasions; and when he saw a person oddly perplexed about a slight difficulty, “Let the man alone (he would say), and torment him no more about it; there is a vow in the case, I am convinced; but is it not very strange that people should be neither afraid nor ashamed of bringing in God Almighty thus at every turn between themselves and their dinner?” When once asked what ground he had for such imaginations, he replied, “That a young lady once told him in confidence, that she could never persuade herself to be dressed against the bell rung for dinner, till she made a vow to heaven that she would never more be absent from the family meals.”]

It appears from Johnson’s diary¹, that he was this year at Mr. Thrale’s, from before Midsummer till after Michaelmas, and that he afterwards passed a month at Oxford.

¹ [“I returned from Streatham, Oct. 1, having lived there more than three months.”—*Prayers and Meditations*, p. 70.—Ed.]

He had then² contracted a great intimacy with Mr. Chambers of that university, afterwards Sir Robert Chambers, one of the judges in India.

He published nothing this year in his own name; but the noble dedication* to the king of Gwyn’s “London and Westminster Improved³,” was written by him; and he furnished the Preface†, and several of the pieces, which compose a volume of Miscellanies by Mrs. Anna Williams, the blind lady who had an asylum in his house⁴. Of these, there are his “Epitaph on Phillips*,” “Translation of a Latin Epitaph on Sir Thomas Hanmer†,” “Friendship, an ode*,” and “The Ant*,” a paraphrase from the Proverbs, of which I have a copy in his own handwriting; and, from internal evidence, I ascribe to him, “To Miss——,”

² [He had known him at least twelve years before this. See *ante*, p. 118.—Ed.]

³ [In this work Mr. Gwyn proposed the *principle*, and in many instances the details, of the most important improvements which have been made in the metropolis in our day. A bridge near Somerset House—a great street from the neighbourhood of the Haymarket to the New Road—the improvement of the interior of St. James’s Park—quays along the Thames—new approaches to London Bridge—the removal of Smithfield market, and several other suggestions on which we pride ourselves as original designs of our own times, are all to be found in Mr. Gwyn’s very able and very curious work. It is singular, that he denounced a row of houses, then building in Piccadilly, as intolerable nuisances to Buckingham Palace, and of these very houses the public voice now calls for the destruction. Gwyn had, as Mr. D’Israeli very happily quotes, “the prophetic eye of taste.”—Ed.]

⁴ In a paper already mentioned (see p. 97. 100.) the following account of this publication is given by a lady [Lady Knight] well acquainted with Mrs. Williams:

“As to her poems, she many years attempted to publish them: the halfcrowns she had got towards the publication, she confessed to me, went for necessaries, and that the greatest pain she ever felt was from the appearance of defrauding her subscribers: ‘but what can I do? the Doctor (Johnson) always puts me off with, Well, we’ll think about it; and Goldsmith says, Leave it to me.’ However, two of her friends, under her directions, made a new subscription at a crown, the whole price of the work, and in a very little time raised sixty pounds. Mrs. Carter was applied to by Mrs. Williams’s desire, and she, with the utmost activity and kindness, procured a long list of names. At length the work was published, in which is a fine written but gloomy tale of Dr. Johnson. The money Mrs. Williams had various uses for, and a part was funded.”

By this publication Mrs. Williams got 150*l*. Ibid.—MALONE.

on her giving the Authour a gold and silver net-work purse of her own weaving † 1;” and “The happy Life †.” Most of the pieces in this volume have evidently received additions from his superiour pen, particularly “Verses to Mr. Richardson, on his Sir Charles Grandison;” “The Excursion;” “Reflections on a Grave digging in Westminster Abbey.” There is in this collection a poem, “On the death of Stephen Grey, the Electrician *;” which, on reading it, appeared to me to be undoubtedly Johnson’s. I asked Mrs. Williams whether it was not his. “Sir,” said she, with some warmth, “I wrote that poem before I had the honour of Dr. Johnson’s acquaintance.” I, however, was so much impressed with my first notion, that I mentioned it to Johnson, repeating, at the same time, what Mrs. Williams had said. His answer was, “It is true, sir, that she wrote it before she was acquainted with me; but she has not told you that I wrote it all over again, except two lines.” “The Fountains †,” a beautiful little fairy tale in prose, written with exquisite simplicity, is one of Johnson’s productions; and I cannot withhold² from Mrs. Thrale the praise of being the authour of that admirable poem, “The Three Warnings.”

He was, indeed, at all times ready to give assistance to his friends, and others, in revising their works, and in writing for them, or greatly improving, their Dedications. In that courtly species of composition no man excelled Dr. Johnson. Though the loftiness of his mind³ prevented him from ever dedicating in his own person, he wrote a very great number of dedications for others. Some of these the persons who were favoured with them are unwilling should be mentioned, from a too anxious apprehension, as I think, that they might be suspected of having received larger assistance; and some, after all the diligence I have bestowed, have escaped my inquiries. He told me, a great many years ago, “he believed he had dedicated to all the royal fam-

ily round;” and it was indifferent to him what was the subject of the work dedicated, provided it were innocent. He once dedicated some musick for the German Flute to Edward, Duke of York. In writing dedications for others, he considered himself as by no means speaking his own sentiments.

He wrote this year a letter, not intended for publication, which has, perhaps, as strong marks of his sentiment and style, as any of his compositions. The original is in my possession. It is addressed to the late Mr. William Drummond, bookseller in Edinburgh, a gentleman of good family, but small estate, who took arms for the house of Stuart in 1775; and during his concealment in London till the act of general pardon came out, obtained the acquaintance of Dr. Johnson, who justly esteemed him as a very worthy man. It seems, some of the members of the society in Scotland for propagating Christian knowledge had opposed the scheme of translating the holy scriptures into the Erse or Gaelic language, from political considerations of the disadvantage of keeping up the distinction between the Highlanders and the other inhabitants of North Britain. Dr. Johnson being informed of this, I suppose by Mr. Drummond, wrote with a generous indignation as follows:

“TO MR. WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

“Johnson’s-court, Fleet-street, 13th August, 1766.

“SIR,—I did not expect to hear that it could be, in an assembly convened for the propagation of Christian knowledge, a question whether any nation uninstructed in religion should receive instruction; or whether that instruction should be imparted to them by a translation of the holy books into their own language. If obedience to the will of God be necessary to happiness, and knowledge of his will be necessary to obedience, I know not how he that withholds this knowledge, or delays it, can be said to love his neighbour as himself. He that voluntarily continues in ignorance is guilty of all the crimes which ignorance produces; as to him that should extinguish the tapers of a light-house, might justly be imputed the calamities of shipwrecks. Christianity is the highest perfection of humanity; and as no man is good but as he wishes the good of others, no man can be good in the highest degree, who wishes not to others the largest measures of the greatest good. To omit for a year, or for a day, the most efficacious method of advancing Christianity, in compliance with any purposes that terminate on this side of the grave, is a crime of which I know not that the world has yet had an example, except in the practice of the planters of America, a race of mortals whom, I suppose, no other man wishes to resemble.

¹ [See *ante*, p. 71. n. where it is shown that the translation of the *Epitaph on Hammer* and the *Verses on the Purse* are by Hawkesworth.—Ed.]

² [This is almost a confession that he would if he could, and shows clearly the kind of feeling he had towards that lady.—Ed.]

³ [This is surely not the occasion on which one would have expected to hear of “loftiness of mind:” a dedicator in his own person *may* be sincere, but he who writes a dedication for another cannot be so, and is moreover accessory to a public deception: and when this imposition is practised for hire (however it may be excused), it ought not, surely, to be accompanied by any extravagant eulogy on *loftiness of mind*.—Ed.]

"The papists have, indeed, denied to the laity the use of the Bible; but this prohibition, in few places now very rigorously enforced, is defended by arguments, which have for their foundation the care of souls. To obscure, upon motives merely political, the light of revelation, is a practice reserved for the reformed; and, surely, the blackest midnight of popery is meridian sunshine to such a reformation. I am not very willing that any language should be totally extinguished. The similitude and derivation of languages afford the most indubitable proof of the traduction of nations, and the genealogy of mankind. They add often physical certainty to historical evidence; and often supply the only evidence of ancient migrations, and of the revolutions of ages which left no written monuments behind them.

"Every man's opinions, at least his desires, are a little influenced by his favourite studies. My zeal for languages may seem, perhaps, rather over-heated, even to those by whom I desire to be well esteemed. To those who have nothing in their thoughts but trade or policy, present power, or present money, I should not think it necessary to defend my opinions; but with men of letters I would not unwillingly compound, by wishing the continuance of every language, however narrow in its extent, or however incommodious for common purposes, till it is repositied in some version of a known book, that it may be always hereafter examined and compared with other languages, and then permitting its disuse. For this purpose, the translation of the Bible is most to be desired. It is not certain that the same method will not preserve the Highland language, for the purposes of learning, and abolish it from daily use. When the highlanders read the Bible, they will naturally wish to have its obscurities cleared, and to know the history, collateral or appendant. Knowledge always desires increase; it is like fire, which must be kindled by some external agent, but which will afterwards propagate itself. When they once desire to learn they will naturally have recourse to the nearest language by which that desire can be gratified; and one will tell another that if he would attain knowledge, he must learn English.

"This speculation may, perhaps, be thought more subtle than the grossness of real life will easily admit. Let it, however, be remembered, that the efficacy of ignorance has long been tried, and has not produced the consequence expected. Let knowledge, therefore, take its turn; and let the patrons of privation stand awhile aside, and admit the operation of positive principles.

"You will be pleased, sir, to assure the worthy man who is employed in the new

translation¹, that he has my wishes for his success; and if here or at Oxford I can be of any use, that I shall think it more than honour to promote his undertaking.

"I am sorry that I delayed so long to write.—I am, sir, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

The opponents of this pious scheme being made ashamed of their conduct, the benevolent undertaking was allowed to go on.

The following letters, though not written till the year after, being chiefly upon the same subject, are here inserted:

"TO MR. WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 21st April, 1767.

"DEAR SIR,—That my letter should have had such effects as you mention gives me great pleasure. I hope you do not flatter me by imputing to me more good than I have really done. Those whom my arguments have persuaded to change their opinion, show such modesty and candour as deserve great praise.

"I hope the worthy translator goes diligently forward. He has a higher reward in prospect than any honours which this world can bestow. I wish I could be useful to him.

"The publication of my letter, if it could be of use in a cause to which all other causes are nothing, I should not prohibit. But first, I would have you to consider whether the publication will really do any good; next whether by printing and distributing a very small number, you may not attain all that you propose; and, what perhaps I should have said first, whether the letter, which I do not now perfectly remember, be fit to be printed.

"If you can consult Dr. Robertson, to whom I am a little known, I shall be satisfied about the propriety of whatever he shall direct. If he thinks that it should be

¹ The Rev. Mr. John Campbell, minister of the parish of Kippen, near Stirling, who has lately favoured me with a long, intelligent, and very obliging letter upon this work, makes the following remark: "Dr. Johnson has alluded to the worthy man employed in the translation of the New Testament. Might not this have afforded you an opportunity of paying a proper tribute of respect to the memory of the Rev. Mr. James Stuart, late minister of Killin, distinguished by his eminent piety, learning and taste? The amiable simplicity of his life, his warm benevolence, his indefatigable and successful exertions for civilizing and improving the parish of which he was minister for upwards of fifty years, entitle him to the gratitude of his country, and the veneration of all good men. It certainly would be a pity, if such a character should be permitted to sink into oblivion."—BOSWELL.

printed, I entreat him to revise it; there may, perhaps, be some negligent lines written, and whatever is amiss, he knows very well how to rectify¹.

"Be pleased to let me know, from time to time, how this excellent design goes forward.

"Make my compliments to young Mr. Drummond, whom I hope you will live to see such as you desire him.

"I have not lately seen Mr. Elphinston, but believe him to be prosperous. I shall be glad to hear the same of you, for I am, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. WILLIAM DRUMMOND.

"London, Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 24th Oct. 1767.

"SIR,—I returned this week from the country, after an absence of near six months, and found your letter with many others, which I should have answered sooner, if I had sooner seen them.

"Dr. Robertson's opinion was surely right. Men should not be told of the faults which they have mended. I am glad the old language is taught, and honour the translator, as a man whom God has distinguished by the high office of propagating his word.

"I must take the liberty of engaging you in an office of charity. Mrs. Heely, the wife of Mr. Heely, who had lately some office in your theatre, is my near relation, and now in great distress. They wrote me word of their situation some time ago, to which I returned them an answer which raised hopes of more than it is proper for me to give them. Their representation of their affairs I have discovered to be such as cannot be trusted: and at this distance, though their case requires haste, I know not how to act. She, or her daughters, may be heard of at Canongate-head. I must beg, sir, that you will inquire after them, and let me know what is to be done. I am willing to go to ten pounds, and will transmit you such a sum, if upon examination you find it likely to be of use. If they are in immediate want, advance them what you think proper. What I could do I would do for the woman, having no great reason to pay much regard to Heely himself².

¹ This paragraph shows Johnson's real estimation of the character and abilities of the celebrated Scottish historian, however lightly, in a moment of caprice, he may have spoken of his works.—BOSWELL. [He seems never to have spoken otherwise than slightly of Dr. Robertson's works, however he may have respected his judgment on this particular subject. See p. 247, 313, and 299.—ED.]

² This is the person concerning whom Sir John Hawkins has thrown out very unwarrantable reflections both against Dr. Johnson and Mr.

"I believe you may receive some intelligence from Mrs. Baker of the theatre, whose letter I received at the same time with yours; and to whom, if you see her, you will make my excuse for the seeming neglect of answering her.

"Whatever you advance within ten pounds shall be immediately returned to you, or paid as you shall order. I trust wholly to your judgment.—I am, sir, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Mr. Cuthbert Shaw³, alike distinguished by his genius, misfortunes, and misconduct, published this year a poem, called "The Race, by Mercurius Spur, Esq." in which he whimsically made the living poets of England contend for pre-eminence of fame by running:

"Prove by their heels the prowess of the head."

In this poem there was the following portrait of Johnson:

"Here Johnson comes,—unblest with outward grace,

His rigid morals stamp'd upon his face;
While strong conceptions struggle in his brain;
(For even wit is brought to bed with pain:)
To view him, porters with their loads would rest,
And babes cling frighted to the nurses' breast.
With looks convulsed he roars in pompous strain,
And, like an angry lion, shakes his mane.
The nine, with terour struck, who ne'er had seen
Aught human with so terrible a mien,
Debating whether they should stay or run,
Virtue steps forth and claims him for her son.
With gentle speech she warns him now to yield,
Nor stain his glories in the doubtful field;
But wrapt in conscious worth, content sit down,
Since Fame, resolved his various pleas to crown,
Though forced his present claim to disavow,
Had long reserved a chaplet for his brow,
He bows, obeys; for time shall first expire,
Ere Johnson stay, when Virtue bids retire."

Frances Barber.—BOSWELL. [Hawkins wished to persuade the world that Dr. Johnson acted unjustifiably in preferring (in the disposal of his property,) Barber to this man, whom Sir John and his daughter, in her *Memoirs*, call, with a most surprising disregard of truth, Johnson's relation, but who, in fact, had only married his relation. She was dead and Heely had married another woman at the time when Hawkins affected to think that he had claims to be Dr. Johnson's heir, and we find that, so early as this year, Johnson expressed his disregard for Heely himself. Some scenes took place in the last days of Johnson's life which, as we shall see, do little credit to Sir John Hawkins, and it seems probable that Barber detected and reported them, as was his duty, to his master; whence, perhaps, Hawkins's malevolence both to Johnson and Barber, and his endeavour to set up a rival to the latter. See *post*, 12th August, and *sub* November, 1784.—ED.]

³ See an account of him in the *European Magazine*, Jan. 1786.—BOSWELL.

The honourable Thomas Hervey¹ and his lady having unhappily disagreed, and being about to separate, Johnson interferred as their friend, and wrote him a letter of expostulation, which I have not been able to find; but the substance of it is ascertained by a letter to Johnson in answer to it, which Mr. Hervey printed. The occasion of this correspondence between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Hervey was thus related to me by Mr. Beauclerk. "Tom Hervey had a great liking for Johnson, and in his will had left him a legacy of fifty pounds. One day he said to me, 'Johnson may want this money now, more than afterwards. I have a mind to give it him directly. Will you be so good as to carry a fifty pound note from me to him?' This I positively refused to do, as he might, perhaps, have knocked me down for insulting him, and have afterwards put the note in his pocket. But I said, if Hervey would write him a letter, and enclose a fifty pound note, I should take care to deliver it. He accordingly did write him a letter, mentioning that he was only paying a legacy a little sooner. To his letter he added, '*P. S. I am going to part with my wife.*' Johnson then wrote to him, saying nothing of the note, but remonstrating with him against parting with his wife."

When I mentioned to Johnson this story, in as delicate terms as I could, he told me that the fifty pound note was given² to him

¹ The Honourable Thomas Hervey, whose letter to Sir Thomas Hanmer, in 1742, was much read at that time. He was the second son of John, the first earl of Bristol, and one of the brothers of Johnson's early friend, Henry Hervey. He [was born 1698] married in 1744, Anne, daughter of Francis Coughlan, Esq. and died Jan. 20, 1775.—MALONE.

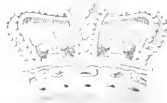
² [This is not inconsistent with Mr. Beauclerk's account. It may have been in consideration of this pamphlet that Hervey left Johnson the fifty pounds in his will, and on second thoughts he may have determined to send it to him. It were however to be wished, that the story had stood on its original ground. The acceptance of an anticipated legacy from a friend would have had nothing objectionable in it: but can so much be said for the employment of one's pen for hire, in the disgusting squabbles of so mischievous and profligate a madman as Mr. Thomas Hervey? "He was well known," says the gentle biographer of the Peerage, "for his genius and eccentricities." The letter to Sir Thomas Hanmer, above mentioned, was the first, it is believed, of the many appeals which Mr. Hervey made to the public relative to his private concerns. The subject is astonishing. Lady Hanmer eloped from her husband with Mr. Hervey, and made, it seems, a will, in his favour, of certain estates, of which Sir Thomas had a life possession. Hervey's letter avows the adultery, and assigns very strange reasons for the lady's leaving her husband,

by Mr. Hervey in consideration of his having written for him a pamphlet against Sir

and then goes on to complain, that Sir Thomas was cutting timber on the estate which had belonged to "*our wife*," so he calls her, and of which the reversion was his, and begging that, if he did sell any more timber, he would give him, Hervey, the refusal of it. All this is garnished, and set off by extravagant flights of fine writing, the most cutting sarcasms, the most indecent details, and the most serious expressions of the writer's conviction, that *his* conduct was natural and delicate, and such as every body must approve; and that, finally, *in Heaven*, Lady Hanmer, in the distribution of wives (*suam cuique*), would be considered as his. Twenty years did not cool his brain. Just at the close of the reign he addressed a letter to King George the Second, complaining of the king's ministers for not paying him 2000*l.* which they owed him, and which sum was composed of 200*l.* per annum for 10 years, which the said ministers *should have added to the salary of an office* which Mr. Hervey held. In this letter he pretty clearly explains the state of his intellect. He talks of "*the hideous subject of his mental ecstacy*," and laments that "*a troubled and resentful mind in a distempered body, is almost the consummation of human misery.*" He complains that "*his doctor mistook his case, by calling that a nervous disorder which was really inflammatory*, and, in consequence of that *fatal error*, Hervey "*passed eleven years without any more account of time, or other notice of things, than a person asleep, under the influence of some horrid dream.*" He talks of his father as a "*monster of iniquity*," of "*his weak and passionate mother*," of "*his base and cruel brother*," and so on. It is this letter which Horace Walpole thus characterizes: "Have you seen Tom Hervey's letter to the king? full of absurdity and madness, but with here and there gleams of genius and happy expressions that are wonderfully fine."—*Letter to Conway, Dec. 1766.* His quarrel with his second wife, in 1767, referred to in the text, he, according to his custom, blazoned to the public by the following advertisement: "*Whereas Mrs. Hervey has been three times from home last year, and at least as many the year before, without my leave or privity, and hath encouraged her son to persist in the like rebellious practices, I hereby declare that I neither am nor will be accountable for any future debts of her whatsoever. She is now keeping forcible possession of my house, to which I never did invite or thought of inviting her in all my life.*"—THOMAS HERVEY." He afterwards proceeded further, and commenced a suit against his lady for jactitation of marriage, which finally ended in his discomfiture. Johnson, as we shall see hereafter, characterized his friend, Tom Hervey, as he had already done (*ante*, p. 40.) his brother Henry, as very vicious. Alas! it is but too probable, that both were disordered in mind, and that what was called *vice* was, in truth, *disease*, and required a madhouse rather than a prison.—[Ed.]

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George III

Charles Hanbury Williams, who, Mr. Hervey imagined, was the authour of an attack upon him; but that it was afterwards discovered to be the work of a garreteer¹, who wrote "The Fool;" the pamphlet, therefore, against Sir Charles was not printed.

In February, 1767, there happened one of the most remarkable incidents of Johnson's life, which gratified his monarchical enthusiasm, and which he loved to relate with all its circumstances, when requested by his friends. This was his being honoured by a private conversation with his majesty in the library at the queen's house. He had frequently visited those splendid rooms, and noble collection of books², which he used to say was more numerous and curious than he supposed any person could have made in the time which the king had employed. Mr. Barnard, the librarian, took care that he should have every accommodation that could contribute to his ease and convenience, while indulging his literary taste in that place; so that he had here a very agreeable resource at leisure hours.

His majesty having been informed of his occasional visits, was pleased to signify a desire that he should be told when Dr. Johnson came next to the library. Accordingly, the next time that Johnson did come, as soon as he was fairly engaged with a book, on which, while he sat by the fire, he seemed quite intent, Mr. Barnard stole round to the apartment where the king was, and, in obedience to his majesty's commands, mentioned that Dr. Johnson was then in the library. His majesty said he was at leisure, and would go to him: upon which Mr. Barnard took one of the candles that stood on the king's table, and lighted his majesty through a suite of rooms, till they came to a private door into the library, of which his majesty had the key. Being entered, Mr. Barnard stepped forward hastily to Dr. Johnson, who was still in a profound study, and whispered him,

¹ [Some curiosity would naturally be felt as to who the *garreteer* was, who wrote a pamphlet, which was attributed to Sir C. H. Williams, the wittiest man of his day and to answer which, the wild and sarcastic genius of Hervey required the assistance of Dr. Johnson. His name was William Horsley, but his acknowledged works are poor productions.—ED.]

² Dr. Johnson had the honour of contributing his assistance towards the formation of this library; for I have read a long letter from him to Mr. Barnard, giving the most masterly instructions on the subject. I wished much to have gratified my readers with the perusal of this letter, and have reason to think that his majesty would have been graciously pleased to permit its publication; but Mr. Barnard, to whom I applied, declined it "on his own account."—BOSWELL. But see the letter in the Appendix.

"Sir, here is the king." Johnson started up, and stood still. His majesty approached him, and at once was courteously easy³.

His majesty began by observing, that he understood he came sometimes to the library; and then mentioning his having heard that the Doctor had been lately at Oxford, asked him if he was not fond of going thither. To which Johnson answered, that he was indeed fond of going to Oxford sometimes, but was likewise glad to come back again. The king then asked him what they were doing at Oxford. Johnson answered, he could not much commend their diligence, but that in some respects they were mended, for they had put their press under better regulations, and were at that time printing Polybius. He was then asked whether there were better libraries at Oxford or Cambridge. He answered, he believed the Bodleian was larger than any they had at Cambridge; at the same time adding, "I hope, whether we have more books or not than they have at Cambridge, we shall make as good use of them as they do." Being asked whether All-Souls or Christ-Church library was the largest, he answered, "All-Souls library is the largest we have, except the Bodleian." "Ay," said the king, "that is the publick library."

His majesty inquired if he was then writing any thing. He answered, he was not, for he had pretty well told the world what he knew, and must now read to acquire more knowledge. The king as it should seem with a view to urge him to rely on his own stores as an original writer, and to

³ The particulars of this conversation I have been at great pains to collect with the utmost authenticity, from Dr. Johnson's own detail to myself; from Mr. Langton, who was present when he gave an account of it to Dr. Joseph Warton, and several other friends at Sir Joshua Reynold's; from Mr. Barnard; from the copy of a letter written by the late Mr. Strahan, the printer, to Bishop Warburton; and from a minute, the original of which is among the papers of the late Sir James Caldwell, and a copy of which was most obligingly obtained for me from his son, Sir Francis Lumm. To all these gentlemen I beg leave to make my grateful acknowledgments, and particularly to Sir Francis Lumm, who was pleased to take a great deal of trouble, and even had the minute laid before the king by Lord Caermarthen, now Duke of Leeds, then one of his majesty's principal secretaries of state, who announced to Sir Francis the royal pleasure concerning it by a letter, in these words:—"I have the king's commands to assure you, sir, how sensible his majesty is of your attention in communicating the minute of the conversation previous to its publication. As there appears no objection to your complying with Mr. Boswell's wishes on the subject, you are at full liberty to deliver it to that gentleman, to make such use of in his Life of Dr. Johnson, as he may think proper."—BOSWELL.

continue his labours, then said, "I do not think you borrow much from any body." Johnson said, he thought he had already done his part as a writer. "I should have thought so too," said the king, "if you had not written so well." Johnson observed to me, upon this, that "No man could have paid a handsomer compliment¹; and it was fit for a king to pay. It was decisive." When asked by another friend, at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, whether he made any reply to this high compliment, he answered "No, sir. When the king had said it, it was to be so. It was not for me to bandy civilities with my sovereign." Perhaps no man who had spent his whole life in courts could have shown a more nice and dignified sense of true politeness than Johnson did in this instance.

His majesty having observed to him that he supposed he must have read a great deal, Johnson answered, that he thought more than he read; that he had read a great deal in the early part of his life, but having fallen into ill health, he had not been able to read much, compared with others: for instance, he said he had not read much, compared with Dr. Warburton. Upon which the king said, that he heard Dr. Warburton was a man of such general knowledge, that you could scarce talk with him on any subject on which he was not qualified to speak; and that his learning resembled Garrick's acting, in its universality². His majesty then talked of

¹ [Johnson himself imitated it to Paoli (see *post*, 10th October, 1769); and it is indeed become one of the *common-places* of compliment.—Ed.]

² The Rev. Mr. Strahan clearly recollects having been told by Johnson, that the king observed that Pope made Warburton a bishop. "True, sir (said Johnson), but Warburton did more for Pope; he made him a Christian;" alluding, no doubt, to his ingenious comments on the "Essay on Man." [Mr. Strahan's recollection probably failed him. His majesty and Dr. Johnson were both too well informed to have bandied such idle talk. Warburton had published the *Divine Legation*, and was chaplain to the prince of Wales before he knew Pope; his acquaintance with that poet, but of four years' continuance, was ended by Pope's death in 1744. It was ten years after, that he became a king's chaplain, and, in 1755, he had a prebend in the cathedral of Durham. In 1757, he was made dean of Bristol: and, 1760, *sixteen years after Pope's death*, he became bishop of Gloucester. If it be alleged, that Mr. Strahan's report refers to the supposition, that his commentary on Pope's "Essay on Man" tended to create that character which finally raised him to the bench; it may be observed, that he published, before and after that commentary, a multitude of works on polemical and religious subjects, much more important and remarkable than the Commentary on the "Essay

the controversy between Warburton and Lowth, which he seemed to have read, and asked Johnson what he thought of it. Johnson answered, "Warburton has most general, most scholastick learning; Lowth is the more correct scholar. I do not know which of them calls names best." The king was pleased to say he was of the same opinion; adding, "You do not think then, Dr. Johnson, that there was much argument in the case." Johnson said, he did not think there was. "Why truly (said the king), when once it comes to calling names, argument is pretty well at an end."

His majesty then asked him what he thought of Lord Lyttelton's history, which was then just published. Johnson said, he thought his style pretty good, but that he had blamed Henry the Second rather too much. "Why (said the king), they seldom do these things by halves." "No, sir (answered Johnson), not to kings." But fearing to be misunderstood, he proceeded to explain himself; and immediately subjoined, "That for those who spoke worse of kings than they deserved, he could find no excuse; but that he could more easily conceive how some might speak better of them than they deserved, without any ill intention; for, as kings had much in their power to give, those who were favoured by them would frequently, from gratitude, exaggerate their praises: and as this proceeded from a good motive, it was certainly excusable, as far as error could be excusable."

The king then asked him what he thought of Dr. Hill. Johnson answered that he was an ingenious man, but had no veracity; and immediately mentioned, as an instance of it, an assertion of that writer, that he had seen objects magnified to a much greater degree by using three or four microscopes at a time than by using one. "Now (added Johnson) every one acquainted with microscopes knows, that the more of them he looks through, the less the object will appear³." "Why (replied the king) this

on Man." The truth is, Warburton was made a bishop by his numerous works, and his high literary character, to which this commentary contributed a very inconsiderable part.—Ed.]

³ [Here, as the bishop of Ferns remarks, Dr. Johnson was culpably unjust to Hill, and showed that he did not understand the subject. Hill does not talk of magnifying objects by two or more microscopes, but by applying two *object glasses* to one microscope; and the advantage of diminished spherical errors by this contrivance is well known. Hill's account of the experiment (*Veg. System, Lond. 1770, p. 44*) is, as the bishop further observes, obscurely and inaccurately expressed in one or two particulars; but there can be no doubt that he is substantially right, and that Dr. Johnson's statement was altogether unfounded.—Ed.]

is not only telling an untruth, but telling it clumsily; for, if that be the case, every one who can look through a microscope will be able to detect him."

"I now (said Johnson to his friends, when relating what had passed) began to consider that I was depreciating this man in the estimation of his sovereign, and thought it was time for me to say something that might be more favourable." He added, therefore, that Dr. Hill was, notwithstanding, a very curious observer; and if he would have been contented to tell the world no more than he knew, he might have been a very considerable man, and needed not to have recourse to such mean expedients to raise his reputation.

The king then talked of literary journals, mentioned particularly the *Journal des Savans*, and asked Johnson if it was well done. Johnson said, it was formerly very well done, and gave some account of the persons who began it, and carried it on for some years; enlarging, at the same time, on the nature and use of such works. The king asked him if it was well done now. Johnson answered, he had no reason to think that it was. The king then asked him if there were any other literary journals published in this kingdom, except the *Monthly and Critical Reviews*; and on being answered there was no other, his majesty asked which of them was the best: Johnson answered, that the *Monthly Review* was done with most care, the *Critical* upon the best principles; adding that the authours of the *Monthly Review* were enemies to the church. This the king said he was sorry to hear.

The conversation next turned on the *Philosophical Transactions*, when Johnson observed that they had now a better method of arranging their materials than formerly. "Ay (said the king), they are obliged to Dr. Johnson for that;" for his majesty had heard and remembered the circumstance, which Johnson himself had forgot.

His majesty expressed a desire to have the literary biography of this country ably executed, and proposed to Dr. Johnson to undertake it¹. Johnson signified his readiness to comply with his majesty's wishes.

During the whole of this interview, Johnson talked to his majesty with profound respect, but still in his firm manly manner, with a sonorous voice, and never in that subdued tone which is commonly used at the levee and in the drawing-room. After the king withdrew, Johnson showed himself highly pleased with his majesty's

conversation and gracious behaviour. He said to Mr. Barnard, "Sir, they may talk of the king as they will; but he is the finest gentleman I have ever seen²." And he afterwards observed to Mr. Langton, "Sir, his manners are those of as fine a gentleman as we may suppose Louis XIV. or Charles II."

At Sir Joshua Reynolds's, where a circle of Johnson's friends was collected round him to hear his account of this memorable conversation, Dr. Joseph Warton, in his frank and lively manner, was very active in pressing him to mention the particulars. "Come now, sir, this is an interesting matter; do favour us with it." Johnson, with great good humour, complied.

He told them, "I found his majesty wished I should talk, and I made it my business to talk. I find it does a man good to be talked to by his sovereign. In the first place, a man cannot be in a passion³—." Here some question interrupted him, which is to be regretted, as he certainly would have pointed out and illustrated many circumstances of advantage, from being in a situation where the powers of the mind are at once excited to vigorous exertion, and tempered by reverential awe.

During all the time in which Dr. Johnson was employed in relating to the circle at Sir Joshua Reynolds's the particulars of what passed between the king and him, Dr. Goldsmith remained unmoved upon a sofa at some distance, affecting not to join in the least in the eager curiosity of the company. He assigned as a reason for his gloom and seeming inattention, that he apprehended Johnson had relinquished his purpose of furnishing him with a prologue to his play, with the hopes of which he had been flattered; but it was strongly suspected that he was fretting with chagrin and envy at the singular honour Dr. Johnson had lately enjoyed. At length, the frankness and simplicity of his natural character prevailed. He sprang from the sofa, advanced to Johnson, and in a kind of flutter, from imagining himself in the situation which he had just been hearing described, exclaimed, "Well, you acquitted yourself in this conversation better than I should have done; for I should have bowed and stammered through the whole of it."

[It is a singularity that, however obvious, has not been before Ed.]

² [This reminds us of Madame de Sevigné's charming naiveté, when, after giving an account of Louis XIV. having danced with her, she adds, "Ah! c'est le plus grand roi du monde!"—Ed.]

³ [Johnson was, in his calmer moments, sensible of the too great vehemence of his conversation; and yet, see *post*, 19th May, 1784.—Ed.]

¹ [This perhaps may have given Dr. Johnson the first idea of the most popular and entertaining of all his works, "The Lives of the Poets."—Ed.]

observed, that Johnson should have been in the presence of Queen Anne and of George the Fourth¹. He once told Sir John Hawkins, [that, in a visit to Mrs. Percy, who had the care of one of the young princes, at the queen's house, the Prince of Wales, being then a child, came into the room, and began to play about; when Johnson, with his usual curiosity, took an opportunity of asking him what books he was reading, and, in particular, inquired as to his knowledge of the scriptures; the prince, in his answers, gave him great satisfaction, and, as to the last, said, that part of his daily exercises was to read Ostervald².]

I received no letter from Johnson this year: nor have I discovered any of the correspondence³ he had, except the two letters to Mr. Drummond, which have been inserted, for the sake of connexion with that to the same gentleman in 1766. His diary affords no light as to his employment at this time. He passed [more than⁴] three months at Lichfield; and I cannot omit an affecting and solemn scene there, as related by himself:

“Sunday, Oct. 18, 1767. Yesterday, Oct. 17, at about ten in the morning, I took my leave for ever of my dear old friend, Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother, and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.

“I desired all to withdraw, then told her that we were to part for ever; that as

¹ [George the First he probably never saw, but George the Second he must frequently have seen, and he had the honour of conversing, as above stated, with George the Third and George the Fourth, and thus saw four of the five last sovereigns, whose reigns already include above a century and a quarter.—ED.]

² [No doubt the popular *Catechism* and “*Abridgement of Sacred History*” of J. F. Ostervald, an eminent Swiss divine. He died in 1747, in the 84th year of his age.—ED.]

³ It is proper here to mention, that when I speak of his correspondence, I consider it independent of the voluminous collection of letters which, in the course of many years, he wrote to Mrs. Thrale, which forms a separate part of his works: and as a proof of the high estimation set on any thing which came from his pen, was sold by that lady for the sum of five hundred pounds.—BOSWELL. [See the preface for some observations on these letters.—ED.]

⁴ In his letter to Mr. Drummond, dated Oct. 24, 1767, he mentions that he had arrived in London, after an absence of nearly *six months* in the country. Probably part of that time was spent at Oxford.—MALONE. [He dates a letter to Mrs. Thrale, from Lichfield, as early as the 20th July, and states that he had already been there longer than he intended. *Letters*.—ED.]

Christians, we should part with prayer; and that I would, if she was willing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to hear me; and held up her poor hands, as she lay in bed, with great fervour, while I prayed, kneeling by her, nearly in the following words:

“Almighty and most merciful Father, whose loving kindness is over all thy works, behold, visit, and relieve this thy servant, who is grieved with sickness. Grant that the sense of her weakness may add strength to her faith, and seriousness to her repentance. And grant that by the help of thy holy spirit, after the pains and labours of this short life, we may all obtain everlasting happiness, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for whose sake hear our prayers⁵. Amen. Our Father, &c.

“I then kissed her. She told me, that to part was the greatest pain that she had ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better place. I expressed, with swelled eyes, and great emotion of tenderness, the same hopes. We kissed, and parted, I humbly hope to meet again, and to part no more⁶.”

By those who have been taught to look upon Johnson as a man of a harsh and stern character, let this tender and affectionate scene be candidly read; and let them then judge whether more warmth of heart and grateful kindness is often found in human nature.

“TO MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, 20 July, 1767.

“Though I have been away so much longer than I purposed or expected, I have found nothing that withdraws my affections from the friends whom I left behind, or which makes me less desirous of reposing at that place which your kindness and Mr. Thrale's allows me to call my *home*.

“Miss Lucy is more kind and civil than I expected, and has raised my esteem by many excellencies very noble and resplendent, though a little discoloured by hoary virginity. Every thing else recalls to my remembrance years in which I proposed what, I am afraid, I have not done, and promised myself pleasure which I have not found.”

We have the following notice in his devotional record:

“August 2, 1767. I have been disturbed and unsettled for a long time, and have been

⁵ [The greater part of this prayer is, as the Bishop of Ferns observes, in the visitation of the sick in our liturgy.—ED.]

⁶ [Catherine Chambers died in a few days after this interview, and was buried in St. Chads, Lichfield, on the 7th Nov. 1767.—HARWOOD.]

without resolution to apply to study or to business, being hindered by sudden snatches.

"I have for some days forborne wine and suppers. Abstinence is not easily practised in another's house; but I think it fit to try.

"I was extremely perturbed in the night, but have had this day more ease than I expected. D[eo] gr[atia]. Perhaps this may be such a sudden relief as I once had by a good night's rest in Fetter-lane.

"From that time, by abstinence, I have had more ease. I have read five books of Homer, and hope to end the sixth to-night. I have given Mrs. ——— a guinea.

"By abstinence from wine and suppers, I obtained sudden and great relief, and had freedom of mind restored to me; which I have wanted for all this year, without being able to find my means of obtaining it."

He, however, furnished Mr. Adams with a dedication* to the king of that ingenious gentleman's "Treatise on the Globes," conceived and expressed in such a manner as could not fail to be very grateful to a monarch, distinguished for his love of the sciences.

This year was published a ridicule of his style, under the title of "Lexiphanes." Sir John Hawkins ascribes it to Dr. Kenrick; but its authour was one Campbell, a Scotch purser in the navy. The ridicule consisted in applying Johnson's "words of large meaning," to insignificant matters, as if one should put the armour of Goliath upon a dwarf. The contrast might be laughable; but the dignity of the armour must remain the same in all considerate minds. This malicious drollery¹, therefore, it may easily be supposed, could do no harm to its illustrious object.

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"At Mr. Rothwell's, perfumer, in New Bond-street, London.

"Lichfield, 10th October, 1767.

"DEAR SIR,—That you have been all summer in London is one more reason for which I regret my long stay in the country. I hope that you will not leave the town before my return. We have here only the chance of vacancies in the passing carriages, and I have bespoken one that may, if it happens, bring me to town on the fourteenth² of this month; but this is not certain.

"It will be a favour if you communicate this to Mrs. Williams; I long to see all my friends. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

¹ [It may have been malicious, but it certainly is not droll. It is so over-charged, as to have neither resemblance nor pleasantry.—ED.]

² [We have just seen that he was detained till the 18th.—ED.]

[“ TO MRS. ASTON³.

"17th November, 1767.

"MADAM,—If you impute it to disrespect or inattention, that I took no leave when I left Lichfield, you will do me great injustice. I know you too well not to value your friendship.

Parker
MISS.

"When I came to Oxford I inquired after the product of our walnut-tree, but it had, like other trees this year, but very few nuts, and for those few I came too late. The tree, as I told you, madam, we cannot find to be more than thirty years old, and upon measuring it, I found it, at about one foot from the ground, seven feet in circumference, and at the height of about seven feet, the circumference is five feet and a half; it would have been, I believe, still bigger but that it has been lopped. The nuts are small, such as they call single nuts; whether this nut is of quicker growth than better I have not yet inquired; such as they are I hope to send them next year.

"You know, dear madam, the liberty I took of hinting, that I did not think your present mode of life very pregnant with happiness. Reflection has not yet changed my opinion. Solitude excludes pleasure, and does not always secure peace. Some communication of sentiments is commonly necessary to give vent to the imagination, and discharge the mind of its own flatulencies. Some lady surely might be found in whose conversation you might delight, and in whose fidelity you might repose. *The world*, says Locke, *has people of all sorts*. You will forgive me this obtrusion of my opinion; I am sure I wish you well.

"Poor Kitty has done what we have all to do, and Lucy has the world to begin anew; I hope she will find some way to more content than I left her possessing.

"Be pleased to make my compliments to Mrs. Hinckley and Miss Turton. I am, madam, your most obliged and most humble servant, "SAM. JOHNSON."]

It appears from his notes of the state of his mind, that he suffered great perturbation and distraction in 1768.

³ [Town-malling⁴, in Kent, 18th Sept. 1768, at night.

⁴ I have now begun the sixtieth year of my life. How the last year has past, I am

³ [Elizabeth, one of the younger daughters of Sir Thomas Aston: see *ante*, p. 29, *n*. Some letters of Johnson to Mrs. Aston, which have been communicated since that note was printed, are written with a uniform spirit of tenderness and respect, and, though of little other value, afford an additional proof of the inaccuracy of Miss Seward, who represents Dr. Johnson as stating to her a very unfavourable character of Mrs. Aston.—ED.]

⁴ [It appears that he visited, with the Thrales,

unwilling to terrify myself with thinking. This day has been past in great perturbation; I was distracted at church in an uncommon degree, and my distress has had very little intermission. I have found myself somewhat relieved by reading, which I therefore intend to practise when I am able.

"This day it came into my mind to write the history of my melancholy. On this I purpose to deliberate; I know not whether it may not too much disturb me."

Nothing of his writings was given to the publick this year, except the Prologue* to his friend Goldsmith's comedy of "The Good-natured Man." The first lines of this prologue are strongly characteristic of the dismal gloom of his mind; which in his case, as in the case of all who are distressed with the same malady of imagination, transfers to others its own feelings. Who could suppose it was to introduce a comedy; when Mr. Bensley solemnly began,

Mr. Brooke of Town-malling, of whose primitive house and manners we find some account in the *Letters*.

"Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, 23d August, 1777.—"It was very well done by Mr. Brooke to send for you. His house is one of my favourite places. His water is very commodious, and the whole place has the true old appearance of a little country town. I hope Miss goes, for she takes notice."

"Mrs. Thrale to Dr. Johnson, 18th September, 1777.—"Come, here is news of Town-malling, the quiet old-fashioned place in Kent, that you liked so, because it was agreeable to your own notions of a rural life. I believe we were the first people, except the master of it, who had, for many years, taken delight in the old coach without springs, the two roasted ducks in one dish, the fortified flower-garden, and fir-trees cut in figures. A spirit of innovation has however reached even there at last. The roads are mended; no more narrow shaded lanes, but clear open turnpike trotting. A yew hedge, or an eugh hedge if you will, newly cut down too by his nephew's desire. Ah! those nephews.—And a wall pulled away, which bore incomparable fruit—to call in the country—is the phrase. Mr. Thrale is wicked enough to urge on these rough reformers; how it will end I know not. For your comfort, the square canals still drop into one another, and the chocolate is still made in the room by a maid, who curtsies as she presents every cup. Dear old Daddy Brooke looks well, and even handsome at eighty-one years old; while I saw his sister, who is ninety-four years old and calls him *Frankey*, eat more venison at a sitting than Mr. Thrale. These are the proper contemplations of this season. May my daughter and my friend but enjoy life as long, and use it as innocently as these sweet people have done. The sight of such a family consoles one's heart."—[E.D.]

"Press'd with the load of life, the weary mind
Surveys the general toil of human kind?"

But this dark ground might make Goldsmith's humour shine the more¹.

In the spring of this year, having published my "Account of Corsica, with the Journal of a Tour to that Island," I returned to London, very desirous to see Dr. Johnson, and hear him upon the subject. I found he was at Oxford, with his friend Mr. Chambers, who was now Vinerian Professor, and lived in New-inn Hall. Having had no letter from him since that in which he criticised the Latinity of my Thesis, and having been told by somebody that he was offended at my having put into my book an extract of his letter to me at Paris, I was impatient to be with him, and therefore followed him to Oxford, where I was entertained by Mr. Chambers, with a civility which I shall ever gratefully remember. I found that Dr. Johnson had sent a letter to me to Scotland, and that I had nothing to complain of but his being more indifferent to my anxiety than I wished him to be. Instead of giving, with the circumstances of time and place, such fragments of his conversation as I preserved during this visit to Oxford, I shall throw them together in continuation.

I asked him whether, as a moralist, he did not think that the practice of the law, in some degree, hurt the nice feeling of honesty. JOHNSON. "Why no, sir, if you act properly. You are not to deceive your clients with false representations of your opinion; you are not to tell lies to a judge." BOSWELL. "But what do you think of supporting a cause which you know to be bad?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you do not know it to be good or bad till the judge determines it. I have said that you are to state facts fairly; so that your thinking, or what you call knowing, a cause to be bad, must be from reasoning, must be from your supposing your arguments to be weak and inconclusive. But, sir, that is not enough.

¹ In this prologue, as Mr. John Taylor informs me, after the fourth line—"And social sorrow loses half its pain," the following couplet was inserted:

"Amidst the toils of this returning year,
When senators and nobles learn to fear,
Our little bard without complaint may share
The bustling season's epidemick care."

So the prologue appeared in the *Publick Advertiser* (the theatrical gazette of that day,) soon after the first representation of this comedy in 1768.—Goldsmith probably thought that the lines printed in italick characters, which, however, seem necessary, or at least improve the sense, might give offence, and therefore prevailed on Johnson to omit them. The epithet *little*, which perhaps the authour thought might diminish his dignity, was also changed to *anxious*.—MALONE.

An argument which does not convince yourself, may convince the judge to whom you urge it; and if it does convince him, why, then, sir, you are wrong, and he is right. It is his business to judge; and you are not to be confident in your own opinion that a cause is bad, but to say all you can for your client, and then hear the judge's opinion." BOSWELL. "But, sir, does not affecting a warmth when you have no warmth, and appearing to be clearly of one opinion when you are in reality of another opinion, does not such dissimulation impair one's honesty? Is there not some danger that a lawyer may put on the same mask in common life, in the intercourse with his friends?" JOHNSON. "Why no, sir. Every body knows you are paid for affecting warmth for your client; and it is, therefore, properly no dissimulation; the moment you come from the bar you resumé your usual behaviour. Sir, a man will no more carry the artifice of the bar into the common intercourse of society, than a man who is paid for tumbling upon his hands will continue to tumble upon his hands when he should walk on his feet!"

Talking of some of the modern plays, he said, "False Delicacy" was totally void of character. He praised Goldsmith's "Good-natured Man;" said it was the best comedy that had appeared since "The Provoked Husband," and that there had not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as that of Croaker. I observed it was the *Suspicious* of his *Rambler*. He said, Goldsmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence. "Sir (continued he), there is all the difference in the world between characters of nature and characters of manners; and *there* is the difference between the characters of Fielding and those of Richardson. Characters of manners are very entertaining; but they are to be understood by a more superficial observer than characters of nature, where a man must dive into the recesses of the human heart."

¹ See *post*, 15th August, 1773, where Johnson has supported the same argument.—J. BOSWELL. [Cicero touches this question more than once, but never with much confidence. "Atqui etiam hoc præceptum officii diligenter tenendum est, ne quem unquam innocentem judicio capitis arcessas; id, enim, sine scelere fieri nullo pacto potest. Nec tamen, ut hoc fugiendum est, ita habendum esse religioni, nocentem aliquando, modo ne nefarium impiumque, defendere. Vult hoc multitudo, patitur consuetudo, fert etiam humanitas. Judicis est semper in causas *verum* sequi patroni, nonnunquam verisimile, etiamsi minus sit verum, defendere." (*De Off. l. 2. c. 14.*) We might have expected a less conditional and apologetical defence of his own profession from the great philosophical orator.—E.D.]

² [By Kelly, the poetical staymaker.—E.D.]

It always appeared to me that he estimated the compositions of Richardson too highly³, and that he had an unreasonable prejudice against Fielding. In comparing those two writers, he used this expression; "that there was as great a difference between them, as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking on the dial-plate." This was a short and figurative state of his distinction between drawing characters of nature and characters only of manners. But I cannot help being of opinion that the neat watches of Fielding are as well constructed as the large clocks of Richardson, and that his dial-plates are brighter. Fielding's characters, though they do not expand themselves so widely in dissertation, are as just pictures of human nature, and I will venture to say, have more striking features, and nicer touches of the pencil; and though Johnson used to quote with approbation a saying of Richardson's, "that the virtues of Fielding's heroes were the vices of a truly good man," I will venture to add that the moral tendency of Fielding's writings, though it does not encourage a strained and rarely possible virtue, is ever favourable to honour and honesty, and cherishes the benevolent and generous affections. He who is as good as Fielding would make him, is an amiable member of society, and may be led on, by more regulated instructors, to a higher state of ethical perfection.

[Johnson was inclined, as being personally acquainted with Richardson, to favour the opinion of his admirers that he was acquainted with the inmost recesses of the human heart, and had an absolute command over the passions; but he seemed not firm in it, and could at any time be talked into a disapprobation of all fictitious relations, of which he would frequently say they took no hold of the mind.]

Johnson proceeded: "Even Sir Francis Wronghead is a character of manners, though drawn with great humour." He then repeated, very happily, all Sir Francis's credulous account to Manly of his being with "the great man," and securing a place. I asked him if "The Suspicious Husband" did not furnish a well-drawn character, that of Ranger. JOHNSON. "No, sir; Ranger is just a rake, a mere rake, and a lively young fellow, but no character."

The great Douglas cause was at this time a very general subject of discussion. I found he had not studied it with much attention, but had only heard parts of it occasionally. He, however, talked of it, and said, "I am of opinion that positive proof of fraud should

³ [See *ante*, p. 96, and *post*, 6th April, 1772.—E.D.]

not be required of the plaintiff, but that the judges should decide according as probability shall appear to preponderate, granting to the defendant the presumption of filiation to be strong in his favour. And I think too, that a good deal of weight should be allowed to the dying declarations, because they were spontaneous. There is a great difference between what is said without our being urged to it, and what is said from a kind of compulsion. If I praise a man's book without being asked my opinion of it, that is honest praise, to which one may trust. But if an authour asks me if I like his book, and I give him something like praise, it must not be taken as my real opinion."

"I have not been troubled for a long time with authours desiring my opinion of their works. I used once to be sadly plagued with a man who wrote verses, but who literally had no other notion of a verse but that it consisted of ten syllables. *Lay your knife and your fork across your plate*, was to him a verse:

Lay yōur knife and your fōrk, acrōss your plate.

As he wrote a great number of verses, he sometimes by chance made good ones, though he did not know it."

[Dr. Johnson did not like that his Piozzi, p. 216, 217. friends should bring their manuscripts for him to read, and he liked still less to read them when they were brought: sometimes, however, when he could not refuse, he would take the play or poem, or whatever it was, and give the people his opinion from some one page that he had peeped into. A gentleman¹ carried him his tragedy, which, because he loved the authour, Johnson took, and it lay about our rooms at Streatham some time. "What answer did you give your friend, sir?" asked Mrs. Thrale, after the book had been called for. "I told him," replied he, "that there was too much *Tig* and *Tirry* in it." Seeing her laugh most violently, "Why, what wouldst have, child?" said he. "I looked at nothing but the dramatis, and there was *Tigranes* and *Tiridates*, or *Teribazus*, or such stuff. A man can tell but what he knows, and I never got any farther than the first page.]"

He renewed his promise of coming to Scotland, and going with me to the Hebrides, but said he would now content himself with seeing one or two of the most curious of them. He said, "Macaulay, who writes the account of St. Kilda, set out with a prejudice against prejudice, and wanted to be a smart modern thinker; and yet affirms for a

truth, that when a ship arrives there all the inhabitants are seized with a cold."

Dr. John Campbell, the celebrated² writer, took a great deal of pains to ascertain this fact, and attempted to account for it on physical principles, from the effect of effluvia from human bodies. Johnson, at another time, praised Macaulay 21 Mar. 1772. for his "*magnanimity*," in asserting this wonderful story, because it was well attested. A lady of Norfolk, by a letter to my friend Dr. Burney, has 2 Oct. 1773. favoured me with the following solution: "Now for the explication of this seeming mystery, which is so very obvious as, for that reason, to have escaped the penetration of Dr. Johnson and his friend, as well as that of the authour. Reading the book with my ingenious friend, the late Rev. Mr. Christian of Docking—after ruminating a little, 'The cause,' says he, 'is a natural one. The situation of St. Kilda renders a north-east wind indispensably necessary before a stranger can land. The wind, not the stranger, occasions an epidemick cold.' If I am not mistaken, Mr. Macaulay is dead; if living, this solution might please him, as I hope it will Mr. Boswell, in return for the many agreeable hours his works have afforded us."

Johnson expatiated on the advantages of Oxford for learning. "There is here, sir," said he, "such a progressive emulation. The students are anxious to appear well to their tutors; the tutors are anxious to have their pupils appear well in the college; the colleges are anxious to have their students appear well in the university; and there are excellent rules of discipline in every college. That the rules are sometimes ill observed may be true, but is nothing against the system. The members of an university may, for a season, be unmindful of their duty. I am arguing for the excellency of the institution."

Of Guthrie, he said, "Sir, he is a man of parts. He has no great regular fund of knowledge; but by reading so long, and writing so long, he no doubt has picked up a good deal."

He said he had lately been a long while at Lichfield, but had grown very weary before he left it. BOSWELL. "I wonder at that, sir; it is your native place." JOHNSON. "Why so is Scotland *your* native place."

His prejudice against Scotland appeared remarkably strong at this time. When I talked of our advancement in literature, "Sir," said he, "you have learnt a little from us, and you think yourselves very great men. Hume would never have written his-

¹ [No doubt Mr. Murphy, in whose tragedy of *Zenobia*, acted in 1768, there are two personages named *Tigranes* and *Teribazus*.—Ed.]

² [See *ante*, 1st July, 1763.—Ed.]

tory, had not Voltaire written it before him. He is an echo of Voltaire." BOSWELL. "But, sir, we have Lord Kames." JOHNSON. "You have Lord Kames. Keep him; ha, ha, ha! We don't envy you him. Do you ever see Dr. Robertson?" BOSWELL. "Yes, sir." JOHNSON. "Does the dog talk of me?" BOSWELL. "Indeed, sir, he does, and loves you." Thinking that I now had him in a corner, and being solicitous for the literary fame of my country, I pressed him for his opinion on the merit of Dr. Robertson's History of Scotland. But, to my surprise, he escaped. "Sir, I love Robertson, and I won't talk of his book."

It is but justice both to him and Dr. Robertson to add, that though he indulged himself in this sally of wit, he had too good taste not to be fully sensible of the merits of that admirable work¹.

An essay, written by Mr. Deane, a divine of the church of England, maintaining the future life of brutes², by an explication of certain parts of the scriptures, was mentioned, and the doctrine insisted on by a gentleman who seemed fond of curious speculation. Johnson, who did not like to hear of any thing concerning a future state which was not authorised by the regular canons of orthodoxy, discouraged this talk; and being offended at its continuation, he watched an opportunity to give the gentleman a blow of reprehension. So, when the poor speculatist, with a serious metaphysical pensive face, addressed him, "But really, sir, when we see a very sensible dog, we don't know what to think of him." Johnson, rolling with joy at the thought which beamed in his eye, turned quickly round, and replied, "True, sir: and when we see a very foolish fellow, we don't know what to think of him." He then rose up, strided to the fire, and stood for some time laughing and exulting.

I told him that I had several times, when in Italy, seen the experiment of placing a scor-

pion within a circle of burning coals; that it ran round and round in extreme pain³; and finding no way to escape, retired to the centre, and like a true Stoick philosopher, darted its sting into its head, and thus at once freed itself from its woes. "This must end'em." I said, this was a curious fact, as it showed deliberate suicide in a reptile. Johnson would not admit the fact. He said, Maupertuis³ was of opinion that it does not kill itself, but dies of the heat; that it gets to the centre of the circle as the coolest place; that its turning its tail in upon its head is merely a convulsion, and that it does not sting itself. He said he would be satisfied if the great anatomist Morgagni, after dissecting a scorpion on which the experiment had been tried, should certify that its sting had penetrated into its head.

He seemed pleased to talk of natural philosophy⁴. "That woodcocks (said he) fly over the northern countries is proved, because they have been observed at sea. Swallows certainly sleep all the winter. A number of them conglobulate together, by flying round and round, and then all in a heap throw themselves under water, and lie in the bed of a river." He told us, one of his first essays was a Latin poem upon the glow-worm: I am sorry I did not ask where it was to be found.

Talking of the Russians and the Chinese, he advised me to read Bell's Travels⁵. I asked him whether I should read Du Halde's Account of China. "Why yes (said he), as one reads such a book; that is to say, consult it."

He talked of the heinousness of the crime

³ I should think it impossible not to wonder at the variety of Johnson's reading, however desultory it might have been. Who could have imagined that the high church of England-man would be so prompt in quoting *Maupertuis*, who, I am sorry to think, stands in the list of those unfortunate mistaken men, who call themselves *esprits forts*. I have, however, a high respect for that philosopher whom the Great Frederick of Prussia loved and honoured, and addressed pathetically in one of his poems—

"*Maupertuis cher Maupertuis
Que notre vie est peu de chose.*"

There was in Maupertuis a vigour and yet a tenderness of sentiment, united with strong intellectual powers, and uncommon ardour of soul. Would he had been a Christian! I cannot help earnestly venturing to hope that he is one now.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell seems to contemplate the possibility of a *post mortem* conversion to Christianity.—ED.]; but Maupertuis died in 1759 at the age of sixty-two, in the arms of the Bernoullis, *très chrétiennement*.—BURNEY.

⁴ [Mr. Boswell means natural history.—ED.]

⁵ [John Bell, of *Antermony*, who published, about 1763, "Travels from St. Petersburg, in Russia, to divers parts of Asia."—ED.]

¹ [It is to be regretted that Mr. Boswell should have persisted in repeating these assertions. Dr. Johnson, on every occasion, seems to have expressed a great contempt for Dr. Robertson's works—very unjustly indeed; but, however Mr. Boswell might lament Johnson's prejudice, he was not justified in thus repeatedly misstating the fact. See *ante*, p. 237. See *post*, sub 19th April, 1772, where Boswell suppresses, and 30th April, 1773, where he again misrepresents Johnson's opinions of Dr. Robertson.—ED.]

² [An Essay on the Future Life of Brute Creatures, by Richard Deane, curate of Middleton. This work is reviewed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1768, p. 177, in a style very like Johnson's; and a story of "a very sensible dog" is noticed with censure. It is, therefore, not improbable that it may have been written by Johnson.—ED.]

of adultery, by which the peace of families was destroyed. He said, "Confusion of progeny constitutes the essence of the crime; and therefore a woman who breaks her marriage vows is much more criminal than a man who does it. A man, to be sure, is criminal in the sight of God; but he does not do his wife a very material injury, if he does not insult her; if, for instance, from mere wantonness of appetite, he steals privately to her chambermaid. Sir, a wife ought not greatly to resent this. I would not receive home a daughter who had run away from her husband on that account. A wife should study to reclaim her husband by more attention to please him. Sir, a man will not, once in a hundred instances, leave his wife and go to a harlot, if his wife has not been negligent of pleasing."

Here he discovered that acute discrimination, that solid judgment, and that knowledge of human nature, for which he was upon all occasions remarkable. Taking care to keep in view the moral and religious duty, as understood in our nation, he showed clearly, from reason and good sense, the greater degree of culpability in the one sex deviating from it than the other; and, at the same time, inculcated a very useful lesson as to *the way to keep him*.

I asked him if it was not hard that one deviation from chastity should so absolutely ruin a young woman. JOHNSON. "Why no, sir; it is the great principle which she is taught. When she has given up that principle, she has given up every notion of female honour and virtue, which are all included in chastity."

A gentleman talked to him of a lady whom he greatly admired and wished to marry, but was afraid of her superiority of talents. "Sir (said he), you need not be afraid; marry her. Before a year goes about, you'll find that reason much weaker, and that wit not so bright." Yet the gentleman may be justified in his apprehension by one of Dr. Johnson's admirable sentences in his life of Waller: "He doubtless praised many whom he would have been afraid to marry; and, perhaps, married one whom he would have been ashamed to praise. Many qualities contribute to domestic happiness, upon which poetry has no colours to bestow; and many airs and sallies may delight imagination, which he who flatters them never can approve."

[The general and constant advice he gave too, when consulted about the choice of a wife, a profession, or whatever influences a man's particular and immediate happiness, was always to reject no positive good from fears of its contrary consequences. "Do not (said he) forbear to marry a beautiful wo-

man if you can find such, out of a fancy that she will be less constant than an ugly one; or condemn yourself to the society of coarseness and vulgarity for fear of the expenses or other dangers of elegance and personal charms, which have been always acknowledged as a positive good, and for the want of which there should be always given some weighty compensation. I have, however (continued Dr. Johnson), seen some prudent fellows who forbore to connect themselves with beauty lest coquetry should be near, and with wit or birth lest insolence should lurk behind them, till they have been forced by their discretion to linger life away in tasteless stupidity, and choose to count the moments by remembrance of pain instead of enjoyment of pleasure." But of the various states and conditions of humanity, he despised none more than the man who marries for a maintenance: and of a friend who made his alliance on no higher principles, he said once, "Now has that fellow (it was a nobleman of whom they were speaking) at length obtained a certainty of three meals a day, and for that certainty, like his brother dog in the fable, he will get his neck galled for life with a collar.]"

He praised Signor Baretto. "His account of Italy is a very entertaining book; and, sir, I know no man who carries his head higher in conversation than Baretto. There are strong powers in his mind. He has not, indeed, many hooks; but with what hooks he has, he grapples very forcibly."

At this time I observed upon the dial-plate of his watch a short Greek inscription, from the New Testament, $\nu\zeta\zeta\ \gamma\alpha\gamma\ \epsilon\gamma\chi\epsilon\tau\alpha\iota$, being the first words of our Saviour's solemn admonition to the improvement of that time which is allowed to us to prepare for eternity; "the night cometh when no man can work." He some time afterwards laid aside this dial-plate; and when I asked him the reason, he said, "It might do very well upon a clock which a man keeps in his closet; but to have it upon his watch which he carries about with him, and which is often looked at by others, might be censured as ostentatious." Mr. Steevens is now possessed of the dial-plate inscribed as above.

He remained at Oxford a considerable time; [where he was for some time confined to Mr. Chambers's apartments in New-inn Hall by a fit of illness.] I was obliged to go to London, where I received this letter, which had been returned from Scotland.

Letters to
Piozzi,
vol. i.
p. 14.

¹ ["For the night cometh." The inscription was, however, made unintelligible by the mistake of writing $\gamma\alpha\gamma$ for $\nu\zeta\zeta$. Hawk. p. 461.—Ed.]

“ TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“Oxford, 23d March, 1768.

“ MY DEAR BOSWELL,—I have omitted a long time to write to you, without knowing very well why. I could now tell why I should not write; for who would write to men who publish the letters of their friends, without their leave? Yet I write to you in spite of my caution, to tell you that I shall be glad to see you, and that I wish you would empty your head of Corsica, which I think has filled it rather too long! But, at all events, I shall be glad, very glad to see you.—I am, sir, yours affectionately,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

I answered thus:

“ TO MR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

“London, 26th April, 1768.

“ MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your last letter, which, though very short, and by no means complimentary, yet gave me real pleasure, because it contains these words, ‘I shall be glad, very glad to see you.’—Surely you have no reason to complain of my publishing a single paragraph of one of your letters; the temptation to it was so strong. An irrevocable grant of your friendship, and your dignifying my desire of visiting Corsica with the epithet of ‘a wise and noble curiosity,’ are to me more valuable than many of the grants of kings.

“But how can you bid me ‘empty my head of Corsica?’ My noble-minded friend, do you not feel for an oppressed nation bravely struggling to be free? Consider fairly what is the case. The Corsicans never received any kindness from the Genoese. They never agreed to be subject to them. They owe them nothing, and when reduced to an abject state of slavery, by force, shall they not rise in the great cause of liberty, and break the galling yoke? And shall not every liberal soul be warm for them? Empty my head of Corsica? Empty it of honour, empty it of humanity, empty it of friendship, empty it of piety. No! while I live, Corsica, and the cause of the brave islanders, shall ever employ much of my attention, shall ever interest me in the sincerest manner.

* * * * *
“I am, &c. “JAMES BOSWELL.”

“ DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

“Oxford, 24th March, 1768.

Letters, “Our election was yesterday. Every possible influence of hope and
vol. i. fear was, I believe, enforced on
p. 11.

¹ [Mr. Boswell, in his “Journal of a Tour in Corsica,” had printed the second and third paragraphs of Johnson’s letter to him of the 14th January, 1766. See *ante*, p. 224.—ED.]

this occasion; the slaves of power, and the solicitors of favour, were driven hither from the remotest corners of the kingdom, but *judex honestum prætulit utili*. The virtue of Oxford has once more prevailed.

“The death of Sir Walter Bagot, a little before the election, left them no great time to deliberate, and they therefore joined Sir Roger Newdigate, their old representative, an Oxfordshire gentleman, of no name, no great interest, nor perhaps any other merit than that of being on the right side; yet when the poll was numbered, it produced,

For Sir R. Newdigate . . .	352
Mr. Page . . .	296
Mr. Jenkinson . . .	198
Dr. Hay . . .	62

“Of this I am sure you must be glad; for, without inquiring into the opinions or conduct of any party, it must be for ever pleasing to see men adhering to their principles against their interest, especially when you consider that those voters are poor, and never can be much less poor by the favour of those whom they are now opposing.”]

“ TO MRS. LUCY PORTER, IN LICHFIELD.

“Oxford, 13th April, 1768.

“ MY DEAR DEAR LOVE,—You Malone have had a very great loss. To lose an old friend, is to be cut off from a great part of the little pleasure that this life allows. But such is the condition of our nature, that as we live on we must see those whom we love drop successively, and find our circle of relations grow less and less, till we are almost unconnected with the world; and then it must soon be our turn to drop into the grave. There is always this consolation, that we have one Protector who can never be lost but by our own fault, and every new experience of the uncertainty of all other comforts should determine us to fix our hearts where true joys are to be found. All union with the inhabitants of earth must in time be broken; and all the hopes that terminate here, must on (one) part or other end in disappointment.

“I am glad that Mrs. Adey and Mrs. Cobb do not leave you alone. Pay my respects to them, and the Swards, and all my friends. When Mr. Porter comes, he will direct you. Let me know of his arrival, and I will write to him.

“When I go back to London, I will take care of your reading glass. Whenever I can do anything for you, remember, my dear darling, that one of my greatest pleasures is to please you.

“The punctuality of your correspondence I consider as a proof of great regard. When we shall see each other, I know not, but let us often think on each other, and think with tenderness. Do not forget me in your prayers. I have for a long time back been

very poorly; but of what use is it to complain?

"Write often, for your letters always give great pleasure to, my dear, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Upon his arrival in London in May, he surprised me one morning with a visit at my lodging in Half-moon-street, was quite satisfied with my explanation, and was in the kindest and most agreeable frame of mind. As he had objected to a part of one of his letters being published, I thought it right to take this opportunity of asking him explicitly whether it would be improper to publish his letters after his death. His answer was, "Nay, sir, when I am dead, you may do as you will."

He talked in his usual style with a rough contempt of popular liberty. "They make a rout about *universa!* liberty, without considering that all that is to be valued, or indeed can be enjoyed by individuals, is *private* liberty. Political liberty is good only so far as it produces private liberty. Now, sir, there is the liberty of the press, which you know is a constant topick. Suppose you and I and two hundred more were restrained from printing our thoughts: what then? What proportion would that restraint upon us bear to the private happiness of the nation!?"

This mode of representing the inconveniences of restraint as light and insignificant was a kind of sophistry in which he delighted to indulge himself, in opposition to the extreme laxity for which it has been fashionable for too many to argue, when it is evident, upon reflection, that the very essence of government is restraint; and certain it is, that as government produces rational happiness, too much restraint is better than too little. But when restraint is unnecessary, and so close as to gall those who are subject to it, the people may and ought to remonstrate; and, if relief is not granted, to resist. Of this manly and spirited principle, no man was more convinced than Johnson himself.

About this time Dr. Kenrick attacked him, through my sides, in a pamphlet, entitled "An Epistle to James Boswell, Esq. occasioned by his having transmitted the moral writings of Dr. Samuel Johnson to Pascal Paoli, General of the Corsicans." I was at first inclined to answer this pamphlet; but Johnson, who knew that my doing so would only gratify Kenrick, by keeping alive what would soon die away of

itself, would not suffer me to take any notice of it.

[Johnson's silence, with regard to Kenrick's attacks, proceeded not more from his contempt of such an adversary, than from a settled resolution he had formed, of declining all controversy in defence either of himself or of his writings.

Hawk. p. 347.

Against personal abuse he was ever armed by a reflection that I have heard him utter:—"Alas! reputation would be of little worth, were it in the power of every concealed enemy to deprive us of it;" and he defied all attacks on his writings by an answer of Dr. Bentley to one who threatened to write him down, that "no authour was ever written down but by himself."

His steady perseverance in this resolution afforded him great satisfaction whenever he reflected on it; and he would often felicitate himself that, throughout his life, he had had firmness enough to treat with contempt the calumny and abuse as well of open as concealed enemies, and the malevolence of those anonymous scribblers whose trade is slander, and wages infamy.]

His sincere regard for Francis Barber, his faithful negro servant, made him so desirous of his further improvement, that he now placed him at a school at Bishop Stortford, in Hertfordshire². This humane attention does Johnson's heart much honour. Out of many letters which Mr. Barber received from his master, he has preserved three, which he kindly gave me, and which I shall insert according to their dates.

"TO MR. FRANCIS BARBER.

"28th May, 1768.

"DEAR FRANCIS,—I have been very much out of order. I am glad to hear that you are well, and design to come soon to you. I would have you stay at Mrs. Clapp's for the present, till I can determine what we shall do. Be a good boy.

"My compliments to Mrs. Clapp and to Mr. Fowler. I am yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Soon afterwards, he supped at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in the Strand, with a company whom I collected to meet him.

² [The sending his negro servant, now probably little short of thirty years of age, to a boarding school, seems a very strange exercise of his good-nature. It was a very unpopular one with some of Johnson's inmates—when Mrs. Williams and Francis quarrelled, as was very frequent, the lady would complain to the doctor, adding, "This is your scholar, on whose education you have spent 300l." Dr. Johnson, in the conclusion of the letter, calls him a "boy," but sixteen years had already elapsed since he entered Johnson's own service.—ED.]

¹ [Would Johnson have talked in this way in the days of the *Marmor Norfolciense?* ante, p. 55.) If we lost the liberty of the press, what security could we have for any other right?—ED.]



Engraved by W. Balfour, after an original drawing by R. Boscawen. In the Year 1765.

QUEEN CHARLOTTE.

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They were Dr. Percy, now Bishop of Dromore, Dr. Douglas, now Bishop of Salisbury, Mr. Langton, Dr. Robertson the historian, Dr. Hugh Blair, and Mr. Thomas Davies, who wished much to be introduced to these eminent Scotch literati; but on the present occasion he had very little opportunity of hearing them talk, for with an excess of prudence, for which Johnson afterwards found fault with them, they hardly opened their lips, and that only to say something which they were certain would not expose them to the sword of Goliath; such was their anxiety for their fame when in the presence of Johnson. He was this evening in remarkable vigour of mind, and eager to exert himself in conversation, which he did with great readiness and fluency; but I am sorry to find that I have preserved but a small part of what passed.

He allowed high praise to Thomson as a poet; but when one of the company said he was also a very good man, our moralist contested this with great warmth, accusing him of gross sensuality and licentiousness of manners. I was very much afraid that in writing Thomson's life, Dr. Johnson would have treated his private character with a stern severity, but I was agreeably disappointed; and I may claim a little merit in it, from my having been at pains to send him authentick accounts of the affectionate and generous conduct of that poet to his sisters, one of whom, the wife of Mr. Thomson, schoolmaster at Lanark, I knew, and was presented by her with three of his letters, one of which Dr. Johnson has inserted in his life.

He was vehement against old Dr. Mounsey¹, of Chelsea College, as "a fellow who swore and talked loosely." "I have often been in his company," said Dr. Percy, "and never heard him swear or talk loosely." Mr. Davies, who sat next to Dr. Percy, having after this had some conversation aside with him, made a discovery which, in his zeal to pay court to Dr. Johnson, he eagerly proclaimed aloud from the foot of the table: "O, sir, I have found out a very good reason why Dr. Percy never heard Mounsey swear or talk loosely, for he tells me he never saw him but at the Duke of Northumberland's table." "And

so, sir," said Dr. Johnson loudly to Dr. Percy, "you would shield this man from the charge of swearing and talking loosely, because he did not do so at the Duke of Northumberland's table. Sir, you might as well tell us that you had seen him hold up his hand at the Old Bailey, and he neither swore nor talked loosely; or that you had seen him in the cart at Tyburn, and he neither swore nor talked loosely. And is it thus, sir, that you presume to controvert what I have related?" Dr. Johnson's animadversion was uttered in such a manner, that Dr. Percy seemed to be displeas'd, and soon afterwards left the company, of which Johnson did not at that time take any notice.

Swift having been mentioned, Johnson, as usual, treated him with little respect as an author. Some of us endeavoured to support the Dean of St. Patrick's, by various arguments. One in particular praised his "Conduct of the Allies." JOHNSON. "Sir, his 'Conduct of the Allies' is a performance of very little ability." "Surely, sir," said Dr. Douglas, "you must allow it has strong facts²." JOHNSON. "Why yes, sir; but what is that to the merit of the composition? In the sessions-paper of the Old Bailey there are strong facts. Housebreaking is a strong fact; robbery is a strong fact; and murder is a *mighty* strong fact: but is great praise due to the historian of those strong facts? No, sir, Swift has told what he had to tell distinctly enough, but that is all. He had to count ten, and he has counted it right." Then recollecting that Mr. Davies, by acting as an *informer*, had been the occasion of his talking somewhat too harshly to his friend Dr. Percy, for which, probably, when the first ebullition was over, he felt some compunction, he took an opportunity to give him a hit: so added, with a preparatory laugh, "Why, sir, Tom Davies might have written 'the Conduct of the Allies.'" Poor Tom being thus suddenly dragged into ludicrous notice in presence of the Scottish doctors, to whom he was ambitious of appearing to advantage, was grievously mortified. Nor did

² My respectable friend, upon reading this passage, observed that he probably must have said not simply "strong facts," but "strong facts well arranged." His Lordship, however, knows too well the value of written documents to insist on setting his recollection against my notes taken at the time. He does not attempt to *traverse the record*. The fact, perhaps, may have been, either that the additional words escaped me in the noise of a numerous company, or that Dr. Johnson, from his impetuosity, and eagerness to seize an opportunity to make a lively retort, did not allow Dr. Douglas to finish his sentence.—BOSWELL.

¹ Messenger Mounsey, M. D. died at his apartments in Chelsea College, Dec. 26, 1788, at the great age of ninety-five. An extraordinary direction in his will may be found in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 50. p. ii. p. 1183.—MALONE. [The direction was, that his body should not suffer any funeral ceremony, but undergo dissection, and, after that operation, be thrown into the Thames, or where the surgeon pleased. It is surprising, that this coarse humourist should have been an intimate friend and favourite of the elegant and pious Mrs. Montagu.—ED.]

his punishment rest here ; for upon subsequent occasions, whenever he, "statesman all o'er¹," assumed a strutting importance, I used to hail him—"the Authour of the *Conduct of the Allies*."

When I called upon Dr. Johnson next morning, I found him highly satisfied with his colloquial prowess the preceding evening. "Well," said he, "we had good talk." BOSWELL. "Yes, sir, you tossed and gored several persons."

The late Alexander Earl of Eglintoune², who loved wit more than wine, and men of genius more than sycophants, had a great admiration of Johnson ; but from the remarkable elegance of his own manners, was, perhaps, too delicately sensible of the roughness which sometimes appeared in Johnson's behaviour. One evening about this time, when his lordship did me the honour to sup at my lodgings with Dr. Robertson, and several other men of literary distinction, he regretted that Johnson had not been educated with more refinement, and lived more in polished society. "No, no, my lord," said Signor Baretto, "do with him what you would, he would always have been a bear." "True," answered the earl, with a smile, "but he would have been a *dancing bear*."

To obviate all the reflections which have gone round the world to Johnson's prejudice, by applying to him the epithet of a *bear*, let me impress upon my readers a just and happy saying of my friend Goldsmith, who knew him well:—"Johnson, to be sure, has a roughness in his manner: but no man alive has a more tender heart. *He has nothing of the bear but his skin*."

[DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

15th June, 1768.

PEARSON MSS. "MY LOVE,—It gives me great pleasure to find that you are so well satisfied with what little things it has been in my power to send you. I

¹ See the hard drawing of him in Churchill's *Rosciad*.—BOSWELL.

² [Tenth earl, who was shot, in 1769, by Mungo Campbell, whose fowling-piece Lord Eglintoune attempted to seize. To this nobleman Boswell was indebted, as he himself said, to his early introduction to the circle of the great, the gay, and the ingenious. Boswell thus mentions himself in a tale called "The Cub at Newmarket," published in 1762 :

Lord Eglintoune, who loves, you know,
A little dish of whim or so,
By chance a curious *cub* had got
On Scotia's mountains newly caught.

Gent. Mag. 1795, 471.—ED.]

³ [It was drolly said, in reference to the pensions granted to Doctors Shebbeare and Johnson, that the king had pensioned a *She-bear* and a *He-bear*.—ED.]

hope you will always employ me in any office that can conduce to your convenience.

"My health is, I thank God, much better, but it is yet very weak ; and very little things put it into a troublesome state ; but still I hope all will be well. Pray for me. "My friends at Lichfield must not think that I forget them. Neither Mrs. Cobb, nor Mrs. Adey, nor Miss Adey, nor Miss Seward, nor Miss Vise, are to suppose that I have lost all memory of their kindness. Mention me to them when you see them. I hear Mr. Vise has been lately very much in danger. I hope he is better.

"When you write again, let me know how you go on, and what company you keep, and what you do all day. I love to think on you, but do not know when I shall see you. Pray, write very often. I am, dearest, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In 1769, so far as I can discover, the publick was favoured with nothing of Johnson's composition, either for himself or any of his friends⁴. His "Meditations" too strongly prove that he suffered much both in body and mind ; yet was he perpetually striving against *evil*, and nobly endeavouring to advance his intellectual and devotional improvement. Every generous and grateful heart must feel for the distresses of so eminent a benefactor to mankind ; and now that his unhappiness is certainly known, must respect that dignity of character which prevented him from complaining.

His majesty having the preceding year instituted the Royal Academy of Arts in London, Johnson had now the honour of being appointed Professor in Ancient

⁴ [A difference took place in the March of this year between Mr. Thrale and Sir Joseph Mawbey, his colleague, in the representation of Southwark, when Sir Joseph endeavoured to defend himself from some anti-popular step he had taken, by inculpating Mr. Thrale ; the affair is related in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and it seems that the concluding paragraph contains internal evidence of having been written by Dr. Johnson :

"If, therefore, delicacy of situation, and *fear of public resentment*, were the motives that impelled Sir Joseph to do his duty against his opinion, let his excuse have its full effect ; but when he regrets his cowardice of compliance, let him regret likewise the cowardice of calumny ; and when he shrinks from vulgar resentment, let him not employ falsehood to cover his retreat."—*Gent. Mag.* vol. xxxix. p. 162. The article proceeds to recommend a recurrence to triennial parliaments, a measure to which Johnson's hatred of the whig septennial bill would naturally incline him ; and as, for Mr. Thrale's sake, he was obliged, by the violence of the times, to adopt some popular topic, he would probably select that of triennial parliaments.—ED.]

Literature¹. In the course of the year he wrote some letters to Mrs. Thrale, passed some part of the summer at Oxford and at Lichfield², and when at Oxford he wrote the following letter:

“ TO THE REVEREND MR. THOMAS
WARTON.

“ 31st May, 1769.

“ DEAR SIR,—Many years ago, when I used to read in the library of your college, I promised to recompense the college for that permission, by adding to their books a Baskerville’s Virgil. I have now sent it, and desire you to reposit it on the shelves in my name³.

“ If you will be pleased to let me know when you have an hour of leisure, I will drink tea with you. I am engaged for the afternoon, to-morrow and on Friday: all my mornings are my own⁴. I am, &c.

“ SAM JOHNSON.”

[“ TO MRS. THRALE.

“ Lichfield, 14th August, 1769.

Letters. “ I set out on Thursday morn-
vol. i. ing, and found my companion, to
p. 24. whom I was very much a stran-
ger, more agreeable than I expected. We went cheerfully forward, and passed the night at Coventry. We came in late, and went out early; and therefore I did not send for my cousin Tom, but I design to make him some amends for the omission.

“ Next day we came early to Lucy, who was, I believe, glad to see us. She

¹ In which place he has been succeeded by Bennet Langton, Esq. When that truly religious gentleman was elected to this honorary professorship, at the same time that Edward Gibbon, Esq., noted for introducing a kind of sneering infidelity into his historical writings, was elected Professor of Ancient History, in the room of Dr. Goldsmith, I observed that it brought to my mind “ Wicked Will Whiston and good Mr. Ditton.”

—I am now also of that admirable institution, as Secretary for Foreign Correspondence, by the favour of the academicians, and the approbation of the sovereign.—BOSWELL.

² [He dates to Mrs. Thrale from Oxford, 27th June and 10th July. He seems to have been there ever since the 18th May.—ED.]

³ “ It has this inscription in a blank leaf: ‘ *Hunc librum D. D. Samuel Johnson, eo quod hic loci studiis interdum vacaret.*’ Of this library, which is an old Gothic room, he was very fond. On my observing to him that some of the *modern* libraries of the University were more commodious and pleasant for study, as being more spacious and airy, he replied, ‘ Sir, if a man has a mind to *prance*, he must study at Christ-Church and All-Souls.’ ”

⁴ “ During this visit he seldom or never dined out. He appeared to be deeply engaged in some literary work. Miss Williams was now with him at Oxford.”—WARTON.

had saved her best gooseberries upon the tree for me; and, as Steele says, *I was neither too proud nor too wise* to gather them. I have rambled a very little *inter fontes et flumina nota*, but I am not yet well. They have cut down the trees in George-lane. Evelyn, in his book of Forest Trees, tells us of wicked men that cut down trees, and never prospered afterwards; yet nothing has deterred these audacious aldermen from violating the Hamadryad of George-lane. As an impartial traveller I must, however, tell that, in Stow-street, where I left a draw-well, I have found a pump, but the lading-well in this ill-fated George-lane lies shamefully neglected.

“ I am going to-day or to-morrow to Ashbourne; but I am at a loss how I shall get back in time to London. Here are only chance coaches, so that there is no certainty of a place. If I do not come, let it not hinder your journey. I can be but a few days behind you; and I will follow in the Brighthelmstone coach. But I hope to come.”]

[“ TO MRS. ASTON.

Brighthelmstone, 26 August, 1769.

“ MADAM,—I suppose you have received the mill: the whole apparatus seemed to be perfect, except that there is wanting a little tin spout at the bottom, and some ring or knob, on which the bag that catches the meal is to be hung. When these are added, I hope you will be able to grind your own bread, and treat me with a cake, made by yourself, of meal from your own corn of your own grinding.

“ I was glad, madam, to see you so well, and hope your health will long increase, and then long continue. I am, madam, your most obedient servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”]

I came to London in the autumn, and having informed him that I was going to be married in a few months, I wished to have as much of his conversation as I could before engaging in a state of life which would probably keep me more in Scotland, and prevent me seeing him so often as when I was a single man; but I found he was at Brighthelmstone with Mr. and Mrs. Thrale. I was very sorry that I had not his company⁵ with me at the Jubilee, in honour of

⁵ [Mr. Boswell, on this occasion, justified Johnson’s foresight and prudence, in advising him to “ clear his head of Corsica:” unluckily the advice had no effect, for Boswell made a fool of himself at the Jubilee by sundry enthusiastic freaks; amongst others, lest he should not be sufficiently distinguished, he wore the words *CORSICA BOSWELL* in large letters round his hat.—ED.]

Shakspeare, at Stratford-upon-Avon, the great poet's native town. Johnson's connexion both with Shakspeare and Garrick founded a double claim to his presence; and it would have been highly gratifying to Mr. Garrick. Upon this occasion I particularly lamented that he had not that warmth of friendship for his brilliant pupil, which we may suppose would have had a benignant effect on both. When almost every man of eminence in the literary world was happy to partake in this festival of genius, the absence of Johnson could not but be wondered at and regretted. The only trace of him there, was in the whimsical advertisement of a haberdasher, who sold *Shaksperian ribands* of various dyes; and, by way of illustrating their appropriation to the bard, introduced a line from the celebrated Prologue at the opening of Drury-lane theatre:

“Each change of *many-colour'd* life he drew.”

From Brighthelmstone Dr. Johnson wrote me the following letter, which they who may think that I ought to have suppressed, must have less ardent feelings than I have always avowed¹.

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“Brighthelmstone, 9th September, 1769.

“DEAR SIR,—Why do you charge me with unkindness? I have omitted nothing that could do you good, or give you pleasure, unless it be that I have forbore to

¹ In the Preface to my account of Corsica, published in 1768, I thus express myself:

“He who publishes a book affecting not to be an authour, and professing an indifference for literary fame, may possibly impose upon many people such an idea of his consequence as he wishes may be received. For my part I should be proud to be known as an authour, and I have an ardent ambition for literary fame; for, of all possessions, I should imagine literary fame to be the most valuable. A man who has been able to furnish a book, which has been approved by the world, has established himself as a respectable character in distant society, without any danger of having that character lessened by the observation of his weaknesses. To preserve an uniform dignity among those who see us every day, is hardly possible; and to aim at it, must put us under the fetters of perpetual restraint. The authour of an approved book may allow his natural disposition an easy play, and yet indulge the pride of superior genius, when he considers that by those who know him only as an authour, he never ceases to be respected. Such an authour, when in his hours of gloom and discontent, may have the consolation to think that his writings are, at that very time, giving pleasure to numbers; and such an authour may cherish the hope of being remembered after death, which has been a great object to the noblest minds in all ages.”—BOSWELL.

tell you my opinion of your ‘Account of Corsica.’ I believe my opinion, if you think well of my judgment, might have given you pleasure; but when it is considered how much vanity is excited by praise, I am not sure that it would have done you good. Your history is like other histories, but your journal is in a very high degree curious and delightful. There is between the history and the journal that difference which there will always be found between notions borrowed from without, and notions generated within. Your history was copied from books; your journal rose out of your own experience and observation. You express images which operated strongly upon yourself, and you have impressed them with great force upon your readers. I know not whether I could name any narrative by which curiosity is better excited or better gratified.

“I am glad that you are going to be married; and as I wish you well in things of less importance, wish you well with proportionate ardour in this crisis of your life. What I can contribute to your happiness, I should be very unwilling to withhold; for I have always loved and valued you, and shall love you and value you still more, as you become more regular and useful: effects which a happy marriage will hardly fail to produce.

“I do not find that I am likely to come back very soon from this place. I shall, perhaps, stay a fortnight longer; and a fortnight is a long time to a lover absent from his mistress. Would a fortnight ever have an end? I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

After his return to town, we met frequently, and I continued the practice of making notes of his conversation, though not with so much assiduity as I wish I had done. At this time, indeed, I had a sufficient excuse for not being able to appropriate so much time to my journal; for General Paoli, after Corsica had been overpowered by the monarchy of France, was now no longer at the head of his brave countrymen, but having with difficulty escaped from his native island, had sought an asylum in Great Britain²; and it was my duty, as well as my pleasure, to attend much upon him³. Such particulars of Johnson's conversation at this period as I have committed to writing, I shall here introduce, without any strict at-

² [21st Sept. 1769. General Paoli arrived at Mr. Hutchinson's, in Old Bond-street.—27th Sept. General Paoli was presented to his Majesty at St. James's.—*Ann. Reg.*—Ed.]

³ [Mr. Boswell's *ostentatious* attendance on General Paoli excited, at the time, a good deal of observation and ridicule.—Ed.]

tention to methodical arrangement. Sometimes short notes of different days shall be blended together, and sometimes a day may seem important enough to be separately distinguished.

He said, he would not have Sunday kept with rigid severity and gloom, but with a gravity and simplicity of behaviour.

[He ridiculed a friend who, looking Piozzi, out on Streatham-common from our P. 176.

windows one day, lamented the enormous wickedness of the times, because some bird-catchers were busy there one fine Sunday morning¹. "While half the Christian world is permitted," said he, "to dance and sing, and celebrate Sunday as a day of festivity, how comes your puritanical spirit so offended with frivolous and empty deviations from exactness? Whoever loads life with unnecessary scruples, sir," continued he, "provokes the attention of others on his conduct, and incurs the censure of singularity without reaping the reward of superior virtue."]

I told him that David Hume had made a short collection of Scotticisms. "I wonder (said Johnson) that *he* should find them²."

He would not admit the importance of the question concerning the legality of general warrants. "Such a power (he observed) must be vested in every government, to answer particular cases of necessity; and there can be no just complaint but when it is abused, for which those who administer government must be answerable. It is a matter of such indifference, a matter about which the people care so very little, that were a man to be sent over Britain to offer them an exemption from it at a halfpenny a piece, very few would purchase it." This was a specimen of that *laxity of talking*, which I had heard him fairly acknowledge; for surely, while the power of granting general warrants was supposed to be legal, and the apprehension of them hung over our heads, we did not possess that security of freedom, congenial to our happy constitution, and which, by the intrepid exertions of Mr. Wilkes, has been happily established.

He said, "The duration of parliament, whether for seven years or the life of the king, appears to me so immaterial, that I would not give half-a-crown to turn the scale one way or the other. The *habeas*

corpus is the single advantage which our government has over that of other countries³."

On the 30th of September we dined together at the Mitre. I attempted to argue for the superiour happiness of the savage life, upon the usual fanciful topicks. JOHNSON. "Sir, there can be nothing more false. The savages have no bodily advantages beyond those of civilized men. They have not better health; and as to care or mental uneasiness, they are not above it, but below it, like bears. No, sir; you are not to talk such paradox: let me have no more on't. It cannot entertain, far less can it instruct. Lord Monbodo, one of your Scotch judges, talked a great deal of such nonsense. I suffered *him*; but I will not suffer *you*." BOSWELL. "But, sir, does not Rousseau talk such nonsense? JOHNSON. "True, sir, but Rousseau *knows* he is talking nonsense, and laughs at the world for staring at him." BOSWELL. "How so, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a man who talks nonsense so well, must know that he is talking nonsense. But I am *afraid* (chuckling and laughing), Monbodo does *not* know that he is talking nonsense⁴." BOSWELL. "Is it wrong then, sir, to affect singularity, in order to make people stare?" JOHNSON. "Yes, if you do it by propagating error; and, indeed, it is wrong in any way. There is in human nature a general inclination to make people stare, and every wise man has himself to cure of it, and does cure himself. If you wish to make people stare by doing better than others, why make them stare till they stare their eyes out. But consider how easy it is to make people stare, by being absurd. I may do it by going into a drawing-room without my shoes. You remember the gentleman in 'The Spectator,' who had a commission of lunacy taken out against him for his extreme singularity, such as never wearing a wig, but a nightcap. Now, sir, abstractedly, the nightcap was best; but, relatively, the advantage was overbalanced by his making the boys run after him."

³ [Did he reckon the power of the common over the public purse as nothing? and did he calculate how long the *habeas corpus* might exist, if the liberty of the press were destroyed, and the duration of parliaments unlimited?—Ed.]

⁴ His lordship having frequently spoken in an abusive manner of Dr. Johnson, in my company, I on one occasion, during the lifetime of my illustrious friend, could not refrain from retaliation, and repeated to him this saying. He has since published I don't know how many pages in one of his curious books, attempting in much anger, but with pitiful effect, to persuade mankind that my illustrious friend was not the great and good man which they esteemed and ever will esteem him to be.—BOSWELL.

¹ [Though Dr. Johnson may have been induced by a spirit of contradiction or impatience, to say something of the kind here stated by Mrs. Piozzi, it is proper to observe, that he was, both in precept and practice, a decorous and generally a strict, though not a puritanical, observer of the Sabbath.—Ed.]

² The first edition of Hume's History of England was full of Scotticisms, many of which he corrected in subsequent editions.—MALONE.

[All desire of *singularity* had indeed a sure enemy in Dr. Johnson. Few people had a more settled reverence for the world than he, or was less captivated by new modes of behaviour introduced, or innovations on the long received customs of common life. One day, in company with Mrs. Thrale, they met a friend driving six very small ponies, and stopped to admire them. "Why does nobody," said Johnson, "begin the fashion of driving six spavined horses, all spavined of the same leg? it would have a mighty pretty effect, and produce the distinction of doing something worse than the common way." He hated the modern way of leaving a company without taking notice to the lady of the house that he was going; and did not much like any of the contrivances by which ease has been lately introduced into society instead of ceremony, which had more of his approbation. Cards, dress, and dancing, however, all found their advocates in Dr. Johnson, who inculcated, upon principle, the cultivation of those arts, which many a moralist thinks himself bound to reject, and many a Christian holds unfit to be practised. "No person," said he, one day, "goes under-dressed till he thinks himself of consequence enough to forbear carrying the badge of his rank upon his back." And, in answer to the arguments urged by Puritans, Quakers, &c. against showy decorations of the human figure, I once heard him exclaim, "Oh, let us be found when our Master calls, us ripping not the lace off our waistcoats, but the spirit of contention from our souls and tongues! Let us all conform in outward customs, which are of no consequence, to the manners of those whom we live among, and despise such paltry distinctions. Alas, sir," continued he, "a man who cannot get to heaven in a green coat, will not find his way thither the sooner in a grey one."]

Talking of a London life, he said, "The happiness of London is not to be conceived but by those who have been in it. I will venture to say, there is more learning and science within the circumference of ten miles from where we now sit, than in all the rest of the kingdom." BOSWELL. "The only disadvantage is the great distance at which people live from one another." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but that is occasioned by the largeness of it, which is the cause of all the other advantages." BOSWELL. "Sometimes I have been in the humour of wishing to retire to a desert." JOHNSON. "Sir, you have desert enough in Scotland."

Although I had promised myself a great deal of instructive conversation with him on the conduct of the married state, of which I had then a near prospect, he did not say much upon that topic. Mr.

Seward¹ heard him once say, that "a man has a very bad chance for happiness in that state, unless he marries a woman of very strong and fixed principles of religion." He maintained to me, contrary to the common notion, that a woman would not be the worse wife for being learned; in which, from all that I have observed of *Artemisias*², I humbly differed from him. That a woman should be sensible and well informed, I allow to be a great advantage; and think that Sir Thomas Overbury³, in his rude versification, has very judiciously pointed out that degree of intelligence which is to be desired in a female companion:

"Give me, next good, an *understanding wife*,
By nature *wise*, not *learned* by much art:
Some *knowledge* on her side will all my life
More scope of conversation impart;
Besides, her inborne virtue fortifie;
They are most firmly good, who best know why."

When I censured a gentleman of my acquaintance for marrying a second time, as it showed a disregard of his first wife, he said, "Not at all, sir. On the contrary, were he not to marry again, it might be concluded that his first wife had given him a disgust of marriage; but by taking a second wife he pays the highest compliment to the first, by showing that she made him so happy as a married man, that he wishes to be so a second time." So ingenious a turn did he give to this delicate question. And yet, on another occasion, he owned that he once had almost asked a promise of Mrs. Johnson that she would not marry again, but had checked himself. Indeed I cannot help thinking, that in his case the request would have been unreasonable; for if Mrs. Johnson forgot, or thought it no injury to the memory of her first love,—the husband of her youth and the father of her children,—to make a second marriage, why should she be precluded from a third, should she be so inclined? In Johnson's persevering fond appropriation of his *Tetty*, even after her decease, he seems totally to have overlooked the prior claim of the honest Birmingham trader⁴. I presume that her having been married before had, at times, given him some uneasiness; for I remember his observing upon the marriage of one of our common friends, "He has done a very

¹ [Mr. William Seward, author of the *Anecdotes of Eminent Persons*, and some other *Ana-*, who must not be confounded with Mr. Seward, the canon of Lichfield.—ED.]

² [See Pope's satirical verses against a learned lady, entitled "*Artemisia*."—ED.]

³ "*A Wife*," a poem, 1614.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [Yet his inquisitive mind might have been struck by his friend Hervey's startling question to Sir Thomas Hammer, relative to the lady who was the cause of their contention: "*In heaven, whose wife shall she be?*" See *ante* p. 238.—ED.]

foolish thing, sir; he has married a widow, when he might have had a maid."

We drank tea with Mrs. Williams. I had last year the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Thrale at Dr. Johnson's one morning, and had conversation enough with her to admire her talents; and to show her that I was a Johnsonian as herself. Dr. Johnson had probably been kind enough to speak well of me, for this evening he delivered me a very polite card from Mr. Thrale and her, inviting me to Streatham.

On the 6th October I complied with this obliging invitation, and found, at an elegant villa, six miles from town, every circumstance that can make society pleasing. Johnson, though quite at home, was yet looked up to with an awe, tempered by affection, and seemed to be equally the care of his host and hostess. I rejoiced at seeing him so happy.

He played off his wit against Scotland with a good-humoured pleasantry, which gave me, though no bigot to national prejudices, an opportunity for a little contest with him. I having said that England was obliged to us for gardeners, almost all their good gardeners being Scotchmen:—JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that is because gardening is much more necessary amongst you than with us, which makes so many of your people learn it. It is *all* gardening with you. Things which grow wild here, must be cultivated with great care in Scotland. Pray now (throwing himself back in his chair, and laughing), are you ever able to bring the *sloe* to perfection?"

I boasted that we had the honour of being the first to abolish the inhospitable, troublesome, and ungracious custom of giving veils to servants. JOHNSON. "Sir, you abolished veils, because you were too poor to be able to give them."

Mrs. Thrale disputed with him on the merit of Prior. He attacked him powerfully; said he wrote of love like a man who had never felt it: his love verses were college verses: and he repeated the song "Alexis shunn'd his fellow swains," &c. in so ludicrous a manner, as to make us all wonder how any one could have been pleased with such fantastical stuff. Mrs. Thrale stood to her gun with great courage, in defence of amorous ditties, which Johnson despised, till he at last silenced her by saying, "My dear lady, talk no more of this. Nonsense can be defended but by nonsense."

Mrs. Thrale then praised Garrick's talents for light gay poetry; and, as a specimen, repeated his song in "Florizel and

Perdita," and dwelt with peculiar pleasure on this line:

"I'd smile with the simple, and feed with the poor."

JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear lady, this will never do. Poor David! Smile with the simple!—what folly is that? And who would feed with the poor that can help it? No, no; let me smile with the wise, and feed with the rich." I repeated this sally to Garrick, and wondered to find his sensibility as a writer not a little irritated by it. To soothe him I observed, that Johnson spared none of us; and I quoted the passage in Horace, in which he compares one who attacks his friends for the sake of a laugh to a pushing ox, that is marked by a bunch of hay put upon his horns: *fanum habet in cornu*. "Ay," said Garrick vehemently, "he has a whole *mow* of it."

Talking of history, Johnson said, "We may know historical facts to be true, as we may know facts in common life to be true. Motives are generally unknown². We cannot trust to the characters we find in history, unless when they are drawn by those who knew the persons, as those, for instance, by Sallust and by Lord Clarendon."

He would not allow much merit to Whitfield's oratory. "His popularity, sir," said he, "is chiefly owing to the peculiarity of his manner. He would be followed by crowds were he to wear a nightcap in the pulpit, or were he to preach from a tree."

I know not from what spirit of contradiction he burst out into a violent declamation against the Corsicans, of whose heroism I talked in high terms. "Sir," said he, "what is all this rout about the Corsicans? They have been at war with the Genoese for upwards of twenty years, and have never yet taken their fortified towns. They might have battered down their walls, and reduced them to powder in twenty years. They might have pulled the walls in pieces, and cracked the stones with their teeth in twenty years." It was in vain to argue with him upon the want of artillery: he was not to be resisted for the moment.

On the evening of October 10, I presented Dr. Johnson to General Paoli. I had greatly wished that two men, for whom I had the highest esteem, should meet. They

² [This was what old Sir Robert Walpole probably meant when, his son Horace, wishing to amuse him one evening, after his fall, offered to read him some historical work. "Any thing," said the old statesman, "but history—that *must* be false." Mr. Gibbon says, "Malheureux sort de l'histoire! Les spectateurs sont trop peu instruits, et les acteurs trop intéressés pour que nous puissions compter sur les récits des uns ou des autres!"] *Misc. Works*, vol. iv. p. 410.—Ed.]

¹ [We shall see hereafter (23d Sept. 1777) that, with less justice, he chose to defend Prior's *delicacy*.—Ed.]

met with a manly ease, mutually conscious of their own abilities, and of the abilities of each other. The general spoke Italian, and Dr. Johnson English, and understood one another very well, with a little aid of interpretation from me, in which I compared myself to an isthmus which joins two great continents. Upon Johnson's approach, the general said, "From what I have read of your works, sir, and from what Mr. Boswell has told me of you, I have long held you in great veneration." The general talked of languages being formed on the particular notions and manners of a people, without knowing which, we cannot know the language. We may know the direct signification of single words; but by these no beauty of expression, no sally of genius, no wit is conveyed to the mind. All this must be by allusion to other ideas. "Sir," said Johnson, "you talk of language as if you had never done any thing else but study it, instead of governing a nation." The general said, "*Questo e un troppo gran complimento;*" this is too great a compliment. Johnson answered, "I should have thought so, sir, if I had not heard you talk." The general asked him what he thought of the spirit of infidelity which was so prevalent. JOHNSON. "Sir, this gloom of infidelity, I hope, is only a transient cloud passing through the hemisphere, which will soon be dissipated, and the sun break forth with his usual splendour." "You think then," said the general, "that they will change their principles like their clothes." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if they bestow no more thought on principles than on dress, it must be so." The general said, that "a great part of the fashionable infidelity was owing to a desire of showing courage. Men who have no opportunities of showing it as to things in this life, take death and futurity as objects on which to display it." JOHNSON. "That is mighty foolish affectation. Fear is one of the passions of human nature, of which it is impossible to divest it. You remember that the Emperor Charles V. when he read upon the tombstone of a Spanish nobleman, 'Here lies one who never knew fear,' wittily said, 'Then he never snuffed a candle with his fingers.'"

He talked a few words of French to the general; but finding he did not do it with facility, he asked for pen, ink, and paper, and wrote the following note:

"J'ai lu dans la géographie de Lucas de Linda un Pater-noster écrit dans une langue tout-à-fait différente de l'Italienne, et de toutes autres lesquelles se dérivent du Latin. L'auteur l'appelle linguam Cor-

¹ [See *ante*, p. 240, the compliment of the king to himself.—Ed.]

sicæ rusticam: elle a peut-être passé, peu-à-peu; mais elle a certainement prévalu autrefois dans les montagnes et dans la campagne. Le même auteur dit la même chose en parlant de Sardaigne; qu'il y a deux langues dans l'Isle, une des villes, l'autre de la campagne."

The general immediately informed him that the *lingua rustica* was only in Sardinia².

Dr. Johnson went home with me, and drank tea till late in the night. He said, "General Paoli had the loftiest port of any man he had ever seen." He denied that military men were always the best bred men. "Perfect good breeding (he observed) consists in having no particular mark of any profession, but a general elegance of manners; whereas, in a military man, you can commonly distinguish the *brand* of a soldier, *l'homme d'épée*:" [and it was, she said, the essence of a gentleman's character to bear the visible mark of no profession whatever. He once named Mr. Berenger as the standard of true elegance; but some one objecting, that he too much resembled the gentleman in Congreve's comedies, Dr. Johnson said, "We must fix then upon the famous Thomas Hervey, whose manners were polished even to acuteness and brilliancy, though he lost but little in solid power of reasoning, and in genuine force of mind." Johnson had an avowed and scarcely limited partiality for all who bore the name, or boasted the alliance of an Aston or a Hervey.]

Dr. Johnson shunned to-night any discussion of the perplexed question of fate and free will, which I attempted to agitate: "Sir (said he), we *know* our will is free, and *there's* an end on 't."

He honoured me with his company at dinner on the 16th of October, at my lodgings in Old Bond-street, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Murphy, Mr. Bickerstaff³, and Mr.

² [The Bishop of Ferns inquires whether it be not possible that a military colony of Jews, transported into Sardinia in the time of Tiberius, may have left some traces of their language there. *Tac. An.* l. 2, c. 85. *Suet. vit. Tib.* c. 36. *Joseph.* l. 18, c. 3.—Ed.]

³ [Isaac Bickerstaff, the authour of several theatrical pieces of considerable merit and continued popularity. This unhappy man was obliged to fly on suspicion of a capital crime, on which occasion Mrs. Poizzi relates, that "when Mr. Bickerstaff's flight confirmed the report of his guilt, and Mr. Thrale said, in answer to Johnson's astonishment, that he had long been a suspected man, 'By those who look close to the ground, dirt will be seen, sir,' was the lofty reply; 'I hope that I see things from a greater distance.'" *Piozzi*, p. 130.—Ed.]

Thomas Davies. Garrick played round him with a fond vivacity, taking hold of the breast of his coat, and, looking up in his face with a lively archness, complimented him on the good health which he seemed then to enjoy; while the sage, shaking his head, beheld him with a gentle complacency. One of the company not being come at the appointed hour, I proposed, as usual upon such occasions, to order dinner to be served; adding, "Ought six people to be kept waiting for one?" "Why, yes (answered Johnson, with a delicate humanity), if the one will suffer more by your sitting down, than the six will do by waiting." Goldsmith, to divert the tedious minutes, strutted about, bragging of his dress, and I believe was seriously vain of it, for his mind was wonderfully prone to such impressions: "Come, come (said Garrick), talk no more of that. You are, perhaps, the worst—eh, eh!"—Goldsmith was eagerly attempting to interrupt him, when Garrick went on, laughing ironically, "Nay, you will always look like a gentleman; but I am talking of being well or ill *drest*." "Well, let me tell you (said Goldsmith), when my tailor brought home my bloom-coloured coat, he said, 'Sir, I have a favour to beg of you. When any body asks you who made your clothes, be pleased to mention John Filby, at the Harrow, in Water-lane.'" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that was because he knew the strange colour would attract crowds to gaze at it, and thus they might hear of him, and see how well he could make a coat even of so absurd a colour."

After dinner our conversation turned first upon Pope. Johnson said, his characters of men were admirably drawn, those of women not so well. He repeated to us, in his forcible melodious manner, the concluding lines of the *Dunciad*¹. While he was talking loudly in praise of those lines, one of the company ventured² to say, "Too fine for such a poem:—a poem on what?" JOHNSON (with a disdainful look). "Why, on *dunces*. It was worth while being a dunce then. Ah, sir, hadst *thou* lived in those days! It is not worth while being a dunce now, when there are no wits." Bickerstaff observed, as a peculiar circumstance, that Pope's fame was higher when he was alive than it was then. Johnson said, his Pas-

torals were poor things, though the versification was fine. He told us, with high satisfaction, the anecdote of Pope's inquiring who was the author of his "London," and saying, he will be soon *deterred*. He observed, that in Dryden's poetry there were passages drawn from a profundity which Pope could never reach. He repeated some fine lines on love, by the former (which I have now forgotten), and gave great applause to the character of Zimri³. Goldsmith said, that Pope's character of Addison showed a deep knowledge of the human heart. Johnson said, that the description of the temple, in "The Mourning Bride⁴," was the finest poetical passage he had ever read; he recollected none in Shakspeare equal to it.—"But (said Garrick, all alarmed for 'the god of his idolatry') we know not the extent and variety of his powers. We are to suppose there are such passages in his works. Shakspeare must not suffer from the badness of our memories." Johnson, diverted by this enthusiastic jealousy, went on with great ardour: "No, sir; Congreve has *nature* (smiling on the tragic eagerness of Garrick); but composing himself, he added, "Sir, this is not comparing Congreve on the whole with Shakspeare on the whole: but only maintaining that Congreve has one finer passage than any that can be found in Shakspeare. Sir, a man may have no more than ten guineas in the world, but he may have those ten guineas in one piece; and so may have a finer piece than a man who has ten thousand pound: but then he has only one tennine piece.—What I mean is, that you can show me no passage where there is simply a description of material objects, without any intermixture of moral notions⁵, which produced such an effect." Mr. Murphy mentioned Shakspeare's description of the night before the battle of Agincourt; but it was observed it had *men* in it. Mr. Davies suggested the speech of Juliet, in which she figures herself awaking in the tomb of her ancestors. Some one mentioned the description of Dover Cliff. JOHN-

³ [The Duke of Buckingham, in *Absalom and Achitophel*.—Ed.]

⁴ Act ii. scene 3.—MALONE.

⁵ In Congreve's description there seems to be an *intermixture of moral notions*; as the affecting power of the passage arises from the vivid impression of the described objects on the mind of the speaker: "And shoots a chillness," &c.—KEARNEY. [So, also, the very first words of the speech, "*how reverend*;" and again, "*it strikes an awe and terror*;" and again, "*looking tranquillity*." All this is surely describing the building by its effects on the mind. The truth is, as Mrs. Piozzi states, Johnson loved to tease Garrick with this apparent preference of Congreve over Shakspeare. See *ante*, p. 222.—Ed.]

¹ Mr. Langton informed me that he once related to Johnson (on the authority of Spence) that Pope himself admired those lines so much, that when he repeated them, his voice faltered: "and well it might, sir (said Johnson), for they are noble lines."—J. BOSWELL.

² [What an idea of the tyranny of Johnson's conversation does this word—*ventured*—give! There is reason, as will appear hereafter, to suspect that Boswell himself was the object of this sarcasm.—Ed.]

son. "No, sir; it should be all precipice— all vacuum. The crows impede your fall. The diminished appearance of the boats, and other circumstances, are all very good description; but do not impress the mind at once with the horrible idea of immense height. The impression is divided; you pass on by computation, from one stage of the tremendous space to another. Had the girl in 'The Mourning Bride' said, she could not cast her shoe to the top of one of the pillars in the temple, it would not have aided the idea, but weakened it."

Talking of a barrister who had a bad utterance, some one (to rouse Johnson) wickedly said, that he was unfortunate in not having been taught oratory by Sheridan. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, if he had been taught by Sheridan, he would have cleared the room." GARRICK. "Sheridan has too much vanity to be a good man."—We shall now see Johnson's mode of *defending* a man; taking him into his own hands and discriminating. JOHNSON. "No, sir. There is, to be sure, in Sheridan, something to reprehend and every thing to laugh at; but, sir, he is not a bad man. No, sir; were mankind to be divided into good and bad, he would stand considerably within the ranks of good. And, sir, it must be allowed that Sheridan excels in plain declamation, though he can exhibit no character."

I should, perhaps, have suppressed¹ this disquisition concerning a person of whose merit and worth I think with respect, had he not attacked Johnson so outrageously in his *Life of Swift*, and, at the same time, treated us his admirers as a set of pigmies. He who has provoked the lash of wit, cannot complain that he smarts from it.

Mrs. Montague, a lady distinguished for having written an *Essay on Shakspeare*, being mentioned—REYNOLDS. "I think that essay does her honour." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; it does *her* honour, but it would do nobody else honour. I have, indeed, not read it all. But when I take up the end of a web, and find it packthread, I do not expect, by looking further, to find embroidery. Sir, I will venture to say, there is not one sentence of true criticism in her book." GARRICK. "But, sir, surely it shows how much Voltaire has mistaken Shakspeare; which nobody else has done." JOHNSON. "Sir, nobody else has thought

¹ [This is a singular avowal, which, had it proceeded from Hawkins or Mrs. Piozzi, Boswell would have very justly censured. But the phrase which he would have thus *suppressed, out of regard* to Sheridan, happens to be the most favourable to his character, and even to his talents, of the many observations of Johnson's which he has recorded. See *ante*, p. 176, relative to what Boswell so unjustly calls Sheridan's "outrageous attack" on Johnson and his admirers.—Ed.]

it worth while. And what merit is there in that? You may as well praise a schoolmaster for whipping a boy who has construed ill. No, sir, there is no real criticism in it; none showing the beauty of thought, as formed on the workings of the human heart."

The admirers of this essay² may be offended at the slighting manner in which Johnson spoke of it: but let it be remembered, that he gave his honest opinion unbiassed by any prejudice, or any proud jealousy of a woman intruding herself into the chair of criticism; for Sir Joshua Reynolds has told me, that when the essay first came out, and it was not known who had written it, Johnson wondered how Sir Joshua could like it. At this time Sir Joshua himself had received no information concerning the authour, except being assured by one of our most eminent literati, that it was clear its authour did not know the Greek tragedies in the original. One day at Sir Joshua's table, when it was related that Mrs. Montague, in an excess of compliment to the authour³ of a modern tragedy, had exclaimed, "I tremble for Shakspeare," Johnson said, "When Shakspeare has got—— for his rival, and Mrs. Montague for his defender, he is in a poor state indeed." [Yet on another occasion, when Mrs. Montague showed him some China plates which had once belonged to Queen Elizabeth, he told her, "that they had no reason to be ashamed of their present possessor, who was so little inferior to the first⁴."

Piozzi,
p. 152.

² Of whom I acknowledge myself to be one considering it as a piece of the secondary or comparative species of criticism; and not of that profound species which alone Dr. Johnson would allow to be "real criticism." It is, besides, clearly and elegantly expressed, and has done effectually what it professed to do, namely, vindicated Shakspeare from the misrepresentations of Voltaire; and considering how many young people were misled by his witty, though false observations, Mrs. Montague's essay was of service to Shakspeare with a certain class of readers, and is, therefore, entitled to praise. Johnson, I am assured, allowed the merit which I have stated, saying (with reference to Boswell), "it is conclusive *ad hominem*."—BOSWELL.

³ [Probably Mr. Jephson, the authour of "*Praganza*," which appeared, with great and somewhat exaggerated applause, in 1775, to which date this latter conversation must therefore be referred.—Ed.]

⁴ [It has been supposed, that the coolness between Mrs. Montague and Dr. Johnson arose out of his treatment of Lord Lyttelton in *the Lives of the Poets*; but we see that he began to speak disrespectfully of her long before that publication; and, indeed, there is hardly any point of Dr. Johnson's conduct less respectable, than the contemptuous way in which he appears to have sometimes spoken of a lady, to whom he continued to

Johnson proceeded:—"The Scotchman¹ has taken the right method in his 'Elements of Criticism.' I do not mean that he has taught us any thing; but he has told us old things in a new way." MURPHY. "He seems to have read a great deal of French criticism, and wants to make it his own; as if he had been for years anatomising the heart of man, and peeping into every cranny of it." GOLDSMITH. "It is easier to write that book, than to read it." JOHNSON. "We have an example of true criticism in Burke's 'Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful;' and if I recollect, there is also Du Bos; and Bouhours, who shows all beauty to depend on truth. There is no great merit in telling how many plays have ghosts in them, and how this ghost is better than that. You must show how terror is impressed on the human heart. In the description of night in Macbeth, the beetle and the bat detract from the general idea of darkness,—inspissated gloom."

Politics being mentioned, he said, "This petitioning² is a new mode of distressing government, and a mighty easy one. I will undertake to get petitions either against quarter guineas or half guineas, with the help of a little hot wine. There must be no yielding to encourage this. The object is not important enough. We are not to blow up half a dozen palaces, because one cottage is burning."

The conversation then took another turn. JOHNSON. "It is amazing what ignorance of certain points one sometimes finds in men of eminence. A wit about town, who wrote loose Latin verses, asked me how it happened that England and Scotland, which were once two kingdoms, were now one: and Sir Fletcher Norton did not seem to know that there were such publications as the Reviews."

"The ballad of Hardyknute has no great merit, if it be really ancient³. People talk of nature. But mere obvious nature may be exhibited with very little power of mind."

On Thursday, October 19, I passed the evening with him at his house. He advised me to complete a Dictionary of words

address such extravagant compliments as that quoted in the text, and to write such flattering letters as we shall read in the course of this work.—Ed.]

¹ [Lord Kames. See *ante*, p. 57, and 179.—Ed.]

² [A great number of petitions, condemnatory of the proceedings against Mr. Wilkes, and inflamed with all the violence of party, were at this period presented to the king.—Ed.]

³ It is unquestionably a modern fiction. It was written by Sir John Bruce of Kinross, and first published at Edinburgh in folio, 1719. See "Percy's Relics of ancient English Poetry," vol. ii. pp. 96. 111. Fourth edition.—MALONE.

peculiar to Scotland, of which I showed him a specimen. "Sir," said he, "Ray has made a collection of north-country words. By collecting those of your country, you will do a useful thing towards the history of the language." He bade me also go on with collections of which I was making upon the antiquities of Scotland. "Make a large book; a folio." BOSWELL. "But of what use will it be, sir?" JOHNSON. "Never mind the use: do it."

I complained that he had not mentioned Garrick in his Preface to Shakspeare; and asked him if he did not admire him. JOHNSON. "Yes, as 'a poor player⁴, who frets and struts his hour upon the stage;' as a shadow." BOSWELL. "But has he not brought Shakspeare into notice?" JOHNSON. "Sir, to allow that, would be to lampoon the age. Many of Shakspeare's plays are the worse for being acted: Macbeth, for instance." BOSWELL. "What, sir, is nothing gained by decoration and action? Indeed, I do wish that you had mentioned Garrick." JOHNSON. "My dear sir, had I mentioned him, I must have mentioned many more; Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Cibber,—nav, and Mr. Cibber too; he too altered Shakspeare." BOSWELL. "You have read his apology⁵, sir?" JOHNSON. "Yes, it is very entertaining. But as for Cibber himself, taking from his conversation all that he ought not to have said, he was a poor creature. I remember when he brought me one of his Odes to have my opinion of it, I could not bear such nonsense, and would not let him read it to the end; so little respect had I for *that great man!* (laughing.) Yet I remember Richardson wondering that I could treat him with familiarity."

I mentioned to him that I had seen the execution of several convicts at Tyburn⁶, two days before, and that none of them seemed to be under any concern. JOHNSON. "Most of them, sir, have never thought at all." BOSWELL. "But is not the fear of death natural to man?" JOHNSON. "So much so, sir, that the whole of life is but keeping away the thoughts of it." He then, in a low and earnest tone, talked of his meditating upon the awful hour of his own dissolution, and in what manner he should conduct himself upon that occasion:—"I know not (said he), whether I should

⁴ [See *ante*, p. 213.—Ed.]

⁵ [The Memoirs of himself and of the stage, which Cibber published under the modest title of an Apology for his Life. See *ante*, p. 181.—Ed.]

⁶ [Six unhappy men were executed at Tyburn on Wednesday the 18th (*one day before*). It was one of the irregularities of Mr. Boswell's mind to be passionately fond of seeing these melancholy spectacles.—Ed.]

wish to have a friend by me, or have it all between God and myself."

Talking of our feeling for the distresses of others: JOHNSON. "Why, sir, there is much noise made about it, but it is greatly exaggerated. No, sir, we have a certain degree of feeling to prompt us to do good; more than that, Providence does not intend. It would be misery to no purpose." BOSWELL. "But suppose now, sir, that one of your intimate friends were apprehended for an offence for which he might be hanged." JOHNSON. "I should do what I could to bail him, and give him any other assistance; but if he were once fairly hanged, I should not suffer." BOSWELL. "Would you eat your dinner that day, sir?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, and eat it as if he were eating with me. Why, there's Barretti, who is to be tried for his life to-morrow; friends have risen up for him on every side, yet if he should be hanged, none of them will eat a slice of plum-pudding the less. Sir, that sympathick feeling goes a very little way in depressing the mind."

I told him that I had dined lately at Foote's, who showed me a letter which he had received from Tom Davies, telling him that he had not been able to sleep, from the concern he felt on account of "*This sad affair of Barretti*," begging of him to try if he could suggest any thing that might be of service; and, at the same time, recommending to him an industrious young man who kept a pickle-shop. JOHNSON. "Ay, sir, here you have a specimen of human sympathy—a friend hanged, and a cucumber pickled. We know not whether Barretti or the pickleman has kept Davies from sleep: nor does he know himself". And as to his not sleeping, sir: Tom Davies is a very great man; Tom has been upon the stage, and knows how to do those things: I have not been upon the stage, and cannot do those things." BOSWELL. "I have often blamed myself, sir, for not feeling for others, as sensibly as many say they do." JOHNSON. "Sir, don't be duped by them any more. You will find these very feeling people are not very ready to do you good. They pay you by *feeling*."

[Though Dr. Johnson possessed the strongest compassion for poverty or illness, he did not even pretend to feel for those who lamented the loss of a child, a parent, or a friend.

Piozzi,
p. 66,
67, 118,
136.

¹ [It would seem that Davies's anxiety was more sincere than Johnson would represent. He says, in a letter to Granger, "I have been so taken up with a very unlucky accident that befel an intimate friend of mine, that for this last fortnight I have been able to attend to no business, though ever so urgent."—*Granger's Letters*, p. 28.—Ed.]

"These are the distresses of sentiment," he would reply, "which a man who is really to be pitied has no leisure to feel. The sight of people who want food and raiment is so common in great cities, that a surly fellow like me has no compassion to spare for wounds given only to vanity or softness." *Canter* indeed was he none: he would forget to ask people after the health of their nearest relations, and say in excuse, "That he knew they did not care: why should they?" said he, "every one in this world has as much as they can do in caring for themselves, and few have leisure really to *think* of their neighbours' distresses, however they may delight their tongues with *talking* of them." Lady Tavistock², who grieved herself to death for the loss of her husband, was talked of. "She was rich and wanted employment," said Johnson, "so she cried till she lost all power of restraining her tears: other women are forced to outlive their husbands, who were just as much beloved, depend on it; but they have no time for grief: and I doubt not, if we had put my Lady Tavistock into a small chandler's shop, and given her a nurse-child to tend, her life would have been saved. The poor and the busy have no leisure for sentimental sorrow." Mrs. Thrale mentioned an event, which, if it had happened, would greatly have injured her husband and his family—"and then, dear sir," said she, "how sorry you would have been!" "I *hope*," replied he, after a long pause, "I should have been *very* sorry;—but remember Rochefoucault's maxim." An acquaintance³ lost the almost certain hope of a good estate that had been long expected. "Such a one will grieve," said Mrs. Thrale, "at her friend's disappointment." "She will suffer as much, perhaps," said he, "as your horse did when your cow miscarried."

Piozzi,
p. 68,
69.

When Mrs. Thrale professed herself sincerely grieved that accumulated distresses had crushed Sir George Colebrook's⁴ family,—"Your own prosperity," said he, "may possibly have so far increased the natural tenderness of your heart, that for aught I know you *may* be a little sorry;

² [Lady Elizabeth Keppel, fifth daughter of the second Earl of Albemarle, married, in 1764, to Francis, eldest son of the fourth Duke of Bedford. He was killed by a fall from his horse, March, 1767. His lady did not die till October, 1768. They were the parents of the late and present Dukes of Bedford.—Ed.]

³ [Probably Mrs. Thrale herself.—Ed.]

⁴ [The banking-house of Sir George Colebrook, Lessingham and Binns, stopped payment in March, 1773. It will be seen hereafter, (28th October, 1775), that Sir George retired for a time to France, where he lived in a style not entitled to much pity.—Ed.]

but it is sufficient for a plain man if he does not laugh when he sees a fine new house tumble down all on a sudden, and a snug cottage stand by ready to receive the owner, whose birth entitled him to nothing better, and whose limbs are left him to go to work again with."

Nothing indeed more surely disgusted Dr. Johnson than hyperbole: he loved not to be told of sallies of excellence, which he said were seldom valuable, and seldom true. "Heroic virtues," said he, "are the *bon mots* of life; they do not appear often, and when they do appear are too much prized, I think; like the aloe-tree, which shoots and flowers once in a hundred years. But life is made up of little things; and that character is the best which does little but repeated acts of beneficence: as that conversation is the best which consists in elegant and pleasing thoughts expressed in natural and pleasing terms. With regard to my own notions of moral virtue," continued he, "I hope I have not lost my sensibility of wrong; but I hope likewise that I have lived long enough in the world, to prevent me from expecting to find any action of which both the original motive and all the parts were good."

Dr. Johnson had been a great reader of Mandeville, and was ever on the watch to spy out those stains of original corruption, so easily discovered by a penetrating observer even in the purest minds. The natural depravity of mankind and the remains of original sin was so fixed in his opinion, that he was a most acute observer of their effects; and used to say sometimes, half in jest, half in earnest, that his observations were the remains of his old tutor Mandeville's instructions. No man, therefore, who smarted from the ingratitude of his friends, found any sympathy from our philosopher: "Let him do good on higher motives next time," would be the answer; "he will then be sure of his reward." As a book, however, he took care always loudly to condemn the *Fable of the Bees*, but not without adding, "that it was the work of a thinking man."

BOSWELL. "Foote has a great deal of humour." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir." BOSWELL. "He has a singular talent of exhibiting character." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not a talent; it is a vice; it is what others abstain from. It is not comedy, which exhibits the character of a species, as that of a miser gathered from many misers; it is farce which exhibits individuals." BOSWELL. "Did not he think of exhibiting you, sir?" JOHNSON. "Sir, fear restrained him; he knew I would have broken his bones. I would have saved him the trouble of cutting off a leg; I would not have left him a leg to cut off." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, is not Foote an infidel?"

JOHNSON. "I do not know, sir, that the fellow is an infidel; but if he be an infidel, he is an infidel as a dog is an infidel; that is to say, he has never thought upon the subject¹." BOSWELL. "I suppose, sir, he has thought superficially, and seized the first notions which occurred to his mind." JOHNSON. "Why then, sir, still he is like a dog, that snatches the piece next him. Did you never observe that dogs have not the power of comparing? A dog will take a small bit of meat as readily as a large, when both are before him."

"Buchanan," he observed, "has fewer *centos* than any modern Latin poet. He has not only had great knowledge of the Latin language, but was a great poetical genius². Both the Scaligers praise him."

He again talked of the passage in *Congreve* with high commendation, and said, "Shakspeare never has six lines together without a fault³. Perhaps you may find seven: but this does not refute my general assertion. If I come to an orchard, and say there's no fruit here, and then comes a poring man who finds two apples and three pears, and tells me, 'Sir, you are mistaken, I have found both apples and pears,' I should laugh at him: what would that be to the purpose?"

BOSWELL. "What do you think of Dr. Young's *Night Thoughts*, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, there are very fine things in them." BOSWELL. "Is there not less religion in the nation now, sir, than there was formerly?" JOHNSON. "I don't know, sir, that there is." BOSWELL. "For instance, there used to be a chaplain in every great family, which we do not find now."

¹ [When Mr. Foote was at Edinburgh, he thought fit to entertain a numerous Scotch company with a great deal of coarse jocularly, at the expense of Dr. Johnson, imagining it would be acceptable. I felt this as not civil to me; but sat very patiently till he had exhausted his merriment on that subject; and then observed, that surely Johnson must be allowed to have some sterling wit, and that I had heard him say a very good thing of Mr. Foote himself. "Ah, my old friend Sam," cried Foote, "no man says better things: do let us have it." Upon which I told the above story, which produced a very loud laugh from the company. But I never saw Foote so disconcerted. He looked grave and angry, and entered into a serious refutation of the justice of the remark. "What, sir," said he, "talk thus of a man of liberal education:—a man who for years was at the University of Oxford:—a man who has added sixteen new characters to the English drama of his country!"—BOSWELL.

² [See *ante*, p. 204, and *post*, sub 30th March, 1783.—Ed.]

³ [What strange "laxity of talk" this is from the author of the "Preface to Shakspeare?" See *ante*, p. 259.—Ed.]

JOHNSON. "Neither do you find any of the state servants which great families used formerly to have. There is a change of modes in the whole department of life."

Next day, October 20, he appeared, for the only time I suppose in his life, as a witness in a court of justice, being called to give evidence to the character of Mr. Baretto who, having stabbed a man in the street, was arraigned at the Old Bailey for murder. Never did such a constellation of genius enlighten the awful sessions-house, emphatically called Justice-hall; Mr. Burke, Mr. Garrick, Mr. Beauclerk, and Dr. Johnson: and undoubtedly their favourable testimony had due weight with the court and jury. Johnson gave his evidence in a slow, deliberate, and distinct manner, which was uncommonly impressive.

[Whatever the *manner* may have been, the *substance* of the evidence, as will appear by the following report of it, was not very important:

"Dr. J.—I believe I began to be acquainted with Mr. Baretto about the year 1753 or 54. I have been intimate with him. He is a man of literature, a very studious man, a man of great diligence. He gets his living by study. I have no reason to think he was ever disordered with liquor in his life. A man that I never knew to be otherwise than peaceable, and a man that I take to be rather timorous.

"Q.—Was he addicted to pick up women in the streets?

"Dr. J.—I never knew that he was.

"Q.—How is he as to eyesight?

"Dr. J.—He does not see me now, nor do I see him. I do not believe he could be capable of assaulting any body in the street, without great provocation."

It is well known that Mr. Baretto was acquitted.

On the 26th of October, we dined together at the Mitre tavern. I found fault with Foote for indulging his talent of ridicule at the expense of his visitors, which I colloquially termed making fools of his company. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, when you go to see Foote, you do not go to see a saint; you go to see a man who will be entertained at your house, and then bring you on a public stage; who will entertain you at his house, for the very purpose of bringing you on a public stage. Sir, he does not *make* fools of his company; they whom he exposes are fools already: he only brings them into action."

Talking of trade, he observed, "It is a mistaken notion that a vast deal of money

¹ [It is odd enough, that two of Johnson's intimate associates, Savage and Baretto, should have been both tried for murder, committed in midnight broils.—ED.]

is brought into a nation by trade. It is not so. Commodities come from commodities; but trade produces no capital accession of wealth. However, though there should be little profit in money, there is a considerable profit in pleasure, as it gives to one nation the productions of another; as we have wines and fruits, and many other foreign articles brought to us." BOSWELL. "Yes, sir, and there is a profit in pleasure, by its furnishing occupation to such numbers of mankind." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you cannot call that pleasure to which all are averse, and which none begin but with the hope of leaving off; a thing which men dislike before they have tried it, and when they have tried it." BOSWELL. "But, sir, the mind must be employed, and we grow weary when idle." JOHNSON. "That is, sir, because others being busy, we want company; but if we were all idle, there would be no growing weary; we should all entertain one another. There is, indeed, this in trade:—it gives men an opportunity of improving their situation. If there were no trade, many who are poor would always remain poor. But no man loves labour for itself." BOSWELL. "Yes, sir, I know a person who does. He is a very laborious judge, and he loves the labour." JOHNSON. "Sir, that is because he loves respect and distinction. Could he have them without labour, he would like it less." BOSWELL. "He tells me he likes it for itself."—"Why, sir, he fancies so, because he is not accustomed to abstract."

We went home to his house to tea. Mrs. Williams made it with sufficient dexterity, notwithstanding her blindness, though her manner of satisfying herself that the cups were full enough appeared to me a little awkward; for I fancied she put her finger down a certain way, till she felt the tea touch it². In my first clation at being allowed the privilege of attending Dr. Johnson at his late visits to this lady, which was like being *à secretioribus consiliis*, I willingly drank cup after cup, as if it had been the Heliconian spring. But as the charm of novelty went off, I grew more fastidious; and besides, I discovered that she was of a peevish temper.

There was a pretty large circle this evening. Dr. Johnson was in very good humour, lively, and ready to talk upon all subjects. Mr. Fergusson, the self-taught philosopher, told him of a new invented machine which went without horses: a man

² I have since had reason to think that I was mistaken; for I have been informed by a lady, who was long intimate with her, and likely to be a more accurate observer of such matters, that she had acquired such a niceness of touch, as to know by the feeling on the outside of the cup, how near it was to being full.—BOSWELL.

who sat in it turned a handle, which worked a spring that drove it forward. "Then, sir," said Johnson, "what is gained is, the man has his choice whether he will move himself alone, or himself and the machine too." Dominicetti¹ being mentioned, he would not allow him any merit. "There is nothing in all this boasted system. No, sir; medicated baths can be no better than warm water: their only effect can be that of tepid moisture." One of the company took the other side, maintaining that medicines of various sorts, and some too of most powerful effect, are introduced into the human frame by the medium of the pores; and, therefore, when warm water is impregnated with salutiferous substances, it may produce great effects as a bath. This appeared to me very satisfactory. Johnson did not answer it; but talking for victory, and determined to be master of the field, he had recourse to the device which Goldsmith imputed to him in the witty words of one of Cibber's comedies: "There is no arguing with Johnson; for when his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the but-end of it." He turned to the gentleman², "Well, sir, go to Dominicetti, and get thyself fumigated; but be sure that the steam be directed to thy *head*, for that is the *peccant part*." This produced a triumphant roar of laughter from the motley assembly of philosophers, printers, and dependents, male and female.

I know not how so whimsical a thought came into my mind, but I asked, "If, sir, you were shut up in a castle, and a newborn child with you, what would you do?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I should not much like my company." BOSWELL. "But would you take the trouble of rearing it?" He seemed, as may well be supposed, unwilling to pursue the subject: but upon my persevering in my question, replied, "Why yes, sir, I would; but I must have all conveniences. If I had no garden, I would make a shed on the roof, and take it there for fresh air. I should feed it, and wash it much, and with warm water to please it, not with cold water to give it pain." Bos-

¹ [Dominicetti was an Italian quack, who made a considerable noise about this time, by the use of medicated baths. He seems to have been received into fashionable society, for we find that he and his wife were much noticed at the celebrated masquerade, given by the King of Denmark, at the Opera-house, on the 10th Oct. 1768. *Ann. Reg. and Gent. Mag.*—Ed.]

² [This "gentleman" was probably Mr. Boswell himself; who, though he generally is candid enough, has occasionally concealed his own name, and particularly where there was no one else present likely to repeat the story. This was observed by the common friends of Johnson and Boswell on the first publication of this work.—Ed.]

WELL. "But, sir, does not heat relax?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you are not to imagine the water is to be very hot. I would not *coddle* the child. No, sir, the hardy method of treating children does no good. I'll take you five children from London, who shall cuff five Highland children. Sir, a man bred in London will carry a burthen, or run, or wrestle, as well as a man brought up in the hardest manner in the country." BOSWELL. "Good living, I suppose, makes the Londoner strong." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I don't know that it does. Our chairmen from Ireland, who are as strong men as any, have been brought up upon potatoes. Quantity makes up for quality." BOSWELL. "Would you teach this child that I have furnished you with, any thing?" JOHNSON. "No, I should not be apt to teach it." BOSWELL. "Would you not have a pleasure in teaching it?" JOHNSON. "No, sir, I should not have pleasure in teaching it." BOSWELL. "Have you not a pleasure in teaching men? *There* I have you. You have the same pleasure in teaching men, that I should have in teaching children." JOHNSON. "Why, something about that." BOSWELL. "Do you think, sir, that what is called natural affection is born with us? It seems to me to be the effect of habit, or of gratitude for kindness. No child has it for a parent whom it has not seen." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I think there is an instinctive natural affection in parents towards their children."

Russia being mentioned as likely to become a great empire, by the rapid increase of population:—JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I see no prospect of their propagating more. They can have no more children than they can get. I know of no way to make them breed more than they do. It is not from reason and prudence that people marry, but from inclination. A man is poor; he thinks, 'I cannot be worse, and so I'll e'en take Peggy.'" BOSWELL. "But have not nations been more populous at one period than another?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but that has been owing to the people being less thinned at one period than another, whether by emigrations, war, or pestilence, not by their being more or less prolific. Births at all times bear the same proportion to the same number of people." BOSWELL. "But, to consider the state of our own country: does not throwing a number of farms into one hand hurt population?" JOHNSON. "Why no, sir; the same quantity of food being produced, will be consumed by the same number of mouths, though the people may be disposed of in different ways. We see, if corn be dear, and butchers' meat cheap, the farmers all apply themselves to the raising of corn, till it becomes plentiful and cheap, and then butchers' meat becomes

dear; so that an equality is always preserved. No, sir, let fanciful men do as they will, depend upon it, it is difficult to disturb the system of life." BOSWELL. "But, sir, is it not a very bad thing for landlords to oppress their tenants, by raising their rents?" JOHNSON. "Very bad. But, sir, it never can have any general influence: it may distress some individuals. For, consider this: landlords cannot do without tenants. Now tenants will not give more for land, than land is worth. If they can make more of their money by keeping a shop, or any other way, they'll do it, and so oblige landlords to let land come back to a reasonable rent, in order that they may get tenants. Land, in England, is an article of commerce. A tenant who pays his landlord his rent, thinks himself no more obliged to him than you think yourself obliged to a man in whose shop you buy a piece of goods. He knows the landlord does not let him have his land for less than he can get from others, in the same manner as the shopkeeper sells his goods. No shopkeeper sells a yard of ribbon for sixpence when sevenpence is the current price." BOSWELL. "But, sir, is it not better that tenants should be dependent on landlords?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, as there are many more tenants than landlords, perhaps, strictly speaking, we should wish not. But if you please you may let your lands cheap, and so get the value, part in money and part in homage. I should agree with you in that." BOSWELL. "So, sir, you laugh at schemes of political improvements." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things."

He observed, "Providence has wisely ordered that the more numerous men are, the more difficult it is for them to agree in any thing, and so they are governed. There is no doubt, that if the poor should reason, 'We'll be the poor no longer, we'll make the rich take their turn,' they could easily do it, were it not that they can't agree. So the common soldiers, though so much more numerous than their officers, are governed by them for the same reason."

He said, "Mankind have a strong attachment to the habitations to which they have been accustomed. You see the inhabitants of Norway do not with one consent quit it, and go to some part of America, where there is a mild climate, and where they may have the same produce from land, with the tenth part of the labour. No, sir; their affection for their old dwellings, and the terrour of a general change, keep them at home. Thus, we see many of the finest spots in the world thinly inhabited, and many rugged spots well inhabited."

"The London Chronicle," which was the only newspaper he constantly took in, being brought, the office of reading it aloud

was assigned to me. I was diverted by his impatience. He made me pass over so many parts of it, that my task was very easy. He would not suffer one of the petitions to the king about the Middlesex election to be read.

I had hired a Bohemian as my servant while I remained in London, and being much pleased with him, I asked Dr. Johnson whether his being a Roman Catholick should prevent my taking him with me to Scotland. JOHNSON. "Why no, sir. If he has no objection, you can have none." BOSWELL. "So, sir, you are no great enemy to the Roman Catholick religion." JOHNSON. "No more, sir, than to the Presbyterian religion." BOSWELL. "You are joking." JOHNSON. "No, sir, I really think so. Nay, sir, of the two, I prefer the popish¹." BOSWELL. "How so, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the Presbyterians have no church, no apostolical ordination." BOSWELL. "And do you think that absolutely essential, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, as it was an apostolical institution, I think it is dangerous to be without it. And, sir, the Presbyterians have no public worship: they have no form of prayer in which they know they are to join. They go to hear a man pray, and are to judge whether they will join with him." BOSWELL. "But, sir, their doctrine is the same with that of the church of England. Their confession of faith, and the thirty-nine articles, contain the same points, even the doctrine of predestination." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir; predestination was a part of the clamour of the times, so it is mentioned in our articles, but with as little positiveness as could be." BOSWELL. "Is it necessary, sir, to believe all the thirty-nine articles?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that is a question which has been much agitated. Some have thought it necessary that they should all be believed; others have considered them to be only articles of peace², that is to say, you are not to preach against them."

¹ [See *ante*, p. 97.—Ed.]

² [Dr. Simon Patrick (afterwards Bishop of Ely,) thus expresses himself on this subject, in a letter to the learned Dr. John Mapletost, dated Feb. 8, 1682—3: "I always took the articles to be only articles of communion; and so Bishop Bramhall expressly maintains against the Bishop of Chalcedon; and I remember well, that Bishop Sanderson, when the king was first restored, received the subscription of an acquaintance of mine, which he declared was not to them as articles of *faith*, but *peace*. I think you need make no scruple of the matter, because all that I know so understand the meaning of subscription, and upon other terms would not subscribe."—The above was printed some years ago in the "European Magazine," from the original, now in the hands of Mr. Mapletost, surgeon at Chertsey, grandson to Dr. John Mapletost.—MALONE.]

BOSWELL. "It appears to me, sir, that predestination, or what is equivalent to it, cannot be avoided, if we hold an universal prescience in the Deity." **JOHNSON.** "Why, sir, does not God every day see things going on without preventing them?" **BOSWELL.** "True, sir, but if a thing be *certainly* foreseen, it must be fixed, and cannot happen otherwise; and if we apply this consideration to the human mind, there is no free-will, nor do I see how prayer can be of any avail." He mentioned Dr. Clarke, and Bishop Bramhall on Liberty and Necessity, and bid me read South's Sermons on Prayer; but avoided the question which has excruciated philosophers and divines, beyond any other. I did not press it further, when I perceived that he was displeased, and shrunk from any abridgment of an attribute usually ascribed to the Divinity, however irreconcilable in its full extent with the grand system of moral government. His supposed orthodoxy here cramped the vigorous powers of his understanding. He was confined by a chain which early imagination and long habit made him think massy and strong, but which, had he ventured to try, he could at once have snapped asunder.

I proceeded:—"What do you think, sir, of Purgatory, as believed by the Roman Catholics?" **JOHNSON.** "Why, sir, it is a very harmless doctrine. They are of opinion that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as to deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to merit being admitted into the society of blessed spirits; and therefore that God is graciously pleased to allow of a middle state, where they may be purified by certain degrees of suffering. You see, sir, there is nothing unreasonable in this." **BOSWELL.** "But then, sir, their masses for the dead?" **JOHNSON.** "Why, sir, if it be once established that there are souls in purgatory, it is as proper to pray for *them*, as for our brethren of mankind who are yet in this life." **BOSWELL.** "The idolatry of the mass?" **JOHNSON.** "Sir, there is no idolatry in the mass. They believe God to be there, and they adore him." **BOSWELL.** "The worship of saints?" **JOHNSON.** "Sir, they do not worship saints; they invoke them; they only ask their prayers. I am talking all this time of the *doctrines* of the church of Rome. I grant you that in *practice*, purgatory is made a lucrative imposition, and that the people do become idolatrous as they recommend themselves to the tutelary protection of particular saints¹. I think their giving the sacra-

¹ [The editor has now before him a Roman Catholic Prayer-book, printed at Ghent so late as 1823, in which there is a prayer to the Virgin, addressing her as "*Ma divine Princesse*," and

ment only in one kind is criminal, because it is contrary to the express institution of Christ, and I wonder how the council of Trent admitted it." **BOSWELL.** "Confession?" **JOHNSON.** "Why, I don't know but that is a good thing. The scripture says, 'Confess your faults one to another,' and the priests confess as well as the laity. Then it must be considered that their absolution is only upon repentance, and often upon penance also. You think your sins may be forgiven without penance, upon repentance alone."

I thus ventured to mention all the common objections against the Roman Catholic church, that I might hear so great a man upon them. What he said is here accurately recorded. But it is not improbable that if one had taken the other side, he might have reasoned differently.

I must however mention, that he had a respect for "*the old religion*," as the mild Melancthon called that of the Roman Catholic church, even while he was exerting himself for its reformation in some particulars. Sir William Scott informs me, that he heard Johnson say, "A man who is converted from protestantism to popery may be sincere; he parts with nothing: he is only superadding to what he already had. But a convert from popery to protestantism gives up so much of what he has held as sacred as any thing that he retains; there is so much *laceration of mind* in such a conversion, that it can hardly be sincere and lasting²." The truth of this reflection may be confirmed by many and eminent instances, some of which will occur to most of my readers³.

When we were alone, I introduced the subject of death, and endeavoured to maintain that the fear of it might be got over. I told him that David Hume said to me, he was no more uneasy to think he should *not be* after this life, than that he *had not been* before he began to exist. **JOHNSON.** "Sir, if he really thinks so, his perceptions are disturbed; he is mad: if he does not think so, he lies. He may tell you he holds his finger in the flame of a candle,

another to St. Joseph, as "*Mon aimable patron*."—Ed.]

² [The Bishop of Ferns expresses his surprise that Johnson should have forgotten Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, and *all those of all nations* who have renounced popery.—Ed.]

³ [The editor does not understand this allusion. He is not aware of "many and eminent instances" of persons converted *from* popery to protestantism relapsing either into superstition or infidelity." He suspects that Mr. Boswell, who often alludes to Mr. Gibbon's vacillation, really meant *him* in this passage, and that the converse of the proposition in the text—namely, that some converts from protestantism to popery had ended infidels—was what he intended to maintain.—Ed.]

without feeling pain; would you believe him? When he dies, he at least gives up all he has." BOSWELL. "Foote, sir, told me, that when he was very ill he was not afraid to die." JOHNSON. "It is not true, sir. Hold a pistol to Foote's breast, or to Hume's breast, and threaten to kill them, and you'll see how they behave." BOSWELL. "But may we not fortify our minds for the approach of death?" Here I am sensible I was in the wrong, to bring before his view what he ever looked upon with horror; for although when in a celestial frame of mind in his "Vanity of Human Wishes," he has supposed death to be "kind nature's signal for retreat," from this state of being to "a happier seat," his thoughts upon this awful change were in general full of dismal apprehensions. His mind resembled the vast amphitheatre, the Coliseum at Rome. In the centre stood his judgment, which, like a mighty gladiator, combated those apprehensions that, like the wild beasts of the *Arena*, were all around in cells, ready to be let out upon him. After a conflict, he drives them back into their dens; but not killing them, they were still assailing him. To my question, whether we might not fortify our minds for the approach of death, he answered, in a passion, "No, sir, let it alone. It matters not how a man dies, but how he lives. The act of dying is not of importance, it lasts so short a time." He added, with an earnest look, "A man knows it must be so, and submits. It will do him no good to whine."

I attempted to continue the conversation. He was so provoked, that he said, "Give us no more of this;" and was thrown into such a state of agitation, that he expressed himself in a way that alarmed and distressed me²; showed an impatience that I should leave him, and when I was going away, called to me sternly, "Don't let us meet to-morrow."

I went home exceedingly uneasy. All the harsh observations which I had ever heard made upon his character crowded into my mind; and I seemed to myself like the man who had put his head into the lion's mouth a great many times with perfect safety, but at last had it bit off.

Next morning [27th October,] I sent him a note, stating that I might have been in the wrong, but it was not intentionally; he was therefore, I could not help thinking, too severe upon me. That notwithstanding

¹ [This was a touch of "that sad humour which his father gave him." See *ante*, p. 10.—Ed.]

² [Yet Mr. Boswell could contradict Sir John Hawkins's assertion, "that Johnson's mind could not contemplate mortality with firmness." See *ante*, p. 145.—Ed.]

our agreement not to meet that day, I would call on him in my way to the city, and stay five minutes by my watch. "You are," said I, "in my mind, since last night, surrounded with cloud and storm. Let me have a glimpse of sunshine, and go about my affairs in serenity and cheerfulness."

Upon entering his study, I was glad that he was not alone, which would have made our meeting more awkward. There were with him Mr. Steevens³ and Mr. Tyers⁴, both of whom I now saw for the first time. My note had, on his own reflection, softened him, for he received me very complacently; so that I unexpectedly found myself at ease, and joined in the conversation.

He said, the critics had done too much honour to Sir Richard Blackmore, by writing so much against him. That in his "Creation" he had been helped by various wits, a line by Phillips, and a line by Tickell; so that by their aid, and that of others, the poem had been made out⁵.

I defended Blackmore's supposed lines, which have been ridiculed as absolute nonsense:

"A painted vest Prince Vortiger had on,
Which from a naked Pict his grandsire won."⁶

I maintained it to be a poetical conceit. A Pict being painted, if he is slain in battle, and a vest is made of his skin, it is a painted vest won from him, though he was naked.

³ [George Steevens, who, in the next year, became associated with Johnson in the edition of Shakspeare, which goes by their joint names. Mr. Steevens was born in 1736, and died at Hampstead in 1800. A cynical disposition rendered him unpopular with his acquaintance, as we shall have occasion to notice in the course of this work.—Ed.]

⁴ [See *ante*, p. 300.—Ed.]

⁵ Johnson himself has vindicated Blackmore upon this very point. See *the Lives of the Poets*, vol. iii. p. 75. Svo. 1791.—J. BOSWELL.

⁶ An acute correspondent of the *European Magazine*, April, 1792, has completely exposed a mistake, which has been unaccountably frequent in ascribing these lines to Blackmore, notwithstanding that Sir Richard Steele, in that very popular work, *The Spectator*, mentions them as written by the author of *The British Princes*, the Hon. Edward Howard. The correspondent, above mentioned, shows this mistake to be so inveterate, that not only I defended the lines as Blackmore's, in the presence of Dr. Johnson, without any contradiction or doubt of their authenticity, but that the Reverend Mr. Whittaker has asserted in print, that he understands they were suppressed in the late edition or editions of Blackmore. "After all," says this intelligent writer, "it is not unworthy of particular observation, that these lines, so often quoted, do not exist, either in Blackmore or Howard." In *The British Princes*, Svo., 1669, now before me (p. 96), they stand thus:

Johnson spoke unfavourably of a certain pretty voluminous authour¹, saying, "He used to write anonymous books, and then other books commending those books, in which there was something of rascality."

I whispered him, "Well, sir, you are now in good humour." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir." I was going to leave him, and had got as far as the staircase. He stopped me, and smiling, said, "Get you gone *in*;" a curious mode of inviting me to stay, which I accordingly did for some time longer.

This little incidental quarrel and reconciliation, which, perhaps, I may be thought to have detailed too minutely, must be esteemed as one of many proofs which his friends had, that though he might be charged with *bad humour* at times, he was always a *good-natured* man; and I have heard Sir Joshua Reynolds, a nice and delicate observer of manners, particularly remark, that when upon any occasion Johnson had been rough to any person in company, he took the first opportunity of reconciliation, by drinking to him, or addressing his discourse to him; but if he found his dignified indirect overtures sullenly neglected, he was quite indifferent, and considered himself as having done all that he ought to do, and the other as now in the wrong.

Being to set out for Scotland on the 10th of November, I wrote to him at Streatham, begging that he would meet me in town on the 9th; but if this should be very inconvenient to him, I would go thither. His answer was as follows:

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"9th November, 1769.

"DEAR SIR,—Upon balancing the inconveniences of both parties, I find it will less incommode you to spend your night here, than me to come to town. I wish to see you, and am ordered by the lady of this house to invite you hither. Whether you can come or not, I shall not have any occasion of writing to you again before your

"A vest as admired Vortiger had on,
Which from this Island's foes his grandsire won,
Whose artful colour pass'd the Tyrian dye,
Obliged to triumph in this legacy."

It is probable I think, that some wag, in order to make Howard still more ridiculous than he really was, has formed the couplet as it now circulates.—BOSWELL.

¹ [There is reason to suppose that this was Dr. Hill, who, as Mr. Chalmers observes to me, used to play such tricks, not only anonymously, but under false names, such as *Dr. Crine*, *Dr. Uvedale*, and many others. But it has been also surmised, that Smollet is meant; and as Boswell had certainly no tenderness for *Hill's* character, (see *ante*, p. 240), the suppression of the name seems to favour this latter opinion.—ED.]

marriage, and therefore tell you now, that with great sincerity I wish you happiness. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

I was detained in town till it was too late on the ninth, so went to him early in the morning of the tenth of November. "Now," said he, "that you are going to marry, do not expect more from life than life will afford. You may often find yourself out of humour, and you may often think your wife not studious enough to please you; and yet you may have reason to consider yourself as upon the whole very happily married."

Talking of marriage in general, he observed, "Our marriage service is too refined. It is calculated only for the best kind of marriages: whereas, we should have a form for matches of convenience, of which there are many²." He agreed with me that there was no absolute necessity for having the marriage ceremony performed by a regular clergyman, for this was not commanded in scripture.

I was volatile enough to repeat to him a little epigrammatick song of mine, on matrimony, which Mr. Garrick had a few days before procured to be set to music by the very ingenious Mr. Dibdin.

A MATRIMONIAL THOUGHT.

"In the blithe days of honey-moon,
With Kate's allurements smitten,
I loved her late, I loved her soon,
And call'd her dearest kitten.

But now my kitten's grown a cat,
And cross like other wives:
O! by my soul, my honest Mat,
I fear she has nine lives³."

My illustrious friend said, "It is very well, sir; but you should not swear." Upon which I altered "O! by my soul," to "alas, alas!"

He was so good as to accompany me to London, and see me into the post-chaise

² [It may be suspected that Mr. Boswell, in transcribing for the press, at the interval of twenty-five years, his original note, may have misrepresented Dr. Johnson's opinion. There are, no doubt, marriages of convenience, but such often turn out to be very happy marriages. Moreover, one would ask, how is the marriage ceremony too *refined*? and, again, if there were two services, who would ever consent to be married by that which implied some degree of degradation, or at least of inferiority? and finally, how is one to guess, beforehand, how a marriage is to turn out?—ED.]

³ [Mr. Boswell used (as did also his eldest son, Sir Alexander) to sing, in convivial society, songs of his own composition. See *Nich. Anecd. vol. ii. p. 665.*—ED.]

which was to carry me on my road to Scotland. And sure I am, that however inconsiderable many of the particulars recorded at this time may appear to some, they will be esteemed by the best part of my readers as genuine traits of his character, contributing together to give a full, fair, and distinct view of it.

In 1770, he published a political pamphlet, entitled "The False Alarm," intended to justify the conduct of ministry and their majority in the house of commons for having virtually assumed it as an axiom, that the expulsion of a member of parliament was equivalent to exclusion, and thus having declared Colonel Luttrell to be duly elected for the county of Middlesex, notwithstanding Mr. Wilkes had a great majority of votes. This being justly considered as a gross violation of the right of election, an alarm for the constitution extended itself all over the kingdom. To prove this alarm to be false was the purpose of Johnson's pamphlet; but even his vast powers are inadequate to cope with constitutional truth and reason, and his argument failed of effect; and the house of commons have since expunged the offensive resolution from their Journals. That the house of commons might have expelled Mr. Wilkes repeatedly, and as often as he should be re-chosen, was not denied; but incapacitation cannot be but by an act of the whole legislature. It was wonderful to see how a prejudice in favour of government in general, and an aversion to popular clamour, could blind and contract such an understanding as Johnson's, in this particular case; yet the wit, the sarcasm, the eloquent vivacity which this pamphlet displayed, made it be read with great avidity at the time, and it will ever be read with pleasure, for the sake of its composition. That it endeavoured to infuse a narcotick indifference, as to publick concerns, into the minds of the people, and that it broke out sometimes into an extreme coarseness of contemptuous abuse, is but too evident.

It must not, however, be omitted, that when the storm of his violence subsides, he takes a fair opportunity to pay a grateful compliment to the king, who had rewarded his merit:—"These low-born railers have endeavoured, surely without effect, to alienate the affections of the people from the only king who for almost a century has much appeared to desire, or much endeavoured to deserve them." And "Every honest man must lament, that the faction has been regarded with frigid neutrality by the Tories, who being long accustomed to signalise their principles by opposition to the court, do not yet consider, that they have at last a king who knows not the name of party, and who wishes to be the common father of all his people."

[This his first and favourite pamphlet was written at Mr. Thrale's, between eight o'clock on Wednesday night and twelve o'clock on Thursday night; and Johnson and Mrs. Thrale read it to Mr. Thrale when he came very late home from the house of commons.]

To this pamphlet, which was at once discovered to be Johnson's, several answers came out, in which care was taken to remind the publick of his former attacks upon government, and of his now being a pensioner, without allowing for the honourable terms upon which Johnson's pension was granted and accepted, or the change of system which the British court had undergone upon the accession of his present majesty. He was, however, soothed in the highest strain of panegyric, in a poem called "The Remonstrance," by the Rev. Mr. Stockdale¹, to whom he was, upon many occasions, a kind protector.

The following admirable minute made by him describes so well his own state, and that of numbers to whom self-examination is habitual, that I cannot omit it:—

"June 1, 1770. Every man naturally persuades himself that he can keep his resolutions, nor is he convinced of his imbecility but by length of time and frequency of experiment. This opinion of our own constancy is so prevalent, that we always despise him who suffers his general and settled purpose to be overpowered by an occasional desire. They, therefore, whom frequent failures have made desperate, cease to form resolutions; and they who are become cunning, do not tell them. Those who do not make them are very few, but of their effect little is perceived; for scarcely any man persists in a course of life planned by choice, but as he is restrained from deviation by some external power. He who may live as he will, seldom lives long in the observation of his own rules. I never yet saw a regular family, unless it were that of Mrs. Harriot's, nor a regular man, except Mr. ———², whose exactness I know only by his own report, and Psalmanazer, whose life was, I think, uniform."

Of this year I have obtained the following letters:

"TO THE REV. DR. FARMER, CAMBRIDGE.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 21st March, 1770.

"SIR,—As no man ought to keep wholly to himself any possession that may be

¹ [The Reverend Percival Stockdale, whose strange and rambling autobiography was published in 1808; he was the author of several bad poems, and he died in 1811, at the age of 75. He was Johnson's neighbour for some years, both in Johnson's-court and Bolt-court.—Ed.]

² [The name in the original manuscript is, as Dr. Hall informs me, *Campbell*, perhaps Dr.

useful to the publick, I hope you will not think me unreasonably intrusive, if I have recourse to you for such information as you are more able to give me than any other man.

“In support of an opinion which you have already placed above the need of any more support, Mr. Steevens, a very ingenious gentleman, lately of King’s College, has collected an account of all the translations which Shakspeare might have seen and used. He wishes his catalogue to be perfect, and therefore entreats that you will favour him by the insertion of such additions as the accuracy of your inquiries has enabled you to make. To this request, I take the liberty of adding my own solicitation.

“We have no immediate use for this catalogue, and therefore do not desire that it should interrupt or hinder your more important employments. But it will be kind to let us know that you receive it. I am, sir, &c. “SAM. JOHNSON.”

[“DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. LUCY PORTER.

“1st May, 1770.

“DEAREST MADAM,—Among other causes that have hindered me from answering your last kind letter, is a tedious and painful rheumatism, that has afflicted me for many weeks, and still continues to molest me. I hope you are well, and will long keep your health and your cheerfulness.

“One reason why I delayed to write was, my uncertainty how to answer your letter. I like the thought of giving away the money very well; but when I consider that Tom Johnson is my nearest relation, and that he is now old and in great want; that he was my playfellow in childhood, and has never done any thing to offend me; I am in doubt whether I ought not rather give it him than any other.

“Of this, my dear, I would have your opinion. I would willingly please you, and I know that you will be pleased best with what you think right.

“Tell me your mind, and do not learn of me to neglect writing; for it is a very sorry trick, though it be mine.

“Your brother is well, I saw him today; and thought it long since I saw him before: it seems he has called often and could not find me. I am, my dear, your affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

[“London, 26th May, 1770.

“MY DEAREST DEAR,—I am very sorry that your eyes are bad; take

John Campbell, whom, on another occasion, (*ante*, p. 189), Johnson calls a “good and a pious man;” but see *post*, 11th April, 1773. Perhaps the Scotch nonjuring Bishop Campbell was meant. See *post*, p. 449.—Ed.]

great care of them, especially by candle-light. Mine continue pretty good, but they are sometimes a little dim. My rheumatism grows gradually better.

“I have considered your letter, and am willing that the whole money should go where you, my dear, originally intended. I hope to help Tom some other way. So that matter is over.

“Dr. Taylor has invited me to pass some time with him at Ashbourne; if I come, you may be sure that I shall take you and Lichfield in my way. When I am nearer coming, I will send you word.

“Of Mr. Porter I have seen very little, but I know not that it is his fault, for he says that he often calls, and never finds me; I am sorry for it, for I love him.

“Mr. Mathias has lately had a great deal of money left him, of which you have probably heard already. I am, my dearest, your most affectionate servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

“TO THE REVEREND MR. THOMAS

WARTON.

“London, 23d June, 1770.

“DEAR SIR,—The readiness with which you were pleased to promise me some notes on Shakspeare, was a new instance of your friendship. I shall not hurry you; but am desired by Mr. Steevens, who helps me in this edition, to let you know, that we shall print the tragedies first, and shall therefore want first the notes which belong to them. We think not to incommode the readers with a supplement; and therefore, what we cannot put into its proper place, will do us no good. We shall not begin to print before the end of six weeks, perhaps not so soon. I am, &c. “SAM. JOHNSON.”

[“TO MRS. THRALE.

“Lichfield, 7th July, 1770.

“I thought I should have heard something to-day about Streatham; but there is no letter; and I need some consolation, for rheumatism is come again, though in a less degree than formerly. I reckon to go next week to Ashbourne, and will try to bring you the dimensions of the great bull. The skies and the ground are all so wet, that I have been very little abroad; and Mrs. Aston is from home, so that I have no motive to walk. When she is at home, she lives on the top of Stow-hill, and I commonly climb up to see her once a day. There is nothing there now but the empty nest.

“To write to you about Lichfield is of no use, for you never saw Stow-pool, nor Borowcop-hill. I believe you may find Borow or Borowcop-hill in my Dictionary, under cop or cob. Nobody here knows what the name imports.”

Pearson MSS.

Letters, vol. i. p. 86, &c.

"Lichfield, 11th July, 1770.

"Mr. Greene¹, the apothecary, has found a book which tells who paid levies in our parish, and how much they paid above an hundred years ago. Do you not think we study this book hard? Nothing is like going to the bottom of things. Many families that paid the parish rates are now extinct, like the race of Hercules. *Pulvis et umbra sumus*. What is nearest us touches us most. The passions rise higher at domestic than at imperial tragedies. I am not wholly unaffected by the revolutions of Sadler-street; nor can forbear to mourn a little when old names vanish away, and new come into their place."

"Ashbourne, 20th July, 1770.

"I came hither on Wednesday, having staid one night at a lodge in the forest of Nedewood. Dr. Taylor's is a very pleasant house, with a lawn and a lake, and twenty deer and five fawns upon the lawn. Whether I shall by any light see Matlock I do not yet know.

"That Baretti's book would please you all I made no doubt. I know not whether the world has ever seen such Travels before. Those whose lot it is to ramble can seldom write, and those who know how to write very seldom ramble. If Sidney had gone, as he desired, the great voyage with Drake, there would probably have been such a narrative as would have equally satisfied the poet and the philosopher."

"Ashbourne, 23d July, 1770.

"I have seen the great bull²; and very great he is. I have seen likewise his heir apparent, who promises to inherit all the bulk and all the virtues of his sire. I have seen the man who offered an hundred guineas for the young bull, while he was yet little better than a calf. Matlock, I am afraid, I shall not see, but I purpose to see Dovedale; and, after all this seeing, I hope to see you."

"TO THE REV. DR. JOSEPH WARTON.

"21st Sept. 1770.

"DEAR SIR,—I am revising my edition of Shakspeare, and remember that I formerly misrepresented your opinion of Lear. Be pleased to write the paragraph as you would have it, and send it. If you have any remarks of your own upon that or any other play, I shall gladly receive them.

"Make my compliments to Mrs. Warton. I sometimes think of wandering for a

¹ [See *post*, 23d March, 1776.—Ed.]

² [Dr. Taylor had a remarkable fine breed of cattle; and one bull, in particular, was of celebrated beauty and size.—Ed.]

few days to Winchester, but am apt to delay. I am, sir, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO MR. FRANCIS BARBER,
"At Mrs. Clapp's, Bishopstortford, Hertfordshire.

"London, 25th Sept. 1770.

"DEAR FRANCIS,—I am at last sat down to write to you, and should very much blame myself for having neglected you so long, if I did not impute that and many other failings to want of health. I hope not to be so long silent again. I am very well satisfied with your progress, if you can really perform the exercises which you are set; and I hope Mr. Ellis does not suffer you to impose on him, or on yourself.

"Make my compliments to Mr. Ellis, and to Mrs. Clapp, and Mr. Smith.

"Let me know what English books you read for your entertainment. You can never be wise unless you love reading.

"Do not imagine that I shall forget or forsake you; for if, when I examine you, I find that you have not lost your time, you shall want no encouragement from yours affectionately,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

TO THE SAME.

"7th December, 1770.

"DEAR FRANCIS,—I hope you mind your business. I design you shall stay with Mrs. Clapp these holidays. If you are invited out you may go, if Mr. Ellis gives leave. I have ordered you some clothes, which you will receive, I believe, next week. My compliments to Mrs. Clapp, and to Mr. Ellis, and Mr. Smith, &c.—I am your affectionate

"SAM. JOHNSON."

During this year there was a total cessation of all correspondence between Dr. Johnson and me, without any coldness on either side, but merely from procrastination, continued from day to day; and as I was not in London, I had no opportunity of enjoying his company and recording his conversation³.

In 1771 he published another political pamphlet, entitled "Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands," in which, upon materials furnished to him by ministry, and upon general topics expanded in his rich style, he successfully endeavoured to persuade the nation that it was wise and laudable to suffer the question of right to remain undecided, rather than involve our country in another war. It has been suggested by some, with what

³ [Here Mr. Boswell had placed Dr. Maxwell's "Collectanea," which the editor has removed to p. 166.—Ed.]

truth I shall not take upon me to decide, that he rated the consequence of those islands to Great Britain too low. But however this may be, every humane mind must surely applaud the earnestness with which he averted the calamity of war; a calamity so dreadful, that it is astonishing how civilised, nay, christian nations, can deliberately continue to renew it. His description of its miseries in this pamphlet is one of the finest pieces of eloquence in the English language. Upon this occasion, too, we find Johnson lashing the party in opposition with unbounded severity, and making the fullest use of what he ever reckoned a most effectual argumentative instrument—contempt. His character of their very able mysterious champion, Junius, is executed with all the force of his genius, and finished with the highest care. He seems to have exulted in sallying forth to single combat against the boasted and formidable hero, who bade defiance to "principalities and powers, and the rulers of this world."

[He often delighted his imagination with the thoughts of having destroyed Junius. One day, Mrs.

Thrale had received a remarkably fine Stilton cheese as a present from some person who had packed and directed it carefully, but without mentioning whence it came. Mr. Thrale, desirous to know who they were obliged to, asked every friend as they came in, but nobody owned it. Dr. Johnson at last excited a general laugh, by saying, "Depend upon it, sir, it was sent by *Junius*."] Piozzi,
p. 31.

This pamphlet, it is observable, was softened in one particular, after the first edition; for the conclusion of Mr. George Grenville's character stood thus: "Let him not, however, be depreciated in his grave. He had powers not universally possessed; could he have enforced payment of the Manilla ransom, *he could have counted it.*" Which, instead of retaining its sly sharp point, was reduced to a mere flat unmeaning expression, or, if I may use the word—*truism*: "He had powers not universally possessed: and if he sometimes erred, he was likewise sometimes right."

"DR. JOHNSON TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"March 20, 1771."

"DEAR SIR,—After much lingering of my own, and much of the ministry, I have, at length, got out my paper¹. But delay is not yet at an end: Not many had been dispersed, before Lord North ordered the sale to stop. His reasons I do not distinct-

ly know. You may try to find them in the perusal². Before his order, a sufficient number were dispersed to do all the mischief, though, perhaps, not to make all the sport that might be expected from it.

"Soon after your departure, I had the pleasure of finding all the danger pass with which your navigation³ was threatened. I hope nothing happens at home to abate your satisfaction; but that Lady Rothes⁴, and Mrs. Langton, and the young ladies, are all well.

"I was last night at the Club. Dr. Percy has written a long ballad in many *fits*: it is pretty enough. He has printed, and will soon publish it. Goldsmith is at Bath, with Lord Clare⁵. At Mr. Thrale's, where I am now writing, all are well. I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[One evening in the oratorio season of the year 1771, Dr. Johnson went with Mrs.

² By comparing the first with the subsequent editions, this curious circumstance of ministerial authorship may be discovered.—BOSWELL.

It can only be discovered (as Mr. Findley observes to me) by him who possesses a copy of the first edition issued out before the sale was stopped.—MALONE.

³ [Probably some canal or work of a similar nature in which Mr. Langton was interested in Lincolnshire. What the danger was which threatened it is not now recollected.—ED.]

⁴ Mr. Langton married, May 24, 1770, Jane, the daughter of — Lloyd, Esq. and widow of John, eighth Earl of Rothes, many years commander in chief of the forces in Ireland, who died in 1767:—MALONE. [It was, as Mr. Chalmers observes, a saying about that time, "*Married a Countess Dowager of Rothes!* Why, every body marries a Countess Dowager of Rothes!" And there were, in fact, about 1772, three ladies of that name married to second husbands. Mary Lloyd married to Mr. Langton; Jane Maitland, widow of John, ninth Earl of Rothes, married the Honourable P. Maitland, seventh son of the fifth Earl of Lauderdale, and Lady Jane Leslie, Countess of Rothes, widow of John Raymond Evelyn Esq. remarried to Sir Lucas Pepys.—ED.]

⁵ [Robert Nugent, an Irish gentleman, who married (the second of three wives) the sister and heiress of Secretary Craggs, by whom he acquired a considerable fortune. He was created, in 1767, Baron Nugent and Viscount Clare, and in 1777, Earl Nugent. His only daughter married the first Marquis of Buckingham, on whose second son the title of Baron Nugent devolved. Lord Nugent wrote some odes and light pieces, which had some merit and a great vogue. He died in 1788. Goldsmith addressed to him his lively verses called "*The Haunch of Venison.*" The characters exhibited in this piece are very comic, and were no doubt drawn from nature; but Goldsmith ought to have confessed that he had borrowed the idea and some of the details from Boileau.—ED.]

¹ "Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands."—BOSWELL.

Piozzi, and though he was for the most part an exceeding bad playhouse companion, as his person drew people's eyes upon the box, and the loudness of his voice made it difficult to hear any body but himself, he sat surprisingly quiet, and Mrs. Piozzi flattered herself that he was listening to the musick. When they got home, however, he repeated these verses, which he said he had made at the oratorio:

IN THEATRO.

Tertii verso quater orbe lustris,
 Quid theatrales tibi, Crispe, pompæ!
 Quam decet canos male litteratos
 Sera voluptas!

Tene mulceri fidibus canoris?
 Tene cantorum modulis stupere?
 Tene per pietas, oculo elegante,
 Currere formas?

Inter equales, sine felle liber,
 Codices, veri studiosus, inter,
 Rectius vives: sua quisque carpat
 Gaudia gratus

Lusibus gaudet puer otiosis,
 Luxus oblectat juvenem theatri,
 At seni, fluxo sapienter uii
 Tempore restat.

Hawk. p. 512, 513. [The publication of Johnson's tracts exhibited him to the world in a new character: he ceased now to be considered as one who, having been occupied in literary studies, and more conversant with books than with men, knew little of active life, the views of parties, or the artifices of designing men: on the contrary, they discovered that he had, by the force of his own genius, and the observations he had made on the history of our own and other countries, attained to such skill in the grand leading principles of political science, as are seldom acquired by those in the most active and important stations, even after long experience; and that, whatever opinions he might have formed on this subject, he had ability by strong reasoning to defend, and by a manly and convincing eloquence to enforce.

Mr. Thrale, a man of slow conceptions, but of a sound judgment, was not one of the last that discerned in his friend this talent, and believing that the exercise of it might redound to the benefit of the publick, entertained a design of bringing Johnson into parliament. We must suppose that he had previously determined to furnish him with a legal qualification, and Johnson, it is certain, was willing to accept the trust. Mr. Thrale had two meetings with the minister, who, at first, seemed inclined to

find him a seat; but, whether upon conversation he doubted his fitness for his purpose, or that he thought himself in no need of his assistance, the project failed.]

Mr. Strahan, the printer, who had been long in intimacy with Johnson, in the course of his literary labours, who was at once his friendly agent in receiving his pension for him, and his banker in supplying him with money when he wanted it; who was himself now a member of parliament, and who loved much to be employed in political negotiation; thought he should do eminent service, both to government and Johnson, if he could be the means of his getting a seat in the house of commons. With this view, he wrote a letter to one of the secretaries of the treasury¹, of which he gave me a copy in his own handwriting, which is as follows:—

New-street, March 30, 1771.

“SIR,—You will easily recollect, when I had the honour of waiting upon you some time ago, I took the liberty to observe to you, that Dr. Johnson would make an excellent figure in the house of commons, and heartily wished he had a seat there. My reasons are briefly these:

“I know his perfect good affection to his majesty and his government, which I am certain he wishes to support by every means in his power.

“He possesses a great share of manly, nervous, and ready eloquence; is quick in discerning the strength and weakness of an argument; can express himself with clearness and precision, and fears the face of no man alive.

“His known character as a man of extraordinary sense and unimpeached virtue would secure him the attention of the house, and could not fail to give him a proper weight there.

“He is capable of the greatest application, and can undergo any degree of labour, where he sees it necessary, and where his heart and affections are strongly engaged. His majesty's ministers might therefore securely depend on his doing, upon every proper occasion, the utmost that could be expected from him. They would find him ready to vindicate such measures as tended to promote the stability of government, and resolute and steady in carrying them into execution. Nor is any thing to be apprehended from the supposed impetuosity of his temper. To the friends of the king you will find him a lamb, to his enemies a lion.

“For these reasons, I humbly apprehend

¹ [The secretaries of the treasury, at this time, were Sir Grey Cooper and James West, Esq.—Ed.]

that he would be a very able and useful member. And I will venture to say, the employment would not be disagreeable to him; and knowing, as I do, his strong affection to the king, his ability to serve him in that capacity, and the extreme ardour with which I am convinced he would engage in that service, I must repeat, that I wish most heartily to see him in the house.

“If you think this worthy of attention, you will be pleased to take a convenient opportunity of mentioning it to Lord North. If his lordship should happily approve of it, I shall have the satisfaction of having been, in some degree, the humble instrument of doing my country, in my opinion, a very essential service. I know your good-nature, and your zeal for the publick welfare, will plead my excuse for giving you this trouble. I am, with the greatest respect, sir, your most obedient and humble servant,

“WILLIAM STRAHAN.”

This recommendation, we know, was not effectual; but how, or for what reason, can only be conjectured¹. It is not to be believed that Mr. Strahan would have applied, unless Johnson had approved of it. I never heard him mention the subject; but at a later period of his life, when Sir Joshua Reynolds told him that Mr. Edmund Burke had said, that if he had come early into parliament, he certainly would have been the greatest speaker that ever was there, Johnson exclaimed, “I should like to try my hand now.”

It has been much agitated among his friends and others, whether he would have been a powerful speaker in parliament, had he been brought in when advanced in life. I am inclined to think, that his extensive knowledge, his quickness and force of mind, his vivacity and richness of expression, his wit and humour, and above all, his poignancy of sarcasm, would have had great effect in a popular assembly; and that the magnitude of his figure, and striking peculiarity of his manner, would have aided the effect. But I remember it was observed by Mr. Flood, that Johnson, having been long used to sententious brevity, and the short flights of conversation, might have failed in that continued and expanded kind of argument, which is requisite in stating complicated matters in publick speaking; and as a

¹ [Lord Stowell has told the editor, that it was understood amongst Johnson's friends that “Lord North was afraid that Johnson's *help*, (as he himself said of Lord Chesterfield's) might have been sometimes *embarrassing*.” “He perhaps thought, and not unreasonably,” added Lord Stowell, “that, like the elephant in the battle, he was quite as likely to trample down his friends as his foes.”—ED.]

proof of this he mentioned the supposed speeches in parliament written by him for the magazine, none of which, in his opinion, were at all like real debates. The opinion of one who was himself so eminent an orator, must be allowed to have great weight. It was confirmed by Sir William Scott [Lord Stowell], who mentioned that Johnson had told him, that he had several times tried to speak in the society of Arts and Manufactures, but “had found he could not get on².” From Mr. William Gerard Hamilton I have heard, that Johnson, when observing to him that it was prudent for a man who had not been accustomed to speak in publick, to begin his speech in as simple a manner as possible, acknowledged that he rose in that society to deliver a speech which he had prepared; “but,” said he, “all my flowers of oratory forsook me.” I however cannot help wishing that he *had* “tried his hand,” in parliament; and I wonder that ministry did not make the experiment.

[Johnson himself was, in Sir J. Hawk. Hawkins's opinion, a little soured by this disappointment; and he afterwards spoke of Lord North in terms of asperity.]

[It was, says Mrs. Piozzi, in 1775 that Mr. Burke made the famous ^{Piozzi, p. 32. 33.} speech³, in parliament, that struck even foes with admiration, and friends with delight. Among the nameless thousands who are contented to echo those praises they have not skill to invent, I ventured, before Dr. Johnson himself, to applaud, with rapture, the beautiful passage in it concerning Lord Bathurst and the angel; “which,” said the doctor, “had I been in the house, I would have answered *thus*:

“Suppose, Mr. Speaker, that to Wharton, or to Marlborough, or to any of the eminent whigs of the last age, the *Devil*

² Dr. Kippis, however (*Biograph. Britan.* article “J. Gilbert Cooper,” p. 266, n. new edit.), says, that he “once heard Dr. Johnson speak in the Society of Arts and Manufactures, upon a subject relative to mechanicks, with a propriety, perspicuity, and energy, which excited general admiration.”—MALONE. [We cannot give credit to Dr. Kippis's account against Johnson's own statement vouched by Lord Stowell and Mr. Hamilton; but even if we could, one speech in the Society of Arts was no test of what Johnson might have been able to do in parliament; and it may be suspected that at the age of sixty-two he, with all his talents, would have failed to acquire that peculiar tact and dexterity, without which even great abilities do not succeed in that very fastidious assembly. Lord St. Helens has since confirmed to the editor, on the authority of his father, an eye-witness, Dr. Johnson's failure at the Society of Arts.—ED.]

³ [On the 22d March, 1775.—ED.]

had, not with any great impropriety, consented to appear; he would perhaps in somewhat like these words have commenced the conversation:

“You seem, my lord, to be concerned at the judicious apprehension, that while you are sapping the foundations of royalty at home, and propagating here the dangerous doctrine of resistance, the distance of America may secure its inhabitants from your arts, though active: but I will unfold to you the gay prospects of futurity. This people, now so innocent and harmless, shall draw the sword against their mother-country, and bathe its point in the blood of their benefactors: this people, now contented with a little, shall then refuse to spare, what they themselves confess they could not miss; and these men, now so honest and so grateful, shall, in return for peace and for protection, see their vile agents in the house of parliament, there to sow the seeds of sedition, and propagate confusion, perplexity, and pain. Be not dispirited then at the contemplation of their present happy state; I promise you that anarchy, poverty, and death, shall, by my care, be carried even across the spacious Atlantic, and settle in America itself, the sure consequences of our beloved whiggism.”

This Mrs. Piozzi thought a thing so very particular, that she begged his leave to write it down directly, before any thing could intervene that might make her forget the force of the expressions].

[“TO MISS LANGTON.

“London, 17th April, 1771.

“MADAM,—If I could have flattered myself that my letters could have given pleasure, or have alleviated pain, I should not have omitted to write to a lady to whom I do sincerely wish every increase of pleasure, and every mitigation of uneasiness.

“I knew, dear madam, that a very heavy affliction¹ had fallen upon you; but it was one of those which the established course of nature makes necessary, and to which kind words give no relief. Success is on these occasions to be expected only from time.

“Your censure of me, as deficient in friendship, is therefore too severe. I have neither been unfriendly, nor intentionally uncivil. The notice with which you have honoured me, I have neither forgotten, nor remembered without pleasure.

“The calamity of ill health, your brother will tell you that I have had, since I saw you, sufficient reason to know and to pity. But this is another evil against which we can receive little help from one another. I can only advise you, and I advise you with

¹ [Probably the death of her aunt, the elder Miss Langton.—ED.]

great earnestness, to do nothing that may hurt you, and to reject nothing that may do you good. To preserve health is a moral and religious duty: for health is the basis of all social virtues; we can be useful no longer than while we are well.

“If the family knows that you receive this letter, you will be pleased to make my compliments.

“I flatter myself with the hopes of seeing Langton after Lady Rothes’s recovery; and then I hope that you and I shall renew our conferences, and that I shall find you willing as formerly to talk and to hear; and shall be again admitted to the honour of being, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

I at length renewed a correspondence which had been too long discontinued:

“TO DR. JOHNSON.

“Edinburgh, 18th April, 1771.

“MY DEAR SIR,—I can now fully understand those intervals of silence in your correspondence with me, which have often given me anxiety and uneasiness; for although I am conscious that my veneration and love for Mr. Johnson have never in the least abated, yet I have deferred for almost a year and a half to write to him.”

In the subsequent part of this letter, I gave him an account of my comfortable life as a married man², and a lawyer in practice at the Scotch bar; invited him to Scotland, and promised to attend him to the Highlands and Hebrides.

“DR. JOHNSON TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“London, 20th June, 1771.

“DEAR SIR,—If you are now able to comprehend that I might neglect to write without diminution of affection, you have taught me, likewise, how that neglect may be uneasily felt without resentment. I wished for your letter a long time, and when it came, it amply recompensed the delay. I never was so much pleased as now with your account of yourself; and sincerely hope, that between publick business, improving studies, and domestick pleasures, neither mel-

² [Mr. Boswell had married in November, 1769, Miss Margaret Montgomerie, of the family of the Montgomeries of Lainshawe, who were baronets, and claimed the peerage of Lyle. Dr. Johnson says of this lady to Mrs. Thrale, in a letter from Auchinleck, 23d August, 1773, “Mrs. [Boswell] has the mien and manner of a gentlewoman, and such a person and mind as would not in any place either be admired or condemned. She is in a proper degree inferior to her husband: she cannot rival him, nor can he ever be ashamed of her.”—ED.]

lancholy nor caprice will find any place for entrance. Whatever philosophy may determine of material nature, it is certainly true of intellectual nature, that it *abhors a vacuum*: our minds cannot be empty; and evil will break in upon them, if they are not pre-occupied by good. My dear sir, mind your studies, mind your business, make your lady happy, and be a good Christian. After this,

—————tristitia et metus
Trades protervis in mare Creticum
Portare ventis.

"If we perform our duty, we shall be safe and steady, '*Sive per*,' &c. whether we climb the Highlands, or are tossed among the Hebrides; and I hope the time will come when we may try our powers both with cliffs and water. I see but little of Lord Elibank¹, I know not why; perhaps by my own fault. I am this day going into Staffordshire and Derbyshire for six weeks. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate, and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

Lichfield, 22d June, 1771.

Letters. "Last night I came safe to Lich-
vol. i. field; this day I was visited by Mrs.
p. 57, 39, Cobb. This afternoon I went to
&c. Mrs. Aston, where I found Miss
T[urton], and waited on her home. Miss
T[urton] wears spectacles, and can hardly
climb the stiles. I was not tired at all, either
last night or to-day. Miss Porter is very kind
to me. Her dog and cats are all well."

"Ashbourne, 3d July, 1771.

"Last Saturday I came to Ashbourne—
Ashbourne in the Peak. Let not the barren
name of the Peak terrify you; I have
never wanted strawberries and cream. The
great bull has no disease but age. I hope
in time to be like the great bull; and hope
you will be like him too a hundred years
hence."

"Ashbourne, 7th July, 1771.

"Poor Dr. Taylor is ill, and under my
government; you know that the act of
government is learned by obedience; I hope
I can govern very tolerably.

"The old rheumatism is come again into
my face and mouth, but nothing yet to the
lumbago; however, having so long thought
it gone, I do not like its return.

"Miss Porter was much pleased to be

¹ [Patrick Murray, fifth Lord Elibank. He had been in the army, and served as a colonel in the expedition against Carthagen in 1740. He was a man of wit and talents, and wrote some tracts relative to the statistics and history of Scotland. He died in 1778.—ED.]

mentioned in your letter, and is sure that I have spoken better of her than she deserved. She holds that both Frank and his master are much improved. The master, she says, is not half so *lounging* and *untidy* as he was; there was no such thing last year as getting him off his chair."

"Ashbourne, 8th July, 1771.

"Dr. Taylor is better, and is gone out in the chaise. My rheumatism is better too.

"I would have been glad to go to Hagley, in compliance with Mr. Lyttelton's² kind invitation, for, besides the pleasure of his company, I should have had the opportunity of recollecting past times, and wandering *per montes notos³ et flumina nota*, of recalling the images of sixteen, and reviewing my conversations with poor Ford⁴. But this year will not bring this gratification within my power. I promised Taylor a month. Every thing is done here to please me; and his health is a strong reason against desertion."]

"TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, IN LEICESTER-FIELDS.

Ashbourne in Derbyshire, 17th July, 1771.

"DEAR SIR,—When I came to Lichfield, I found that my portrait⁵ had been much visited, and much admired. Every man has a lurking wish to appear considerable in his native place; and I was pleased with the dignity conferred by such a testimony of your regard.

"Be pleased, therefore, to accept the thanks of, sir, your most obliged, and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Compliments to Miss Reynolds."

"TO DR. JOHNSON.

Edinburgh, 27th July, 1771.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The bearer of this, Mr. Beattie, professor of moral philosophy at Aberdeen, is desirous of being introduced to your acquaintance. His genius and learning, and labours in the service of virtue and religion, render him very worthy of it: and as he has a high esteem of your character, I hope you will give him a favourable reception. I ever am, &c.

"JAMES BOSWELL."

² [The uncle of Lord Lyttelton, who lived at Little Hagley.—ED.]

³ [Thus in Mrs. Thrale's book.—ED.]

⁴ Cornelius Ford, his mother's nephew.—PROZZI.

⁵ The second portrait of Johnson, painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds; with his arms raised, and his hands bent. It was at this time, it is believed, in the possession of Miss Lucy Porter, and is still probably at Lichfield.—MALONE. [It is now the property of the Marquis of Stafford.—ED.]

["DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

"Lichfield, Sat. 3d Aug. 1771.

Letters, vol. i. p. 5. "Having stayed my month with Taylor, I came away on Wednesday, leaving him, I think, in a disposition of mind not very uncommon, at once weary of my stay, and grieved at my departure.

"My purpose was to have made haste to you and Streatham; and who would have expected that I should have been stopped by Lucy? Hearing me give Francis orders to take in places, she told me that I should not go till after next week. I thought it proper to comply; for I was pleased to find that I could please, and proud of showing you that I do not come an universal out-cast. Lucy is likewise a very peremptory maiden; and if I had gone without permission, I am not very sure that I might have been welcome at another time."]

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

"29th August, 1771.

"DEAR SIR,—I am lately returned from Staffordshire and Derbyshire. The last letter mentions two others which you have written to me since you received my pamphlet. Of these two I never had but one, in which you mentioned a design of visiting Scotland, and, by consequence, put my journey to Langton out of my thoughts. My summer wanderings are now over, and I am engaging in a very great work, the revision of my Dictionary; from which I know not, at present, how to get loose.

"If you have observed, or been told, any errors or omissions, you will do me a great favour by letting me know them.

"Lady Rothes, I find, has disappointed you and herself. Ladies will have these tricks. The queen and Mrs. Thrale, both ladies of experience, yet both missed their reckoning this summer. I hope, a few months will recompense your uneasiness.

"Please to tell Lady Rothes how highly I value the honour of her invitation, which it is my purpose to obey as soon as I have disengaged myself. In the mean time I shall hope to hear often of her ladyship, and every day better news and better, till I hear that you have both the happiness, which to both is very sincerely wished by, sir, your most affectionate and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

In October I again wrote to him, thanking him for his last letter, and his obliging reception of Mr. Beattie; informing him that I had been at Alnwick lately, and had good accounts of him from Dr. Percy.

[In October, 1771, John Bell, Esq. of Hertfordshire, a gentleman with whom he had maintained a long and strict friendship, had the misfortune to

lose his wife, and wished Johnson, from the outlines of her character, which he should give him, and his own knowledge of her worth, to compose a monumental inscription for her: he returned the husband thanks for the confidence he placed in him, and acquitted himself of the task in a fine eulogium, now to be seen in the parish church of Watford in Hertfordshire.]

In his religious record of this year we observe that he was better than usual, both in body and mind, and better satisfied with the regularity of his conduct. But he is still "trying his ways" too rigorously. He charges himself with not rising early enough; yet he mentions what was surely a sufficient excuse for this, supposing it to be a duty seriously required, as he all his life appears to have thought it.

"One great hinderance is want of rest; my nocturnal complaints grow less troublesome towards morning; and I am tempted to repair the deficiencies of the night."

Alas! how hard would it be, if this indulgence were to be imputed to a sick man as a crime. In his retrospect on the following Easter-eve, he says:

"When I review the last year, I am able to recollect so little done, that shame and sorrow, though perhaps too weakly, come upon me."

Had he been judging of any one else in the same circumstances, how clear would he have been on the favourable side. How very difficult, and in my opinion almost constitutionally impossible it was for him to be raised early, even by the strongest resolutions, appears from a note in one of his little paper books (containing words arranged for his Dictionary), written, I suppose, about 1753:

"I do not remember that, since I left Oxford, I ever rose early by mere choice, but once or twice at Edial, and two or three times for the Rambler¹."

I think he had fair ground enough to have quieted his mind on the subject, by concluding that he was physically incapable of what is at best but a commodious regulation.

In 1772 he was altogether quiescent as an author; but it will be found, from the various evidences which I shall bring together, that his mind was acute, lively, and vigorous.

"DR. JOHNSON TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

"27th February, 1772.

"DEAR SIR,—Be pleased to send to Mr. Banks, whose place of residence I do not know, this note, which I have sent open, that, if you please, you may read it.

¹ [And, "for the Rambler," it could hardly have been "by mere choice."—ED.]

“When you send it, do not use your own seal. I am, sir, your most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO JOSEPH BANKS, ESQ.

“Johnson’s-court, Fleet-street, 27th Feb. 1772.

“Perpetua ambita bis terrâ prœmia lactis
Hæc habet altrici Capra secunda Jovis”.

“SIR,—I return thanks to you and to Dr. Solander for the pleasure which I received in yesterday’s conversation. I could not recollect a motto for your goat, but have given her one. You, sir, may perhaps have an epick poem from some happier pen than, sir, your most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. TO DR. JOHNSON.

“MY DEAR SIR,—It is hard that I cannot prevail on you to write to me oftener. But I am convinced that it is in vain to expect from you a private correspondence with any regularity. I must, therefore, look upon you as a fountain of wisdom, from whence few rills are communicated to a distance, and which must be approached at its source, to partake fully of its virtues.
* * * * *

“I am coming to London soon, and am to appear in an appeal from the court of session in the house of lords. A schoolmaster in Scotland was, by a court of inferior jurisdiction, deprived of his office, for being somewhat severe in the chastisement of his scholars. The court of session considering it to be dangerous to the interest of learning and education, to lessen the dignity of teachers, and make them afraid of too indulgent parents, instigated by the complaints of their children, restored him. His enemies have appealed to the house of lords, though the salary is only twenty pounds a year. I was counsel for him here. I hope there will be little fear of a reversal; but I must beg to have your aid in my plan of supporting the decree. It is a general question, and not a point of particular law.
* * * * *

“I am, &c. “JAMES BOSWELL.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“15th March, 1772.

“DEAR SIR,—That you are coming so soon to town I am very glad; and still more

¹ Thus translated by a friend:—

“In fame scarce second to the nurse of Jove,
This goat, who twice the world had traversed round,
Deserving both her master’s care and love,
Ease and perpetual pasture now has found.”

[Neither the original nor the translation will add much to the poetical fame of Mr. Boswell’s friends. The Latin seems particularly stiff and poor.—Ed.]

glad that you are coming as an advocate. I think nothing more likely to make your life pass happily away, than that consciousness of your own value, which eminence in your profession will certainly confer. If I can give you any collateral help, I hope you do not suspect that it will be wanting. My kindness for you has neither the merit of singular virtue, nor the reproach of singular prejudice. Whether to love you be right or wrong, I have many on my side: Mrs. Thrale loves you, and Mrs. Williams loves you, and what would have inclined me to love you, if I had been neutral before, you are a great favourite of Dr. Beattie.

“Of Dr. Beattie I should have thought much, but that his lady puts him out of my head; she is a very lovely woman.

“The ejection which you come hither to oppose, appears very cruel, unreasonable, and oppressive. I should think there could not be much doubt of your success.

“My health grows better, yet I am, not fully recovered. I believe it is held that men do not recover very fast after three-score. I hope yet to see Beattie’s college: and have not given up the western voyage. But however all this may be or not, let us try to make each other happy when we meet, and not refer our pleasure to distant times or distant places.

“How comes it that you tell me nothing of your lady? I hope to see her some time, and till then shall be glad to hear of her. I am, dear sir, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO BENNET LANGTON,
ESQ. AT LANGTON.

“14th March, 1772.

“DEAR SIR,—I congratulate you and Lady Rothes on your little man, and hope you will all be many years happy together.

“Poor Miss Langton can have little part in the joy of her family. She this day called her aunt Langton to receive the sacrament with her; and made me talk yesterday on such subjects as suit her condition. It will probably be her *viaticum*. I surely need not mention again that she wishes to see her mother. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

On the 21st of March, I was happy to find myself again in my friend’s study, and was glad to see my old acquaintance, Mr. Francis Barber, who has now returned home. Dr. Johnson received me with a hearty welcome; saying, “I am glad you are come, and glad you are come upon such an errand:” (alluding to the cause of the schoolmaster.) BOSWELL. “I hope, sir, he will be in no danger. It is a very deli-

cate matter to interfere between a master and his scholars: nor do I see how you can fix the degree of severity that a master may use." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, till you can fix the degree of obstinacy and negligence of the scholars, you cannot fix the degree of severity of the master. Severity must be continued until obstinacy be subdued, and negligence be cured." He mentioned the severity of Hunter, his own master. "Sir (said I), Hunter is a Scotch name: so it should seem this schoolmaster who beat you so severely was a Scotchman. I can now account for your prejudice against the Scotch." JOHNSON. "Sir, he was not Scotch; and, abating his brutality, he was a very good master."

We talked of his two political pamphlets, "The False Alarm," and "Thoughts concerning Falkland's Islands." JOHNSON.

"Well, sir, which of them did you think the best?" BOSWELL. "I liked the second best." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I liked the first best; and Beattie liked the first best. Sir, there is a subtlety of disquisition in the first, that is worth all the fire of the second." BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, is it true that Lord North paid you a visit, and that you got two hundred a year in addition to your pension?" JOHNSON.

"No, sir. Except what I had from the bookseller, I did not get a farthing by them. And between you and me, I believe Lord North is no friend¹ to me."

BOSWELL. "How so, sir?" JOHNSON.

"Why, sir, you cannot account for the fancies of men. Well, how does Lord Elibank? and how does Lord Monbodd²?"

BOSWELL. "Very well, sir. Lord Monbodd² still maintains the superiority of the savage life." JOHNSON. "What strange narrowness of mind now is that, to think the things we have not known are better than the things which we have known."

BOSWELL. "Why, sir, that is a common prejudice." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, but a common prejudice should not be found in one whose trade it is to rectify error."

A gentleman having come in who was to go as a mate in the ship along with Mr.

Banks and Dr. Solander, Dr. Johnson asked what were the names of the ships destined for the expedition³. The gentleman answered, they were once to be called the Drake and the Raleigh, but now they were to be called the Resolution and the Adventure. JOHNSON. "Much better; for had the Raleigh returned without going round the world, it would have been ridiculous. To give them the names of the Drake and the Raleigh was laying a trap for satire."

BOSWELL. "Had you not some desire to go upon this expedition, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why, yes, but I soon laid it aside. Sir, there is very little of intellectual, in the course. Besides, I see but at a small distance. So it was not worth my while to go to see birds fly, which I should not have seen fly; and fishes swim, which I should not have seen swim."

The gentleman being gone, and Dr. Johnson having left the room for some time, a debate arose between the Reverend Mr. Stockdale and Mrs. Desmoulins, whether Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander were entitled to any share of glory from their expedition. When Dr. Johnson returned to us, I told him the subject of their dispute. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it was probably for botany that they went out: I believe they thought only of culling of simples."

I thanked him for showing civilities to Beattie. "Sir (said he), I should thank you. We all love Beattie. Mrs. Thrale says, if ever she has another husband, she'll have Beattie. He sunk upon us⁴ that

³ [There was no person in the capacity of *mate* in either of these ships. Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander did not go with this expedition. The reason which they alleged for abandoning the intention will be found in the Annual Register for 1772, p. 108.—Ed.]

⁴ "TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

Edinburgh, 3d May, 1792.

"MY DEAR SIR,—As I suppose your great work will soon be reprinted, I beg leave to trouble you with a remark on a passage of it, in which I am a little misrepresented. Be not alarmed; the misrepresentation is not imputable to you. Not having the book at hand, I cannot specify the page, but I suppose you will easily find it. Dr. Johnson says, speaking of Mrs. Thrale's family, 'Dr. Beattie *sunk upon us* that he was married, or words to that purpose.' I am not sure that I understand *sunk upon us*, which is a very uncommon phrase: but it seems to me to imply (and others, I find, have understood it in the same sense), *studiously concealed from us his being married*. Now, sir, this was by no means the case. I could have no motive to conceal a circumstance of which I never was nor can be ashamed; and of which Dr. Johnson seemed to think, when he afterwards became acquainted with Mrs. Beattie, that I had, as was true, reason to be proud. So far was I from con-

¹ [See *ante*, p. 275.—Ed.]

² [James Burnet, born in 1714, called to the Scottish bar in 1738, and advanced to be a lord of session, by the title of Lord Monbodd^o, in 1767, was, in private life, as well as in his literary career, a humorist; the learning and acuteness of his various works are obscured by his love of singularity and paradox. He died in 1799.—Ed. He was a devout believer in the virtues of the heroic ages and the deterioration of civilized mankind; a great contemner of luxuries, inasmuch that he never used a wheel-carriage. It should be added that he was a gentleman of the most amiable disposition, and the strictest honour and integrity.—WALTER SCOTT.]

he was married; else we should have shown his lady more civilities. She is a very fine woman. But how can you show civilities to a nonentity? I did not think he had been married. Nay, I did not think about it one way or other; but he did not tell us of his lady till late."

He then spoke of St. Kilda, the most remote of the Hebrides. I told him, I thought of buying it. JOHNSON. "Pray do, sir. We will go and pass a winter amid the blasts there. We shall have fine fish, and we will take some dried tongues with us, and some books. We will have a strong built vessel, and some Orkney men to navigate her. We must build a tolerable house: but we may carry with us a wooden house ready made, and requiring nothing but to be put up. Consider, sir, by buying St. Kilda, you may keep the people from falling into worse hands. We must give them a clergyman, and he shall be one of Beattie's choosing. He shall be educated at Marischal College. I'll be your lord chancellor, or what you please." BOSWELL. "Are you serious, sir, in advising me to buy St. Kilda? for if you should advise me to go to Japan, I believe I should do it." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir, I am serious." BOSWELL. "Why then I'll see what can be done."

I gave him an account of the two parties in the church of Scotland, those for supporting the rights of patrons, independent of the people, and those against it. JOHNSON. "It should be settled one way or other. I cannot wish well to a popular election of the clergy, when I consider that it occasions such animosities, such unworthy courting of the people, such slanders between the

cealing her, that my wife had at that time almost as numerous an acquaintance in London as I had myself; and was, not very long after, kindly invited and elegantly entertained at Streatham by Mr. and Mrs. Thrale.

"My request, therefore, is, that you would rectify this matter in your new edition. You are at liberty to make what use you please of this letter.

"My best wishes ever attend you and your family. Believe me to be, with the utmost regard and esteem, dear sir, your obliged and affectionate humble servant, "J. BEATTIE."

I have, from my respect for my friend Dr. Beattie, and regard to his extreme sensibility, inserted the foregoing letter, though I cannot but wonder at his considering as any imputation a phrase commonly used among the best friends.—BOSWELL. [Dr. Beattie was, perhaps, the more sensitive on this point as he must have been, at the time he wrote, conscious that there was something that might give a colour to such an imputation. It became known, shortly after the date of this letter, that the mind of poor Mrs. Beattie had become deranged, and she passed the last years of her life in confinement.—See *Life of Beattie*, by Sir W. Forbes.—Ed.]

contending parties, and other disadvantages. It is enough to allow the people to remonstrate against the nomination of a minister for solid reasons." (I suppose he meant heresy or immorality.)

He was engaged to dine abroad, and asked me to return to him in the evening, at nine, which I accordingly did.

We drank tea with Mrs. Williams, who told us a story of *second sight*, which happened in Wales, where she was born. He listened to it very attentively, and said he should be glad to have some instances of that faculty well authenticated. His elevated wish for more and more evidence for spirit, in opposition to the grovelling belief of materialism, led him to a love of such mysterious disquisitions. He again justly observed, that we could have no certainty of the truth of supernatural appearances, unless something was told us which we could not know by ordinary means, or something done which could not be done but by supernatural power¹: that Pharaoh in reason and justice required such evidence from Moses; nay, that our Saviour said, "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin." He had said in the morning, that "Macaulay's History of St. Kilda" was very well written, except some foppery about liberty and slavery. I mentioned to him that Macaulay told me, he was advised to leave out of his book the wonderful story that upon the approach of a stranger all the inhabitants catch cold²; but that it had been so well authenticated, he determined to retain it. JOHNSON. "Sir, to leave things out of a book, merely because people tell you they will not be believed, is meanness. Macaulay acted with more magnanimity."

We talked of the Roman Catholic reli-

¹ [This is the true distinction; and if Johnson had on all occasions abided by this text, he would have escaped the ridicule and regret which he often occasioned by the appearance, if not the reality, of superstitious credulity. When he said, "that all ages and all nations believe" in these supernatural manifestations (*ante*, p. 149); and again, "that they are so frequent, that they cannot be called fortuitous" (*ante*, p. 228), he should have given us the instances in which any thing was clearly and undoubtedly *done*, which could *only* have been done by supernatural power. *Appearances*, without supernatural *facts*, are nothing: they may be dreams, or disease. Every one sees visions in his sleep, and every body knows that the sick see them in their paroxysms; and there are some cases (such as that of Nicolai, the Berlin bookseller), in which persons, awake and not *otherwise* disordered in mind, have "thick-coming fancies," and see what, if real, would be supernatural; but where, we must again ask, is there in the profane history of the world, one well attested supernatural *fact*?—Ed.]

² [See *ante*, p. 246.—Ed.]

gion, and how little difference there was in essential matters between ours and it. JOHNSON. "True, sir; all denominations of christians have really little difference in point of doctrine, though they may differ widely in external forms. There is a prodigious difference between the external form of one of your presbyterian churches of Scotland, and the church in Italy; yet the doctrine taught is essentially the same."

I mentioned the petition to parliament for removing the subscription to the thirty-nine articles¹. JOHNSON. "It was soon thrown out. Sir, they talk of not making boys at the university subscribe to what they do not understand; but they ought to consider, that our universities were founded to bring up members for the church of England, and we must not supply our enemies with arms for our arsenal. No, sir, the meaning of subscribing is, not that they fully understand all the articles, but that they will adhere to the church of England. Now take it in this way, and suppose that they should only subscribe their adherence to the church of England, there would be still the same difficulty; for still the young men would be subscribing to what they do not understand. For if you should ask them, what do you mean by the church of England? Do you know in what it differs from the presbyterian church? from the Romish church? from the Greek church? from the Coptick church? they could not tell you. So, sir, it comes to the same thing." BOSWELL. "But, would it not be sufficient to subscribe the Bible?" JOHNSON. "Why, no, sir; for all sects will subscribe the Bible; nay, the Mahometans will sub-

scribe the Bible; for the Mahometans acknowledge Jesus Christ, as well as Moses, but maintain that God sent Mahomet as a still greater prophet than either."

I mentioned the motion which had been made in the house of commons, to abolish the fast of the 30th of January². JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I could have wished that it had been a temporary act, perhaps to have expired with the century. I am against abolishing it; because that would be declaring it wrong to establish it; but I should have no objection to make an act, continuing it for another century, and then letting it expire."

He disapproved of the royal marriage bill; "Because," said he, "I would not have the people think that the validity of marriage depends on the will of man, or that the right of a king depends on the will of man. I should not have been against making the marriage of any of the royal family, without the approbation of king and parliament, highly criminal³."

In the morning we had talked of old families, and the respect due to them. JOHNSON. "Sir, you have a right to that kind of respect, and are arguing for yourself. I am for supporting the principle, and am disinterested in doing it, as I have no such right." BOSWELL. "Why, sir, it is one more incitement to a man to do well." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, and it is a matter of opinion very necessary to keep society together. What is it but opinion, by which we have a respect for authority, that prevents us, who are the rabble, from rising up and pulling down you who are gentlemen from your places, and saying, 'We will be gentlemen in our turn?' Now, sir, that respect for authority is much more easily granted to a man whose father has had it, than to an upstart, and so society is more

¹ [This was a petition drawn up by Mr. Francis Blackburn, who, though an archdeacon of the church of England, had published several works against her discipline and peculiar doctrines; the petition was presented on the 6th of February; and after an animated debate, rejected (not being even allowed to lie on the table) by 217 voices against 71. Mr. Gibbon thus notices this debate, in a letter to Lord Sheffield: "I congratulate you on the late victory of our dear mamma, the church of England. She had, last Thursday (6th February), seventy-one rebellious sons, who pretended to set aside her wall, on account of insanity, but two hundred and seventeen worthy champions, headed by Lord North, Burke, Hans Stanley, Charles Fox, Godfrey Clarke, &c. supported the validity of it with infinite humour. By the by, Charles Fox prepared himself for that holy war, by passing twenty-two hours in the pious exercise of hazard; his devotion only cost him 500l. per hour, in all 11,000l." *Misc. Works*, vol. ii. p. 74. The argument which seemed to make most effect in the house, was against requiring subscription from every youth entering the university, of whatever age, or intended for whatever profession. To this point Johnson's observation particularly alludes.—Ed.]

² [Doctor Nowell had preached, as usual, before the house on the 30th of Jan. and had been thanked for his sermon. Some days afterwards, Mr. Thos. Townshend complained of certain unconstitutional passages in the sermon; and on the 21st Feb. after a debate, the thanks were ordered to be expunged from the journals; and on the 2d March, Mr. Fred. Montague moved for leave to bring in a bill to repeal the observance of that day altogether. This motion was rejected by 125 to 97.—Ed.]

³ [It is not very easy to understand Dr. Johnson's objection as above stated. Does not the validity of *all marriages* "depend on the will of man," that is, are there not in all civilized nations certain legal *formulae* and conditions requisite to constitute a marriage? If all human institutions are to be disregarded, what is marriage? And as to the indefeasible rights of kings, see Johnson's opinions, *ante*, pp. 192, 195; and finally, if it be competent to the legislature to make an act *highly criminal*, does not that imply a competency to forbid it altogether?—Ed.]

easily supported." BOSWELL. "Perhaps, sir, it might be done by the respect belonging to office, as among the Romans, where the dress, the *toga*, inspired reverence." JOHNSON. "Why, we know very little about the Romans. But, surely, it is much easier to respect a man who has always had respect, than to respect a man who we know was last year no better than ourselves, and will be no better next year. In republicks there is no respect for authority, but a fear of power." BOSWELL. "At present, sir, I think riches seem to gain most respect." JOHNSON. "No, sir, riches do not gain hearty respect; they only procure external attention. A very rich man, from low beginnings, may buy his election in a borough; but, *cæteris paribus*, a man of family will be preferred. People will prefer a man for whose father their fathers have voted, though they should get no more money, or even less. That shows that the respect for family is not merely fanciful, but has an actual operation. If gentlemen of family would allow the rich upstarts to spend their money profusely, which they are ready enough to do, and not vie with them in expense, the upstarts would soon be at an end, and the gentlemen would remain; but if the gentlemen will vie in expense with the upstarts, which is very foolish, they must be ruined.

[Indeed, though a man of obscure birth himself, Dr. Johnson's partiality to people of family was visible on every occasion; his zeal for subordination warm even to bigotry; his hatred to innovation, and reverence for the old feudal times, apparent, whenever any possible manner of showing them occurred.]

I gave him an account of the excellent mimicry of a friend¹ of mine in Scotland; observing, at the same time, that some people thought it a very mean thing. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is making a very mean use of man's powers. But to be a good mimick requires great powers, great acuteness of observation, great retention of what is observed, and great pliancy of organs to represent what is observed. I remember a lady of quality in this town, Lady ———², who was a wonderful mimick, and used to make me laugh immoderately. I have heard she is now gone mad." BOSWELL. "It is amazing how a mimick can not only give you the gestures and voice of a person whom he represents; but even what a person would say on any particular subject." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you are

to consider that the manner and some particular phrases of a person do much to impress you with an idea of him, and you are not sure that he would say what the mimick says in his character." BOSWELL. "I don't think Foote a good mimick, sir." JOHNSON. "No, sir; his imitations are not like. He gives you something different from himself, but not the character which he means to assume. He goes out of himself, without going into other people. He cannot take off any person unless he is strongly marked, such as George Faulkner. He is like a painter who can draw the portrait of a man who has a wen upon his face, and who therefore is easily known. If a man hops upon one leg, Foote can hop upon one leg. But he has not that nice discrimination which your friend seems to possess. Foote is, however, very entertaining with a kind of conversation between wit and buffoonery."

On Monday, March 23, I found him busy, preparing a fourth edition of his folio Dictionary. Mr. Peyton, one of his original amanuenses, was writing for him. I put him in mind of a meaning of the word *side*, which he had omitted, viz. relationship; as father's side, mother's side. He inserted it. I asked him if *humiliating* was a good word. He said he had seen it frequently used, but he did not know it to be legitimate English. He would not admit *civilization*, but only *civility*. With great deference to him I thought *civilization*, from *civilize*, better in the sense opposed to *barbarity* than *civility*; as it is better to have a distinct word for each sense, than one word with two senses, which *civility* is, in his way of using it.

He seemed also to be intent on some sort of chymical operation. I was entertained by observing how he contrived to send Mr. Peyton on an errand, without seeming to degrade him:—"Mr. Peyton, Mr. Peyton, will you be so good as to take a walk to Temple-Bar? You will there see a chymist's shop, at which you will be pleased to buy for me an ounce of oil of vitriol; not spirit of vitriol, but oil of vitriol. It will cost three half-pence." Peyton immediately went, and returned with it, and told him it cost but a penny.

[Of the death of this poor labourer in literature, of whom Mrs. Piozzi says that he had considerable talents, and knew many modern languages, Johnson gave himself the following pathetic account, in a letter to that lady:

"TO MRS. THRALE.

"1st April, 1776.

"Poor Peyton expired this morning. He probably—during many years, of which he sat starving by the bed of a wife, not only useless

Letters,
vol. i.
p. 312,

¹ [This friend was Mr. Cullen, advocate, son of the celebrated physician, afterwards a judge, by the name of Lord Cullen.

² [The melancholy circumstance stated as to the lady, induces the editor to refrain from attempting to fill up this blank.—ED.]

but almost motionless, condemned by poverty to personal attendance, and by the necessity of such attendance chained down to poverty—he probably thought often how lightly he should tread the path of life without his burthen. Of this thought the admission was unavoidable, and the indulgence might be forgiven to frailty and distress. His wife died at last, and before she was buried, he was seized by a fever, and is now going to the grave.

“Such miscarriages, when they happen to those on whom many eyes are fixed, fill histories and tragedies; and tears have been shed for the sufferings, and wonder excited by the fortitude of those who neither did nor suffered more than Peyton.”]

I then reminded him of the schoolmaster's cause, and proposed to read to him the printed papers concerning it. “No, sir,” said he, “I can read quicker than I can hear.” So he read them to himself.

After he had read for some time, we were interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Kristron, a Swede, who was tutor to some young gentlemen in the city. He told me that there was a very good History of Sweden, by Dalin. Having at that time an intention of writing the history of that country, I asked Dr. Johnson whether one might write a history of Sweden without going thither. “Yes, sir,” said he, “one for common use.”

We talked of languages. Johnson observed that Leibnitz had made some progress in a work, tracing all languages up to the Hebrew. “Why, sir,” said he, “you would not imagine that the French *jour*, day, is derived from the Latin *dies*, and yet nothing is more certain; and the intermediate steps are very clear. From *dies*, comes *diurnus*. *Diu* is, by inaccurate ears, or inaccurate pronunciation, easily confounded with *giu*; then the Italians form a substantive of the ablative of an adjective, and thence *giurno*, or, as they make it, *giorno*; which is readily contracted into *giour*, or *jour*.” He observed, that the Bohemian language was true Slavonick. The Swede said, it had some similarity with the German. JOHNSON. “Why, sir, to be sure, such parts of Slavonia as confine with Germany will borrow German words; and such parts as confine with Tartary will borrow Tartar words.”

He said, he never had it properly ascertained that the Scotch Highlanders and the Irish understood each other¹. I told him

¹ [In Mr. Anderson's Historical Sketches of the Native Irish, we find the following observations:—

“The Irish and Gaelic languages are the same, and formerly what was spoken in the Highlands

that my cousin, Colonel Graham, of the Royal Highlanders, whom I met at Drogheda, told me they did. JOHNSON. “Sir, if the Highlanders understood Irish, why translate the New Testament into Erse, as was lately done at Edinburgh, when there is an Irish translation?” BOSWELL. “Although the Erse and Irish are both dialects of the same language, there may be a good deal of diversity between them, as between the different dialects in Italy.” The Swede went away, and Dr. Johnson continued his reading of the papers. I said, “I am afraid, sir, it is troublesome.” “Why, sir,” said he, “I do not take much delight in it; but I'll go through it.”

We went to the Mitre, and dined in the room where he and I first supped together. He gave me great hopes of my cause. “Sir,” said he, “the government of a schoolmaster is somewhat of the nature of military government; that is to say, it must be arbitrary, it must be exercised by the will of one man, according to particular circumstances. You must show some learning upon this occasion. You must show, that a schoolmaster has a prescriptive right to beat; and that an action of assault and

of Scotland was generally called *Irish*. Those who have attended to the subject must have observed, that the word *Irish* was gradually changed into *Erse*, denoting the language that is now generally called *Gaelic*.” Mr. Anderson states that, when he was in Galway, in Ireland, in 1814, he found a vessel there from Lewis, one of the Hebrides, the master of which remarked to him that the people here spoke *curious Gaelic*, but he understood them easily, and commerce is actually carried on between the Highlanders and the Irish through the medium of their common language.”—P. 133.

My friend, Colonel Meyrick Shawe, who pointed out Mr. Anderson's work to me, adds, “I can venture to say from my own experience, that were it not for the difference of pronunciation, the Irish and the Highlanders would be perfectly intelligible to each other; and even with that disadvantage, they become so in a short time. I have indeed met some Highlanders whom I could not understand at all; but there was a Captain Cameron in the same regiment with me (76th), who spoke with an accent more like the Irish than usual, whom I could understand perfectly when he spoke slow. There are, I am told, few words in Irish that are not intelligible to the Highlanders, but there are many in the Gaelic which an Irishman cannot understand. The Scotch, as I am told, and as is natural from their position, have many Pictish and other foreign words. The Irish have no Pictish words, but many Latin.”

Sir Walter Scott also informs me, that “there is no doubt the languages are the same, and the difference in pronunciation and construction not very considerable. The *Erse* or *Earish* is the *Irish*; and the race called *Scots* came originally from Ulster.”—ED.]

battery cannot be admitted against him unless there is some great excess, some barbarity. This man has maimed none of his boys. They are all left with the full exercise of their corporeal faculties. In our schools in England many boys have been maimed; yet I never heard of an action against a schoolmaster on that account. Puffendorf, I think, maintains the right of a schoolmaster to beat his scholars."

On Saturday, March 27, I introduced to him Sir Alexander Macdonald¹, with whom he had expressed a wish to be acquainted. He received him very courteously.

Sir Alexander observed, that the chancellors² in England are chosen from views much inferior to the office, being chosen from temporary political views. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, in such a government as ours, no man is appointed to an office because he is the fittest for it, nor hardly in any other government; because there are so many connexions and dependencies to be studied. A despotic prince may choose a man to an office, merely because he is the fittest for it. The king of Prussia may do it." Sir A. "I think, sir, almost all great lawyers, such at least as have written upon law, have known only law, and nothing else." JOHNSON. "Why, no, sir; Judge Hale was a great lawyer, and wrote upon law; and yet he knew a great many other things, and has written upon other things. Selden too." Sir A. "Very true, sir; and Lord Bacon. But was not Lord Coke a mere lawyer?" JOHNSON. "Why, I am afraid

¹ [Next brother of Sir James Macdonald, whom Mr. Boswell calls the Marcellus of Scotland, and whom the concurrent testimony of his contemporaries proves to have been a very extraordinary young man. He died at Rome in 1766. (See *post*, 5th Sept., 1773.) Sir Alexander succeeded his brother as eighth baronet, and was created an Irish baron, by the title of Lord Macdonald, in 1776. The late chief baron of the exchequer, Sir Archibald Macdonald, was their youngest brother. We shall see more of Sir Alexander under the year 1773, during the Tour to the Hebrides.—Ed.]

² [This, no doubt, may occasionally happen, and a lord chancellor sometimes disappoints the expectations not only of the country, but of those who make him; yet on the whole, it seems hard to discover how chancellors can be selected without some attention to political interests. A party coming into power generally makes the ablest and most prominent lawyer of its principles chancellor. There is reason to suppose that a man thus selected in the face of the public, and from an eminence to which he has raised himself, will be better fitted to discharge the various duties of that great office, than if chancellors were to be chosen by some other standard. What, however, that other standard should or could be, Sir Alexander Macdonald did not suggest, and probably never considered.—Ed.]

he was, but he would have taken it very ill if you had told him so. He would have prosecuted you for scandal." BOSWELL.

"Lord Mansfield is not a mere lawyer." JOHNSON. "No, sir, I never was in Lord Mansfield's company; but Lord Mansfield was distinguished at the university. Lord Mansfield, when he first came to town, 'drank champagne with the wits,' as Prior says. He was the friend of Pope³." Sir A. "Barristers, I believe, are not so abusive now as they were formerly⁴. I fancy they had less law long ago, and so were obliged to take to abuse to fill up the time. Now they have such a number of precedents, they have no occasion for abuse."

JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, they had more law long ago than they have now. As to precedents, to be sure they will increase in course of time; but the more precedents there are, the less occasion is there for law; that is to say, the less occasion is there for investigating principles." Sir A. "I have been correcting several Scotch accents in my friend Boswell. I doubt, sir, if any Scotchman ever attains to a perfect English pronunciation." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, few of them do, because they do not persevere after acquiring a certain degree of it. But, sir, there can be no doubt that they may attain to a perfect English pronunciation, if they will. We find how near they come to it; and certainly, a man who conquers nineteen parts of the Scotch accent, may conquer the twentieth. But, sir, when a man has got the better of nine-tenths he grows weary, he relaxes his diligence, he finds he has corrected his accent so far as not to be disagreeable, and he no longer desires his friends to tell him when he is wrong, nor

³ [He was one of his executors. The large space which (thanks to Mr. Boswell) Dr. Johnson occupies in our estimate of the society of his day, makes it surprising that he should never have been in company with Lord Mansfield; but Boswell was disposed to overrate the extent and rank of Johnson's acquaintance. It is proper here to correct an error relative to Lord Mansfield and Dr. Johnson, which has found its way into print. In Miss Hawkins's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 218, she gives the following anecdote on the authority of her brother, who states that, "*calling upon Dr. Johnson shortly after the death of Lord Mansfield, and mentioning the event, Johnson answered, 'Ah, sir; there was little learning and less virtue.'*" It happens, unluckily for the accuracy of this anecdote, that Lord Mansfield survived Dr. Johnson full ten years.—Ed.]

⁴ [The general tone of society is probably improved in this respect, and barristers are more men of the world, and mix more in polite company than at the times Sir A. Macdonald alluded to.—Ed.]

does he choose to be told. Sir, when people watch me narrowly, and I do not watch myself, they will find me out to be of a particular county. In the same manner Dunning may be found out to be a Devonshire man. So most Scotchmen may be found out. But, sir, little aberrations are of no disadvantage. I never catched Mallet in a Scotch accent; and yet Mallet, I suppose, was past five-and-twenty before he came to London!''

Upon another occasion I talked to him on this subject, having myself taken some pains to improve my pronunciation, by the aid of the late Mr. Love², of Drury-lane theatre, when he was a player at Edinburgh, and also of old Mr. Sheridan. Johnson said to me, "Sir, your pronunciation is not offensive." With this concession I was pretty well satisfied; and let me give my countrymen of North-Britain an advice not to aim at absolute perfection in this respect; not to speak *high English*, as we are apt to call what is far removed from the *Scotch*, but which is by no means *good English*, and makes "the fools who use it" truly ridiculous. Good English is plain, easy, and smooth in the mouth of an unaffected English gentleman. A studied and factitious pronunciation, which requires perpetual attention, and imposes perpetual constraint, is exceedingly disgusting. A small intermixture of provincial peculiarities may, perhaps, have an agreeable effect, as the notes of different birds concur in the harmony of the grove, and please more than if they were all exactly alike. I could name some gentlemen of Ireland³, to whom a slight proportion of the accent and recitative of that country is an advantage. The same observation will apply to the gentlemen of Scotland. I do not mean that we should speak as broad as a certain prosperous member⁴ of parliament from that country; though it has been well observed, that "it has been of no small use to him; as it rouses the at-

ention of the house by its uncommonness; and is equal to tropes and figures in a good English speaker." I would give as an instance of what I mean to recommend to my countrymen, the pronunciation of the late Sir Gilbert Elliot⁵; and may I presume to add that of the present Earl of Marchmont⁶, who told me, with great good-humour, that the master of a shop in London where he was not known, said to him, "I suppose, sir, you are an American." "Why so, sir?" said his lordship. "Because, sir," replied the shopkeeper, "you speak neither English nor Scotch, but something different from both, which I conclude is the language of America."

BOSWELL. "It may be of use, sir, to have a dictionary to ascertain the pronunciation." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, my Dictionary shows you the accent of words, if you can but remember them." BOSWELL. "But, sir, we want marks to ascertain the pronunciation of the vowels. Sheridan, I believe, has finished such a work." JOHNSON. Why, sir, consider how much easier it is to learn a language by the ear, than by any marks. Sheridan's Dictionary may do very well; but you cannot always carry it about with you: and, when you want the word, you have not the dictionary. It is like a man who has a sword that will not draw. It is an admirable sword, to be sure: but while your enemy is cutting your throat, you are unable to use it. Besides, sir, what entitles Sheridan to fix the pronunciation of English? He has, in the first place, the disadvantage of being an Irishman: and if he says he will fix it after the example of the best company, why, they differ among themselves. I remember an instance: when I published the Plan for my Dictionary, Lord Chesterfield told me that the word *great* should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *state*; and Sir William Yonge⁷ sent me word that it should be pronounced so as to rhyme to *seat*, and that none but an Irishman would pronounce it *grait*. Now here

¹ [He says, in the *Lives of the Poets*, that "of Mallet he had a very slight personal knowledge." Mallet came to England in 1723, when he was about twenty-five years of age.—Ed.]

² [Love was an assumed name. He was the son of Mr. Dance, the architect. He resided many years at Edinburgh as manager of the theatre of that city; he removed in 1762 to Drury-lane, and died in 1771. He wrote some theatrical pieces of no reputation.—Ed.]

³ [Mr. Boswell probably included, in this observation, Mr. Burke; who, to the last, retained more of the Irish accent than was agreeable to less indulgent ears.—Ed.]

⁴ [Mr. Dundas, successively lord advocate, secretary of state, first lord of the admiralty, and Viscount Melville, whose accent, and many of whose phrases, were to the last peculiarly national.—Ed.]

⁵ [Third baronet, father of the first Lord Minto; a gentleman of distinction in the political, and not unknown in the poetical world: he died in 1777. Is it not, however, rather *Hibernian* to recommend as a model of *pronunciation*, one who was already *dead*?—*ignotum per ignotius*.—Ed.]

⁶ [Hugh, fourth Earl of Marchmont, the friend and executor of Pope; born in 1708, died in 1794.—Ed.]

⁷ [Sir W. Yonge, fourth baronet, K. B. and secretary at war in Sir Robert Walpole's administration; he died in 1755. See *ante*, p. 79, where the editor has inadvertently stated that Sir W. Yonge *told*, instead of *sent word* to Johnson how *great* should be pronounced. The pronunciation is now settled, beyond question, in the mode stated by Lord Chesterfield.—Ed.]

were two men of the highest rank, the one, the best speaker in the house of lords, the other, the best speaker in the house of commons, differing entirely."

I again visited him at night. Finding him in a very good humour, I ventured to lead him to the subject of our situation in a future state, having much curiosity to know his notions on that point. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the happiness of an unembodied spirit will consist in a consciousness of the favour of God, in the contemplation of truth, and in the possession of felicitating ideas." BOSWELL. "But, sir, is there any harm in our forming to ourselves conjectures as to the particulars of our happiness, though the scripture has said but very little on the subject? 'We know not what we shall be.'" JOHNSON. "Sir, there is no harm. What philosophy suggests to us on this topic is probable: what scripture tells us is certain. Dr. Henry More¹ has carried it as far as philosophy can. You may buy both his theological and philosophical works in two volumes folio, for about eight shillings." BOSWELL. "One of the most pleasing thoughts is, that we shall see our friends again?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but you must consider, that when we are become purely rational, many of our friendships will be cut off. Many friendships are formed by a community of sensual pleasures; all these will be cut off. We form many friendships with bad men, because they have agreeable qualities, and they can be useful to us; but, after death, they can no longer be of use to us. We form many friendships by mistake, imagining people to be different from what they really are. After death, we shall see every one in a true light. Then, sir, they talk of our meeting our relations: but then all relationship is dissolved: and we shall have no regard for one person more than another, but for their real value. However, we shall either have the satisfaction of meeting our friends, or be satisfied without meeting them." BOSWELL. "Yet, sir, we see in scripture, that Dives still retained an anxious concern about his brethren." JOHN-

SON. "Why, sir, we must either suppose that passage to be metaphorical, or hold with many divines, and all the Purgatorians, that departed souls do not all at once arrive at the utmost perfection of which they are capable." BOSWELL. "I think, sir, that is a very rational supposition." JOHNSON. "Why, yes, sir; but we do not know it is a true one. There is no harm in believing it: but you must not compel others to make it an article of faith; for it is not revealed." BOSWELL. "Do you think, sir, it is wrong in a man who holds the doctrine of purgatory, to pray for the souls of his deceased friends?" JOHNSON. "Why no, sir." BOSWELL. "I have been told, that in the liturgy of the episcopal church of Scotland, there was a form of prayer for the dead." JOHNSON. "Sir, it is not in the liturgy which Laud framed for the episcopal church of Scotland: if there is a liturgy older than that, I should be glad to see it." BOSWELL. "As to our employment in a future state, the sacred writings say little. The Revelation, however, of St. John gives us many ideas, and particularly mentions musick. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, ideas must be given you by means of something which you know: and as to musick, there are some philosophers and divines who have maintained that we shall not be spiritualized to such a degree, but that something of matter, very much refined, will remain. In that case, musick may make a part of our future felicity³."

BOSWELL. "I do not know whether there are any well-attested stories of the appearance of ghosts. You know there is a famous story of the appearance of Mrs. Veal, prefixed to 'Drelincourt on Death.'" JOHNSON. "I believe, sir, that is given up⁴; I believe the woman declared upon her death-bed that it was a lie⁵." BOSWELL. "This objection is made against the truth of ghosts appearing: that if they are in a state of happiness, it would be a punishment to them to return to this world; and if they are in a state of misery, it would be giving

³ [See *ante*, p. 58.—ED.]

¹ [Called the Platonist, on account of his voluminous efforts to blend the platonic philosophy with christianity. He, Van Helmot, and Valentine Greatrakes, all mystics in their several professions, were patronized by Anne Finch, Lady Conway (herself a mystic), and all resided for some time in her house at Ragley, where there is a portrait of Van Helmot, and where were found by Mr. Walpole several letters of Dr. More.—ED.]

² Bishop Hall, in his Epistle, "discoursing of the different degrees of heavenly glory, and of our mutual knowledge of each other above," holds the affirmative on both these questions.—MALONE. [See *ante*, p. 227.—ED.]

⁴ [It may be inferred from this that Dr. Johnson, notwithstanding his assertion, that apparitions are frequent, (*ante*, p. 228), was not able to produce one authentic instance of such an appearance. We shall find, in the course of his conversation, a statement, that old Cave had seen a spirit, and some other similar stories, but nothing which, as it would seem, Johnson himself could believe.—ED.]

⁵ This fiction is known to have been invented by Daniel Defoe, and was added to the second edition of the English translation of Drelincourt's work (which was originally written in French), to make it sell. The first edition had it not.—MALONE.

them a respite." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, as the happiness or misery of embodied spirits does not depend upon place, but is intellectual, we cannot say that they are less happy or less miserable by appearing upon earth."

We went down between twelve and one to Mrs. Williams's room, and drank tea. I mentioned that we were to have the remains of Mr. Gray in prose and verse, published by Mr. Mason. JOHNSON. "I think we have had enough of Gray. I see they have published a splendid edition of Akenside's works. One bad ode may be suffered; but a number of them together makes one sick." BOSWELL. "Akenside's distinguished poem is his 'Pleasures of Imagination;' but, for my part, I never could admire it so much as most people do." JOHNSON. "Sir, I could not read it through." BOSWELL. "I have read it through; but I did not find any great power in it."

I mentioned Elwal, the heretick, whose trial¹ Sir John Pringle had given me to read. JOHNSON. "Sir, Mr. Elwal was, I think, an ironmonger at Wolverhampton; and he had a mind to make himself famous, by being the founder of a new sect, which he wished much should be called *Elwallians*. He held, that every thing in the Old Testament that was not typical was to be of perpetual observance; and so he wore a ribbon in the plaits of his coat, and he also wore a beard. I remember I had the honour of dining in company with Mr. Elwal. There was one Barter, a miller, who wrote against him; and you had the controversy between Mr. Elwal and Mr. Barter. To try to make himself distinguished, he wrote a letter to King George the Second, challenging him to dispute with him, in which he said, 'George, if you be afraid to come by yourself, to dispute with a poor old man, you may bring a thousand of your *black-guards* with you; and if you should still be afraid, you may bring a thousand of your *red-guards*.' The letter had something of the impudence of Junius to our present king. But the men of Wolverhampton were not so inflammable as the common council of London; so Mr. Elwal failed in his scheme of making himself a man of great consequence."

On Tuesday, 31st March, he and I dined at General Paoli's. A question was started whether the state of marriage was natural to man. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is so far from being natural for a man and woman to live in a state of marriage, that we find

¹ ["The Triumph of Truth; being an account of the trial of E. Elwal for heresy and blasphemy, 8vo. Lond." This is rather the rambling declamation of an enthusiast, than the account of a trial.—ED.]

all the motives which they have for remaining in that connexion, and the restraints which civilized society imposes to prevent separation, are hardly sufficient to keep them together." The general said, that in a state of nature a man and woman uniting together, would form a strong and constant affection, by the mutual pleasure each would receive; and that the same causes of dissension would not arise between them, as occur between husband and wife in a civilized state. JOHNSON. "Sir, they would have dissensions enough, though of another kind. One would choose to go a hunting in this wood, the other in that; one would choose to go a fishing in this lake, the other in that; or, perhaps, one would choose to go a hunting, when the other would choose to go a fishing; and so they would part. Besides, sir, a savage man and a savage woman meet by chance; and when the man sees another woman that pleases him better, he will leave the first."

We then fell into a disquisition whether there is any beauty independent of utility. The general maintained there was not. Dr. Johnson maintained that there was; and he instanced a coffee cup which he held in his hand, the painting of which was of no real use, as the cup could hold the coffee equally well if plain; yet the painting was beautiful.

We talked of the strange custom of swearing in conversation. The general said, that all barbarous nations swore from a certain violence of temper, that could not be confined to earth, but was always reaching at the powers above. He said, too, that there was greater variety of swearing, in proportion as there was a greater variety of religious ceremonies.

Dr. Johnson went home with me to my lodgings in Conduit-street and drank tea, previous to our going to the Pantheon, which neither of us had seen before.

He said, "Goldsmith's *Life of Parnell* is poor; not that it is poorly written, but that he had poor materials; for nobody can write the life of a man, but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse² with him."

I said, that if it was not troublesome and presuming too much, I would request him to tell me all the little circumstances of his life; what schools he attended, when he came to Oxford, when he came to London, &c. &c. He did not disapprove of my curiosity as to these particulars; but said, "They'll come out by degrees, as we talk together."

² [Yet Johnson himself knew but few of the many whose lives he wrote, and these few are certainly not his most amusing biographical productions. See *ante*, p. 110 n.—ED.]

Piozzi, [When Mrs. Piozzi, in July, p. 24, 25. 1773, happened to allude to his future biographer, "And who will be my biographer," said he, "do you think?" "Goldsmith, no doubt," replied she, "and he will do it the best among us." "The dog would write it best, to be sure," replied he; "but his particular malice towards me, and general disregard for truth, would make the book useless to all, and injurious to my character." "Oh! as to that," said she, "we should all fasten upon him, and force him to do you justice; but the worst is, the doctor does not *know* your life; nor can I tell indeed who does, except Dr. Taylor of Ashbourne." "Why, Taylor," said he, "is better acquainted with my *heart* than any man or woman now alive; and the history of my Oxford exploits lies all between him¹ and Adams; but Dr. James knows my very early days better than he. After my coming to London to drive the world about a little, you must all go to Jack Hawkesworth for anecdotes: I lived in great familiarity with him (though I think there was not much affection) from the year 1753 till the time Mr. Thrale and you took me up. I intend, however, to disappoint the rogues, and either make you write the life, with Taylor's intelligence; or, which is better, do it myself, after outliving you all. I am now," added he, "keeping a diary, in hopes of using it for that purpose some time."]

He censured Ruffhead's Life of Pope; and said, "he knew nothing of Pope, and nothing of poetry." He praised Dr. Joseph Warton's Essay on Pope; but said, he supposed we should have no more of it, as the authour had not been able to persuade the world to think of Pope as he did." BOSWELL "Why, sir, should that prevent him from continuing his work? He is an ingenious counsel, who has made the most of his cause: he is not obliged to gain it." JOHNSON. "But, sir, there is a difference when the cause is of a man's own making."

We talked of the proper use of riches. JOHNSON. "If I were a man of great estate, I would drive all the rascals whom I did not like out of the county, at an election."

I asked him, how far he thought wealth should be employed in hospitality. JOHNSON. "You are to consider that ancient hospitality of which we hear so much, was in

an uncommercial country, when men being idle, were glad to be entertained at rich men's tables. But in a commercial country, a busy country, time becomes precious, and therefore hospitality is not so much valued. No doubt there is still room for a certain degree of it; and a man has a satisfaction in seeing his friends eating and drinking around him. But promiscuous hospitality is not the way to gain real influence. You must help some people at table before others; you must ask some people how they like their wine oftener than others. You therefore offend more people than you please. You are like the French statesman, who said, when he granted a favour, '*J'ai fait dix mécontents et un ingrat.*' Besides, sir, being entertained ever so well at a man's table, impresses no lasting regard or esteem. No, sir, the way to make sure of power and influence is, by lending money confidentially to your neighbours at a small interest, or perhaps at no interest at all, and having their bonds in your possession." BOSWELL. "May not a man, sir, employ his riches to advantage, in educating young men of merit?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, if they fall in your way; but if it be understood that you patronize young men of merit, you will be harassed with solicitations. You will have numbers forced upon you, who have no merit; some will force them upon you from mistaken partiality; and some from downright interested motives, without scruple; and you will be disgraced."

"Were I a rich man, I would propagate all kinds of trees that will grow in the open air. A green-house is childish. I would introduce foreign animals into the country; for instance, the rein-deer²."

The conversation now turned on critical subjects. JOHNSON. "Bayes, in '*The Rehearsal*,' is a mighty silly character. If it was intended to be like a particular man, it could only be diverting while that man was remembered. But I question whether it was meant for Dryden, as has been reported; for we know some of the passages said to be ridiculed were written since the *Rehearsal*: at least a passage mentioned in the preface³ is of a later date." I main-

² This project has since been realized. Sir Henry Liddel, who made a spirited tour into Lapland, brought two rein-deer to his estate in Northumberland, where they bred: but the race has unfortunately perished.—BOSWELL.

³ There is no preface to "*The Rehearsal*," as originally published. Dr. Johnson seems to have meant the address to the reader, with a key, subjoined to it, which have been prefixed to the modern editions of that play. He did not know, it appears, that several *additions* were made to "*The Rehearsal*" after the first edition. The ridicule on the passages here alluded to is found

¹ [This (as well as the story of the *shoes*, ante, p. 26, n.) seems inconsistent with the inference drawn from the books of Pembroke College, that Johnson had left Oxford before Taylor came thither. The Editor can attempt to reconcile these discrepancies only by supposing that Johnson, though he had left *Pembroke College*, continued in Oxford, living, perhaps, with Taylor, as companion or private tutor.—ED.]

tained that it had merit as a general satire on the self-importance of dramattick authors. But even in this light he held it very cheap.

We then looked to the Pantheon. The first view of it did not strike us so much as Ranelagh¹, of which he said, the "*coup d'œil* was the finest thing he had ever seen." The truth is, Ranelagh is of a more beautiful form; more of it, or rather indeed the whole *rotunda*, appears at once, and it is better lighted. However, as Johnson observed, we saw the Pantheon in time of mourning, when there was a dull uniformity; whereas we had seen Ranelagh when the view was enlivened with a gay profusion of colours. Mrs. Bosville², of Gunthwait, in Yorkshire, joined us, and entered into conversation with us. Johnson said to me afterwards, "Sir, this is a mighty intelligent lady."

I said there was not half a guinea's worth of pleasure in seeing this place. JOHNSON.

among those *additions*. They therefore furnish no ground for the doubts here suggested. Unquestionably Bayes was meant to be the representative of Dryden, whose familiar phrases in his ordinary conversation are frequently introduced in this piece.—MALONE. [Bayes may have been originally sketched for Sir Robert Howard, but there is no doubt that the finished picture was meant for Dryden—he himself complains bitterly that it was so; and Johnson, better informed when he came to write Dryden's life, expressly says that "he was characterized under the name of Bayes in 'The Rehearsal.'"—Ed.]

¹ [Ranelagh, so called because its site was that of the villa of Viscount Ranelagh, near Chelsea, was a place of entertainment, of which the principal room was an oval of great dimensions, with an orchestra in the centre, and tiers of boxes all round. The chief amusement was *promenading*, as it was called, round and round the circular area below, and taking refreshments in the boxes, while the orchestra executed different pieces of music. The Pantheon, in Oxford-street, was built in 1772, after Wyatt's designs, as a kind of *town Ranelagh*, but partook more of the shape of a theatre (for the purposes of which it was sometimes applied.) Both these places had a considerable vogue for a time, but are now almost forgotten; the last appearance (if one may use the expression) of Ranelagh was when the installation ball of the Knights of the Bath, in 1802, was given there. It has since been razed to the ground, and no vestige of that once fairy palace remains. The original Pantheon was burned down, but was rebuilt on a more moderate scale, and used to be heard of, as the scene of an occasional masquerade or concert; but it has not been opened, it is believed, for the last twenty years.—Ed.]

² [Diana Wentworth, wife of Godfrey Bosville, Esq. of Gunthwait, whose daughter had married, in 1768, Sir Alexander, afterwards created Lord, Macdonald.—Ed.]

"But, sir, there is half a guinea's worth of inferiority to other people in not having seen it." BOSWELL. "I doubt, sir, whether there are many happy people here." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, there are many happy people here. There are many people here who are watching hundreds, and who think hundreds are watching them."

Happening to meet Sir Adam Ferguson³, I presented him to Dr. Johnson. Sir Adam expressed some apprehension that the Pantheon would encourage luxury. "Sir," said Johnson, "I am a great friend to publick amusements; for they keep people from vice. You now (addressing himself to me) would have been with a wench, had you not been here. O! I forgot you were married."

Sir Adam suggested, that luxury corrupts a people, and destroys the spirit of liberty. JOHNSON. "Sir, that is all visionary. I would not give half a guinea to live under one form of government rather than another. It is of no moment to the happiness of an individual. Sir, the danger of the abuse of power is nothing to a private man. What Frenchman is prevented from passing his life as he pleases?" SIR ADAM. "But, sir, in the British constitution it is surely of importance to keep up a spirit in the people, so as to preserve a balance against the crown." JOHNSON. "Sir, I perceive you are a vile whig⁵. Why all this childish jealousy of the power of the crown? The crown has not power enough. When I say that all governments are alike, I consider that in no government power can be abused long. Mankind will not bear it. If a sovereign oppresses his people to a great degree, they will rise and cut off his head. There is a remedy in human nature against tyranny, that will keep us safe under every form of government. Had not the people of France thought themselves honoured in sharing in the brilliant actions

³ [Sir Adam Ferguson of Kelkerran, Bart. member of parliament for Ayrshire from 1774 to 1780.—Ed.]

⁴ [This is said "laxity of talk." If a Frenchman had written any thing like Johnson's *Norfolk Prophecy*, or talked of Louis XV. as Johnson did of George the Second, he would have been either forced to fly, or would have expiated his indiscretion in the Bastille: poor Marmon- tel was, we know, sent to the Bastille for repeating the parody of a few lines in a play, at which a lord of the bed-chamber happened to be offend- ed.—Ed.]

⁵ [These words must have been accompanied and softened by some jocular expression of countenance or intonation of voice, for, rude as Johnson often was, it is hardly conceivable that he should have seriously said such a thing to a gentleman whom he saw for the first time.—Ed.]

of Louis XIV., they would not have endured him; and we may say the same of the King of Prussia's people." Sir Adam introduced the ancient Greeks and Romans. JOHNSON. "Sir, the mass of both of them were barbarians. The mass of every people must be barbarous where there is no printing, and consequently knowledge is not generally diffused. Knowledge is diffused among our people by the newspapers." Sir Adam mentioned the orators, poets, and artists of Greece. JOHNSON. "Sir, I am talking of the mass of the people. We see even what the boasted Athenians were. The little effect which Demosthenes's orations had upon them, shows that they were barbarians."

Sir Adam was unlucky in his topics; for he suggested a doubt of the propriety of bishops having seats in the house of lords. JOHNSON. "How so, sir? Who is more proper for having the dignity of a peer than a bishop, provided a bishop be what he ought to be; and if improper bishops be made, that is not the fault of the bishops, but of those who make them."

On Sunday, April 5, after attending divine service at St. Paul's church, I found him alone. Of a schoolmaster¹ of his acquaintance, a native of Scotland, he said, "He has a great deal of good about him; but he is also very defective in some respects. His inner part is good, but his outer part is mighty awkward. You in Scotland do not attain that nice critical skill in languages, which we get in our schools in England. I would not put a boy to him, whom I intended for a man of learning. But for the sons of citizens, who are to learn a little, get good morals, and then go to trade, he may do very well."

I mentioned a cause in which I had appeared as counsel at the bar of the general assembly of the church of Scotland, where a *probationer* (as one licensed to preach, but not yet ordained, is called) was opposed in his application to be inducted, because it was alleged that he had been guilty of fornication five years before. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if he has repented, it is not a sufficient objection. A man who is good enough to go to heaven, is good enough to be a clergyman." This was a humane and liberal sentiment. But the character of a clergyman is more sacred than that of an ordinary christian. As he is to instruct with authority, he should be regarded with reverence, as one upon whom divine truth has had the effect to set him above such transgressions, as men, less exalted by spiritual habits and yet upon the whole not to be excluded from heaven, have been betrayed into by the predominance of passion.

That clergyman may be considered as sinners in general, as all men are, cannot be denied; but this reflection will not counteract their good precepts so much, as the absolute knowledge of their having been guilty of certain specific immoral acts. I told him, that by the rules of the church of Scotland, in their "Book of Discipline," if a *scandal*, as it is called, is not prosecuted for five years, it cannot afterwards be proceeded upon, "unless it be of a *heinous nature*, or again become flagrant;" and that hence a question arose, whether fornication was a sin of a heinous nature; and that I had maintained, that it did not deserve that epithet, inasmuch as it was not one of those sins which argue very great depravity of heart: in short, was not, in the general acceptance of mankind, a heinous sin. JOHNSON. "No, sir, it is not a heinous sin. A heinous sin is that for which a man is punished with death or banishment." BOSWELL. "But, sir, after I had argued that it was not a heinous sin, an old clergyman rose up, and repeating the text of scripture denouncing judgment against whoremongers, asked, whether, considering this, there could be any doubt of fornication being a heinous sin." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, observe the word *whoremonger*. Every sin, if persisted in, will become heinous. Whoremonger is a dealer in whores, as ironmonger is a dealer in iron. But as you don't call a man an ironmonger for buying and selling a penknife; so you don't call a man a whoremonger for getting one wench with child?"

I spoke of the inequality of the livings of the clergy in England, and the scanty provisions of some of the curates. JOHNSON. "Why yes, sir; but it cannot be helped. You must consider, that the revenues of the clergy are not at the disposal of the state, like the pay of the army. Different men have founded different churches; and some are better endowed, some worse. The state cannot interfere, and make an equal division of what has been particularly appropriated. Now when a clergyman has but small living, or even two small livings, he can afford very little to the curate.

He said he went more frequently to church when there were prayers only, than when there was also a sermon, as the people required more an example for the one than the other; it being much easier for them to hear a sermon, than to fix their minds on prayer.

² It must not be presumed that Dr. Johnson meant to give any countenance to licentiousness, though in the character of an advocate he made a just and subtle distinction between occasional and habitual transgression.—BOSWELL.

¹ [Mr. Elphinston: see *ante*, p. 85.—ED.]

On Monday, April 6, I dined with him at Sir Alexander Macdonald's, where was a young officer in the regimentals of the Scots Royal, who talked with a vivacity, fluency, and precision so uncommon, that he attracted particular attention. He proved to be the Hon. Thomas Erskine, youngest brother to the Earl of Buchan, who has since risen into such brilliant reputation at the bar in Westminster-hall¹.

Fielding being mentioned, Johnson exclaimed, "He was a blockhead;" and upon my expressing my astonishment at so strange an assertion, he said, "What I mean by his being a blockhead is, that he was a barren rascal." BOSWELL. "Will you not allow, sir, that he draws very natural pictures of human life?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, it is of very low life. Richardson used to say, that had he not known who Fielding was, he should have believed he was an ostler. Sir, there is more knowledge of the heart in one letter of Richardson's, than in all 'Tom Jones'². I, indeed, never read 'Joseph Andrews.'" ERSKINE. "Surely, sir, Richardson is very tedious." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself. But you must read him for the sentiment, and consider the story as only giving occasion to the sentiment." I have already given my opinion of Fielding; but I cannot refrain from repeating here my wonder at Johnson's excessive and unaccountable depreciation of one of the best writers that England has produced. "Tom Jones" has stood the

¹ [Born in 1748; entered the *navy* as a midshipman in 1764, and the *army* as an ensign in the royals in 1768. He was called to the bar in 1779; appointed a king's council in 1783, and, in 1806, lord chancellor of England, and created a baron by the title of Lord Erskine. He died in 1823. Neither his conversation, (though, even to the last, remarkable for fluency and vivacity,) nor his parliamentary speeches, ever bore any proportion to the extraordinary force and brilliancy of his forensic eloquence. Those who only knew him in private, or in the house of commons, had some difficulty in believing the effect he produced at the bar. During the last years of his life, his conduct was eccentric to a degree that justified a suspicion, and even a hope, that his understanding was impaired.—ED.]

² Johnson's severity against Fielding did not arise from any viciousness in his style, but from his loose life, and the profligacy of almost all his male characters. Who would venture to read one of his novels aloud to modest women? His novels are *male* amusements, and very amusing they certainly are. Fielding's conversation was coarse, and so tinctured with the rank weeds of *the garden*, [Covent-garden,] that it would now be thought only fit for a brothel.—BURNEY.

test of public opinion with such success, as to have established its great merit, both for the story, the sentiments, and the manners, and also the varieties of diction, so as to leave no doubt of its having an animated truth of execution throughout.

A book of travels, lately published under the title of *Coriat Junior*, and written by Mr. Paterson³, was mentioned. Johnson said this book was in imitation of Sterne⁴, and not of Coriat, whose name Paterson had chosen as a whimsical one. "Tom Coriat (said he) was a humourist about the court of James the First. He had a mixture of learning, of wit, and of buffoonery. He first travelled through Europe, and published his travels⁵. He afterwards travelled on foot through Asia, and had made many remarks; but he died at Mandoa, and his remarks were lost."

We talked of gaming, and animadverted on it with severity. JOHNSON. "Nay, gentlemen, let us not aggravate the matter. It is not roguery to play with a man who is ignorant of the game, while you are master of it, and so win his money; for he thinks he can play better than you, as you think you can play better than he; and the superior skill carries it." ERSKINE. "He is a fool, but you are not a rogue." JOHNSON. "That's much about the truth, sir. It must be considered, that a man who only does what every one of the society to which he belongs would do, is not a dishonest man. In the republic of Sparta it was agreed, that stealing was not dishonourable, if not discovered. I do not commend a society where there is an agreement that what would not otherwise be fair, shall be fair; but I maintain, that an individual of any society, who practises what is allowed, is not a dishonest man." BOSWELL. "So then, sir, you do not think ill of a man who wins perhaps forty thousand pounds in a winter?" JOHNSON. "Sir, I do not call a gamester a dishonest man; but I call him an unsocial man, an unprofitable man."

³ Mr. Samuel Paterson, eminent for his knowledge of books.—BOSWELL. [He was the son of a woollen-draper; he kept a bookseller's shop, chiefly for old books, and was afterwards an auctioneer; but seems to have been unsuccessful in all his attempts at business. He made catalogues of several celebrated libraries. He died in 1802, ætat. 77.—ED.]

⁴ Mr. Paterson, in a pamphlet, produced some evidence to show that his work was written before Sterne's "Sentimental Journey" appeared.—BOSWELL.

⁵ [Under the title of "*Crudities*, hastily gobbled up in France, Savoy, Italy, Rhætia, Helvetia, &c." Coriat was born in 1577, educated at Westminster school and Oxford. He died in 1617, at *Surat*, says the Biog. Dict., after he had left Mandoa.—ED.]

Gaming is a mode of transferring property without producing any intermediate good. Trade gives employment to numbers, and so produces intermediate good."

Mr. Erskine told us, that when he was in the island of Minorca, he not only read prayers, but preached two sermons to the regiment¹. He seemed to object to the passage in scripture, where we are told that the angel of the Lord smote in one night forty thousand Assyrians² "Sir (said Johnson), you should recollect that there was a supernatural interposition; they were destroyed by pestilence. You are not to suppose that the angel of the Lord went about and stabbed each of them with a dagger, or knocked them on the head man by man."

After Mr. Erskine was gone, a discussion took place, whether the present Earl of Buchan, when Lord Cardross, did right to refuse to go secretary of the embassy to Spain, when Sir James Gray, a man of inferior rank, went ambassador. Dr. Johnson said, that perhaps in point of interest he did wrong; but in point of dignity he did well. Sir Alexander insisted that he was wrong; and said that Mr. Pitt intended it as an advantageous thing for him. "Why, sir, (said Johnson,) Mr. Pitt might think it an advantageous thing for him to make him a vintner, and get him all the Portugal trade; but he would have demeaned himself strangely, had he accepted of such a situation. Sir, had he gone secretary while his inferior was ambassador, he would have been a traitor to his rank and family³."

I talked of the little attachment which subsisted between near relations in Lon-

¹ [Lord Erskine was fond of this anecdote. He told it to the editor the first time that he had the honour of being in his company, and often repeated it with an observation, that he had been a sailor and a soldier, was a lawyer and a parson. The latter he affected to think the greatest of his efforts, and to support that opinion would quote the prayer for the *clergy* in the liturgy, from the expression of which he would (in no commendable spirit of jocularly) infer that the enlightening *them* was one of the "*greatest marvels*" which could be worked.—ED.]

² One hundred and eighty-five thousand. See Isaiah, xxxvii. 36, and 2 Kings, xix. 35.—MALONE.

³ [If this principle were to be admitted, the young nobility would be excluded from all the professions; for the superiors in the profession would frequently be their inferiors in personal rank. Would Johnson have dissuaded Lord Cardross from entering on the military profession, because at his outset he must have been commanded by a person inferior in personal rank? This, if ever it was a subject of real doubt, is now better understood, and young men of the highest rank think it no degradation to enter into the junior ranks of the military, naval, and diplomatic and official professions.—ED.]

don. "Sir (said Johnson,) in a country so commercial as ours, where every man can do for himself, there is not so much occasion for that attachment. No man is thought the worse of here, whose brother was hanged⁴. In uncommercial countries, many of the branches of a family must depend on the stock; so, in order to make the head of the family take care of them, they are represented as connected with his reputation, that, self-love being interested, he may exert himself to promote their interest. You have first large circles, or clans; as commerce increases, the connexion is confined to families; by degrees, that too goes off, as having become unnecessary, and there being few opportunities of intercourse. One brother is a merchant in the city, and another is an officer in the guards; how little intercourse can these two have!"

I argued warmly for the old feudal system. Sir Alexander opposed it, and talked of the pleasure of seeing all men free and independent. JOHNSON. "I agree with Mr. Boswell, that there must be a high satisfaction in being a feudal lord; but we are to consider that we ought not to wish to have a number of men unhappy for the satisfaction of one." I maintained that numbers, namely, the vassals or followers, were not unhappy; for that there was a reciprocal satisfaction between the lord and them; he being kind in his authority over them; they being respectful and faithful to him.

On Thursday, April 9, I called on him to beg he would go and dine with me at the Mitre Tavern. He had resolved not to dine at all this day, I know not for what reason; and I was so unwilling to be deprived of his company, that I was content to submit to suffer a want, which was at first somewhat painful, but he soon made me forget it; and a man is always pleased with himself, when he finds his intellectual inclinations predominate.

He observed, that to reason philosophically on the nature of prayer was very unprofitable.

Talking of ghosts, he said, he knew one friend, who was an honest man and a sensible man, who told him he had seen a ghost

⁴ [Johnson would hardly have volunteered this illustration if there had been any grounds for the story told by Miss Seward and Dr. M'Nicol.—See *ante*, p. 11. *n.*; and, since that note was printed, Dr. Harwood has furnished additional grounds for disbelieving the story. Miss Seward says, that that the person hanged was "*his uncle Andrew*," and Dr. M'Nicol says he was a *native of Scotland*." Now, in the parish register of Cubley, where Michael Johnson was born, we find the entries of the births of several persons of his family, between 1650 and 1700, and especially of "*Andrew Johnson*," the Doctor's *uncle*.—ED.]

—old Mr. Edward Cave, the printer at St. John's Gate. He said, Mr. Cave did not like to talk of it, and seemed to be in great horror whenever it was mentioned. BOSWELL. "Pray, sir, what did he say was the appearance?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, something of a shadowy being."

I mentioned witches, and asked him what they properly meant. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, they properly mean those who make use of the aid of evil spirits." BOSWELL. "There is, no doubt, sir, a general report and belief of their having existed." JOHNSON. "You have not only the general report and belief, but you have many voluntary solemn confessions." He did not affirm any thing positively upon a subject which it is the fashion of the times to laugh at as a matter of absurd credulity. He only seemed willing, as a candid inquirer after truth, however strange and inexplicable, to show that he understood what might be urged for it¹.

On Friday, April 10, I dined with him at General Oglethorpe's, where we found Dr. Goldsmith.

Armorial bearings having been mentioned, Johnson said they were as ancient as the siege of Thebes, which he proved by a passage in one of the tragedies of Euripides².

I started the question, whether duelling was consistent with moral duty. The brave old general fired at this, and said, with a lofty air, "Undoubtedly a man has a right

¹ See this curious question treated by him with most acute ability, *post*, 16th Aug. 1773.—BOSWELL.

² The passage to which Johnson alluded, is to be found (as I conjecture) in the ΠΗΛΗΝΙΣΣÆ, l. 1120.

ΚΑΙ ΠΡΩΤΑ ΜΕΝ ΠΡΟΣΗΓΕ, Κ. Τ. Λ.

ἜΟ ΤΗΣ ΚΥΝΑΧΟΥ ΠΑΡΘΕΝΟΠΑΙΟΣ ΕΚΧΡΟΝΟΣ,

ΕΠΙΣΗΜ, ΕΧΩΝ ΟΙΚΕΙΟΝ ΕΝ ΜΕΤΑ ΣΑΚΕΙ.—

J. BOSWELL.

[The meaning is that "Parthenopæus had, in the centre of his shield, the *domestic sign*—*Atalanta killing the Ætolian boar*;" but this, admitting that the story of Atalanta was the "armorial bearing" of Parthenopæus, would only prove them to be as ancient as *Euripides*, who flourished (442 A. C.) near 800 years after the siege of Thebes (1225 A. C.) Homer, whom the chronologists place 500 years before Euripides, describes a sculptured shield; and there can be little doubt that very soon after ingenuity had made a shield, taste would begin to decorate it. The words "*domestic sign*" are certainly very curious, yet probably mean no more than that he bore on his shield the representation of a family story. The better opinion seems to be that it was not till the visor concealed the face of the warrior, that the ornaments of the shields and crests became distinctive of individuals and families in that *peculiar* manner which we understand by the terms "*armorial bearings*."—Ed.]

to defend his honour." GOLDSMITH (turning to me). "I ask you first, sir, what would you do if you were affronted?" I answered, I should think it necessary to fight. "Why then," replied Goldsmith, "that solves the question." JOHNSON. "No, sir, it does not solve the question." It does not follow, that what a man would do is therefore right." I said, I wished to have it settled, whether duelling was contrary to the laws of christianity. Johnson immediately entered on the subject, and treated it in a masterly manner; and so far as I have been able to recollect, his thoughts were these: "Sir, as men become in a high degree refined, various causes of offence arise; which are considered to be of such importance, that life must be staked to atone for them, though in reality they are not so. A body that has received a very fine polish may be easily hurt. Before men arrive at this artificial refinement, if one tells his neighbour, he lies, his neighbour tells him, he lies; if one gives his neighbour a blow, his neighbour gives him a blow: but in a state of highly polished society, an affront is held to be a serious injury. It must, therefore, be resented, or rather a duel must be fought upon it; as men have agreed to banish from their society one who puts up with an affront without fighting a duel. Now, sir, it is never unlawful to fight in self-defence. He, then, who fights a duel, does not fight from passion against his antagonist, but out of self-defence; to avert the stigma of the world, and to prevent himself from being driven out of society. I could wish there was not that superfluity of refinement; but while such notions prevail, no doubt, a man may lawfully fight a duel³."

Let it be remembered, that this justification is applicable only to the person who receives an affront. All mankind must condemn the aggressor.

The general told us, that when he was a very young man, I think only fifteen, serving under Prince Eugene of Savoy, he was sitting in a company at table with a Prince of Wirtemberg. The prince took up a glass of wine, and, by a filip, made some of it fly in Oglethorpe's face. Here was a nice dilemma. To have challenged him instantly might have fixed a quarrelsome character upon the young soldier: to have taken no notice of it might have been considered as cowardice. Oglethorpe, therefore, keeping his eye upon the prince, and smiling all the time, as if he took what his highness had done in jest, said, "*Mon prince*—" I forget the

³ The frequent disquisitions on this subject bring painfully to recollection the death of Mr. Boswell's eldest son, Sir Alexander, who was killed in a duel in 1822.—Ed.]

French words he used; the purport however was, "That's a good joke: but we do it much better in England;" and threw a whole glass of wine in the prince's face. An old general, who sat by, said, "*Il a bien fait, mon prince, vous l'avez commencé:*" and thus all ended in good-humour.

Dr. Johnson said, "Pray, general, give us an account of the siege of Belgrade." Upon which the general, pouring a little wine upon the table, described every thing with a wet finger. "Here we were, here were the Turks," &c. &c. Johnson listened with the closest attention.

A question was started, how far people who disagree in a capital point can live in friendship together. Johnson said they might. Goldsmith said they could not, as they had not the *idem velle atque idem nolle*—the same likings and the same aversions.

JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you must shun the subject as to which you disagree. For instance, I can live very well with Burke: I love his knowledge, his genius, his diffusion, and affluence of conversation; but I would not talk to him of the Rockingham party¹."

GOLDSMITH. "But, sir, when people live together who have something as to which they disagree, and which they want to shun, they will be in the situation mentioned in the story of Bluebeard. 'You may look into all the chambers but one.' But we should have the greatest inclination to look into that chamber, to talk of that subject." JOHNSON (with a loud voice). "Sir, I am not saying that *you* could live in friendship with a man from whom you differ as to some point; I am only saying that *I* could do it. You put me in mind of Sappho in Ovid²."

¹ Of which Mr. Burke was a leading member.—Ed.]

² Mr. Boswell's note here being rather short, as taken at the time (with a view perhaps to future revision,) Johnson's remark is obscure, and requires to be a little opened. What he said probably was, "You seem to think that two friends, to live well together, must be in a perfect harmony with each other; that each should be to the other, what Sappho boasts she was to her lover, and uniformly agree in every particular; but this is by no means necessary," &c. The words of Sappho alluded to, are "*omnique à parte placebam.*"—Ovid. *Epist. Sapp. ad Phaonem*. I. 51.—MALONE.

I should rather conjecture that the passage which Johnson had in view was the following, l. 45 :

"Si, nisi quæ facie poterit te digna videri
Nulla futura tua est; nulla futura tua est."

His reasoning and its illustration I take to be this. If you are determined to associate with no one whose sentiments do not universally coincide with your own, you will by such a resolution exclude yourself from all society, for no two men can be

Goldsmith told us, that he was now busy in writing a *Natural History*³; and that he might have full leisure for it, he had taken lodgings, at a farmer's house, near to the six mile-stone, on the Edgware-road, and had carried down his books in two returned post-chaises. He said, he believed the farmer's family thought him an odd character, similar to that in which the *Spectator* appeared to his landlady and her children; he was *The Gentleman*. Mr. Mickle⁴, the translator of "*The Lusiad*," and I, went to visit him at this place a few days afterwards. He was not at home; but having a curiosity to see his apartment, we went in, and found curious scraps of descriptions of animals, scrawled upon the wall with a black lead pencil.

The subject of ghosts being introduced, Johnson repeated what he had told me of a friend of his⁵, an honest man, and a man of sense, having asserted to him, that he had seen an apparition. Goldsmith told us, he was assured by his brother, the Reverend Mr. Goldsmith, that he also had seen one. General Oglethorpe told us, that Prendergast, an officer in the Duke of Marlborough's army, had mentioned to many of his friends, that he should die on a particular day; that upon that day a battle took place with the French; that after it was over, and Prendergast was still alive, his brother officers, while they were yet in the field, jestingly asked him, where was his prophecy now. Prendergast gravely answered, "I shall die, notwithstanding what you see." Soon afterwards, there came a shot from a French battery, to which the orders for a cessation of arms had

found who, on all points, invariably think alike. So Sappho in Ovid tells Phaon, that if he will not unite himself to any one who is not a complete resemblance of himself, it will be impossible for him to form any union at all.

The lines which I have quoted are thus expanded in Pope's Paraphrase, which, to say the truth, I suspect was at this moment more in Johnson's recollection than the original:

"If to no charms thou wilt thy heart resign
But such as merit, such as equal thine,
By none, alas! by none, thou canst be moved,
Phaon alone by Phaon must be loved."

JAMES BOSWELL.

³ [Published soon after, under the title of a *History of the Earth and of Animated Nature*.—Ed.]

⁴ [William Julius Mickle, the son of a Scotch clergyman, was born in 1734. He lived the life that poets lived in those days; that is, in difficulties and distress till 1779, when being appointed secretary to Commodore Johnson, he realized by prize agencies a moderate competence; he died in 1788. His translation of the *Lusiad* is still read; his original pieces are almost all forgotten.—Ed.]

⁵ Mr. Cave. See *ante*, p. 294.

not reached, and he was killed upon the spot. Colonel Cecil, who took possession of his effects, found in his pocket-book the following solemn entry :

[Here the date.] "Dreamt—or——1. Sir John Friend meets me." (Here the very day on which he was killed was mentioned). Prendergast had been connected with Sir John Friend, who was executed for high treason. General Oglethorpe said, he was with Colonel Cecil, when Pope came and inquired into the truth of this story, which made a great noise at the time, and was then confirmed by the colonel.

On Saturday, April 11, he appointed me to come to him in the evening, when he should be at leisure to give me some assistance for the defence of Hastie, the schoolmaster of Campbelltown, for whom I was to appear in the house of lords. When I came, I found him unwilling to exert himself. I pressed him to write down his thoughts upon the subject. He said, "There's no occasion for my writing. I'll talk to you." He was, however, at last prevailed on to dictate to me, while I wrote a [paper, which will be found in the appendix.]

"This, sir," said he, "you are to turn in your mind, and make the best use of it you can in your speech."

¹ Here was a blank, which may be filled up thus: "*was told by an apparition;*" the writer being probably uncertain whether he was asleep or awake, when his mind was impressed with the solemn presentiment with which the fact afterwards happened so wonderfully to correspond.—BOSWELL. [My friend, Sir Henry Hardinge, secretary at war, is so kind as to inform me that it appears that Colonel Sir Thomas Prendergast, of the twenty-second foot, was killed at Malplaquet, August 31, 1709, but no trace can be found of Colonel Cecil. There were one or two subalterns, of the name of Cecil, at that time in the army, but it does not appear that they rose to the rank of field-officers. Is it not very strange, if this story made so great a noise, we should read of it nowhere else; and, as so much curiosity was excited, that the *paper* should not have been preserved, or, at least, so generally shown as to be mentioned by some other witness?—the paper would have been exceedingly curious; but the hearsay that there had been such a paper is nothing, and indeed, in point of evidence, worse than nothing; for if a paper had existed, thousands must have seen it, and Oglethorpe himself does not state that even he saw it. At the time of the battle of Malplaquet, Oglethorpe was only eleven years old. Pope's inquiries were probably made when the story was recent. Is it likely that Oglethorpe at the age of eleven was present at Pope's interview with Colonel Cecil, and even if he were, what credit is to be given to the recollections, after the lapse of sixty-three years, of what a boy of eleven had heard? Colonel Cecil was probably the well known Jacobite of that name.—Ed.]

Of our friend Goldsmith he said, "Sir, he is so much afraid of being unnoticed, that he often talks merely lest you should forget that he is in the company." BOSWELL. "Yes, he stands forward." JOHNSON. "True, sir, but if a man is to stand forward, he should wish to do it not in an awkward posture, not in rags, not so as that he shall only be exposed to ridicule." BOSWELL. "For my part, I like very well to hear honest Goldsmith talk away carelessly." JOHNSON. "Why yes, sir; but he should not like to hear himself."

On Tuesday, April 14, the decree of the court of session in the schoolmaster's cause was reversed in the house of lords, after a very eloquent speech by Lord Mansfield, who showed himself an adept in school discipline, but I thought was too rigorous towards my client. On the evening of the next day I supped with Dr. Johnson, at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in the Strand, in company with Mr. Langton and his brother-in-law, Lord Binning². I repeated a sentence of Lord Mansfield's speech, of which, by the aid of Mr. Longlands, the solicitor on the other side, who obligingly allowed me to compare his note with my own, I have a full copy. "My lords, severity is not the way to govern either boys or men." "Nay," said Johnson, "it is the way to govern them. I know not whether it be the way to mend them."

I talked of the recent³ expulsion of six students from the University of Oxford, who were methodists, and would not desist from publicly praying and exhorting. JOHNSON. "Sir, that expulsion was extremely just and proper. What have they to do at an university, who are not willing to be taught, but will presume to teach? Where is religion to be learnt, but at an university? Sir, they were examined, and found to be mighty ignorant fellows." BOSWELL. "But, was it not hard, sir, to expel them, for I am told they were good beings?" JOHNSON. "I believe they might be good beings; but they were not fit to be in the University of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in the field; but we turn her out of a garden." Lord Elibank used to repeat this as an illustration uncommonly happy.

Desirous of calling Johnson forth to talk, and exercise his wit, though I should myself be the object of it, I resolutely ventured

² [Charles, Lord Binning, afterwards eighth Earl of Haddington, was the son of Mary Holt, who, by a first marriage with Mr. Lloyd, was the mother of Lady Rothies, Mr. Langton's wife.—Ed.]

³ [Not very recent, if he alluded to six members of St. Edmund Hall, who were expelled in May, 1768. See *Gent. Mag.* vol. xxxviii. p. 225.—Ed.]

to undertake the defence of convivial indulgence in wine, though he was not to-night in the most genial humour. After urging the common plausible topics, I at last had recourse to the maxim, *in vino veritas*, a man who is well warned with wine will speak truth. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, that may be an argument for drinking, if you suppose men in general to be liars. But, sir, I would not keep company with a fellow, who lies as long as he is sober, and whom you must make drunk before you can get a word of truth out of him!"

Mr. Langton told us, he was about to establish a school upon his estate, but it had been suggested to him, that it might have a tendency to make the people less industrious. JOHNSON. "No, sir. While learning to read and write is a distinction, the few who have that distinction may be the less inclined to work; but when every body learns to read and write, it is no longer a distinction. A man who has a laced waistcoat is too fine a man to work; but if every body had laced waistcoats, we should have people working in laced waistcoats. There are no people whatever more industrious, none who work more, than our manufacturers; yet they have all learnt to read and write. Sir, you must not neglect doing a thing immediately good, from fear of remote evil, from fear of its being abused. A man who has candles may sit up too late, which he would not do if he had not candles; but nobody will deny that the art of making candles, by which light is continued to us beyond the time that the sun gives us light, is a valuable art, and ought to be preserved." BOSWELL. "But, sir, would it not be better to follow nature; and go to bed and rise just as nature gives us light or withholds it?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; for then we should have no kind of equality in the partition of our time between sleeping and waking. It would be very different in different seasons and in different places. In some of the northern parts of Scotland how little light is there in the depth of winter!"

We talked of Tacitus, and I hazarded an opinion, that with all his merit for penetration, shrewdness of judgment, and terseness of expression, he was too compact, too much broken into hints, as it were, and therefore too difficult to be understood. To my great satisfaction, Dr. Johnson sanctioned

this opinion. "Tacitus, sir, seems to me rather to have made notes for an historical work, than to have written a history²."

At this time it appears from his "Prayers and Meditations," that he had been more than commonly diligent in religious duties, particularly in reading the holy scriptures. It was Passion Week, that solemn season which the Christian world has appropriated to the commemoration of the mysteries of our redemption, and during which, whatever embers of religion are in our breasts, will be kindled into pious warmth.

I paid him short visits both on Friday and Saturday, and seeing his large folio Greek Testament before him, beheld him with a reverential awe, and would not intrude upon his time. While he was thus employed to such good purpose, and while his friends in their intercourse with him constantly found a vigorous intellect and a lively imagination, it is melancholy to read in his private register:

"My mind is unsettled and my memory confused. I have of late turned my thoughts with a very useless earnestness upon past incidents. I have yet got no command over my thoughts; an unpleasing incident is almost certain to hinder my rest."

What philosophick heroism was it in him to appear with such manly fortitude to the world, while he was inwardly so distressed! We may surely believe that the mysterious principle of being "made perfect through suffering," was to be strongly exemplified in him.

On Sunday, 19th April, being Easter-day, General Paoli and I paid him a visit before dinner. We talked of the notion that blind persons can distinguish colours by the touch. Johnson said, that Professor Sanderson mentions his having attempted to do it, but that he found he was aiming at an impossibility; that to be sure a difference in the surface makes the difference of colours; but that difference is so fine, that it is not sensible to the touch. The General mentioned jugglers and fraudulent gamesters, who could know cards by the touch. Dr. Johnson said, "the cards used by such persons must be less polished than ours commonly are."

We talked of sounds. The general said, there was no beauty in a simple sound, but only in an harmonious composition of sounds. I presumed to differ from this opinion, and mentioned the soft and sweet

¹ Mrs. Piozzi, in her "Anecdotes," p. 201, has given an erroneous account of this incident, as of many others. She pretends to relate it from recollection, as if she herself had been present; when the fact is that it was communicated to her by me. She has represented it as a personality, and the true point has escaped her.—BOSWELL.

² It is remarkable that Lord Monbodo, whom on account of his resembling Dr. Johnson in some particulars, Foote called an Elzevir edition of him, has, by coincidence, made the very same remark.—*Origin and Progress of Language*, vol. iii. 2d edit. p. 219.—BOSWELL.

sound of a fine woman's voice. JOHNSON. "No, sir, if a serpent or a toad uttered it, you would think it ugly." BOSWELL. "So you would think, sir, were a beautiful tune to be uttered by one of those animals." JOHNSON. "No, sir, it would be admired. We have seen fine fiddlers whom we liked as little as toads." (laughing).

Talking on the subject of taste in the arts, he said, that difference of taste was, in truth, difference of skill. BOSWELL. "But, sir, is there not a quality called taste, which consists merely in perception or in liking? for instance, we find people differ much as to what is the best style of English composition. Some think Swift's the best; others prefer a fuller and grander way of writing." JOHNSON. "Sir, you must first define what you mean by style, before you can judge who has a good taste in style, and who has a bad. The two classes of persons whom you have mentioned, don't differ as to good and bad. They both agree that Swift has a good neat style; but one loves a neat style, another loves a style of more splendour. In like manner, one loves a plain coat, another loves a laced coat; but neither will deny that each is good in its kind."

[The following meditations, made about this period, are very interesting sketches of his feelings:

"April 26, 1772. I was some way hindered from continuing this contemplation in the usual manner, and therefore try, at the distance of a week, to review the last [Easter] Sunday.

"I went to church early, having first, I think, used my prayer. When I was there, I had very little perturbation of mind. During the usual time of meditation, I considered the Christian duties under the three principles of soberness, righteousness, and godliness; and purposed to forward godliness by the *annual perusal of the Bible*; righteousness by *settling something for charity*, and soberness by *early hours*. I commended as usual, with preface of permission, and, I think, mentioned Bathurst. I came home, and found Paoli and Boswell waiting for me. What devotions I used after my return home, I do not distinctly remember. I went to prayers in the evening; and, I think, entered late.

"On Good Friday, I paid Peyton without requiring work.

"It is a comfort to me, that at last, in my sixty-third year, I have attained to know, even thus hastily, confusedly, and imperfectly, what my Bible contains.

"Having missed church in the morning (April 26), I went this evening, and afterwards sat with Southwell."

While I remained in London this spring, I was with him at several other times, both

by himself and in company. I dined with him one day at the Crown and Anchor tavern, in the Strand, with Lord Elibank, Mr. Langton, and Dr. Vansittart of Oxford.¹ Without specifying each particular day, I have preserved the following memorable things.

I regretted the reflection in his preface to Shakspeare against Garrick, to whom we cannot but apply the following passage:—"I collated such copies as I could procure, and wished for more, but have not found the collectors of these rarities very communicative." I told him, that Garrick had complained to me of it, and had vindicated himself by assuring me, that Johnson was made welcome to the full use of his collection, and that he left the key of it with a servant, with orders to have a fire and every convenience for him. I found Johnson's notion was, that Garrick wanted to be courted for them, and that, on the contrary, Garrick should have courted him, and sent him the plays of his own accord. But, indeed, considering the slovenly and careless manner in which books were treated by Johnson, it could not be expected that scarce and valuable editions should have been lent to him.

A gentleman having to some of the usual arguments for drinking added this:—"You know, sir, drinking drives away care, and makes us forget whatever is disagreeable. Would not you allow a man to drink for that reason?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, if he sat next *you*."

I expressed a liking for Mr. Francis Osborne's² works, and asked him what he thought of that writer. He answered, "A conceited fellow. Were a man to write so

¹ [Dr. Robert Vansittart, LL.D., professor of civil law at Oxford, and recorder of Windsor. He was a senior fellow of All Souls, where, after he had given up the profession in London, he chiefly resided in a set of rooms, formerly the old library, which he had fitted up in the Gothic style, and where he died about 1794. He was remarkable for his good-humour and inoffensive wit, and a great favourite on the Oxford circuit. He was tall and very thin; and the bar gave the name of *Counsellor Van* to a sharp-pointed rock on the Wye, which still retains the name. He was the elder brother to Mr. Henry Vansittart, governor of Bengal, father of the present Lord Bexley, to whom the editor is indebted for the above particulars relative to his uncle.—Ed.]

² [Of the family of the Osbornes, of Chicksands, in Bedfordshire. The work by which he is now best known, his "*Historical Memoirs of the Reign of Queen Elizabeth and King James*," written in a very acrimonious spirit. He had attached himself to the Pembroke family; and, like Earl Philip (whom Walpole designates by the too gentle appellation of *memorable Simpleton*), joined the parliamentarians. He died in 1659.—Ed.]

now, the boys would throw stones at him.” He, however, did not alter my opinion of a favourite authour, to whom I was first directed by his being quoted in “The Spectator,” and in whom I have found much shrewd and lively sense, expressed indeed in a style somewhat quaint, which, however, I do not dislike. His book has an air of originality. We figure to ourselves an ancient gentleman talking to us.

When one of his friends endeavoured to maintain that a country gentleman might contrive to pass his life very agreeably, “Sir,” said he, “you cannot give me an instance of any man who is permitted to lay out his own time, contriving not to have tedious hours.” This observation, however, is equally applicable to gentlemen who live in cities¹, and are of no profession.

He said, “there is no permanent national character: it varies according to circumstances. Alexander the Great swept India²; now the Turks sweep Greece.”

A learned gentleman, who, in the course of conversation, wished to inform us of this simple fact, that the counsel upon the circuit at Shrewsbury were much bitten by fleas, took, I suppose, seven or eight minutes in relating it circumstantially. He in a plenitude of phrase told us, that large bales of woollen cloth were lodged in the town-hall; that by reason of this, fleas nested there in prodigious numbers; that the lodgings of the counsel were near the town-hall; and that those little animals moved from place to place with wonderful agility. Johnson sat in great impatience till the gentleman had finished his tedious narrative, and then burst out (playfully however), “It is a pity, sir, that you have not seen a lion; for a flea has taken you such a time, that a lion must have served you a twelve-month³.”

¹ [Not quite: men who live in cities have theatres, clubs, and all the variety of public and private society within reach.—ED.]

² [The force of this illustration is not very obvious. India, so far as regards the natives, is perhaps now quite as liable to be swept by an invader as it was three thousand years ago. All authorities seem to be agreed that the people of India and China have changed wonderfully little in the lapse of time.—ED.]

³ Mrs. Piozzi, to whom I told this anecdote, has related it as if the gentleman had given “the natural history of the mouse.”—*Anecdotes*, p. 191. [The “learned gentleman” was certainly Dr. Vansittart, as is proved by two passages in the correspondence between Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson, July and August, 1773. She writes to the Doctor in Scotland, “I have seen the man that saw the mouse,” &c. Johnson replies, “Poor V———, &c; he is a good man, and, when his mind is composed, a man of parts.” This, with Boswell’s reference in the

He would not allow Scotland to derive any credit from Lord Mansfield; for he was educated in England. “Much,” said he, “may be made of a Scotchman, if he be caught young.”

Talking of a modern historian⁴, he said, “There is more thought in the moralist than in the historian. There is but a shallow stream of thought in history.” BOSWELL. “But surely, sir, an historian has reflection.” JOHNSON. “Why yes, sir; and so has a cat when she catches a mouse for her kitten. But she cannot write like [Beattie]; neither can [Robertson].”

He said, “I am very unwilling to read the manuscripts of authours, and give them my opinion. If the authours who apply to me have money, I bid them boldly print without a name; if they have written in order to get money, I tell them to go to the booksellers and make the best bargain they can.” BOSWELL. “But, sir, if a bookseller should bring you a manuscript to look at.” JOHNSON. “Why, sir, I would desire the bookseller to take it away.”

I mentioned a friend⁵ of mine who had resided long in Spain, and was unwilling to return to Britain. JOHNSON. “Sir, he is attached to some woman.” BOSWELL. “I rather believe, sir, it is the fine climate which keeps him there.” JOHNSON. “Nay, sir, how can you talk so? What is *climate* to happiness? Place me in the heart of Asia, should I not be exiled? What proportion does climate bear to the complex system of human life? You may advise me to go to live at Bologna to eat sausages. The sausages there are the best in the world; they lose much by being carried.”

On Saturday, 9th May, Mr. Dempster and I had agreed to dine by ourselves at the British coffee-house. Johnson, on whom I happened to call in the morning, said, he would join us, which he did, and we spent a very agreeable day, though I recollect but little of what passed.

He said, “Walpole was a minister given by the king to the people: Pitt was a minister given by the people to the king,—as an adjunct.”

preceding page to Dr. Vansittart, and the mention of the Shrewsbury circuit, which Vansittart went, together with the preceding note, leave no doubt that he was the person alluded to. It also proves that the *inaccuracy* of which Boswell accuses Mrs. Piozzi was (if an inaccuracy at all) sanctioned by Johnson himself; for we see that he at once understood whom she meant by “the man that saw the mouse.”—ED.]

⁴ [This historian and moralist (whose names Mr. Boswell left in blank) are Doctors Robertson and Beattie.—ED.]

⁵ [Probably Mr. Boswell’s brother, David See *post*, sub 29th April, 1780.—ED.]

“The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation is this: he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man, it is a pity he is not rich, we may say of Goldsmith, it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself.”

Before leaving London this year, I consulted him upon a question purely of Scotch law. It was held of old, and continued for a long period, to be an established principle in that law, that whoever intermeddled with the effects of a person deceased, without the interposition of legal authority to guard against embezzlement, should be subjected to pay all the debts of the deceased, as having been guilty of what was technically called *vicious intromission*. The court of session had gradually relaxed the strictness of this principle, where the interference proved had been inconsiderable. In a case¹ which came before that court the preceding winter, I had laboured to persuade the judge to return to the ancient law. It was my own sincere opinion, that they ought to adhere to it: but I had exhausted all my powers of reasoning in vain. Johnson thought as I did; and in order to assist me in my application to the court for a revision and alteration of the judgment, he dictated to me an argument [which will be found in the Appendix].

The reader will see with what comprehension of mind, and clearness of penetration, he treated a subject altogether new to him, without any other preparation than my having stated to him the arguments which had been used on each side of the question. His intellectual powers appeared with peculiar lustre, when tried against those of a writer of such fame as Lord Kames, and that too in his lordship's own department.

This masterly argument, after being prefaced and concluded with some sentences of my own, and garnished with the usual formularies, was actually printed and laid before the lords of session, but without success. My respected friend Lord Hailes, however, one of that honourable body, had critical sagacity enough to discover a more than ordinary hand in the *petition*. I told him Dr. Johnson had favoured me with his pen. His lordship, with wonderful *acumen*, pointed out exactly where his composition began, and where it ended. But that I may do impartial justice, and conform to the great rule of courts, *Suum cuique tribuito*, I must add, that their lordships in general, though they were pleased to eall this “a well-drawn paper,” preferred the former very inferior petition, which I had

written; thus confirming the truth of an observation made to me by one of their number, in a merry mood: “My dear sir, give yourself no trouble in the composition of the papers you present to us; for, indeed, it is casting pearls before swine².”

I renewed my solicitations that Dr. Johnson would this year accomplish his long-intended visit to Scotland.

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“13th Aug. 1772.

“DEAR SIR,—The regret has not been little with which I have missed a journey so pregnant with pleasing expectations, as that in which I could promise myself not only the gratification of curiosity, both rational and fanciful, but the delight of seeing those whom I love and esteem. * * * But such has been the course of things, that I could not come; and such has been, I am afraid, the state of my body, that it would not well have seconded my inclination. My body, I think, grows better, and I refer my hopes to another year; for I am very sincere in my design to pay the visit, and take the ramble. In the mean time, do not omit any opportunity of keeping up a favourable opinion of me in the minds of any of my friends. Beattie's book³ is, I believe, every day more liked; at least, I like it more, as I look more upon it.

“I am glad if you got credit by your cause, and am yet of opinion, that our cause was good, and that the determination ought to have been in your favour. Poor Hastie, [the school-master], I think, had but his deserts.

“You promised to get me a little Pindar, you may add to it a little Anacreon.

“The leisure which I cannot enjoy, it will be a pleasure to hear that you employ upon the antiquities of the feudal establishment. The whole system of ancient tenures is gradually passing away; and I wish to have the knowledge of it preserved adequate and complete. For such an institution makes a very important part of the history of mankind. Do not forget a design so worthy of a scholar who studies the law of his country, and of a gentleman who may naturally be curious to know the condition of his own ancestors.—I am, dear sir, yours with great affection,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

² [The expression was coarse, but the meaning was correct; the facts and the law only ought to be considered by the judge—the verbal decorations of style should be of no weight. It is probable that the judge who made use of this homely phrase was bantering Boswell on some pleading in which there was perhaps more ornament than substance.—ED.]

³ [“Essay on Truth,” of which a third edition was published in 1772.—ED.]

¹ Wilson against Smith and Armour.—BOSWELL.

Ed. [He this autumn visited Lichfield and Ashbourne, where it appears from his letters to Mrs. Thrale that he was considerably indisposed.]

[“ TO MRS. THRALE.

“ [Lichfield,] 19th Oct. 1772.

Letters, vol. i. p. 55, 62, 68. “ I set out on Thursday night at nine, and arrived at Lichfield on Friday night at eleven, no otherwise incommoded than with want of sleep, which, however, I enjoyed very comfortably the first night. I think a stage coach is not the worst bed.”

“ Ashbourne, 4th Nov. 1772.

“ Since I came to Ashbourne I have been out of order. I was well at Lichfield. You know sickness will drive me to you; so perhaps you very heartily wish me better: but you know likewise that health will not hold me away.”

“ [Ashbourne,] 23d Nov. 1772.

“ I cannot yet get well; my nights are flatulent and unquiet, but my days are tolerably easy, and Taylor says that I look much better than when I came hither. You will see when I come, and I can take your word.”

“ [Ashbourne,] 27th Nov. 1772.

“ If you are so kind as to write to me on Saturday, the day on which you will receive this, I shall have it before I leave Ashbourne. I am to go to Lichfield on Wednesday, and purpose to find my way to London through Birmingham and Oxford.

“ I was yesterday at Chatsworth. It is a very fine house. I wish you had been with me to see it; for then, as we are apt to want matter of talk, we should have gained something new to talk on. They complimented me with playing the fountain, and opening the cascade. But I am of my friend’s opinion, that when one has seen the ocean, cascades are but little things.”]

“ MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

“ Edinburgh, 25th Dec. 1772.

“ MY DEAR SIR,— * * * * *

“ I was much disappointed that you did not come to Scotland last autumn. However, I must own that your letter prevents me from complaining; not only because I am sensible that the state of your health was but too good an excuse, but because you write in a strain which shows that you have agreeable views of the scheme which we have so long proposed.

* * * * *

“ I communicated to Beattie what you said of his book in your last letter to me. He writes to me thus: ‘ You judge very rightly in supposing that Dr. Johnson’s

favourable opinion of my book must give me great delight. Indeed it is impossible for me to say how much I am gratified by it; for there is not a man upon earth whose good opinion I would be more ambitious to cultivate. His talents and his virtues I revere more than any words can express. The extraordinary civilities (the paternal attentions I should rather say), and the many instructions I have had the honour to receive from him, will to me be a perpetual source of pleasure in the recollection,

“ Dum memor ipse mei, dum spiritus hos reget artus.”

“ I had still some thoughts, while the summer lasted, of being obliged to go to London on some little business; otherwise I should certainly have troubled him with a letter several months ago, and given some vent to my gratitude and admiration. This I intend to do as soon as I am left a little at leisure. Mean time, if you have occasion to write to him, I beg you will offer him my most respectful compliments, and assure him of the sincerity of my attachment and the warmth of my gratitude, * * * * *

“ I am, &c. “ JAMES BOSWELL.”

In 1773, his only publication was an edition of his folio Dictionary, with additions and corrections; nor did he, so far as is known, furnish any productions of his fertile pen to any of his numerous friends or dependants, except the Preface * 1 to his old amanuensis Macbean’s “ Dictionary of Ancient Geography.” His Shakspeare, indeed, which had been received with high approbation by the publick, and gone through several editions, was this year republished by George Steevens, Esq. a gentleman not only deeply skilled in ancient learning, and of very extensive reading in English literature, especially the early writers, but at the same time of acute discernment and elegant taste. It is almost unnecessary to say, that by his great and valuable additions to Dr. Johnson’s work, he justly obtained considerable reputation:

“ Divisum imperium cum Jove Cæsar habet.”

[He began this year with a fit of Ed. the gout.

“ TO MRS. THRALE.

“ Tuesday, 26th Jan. 1773.

“ Last night was very tedious, and this

* 1 He, however, wrote or partly wrote, an epitaph [see ante, p. 278] on Mrs. Bell, wife of his friend John Bell, Esq. brother of the Rev. Dr. Bell, Prebendary of Westminster, which is printed in his works. It is in English prose, and has so little of his manner, that I did not believe he had any hand in it, till I was satisfied of the fact by the authority of Mr. Bell.—BOSWELL.

Letters, vol. i. p. 71. day makes no promises of much ease. However, I have this day put on my shoe, and hope that gout is gone. I shall have only the cough to contend with, and I doubt whether I shall et rid of that without change of place. I caught cold in the coach as I went away, and am disordered by very little things. Is it accident or age?"

"19th Feb. 1773.

"I think I am better, but cannot say much more than that I think so. I was yesterday with Miss Lucy Southwell and Mrs. Williams, at Mr. Southwell's¹. Miss Frances Southwell is not well.

"I have an invitation to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's on Tuesday. May I accept it?"

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"London, 22d Feb. 1773.

"DEAR SIR,—I have read your kind letter much more than the elegant Pindar which it accompanied. I am always glad to find myself not forgotten; and to be forgotten by you would give me great uneasiness. My northern friends have never been unkind to me; I have from you, dear sir, testimonies of affection, which I have not often been able to excite; and Dr. Beattie rates the testimony which I was desirous of paying to his merit much higher than I should have thought it reasonable to expect.

"I have heard of your masquerade². What says your synod to such innovations? I am not studiously scrupulous, nor do I think a masquerade either evil in itself, or very likely to be the occasion of evil; yet as the world thinks it a very licentious relaxation of manners, I would not have been one of the *first* masquers, in a country where no masquerade had ever been before³.

"A new edition of my great Dictionary is printed, from a copy which I was persuaded

¹ [Dr. Johnson's early friend, Mr. Edmond Southwell, third son of the first Lord Southwell, born in 1705, had died in the preceding November, aged 67: the Mr. Southwell, here mentioned, was probably Thomas Arthur, afterwards the fourth lord and second viscount (see *ante*, p. 158). The two ladies mentioned were probably daughters of the first lord: Frances born in 1708, and Lucy born in 1710.—ED.]

² Given by a lady at Edinburgh.—BOSWELL.

³ There had been masquerades in Scotland; but not for a very long time.—BOSWELL. [This masquerade was given on the 1st January, by the Dowager Countess of Fife; Johnson had no doubt seen an account of it in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for January, where it is said to have been the only masquerade ever seen in Scotland. Mr. Boswell himself appeared in the character of a *Dumb Conjuror*.—ED.]

to revise; but having made no preparation, I was able to do very little. Some superfluities I have expunged, and some faults I have corrected, and here and there have scattered a remark; but the main fabrick of the work remains as it was. I have looked very little into it since I wrote it, and, I think, I found it full as often better, as worse, than I expected.

"Baretti and Davies have had a furious quarrel; a quarrel, I think, irreconcilable. Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy, which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This, you see, borders upon farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable.

"I am sorry that you lost your cause of intromission, because I yet think the arguments on your side unanswerable. But you seem, I think, to say that you gained reputation even by your defeat; and reputation you will daily gain, if you keep Lord Auchinleck's precept in your mind, and endeavour to consolidate in your mind a firm and regular system of law, instead of picking up occasional fragments.

"My health seems in general to improve; but I have been troubled many weeks with vexatious catarrh, which is sometimes sufficiently distressful. I have not found any great effects from bleeding and physick; and am afraid that I must expect help from brighter days and softer air.

"Write to me now and then; and whenever any good befalls you, make haste to let me know it, for no one will rejoice at it more than, dear sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"You continue to stand very high in the favour of Mrs. Thrale."

While a former edition of my work was passing through the press, I was unexpectedly favoured with a packet from Philadelphia, from Mr. James Abercrombie, a gentleman of that country, who is pleased to honour me with very high praise of my "Life of Dr. Johnson." To have the fame of my illustrious friend, and his faithful biographer, echoed from the New World is extremely flattering; and my grateful acknowledgments shall be wafted across the Atlantick. Mr. Abercrombie has politely conferred on me a considerable additional obligation, by transmitting to me copies of two letters from Dr. Johnson to American gentlemen. "Gladly, sir (says he), would I have sent you the originals: but being the only relics of the kind in America, they are considered by the possessors of such inestimable value, that

no possible consideration would induce them to part with them. In some future publication of yours relative to that great and good man, they may perhaps be thought worthy of insertion."

"DR. JOHNSON TO MR. B———D 1.

"Johnson's court, Fleet-street, 4th March, 1773.

"SIR,—That in the hurry of a sudden departure you should yet find leisure to consult my convenience, is a degree of kindness, and an instance of regard, not only beyond my claims, but above my expectation. You are not mistaken in supposing that I set a high value on my American friends, and that you should confer a very valuable favour upon me by giving me an opportunity of keeping myself in their memory.

"I have taken the liberty of troubling you with a packet, to which I wish a safe and speedy conveyance, because I wish a safe and speedy voyage to him that conveys it. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO THE REVEREND MR. WHITE².

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 4th March, 1773.

"DEAR SIR,—Your kindness for your friends accompanies you across the Atlantic. It was long since observed by Horace, that no ship could leave care behind: you have been attended in your voyage by other powers,—by benevolence and constancy: and I hope care did not often show her face in their company.

"I received the copy of *Rasselas*. The impression is not magnificent, but it flatters an author, because the printer seems to have expected that it would be scattered among the people. The little book has been well received, and is translated into Italian, French, German, and Dutch. It has now one honour more by an American edition.

"I know not that much has happened since your departure that can engage your curiosity. Of all publick transactions the whole world is now informed by the news-

¹ This gentleman, who now resides in America in a publick character of a considerable dignity, desired that his name might not be transcribed at full length.—BOSWELL. [Probably a Mr. Bland, whose "*Enquiry into the Rights of the British Colonies*" was republished in London, in 1770.—Ed.]

² Now Doctor White, and bishop of the episcopal church in Pennsylvania. During his first visit to England in 1771, as a candidate for holy orders, he was several times in company with Dr. Johnson, who expressed a wish to see the edition of *Rasselas* which Dr. White told him had been printed in America. Dr. White, on his return, immediately sent him a copy.—BOSWELL.

papers. Opposition seems to despond; and the dissenters, though they have taken advantage of unsettled times, and a government much enfeebled, seem not likely to gain any immunities.

"Dr. Goldsmith has a new comedy³ in rehearsal at Covent Garden, to which the manager predicts ill success. I hope he will be mistaken. I think it deserves a very kind reception.

"I shall soon publish a new edition of my large Dictionary; I have been persuaded to revise it, and have mended some faults, but added little to its usefulness.

"No book has been published since your departure, of which much notice is taken. Faction only fills the town with pamphlets, and greater subjects are forgotten in the noise of discord.

"Thus have I written, only to tell you how little I have to tell. Of myself I can only add, that having been afflicted many weeks with a very troublesome cough, I am now recovered.

"I take the liberty which you give me of troubling you with a letter, of which you will please to fill up the direction. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

[" TO MRS. THRALE.

"25th March, 1773.

"Did not I tell you that I had written to Boswell? he has answered my letter⁴.

Letters,
vol. i.
p. 80.

"I am going this evening to put young Otway to school with Mr. Elphinston.

"C——⁵ is so distressed with abuse about his play, that he has solicited Goldsmith to *take him off the rack of the newspapers*.

"M——⁶ is preparing a whole pamphlet against G——⁶, and G—— is, I suppose, collecting materials to confute M——.

"Jennens⁷ has published *Hamlet*, but without a preface, and S——⁸ declares his intention of letting him pass the rest of his life in peace. Here is news."

³ [She stoops to conquer.—Ed.]

⁴ [But has not published his answer.—Ed.]

⁵ [Richard Cumberland. The play in question was the *Choleric Man*, which he afterwards published with a "Dedication to Detraction." He was very sensible to such attacks, as Sheridan more than hints in the character of Sir Fretful Plagiary, which was intended for him.—Ed.]

⁶ These initials, no doubt, mean Mickle and Garrick, (see Garrick's letter to Boswell, *post*, sub 23d Oct. 1773): the quarrel was on the subject of the "*Siege of Marseilles*." See Mickle's *Life in Anderson's British Poets*.—Ed.]

⁷ [Soame Jenyns.—Ed.]

⁸ [George Steevens.—Ed.]

On Saturday, April 3, the day after my arrival in London this year, I went to his house late in the evening, and sat with Mrs. Williams till he came home. I found in the London Chronicle, Dr. Goldsmith's apology to the publick for beating Evans, a bookseller, on account of a paragraph¹ in a newspaper published by him, which Goldsmith thought impertinent to him and to a lady of his acquaintance. The apology was written so much in Dr. Johnson's manner, that both Mrs. Williams and I supposed it to be his; but when he came home, he soon undeceived us. When he said to Mrs. Williams, "Well, Dr. Goldsmith's *manifesto* has got into your paper;" I asked him if Dr. Goldsmith had written it, with an air that made him see I suspected it was his, though subscribed by Goldsmith. JOHNSON. "Sir, Dr. Goldsmith would no more have asked me to write such a thing as that for him, than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or to do any thing else that denoted his imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it, as if I had seen him do it. Sir, had he shown it to any one friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has, indeed, done it very well; but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought every thing that concerned him must be of importance to the publick." BOSWELL. "I fancy, sir, this is the first time he has been engaged in such an adventure." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat*²; he may have *been beaten* before. This, sir, is a new plume to him."

I mentioned Sir John Dalrymple's "Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland," and his discoveries to the prejudice of Lord Russel and Algernon Sidney. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, every body who had just notions of government thought them rascals before. It is well that all mankind now see them to be rascals." BOSWELL. "But, sir, may not those discoveries be true without their being rascals?" JOHNSON. "Consider, sir, would any of them have been willing to have had it known that they intrigued with France? Depend upon it, sir, he who does

¹ [The offence given was a long abusive letter in the London Packet. A particular account of this transaction, and Goldsmith's Vindication (for such it was, rather than an apology), may be found in the new Life of that poet, prefixed to his Miscellaneous Works, in 4 vols. Svo. pp. 105—108.—MALONE.]

² [Mr. Chalmers, in the article *Goldsmith*, in the *Biog. Dict.*, states, on the authority of Evans, that he had beaten Goldsmith, and not Goldsmith him; but surely, in such a case, the authority of Evans would be suspicious, even if it were not opposed to the whole current of contemporary evidence.—ED.]

what he is afraid should be known, has something rotten about him. This Dalrymple seems to be an honest fellow; for he tells equally what makes against both sides. But nothing can be poorer than his mode of writing; it is the mere bouncing of a school-boy: Great He³, but greater She! and such stuff."

I could not agree with him in this criticism; for though Sir John Dalrymple's style is not regularly formed in any respect, and one cannot help smiling sometimes at his affected *grandiloquence*, there is in his writing a pointed vivacity, and much of a gentlemanly spirit.

At Mr. Thrale's, in the evening, he repeated his usual paradoxical declamation against action in publick speaking. "Action can have no effect upon reasonable minds. It may augment noise, but it never can enforce argument. If you speak to a dog, you use action; you hold up your hand thus, because he is a brute; and in proportion as men are removed from brutes, action will have the less influence upon them." MRS. THRALE. "What then, sir, becomes of Demosthenes's saying? 'Action, action, action!'" JOHNSON. "Demosthenes, madam, spoke to an assembly of brutes; to a barbarous people."

I thought it extraordinary, that he should deny the power of rhetorical action upon human nature, when it is proved by innumerable facts in all stages of society. Reasonable beings are not solely reasonable. They have fancies which may be pleased, passions which may be roused.

Lord Chesterfield being mentioned, Johnson remarked, that almost all of that celebrated nobleman's witty sayings were puns. He, however, allowed the merit of good wit to his lordship's saying of Lord Tyrawley and himself, when both very old and infirm: "Tyrawley and I have been dead these two years; but we don't choose to have it known."

He talked with approbation of an intended edition of "The Spectator," with notes; two volumes of which had been prepared by a gentleman eminent in the literary world⁴, and the materials which he had collected for the remainder had been transferred to an-

³ A bombastic ode of Oldham's on Ben Johnson begins thus: "GREAT THOU!" which perhaps his namesake remembered.—MALONE. [Mr. Malone's note is absurd. Mr. Hallam very justly observes, that Dr. Johnson clearly meant Dalrymple's description of the parting of Lord and Lady Russel. "He great in this last act of his life, but she greater.]"

⁴ [Mr. Chalmers (who, himself, has ably performed this task) informs me, that the first of these gentlemen was Dr. Percy, and the second Dr. John Calder, of whom some account will be found, *Gent. Mag.* v. 85. p. 564.—ED.]

other hand. He observed, that all works which describe manners, require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less; and told us, he had communicated all he knew that could throw light upon "The Spectator." He said, "Addison had made his Sir Andrew Freeport a true whig, arguing against giving charity to beggars, and throwing out other such ungracious sentiments¹; but that he had thought better, and made amends by making him found an hospital for decayed farmers." He called for the volume of "The Spectator," in which that account is contained, and read it aloud to us. He read so well, that every thing acquired additional weight and grace from his utterance.

The conversation having turned on modern imitations of ancient ballads, and some one having praised their simplicity, he treated them with that ridicule which he always displayed when that subject was mentioned.

He disapproved of introducing scripture phrases into secular discourse. This seemed to me a question of some difficulty. A scripture expression may be used, like a highly classical phrase, to produce an instantaneous strong impression; and it may be done without being at all improper. Yet I own there is danger, that applying the language of our sacred book to ordinary subjects may tend to lessen our reverence for it. If therefore it be introduced at all, it should be with very great caution.

On Thursday, April 8, I sat a good part of the evening with him, but he was very silent. He said, "Burnet's 'History of his own Times' is very entertaining. The style, indeed, is mere chit-chat. I do not believe that Burnet intentionally lied; but he was so much prejudiced, that he took no pains to find out the truth. He was like a man who resolves to regulate his time by a certain watch; but will not inquire whether the watch is right or not."

Though he was not disposed to talk, he was unwilling that I should leave him; and when I looked at my watch, and told him it was twelve o'clock, he cried, "What's that to you and me?" and ordered Frank to tell Mrs. Williams that we were coming to drink tea with her, which we did. It was settled that we should go to church together next day.

On the 9th of April, being Good-Friday, I breakfasted with him on tea and cross-buns: *Doctor* Levett, as Frank called him, making the tea. He carried me with him to the church of St. Clement Danes, where he had his seat; and his behaviour was, as I had imaged to myself, solemnly devout. I

¹ [It probably was this conversation which made Mrs. Piozzi think, that he had used these expressions in his "Life of Addison." See *ante*, p. 163.—Ed.]

never shall forget the tremulous earnestness with which he pronounced the awful petition in the Litany: "In the hour of death, and at the day of judgment, good Lord deliver us."

We went to church both in the morning and evening. In the interval between the two services we did not dine: but he read in the Greek New Testament, and I turned over several of his books.

In Archbishop Laud's Diary, I found the following passage, which I read to Dr. Johnson:

"1623. February 1, Sunday. I stood by the most illustrious Prince Charles², at dinner. He was then very merry, and talked occasionally of many things with his attendants. Among other things, he said, that if he were necessitated to take any particular profession of life he could not be a lawyer, adding his reasons: 'I cannot,' said he, 'defend a bad, nor yield in a good cause.'" JOHNSON. "Sir, this is false reasoning; because every cause has a bad side: and a lawyer is not overcome, though the cause which he has endeavoured to support be determined against him."

I told him that Goldsmith had said to me a few days before, "As I take my shoes from the shoemaker, and my coat from the tailor, so I take my religion from the priest." I regretted this loose way of talking. JOHNSON. "Sir, he knows nothing; he has made up his mind about nothing."

To my great surprise he asked me to dine with him on Easter-Day. I never supposed that he had a dinner at his house: for I had not then heard of any one of his friends having been entertained at his table. He told me, "I have generally a meat pie on Sunday: it is baked at a public oven, which is very properly allowed, because one man can attend it; and thus the advantage is obtained of not keeping servants from church to dress dinners."

April 11, being Easter-Sunday, after having attended divine service at St. Paul's, I repaired to Dr. Johnson's. I had gratified my curiosity much in dining with JEAN JACQUES ROUSSEAU, while he lived in the wilds of Neuchatel: I had as great a curiosity to dine with DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, in the dusky recess of a court in Fleet-street. I supposed we should scarcely have knives and forks, and only some strange, uncouth, ill-drest dish: but I found every thing in very good order. We had no other company but Mrs. Williams and a young woman whom I did not know. As a dinner here was considered as a singular phenomenon, and as I was frequently interrogated on the subject, my readers may perhaps be desirous to know our bill of fare. Foote, I remember, in allusion to Francis, the *negro*,

² Afterwards Charles I.—BOSWELL.

was willing to suppose that our repast was *black broth*. But the fact was, that we had a very good soup, a boiled leg of lamb and spinach, a veal pie¹, and a rice pudding.

Of Dr. John Campbell, the authour, he said, "He is a very inquisitive and a very able man, and a man of good religious principles, though I am afraid he has been deficient in practice. Campbell is radically right; and we may hope, that in time there will be good practice²."

He owned that he thought Hawkesworth was one of his imitators, but he did not think Goldsmith³ was. Goldsmith, he said, had great merit. BOSWELL. "But, sir, he is much indebted to you for his getting so high in the publick estimation." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he has perhaps got *sooner* to it by his intimacy with me."

Goldsmith, though his vanity often excited him to occasional competition, had a very high regard for Johnson, which he had at this time expressed in the strongest manner in the Dedication of his comedy, entitled "She Stoops to Conquer⁴."

Johnson observed, that there were very few books printed in Scotland before the Union. He had seen a complete collection of them in the possession of the Hon. Archibald Campbell, a nonjuring bishop⁵. I wish this collection had been kept entire. Many of them are in the library of the faculty of advocates at Edinburgh. I told Dr. Johnson that I had some intention to write the life of the learned and worthy Thomas Ruddiman⁶. He said, "I should take pleasure in helping you to do honour to him. But his farewell letter to the faculty of advocates, when he resigned the office of their librarian, should have been in Latin."

¹ [Mr. Boswell does not say whether the pie had the extraordinary addition of "plums and sugar," which, Mrs. Piozzi tells us were ingredients in Dr. Johnson's veal pies. See *ante*, p. 208.—Ed.]

² [This praise of Dr. Campbell's piety is so moderate as to excite a doubt whether he was the person meant in p. 270: perhaps the words "regularity" and "exactness" in that passage are not to be taken in a sense exclusively religious.—Ed.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 189.—Ed.]

⁴ "By inscribing this slight performance to you, I do not mean so much to compliment you as myself. It may do me some honour to inform the publick, that I have lived many years in intimacy with you. It may serve the interests of mankind also to inform them, that the greatest wit may be found in a character, without impairing the most unaffected piety."—BOSWELL.

⁵ See an account of this learned and respectable gentleman, and of his curious work on the *Middle State*, post, 25th Oct. 1773.—BOSWELL.

⁶ [See *ante*, p. 86.—Ed.]

I put a question to him upon a fact in common life, which he could not answer, nor have I found any one else who could. What is the reason that women servants, though obliged to be at the expense of purchasing their own clothes, have much lower wages than men servants, to whom a great proportion of that article is furnished, and when in fact our female house servants work much harder than the male?⁷

He told me that he had twelve or fourteen times attempted to keep a journal of his life, but never could persevere. He advised me to do it. "The great thing to be recorded, said he, 'is the state of your own mind; and you should write down every thing that you remember, for you cannot judge at first what is good or bad; and write immediately, while the impression is fresh, for it will not be the same a week afterwards.'"

I again solicited him to communicate to me the particulars of his early life. He said, "You shall have them all for twopence. I hope you shall know a great deal more of me before you write my life." He mentioned to me this day many circumstances, which I wrote down when I went home, and have interwoven in the former part of this narrative.

[The following is his own minute, but not uninteresting memorandum of this day:

"April 11, 1773. I had more disturbance in the night than has been customary for some weeks past. I rose before nine in the morning, and prayed and drank tea. I came, I think, to church in the beginning of the prayers. I did not distinctly hear the Psalms, and found that I had been reading the Psalms for Good Friday. I went through the Litany, after a short disturbance, with tolerable attention.

"After sermon, I perused my prayer in the pew, then went nearer the altar, and being introduced into another pew, used my prayer again, and recommended my relations, with Bathurst and [Miss] Boothby, then my wife again by herself. Then I went nearer the altar, and read the collects chosen for meditation. I prayed for Salisbury⁸, and, I think, the Thrales. I then communicated with calmness, used the collect for Easter Day, and returning to the first pew, prayed my prayer the third time. I came home again; used my prayer and the Easter Collect. Then went into the study to Boswell, and read the Greek Testament. Then dined, and when Boswell went away,

⁷ There is a greater variety of employments for men than for women: therefore the demand raises the price.—KEARNEY.

⁸ [Mrs. Salisbury, Mrs. Thrale's mother, then languishing with an illness, of which she died in a few weeks.—Ed.]

ended the four first chapters of St. Matthew, and the Beatitudes of the fifth.

"I then went to Evening Prayers, and was composed.

"I gave the pew-keepers each five shillings and threepence."]

On Tuesday, April 13, he and Dr. Goldsmith and I dined at General Oglethorpe's. Goldsmith expatiated on the common topic, that the race of our people was degenerated, and that this was owing to luxury.

JOHNSON. "Sir, in the first place, I doubt the fact¹. I believe there are as many tall men in England now, as ever there were. But, secondly, supposing the stature of our people to be diminished, that is not owing to luxury; for, sir, consider to how very small a proportion of our people luxury can reach. Our soldiery, surely, are not luxurious, who live on sixpence a day; and the same remark will apply to almost all the other classes. Luxury, so far as it reaches the poor, will do good to the race of people; it will strengthen and multiply them. Sir, no nation was ever hurt by luxury; for, as I said before, it can reach but to a very few. I admit that the great increase of commerce and manufactures hurts the military spirit of a people; because it produces a competition for something else than martial honours—a competition for riches. It also hurts the bodies of the people; for you will observe, there is no man who works at any particular trade, but you may know him from his appearance to do so. One part or the other of his body being more used than the rest, he is in some degree deformed: but, sir, that is not luxury. A tailor sits cross-legged; but that is not luxury." GOLDSMITH. "Come, you're just going to the same place by another road." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, I say that is not luxury. Let us take a walk from Charing-cross to White-chapel, through, I suppose, the greatest series of shops in the world: what is there in any of these shops (if you except gin shops) that can do any human being any harm?" GOLDSMITH. "Well, sir, I'll accept your challenge. The very next shop to Northumberland-house is a pickle shop." JOHNSON. "Well, sir: do we not know that a maid can in one afternoon make pickles sufficient to serve a whole family for a year?"

¹ [There seems no reason whatever to believe the fact: old coffins and old armour do not designate a taller race of men. Pope tells us, that Colley Cibber obtained King Edward's armour from the Tower, and wore it in a theatrical procession. The doors, windows, and ceilings of old houses are not loftier than those of modern days. Other animals, too, cannot have degenerated in size by the *luxury of man*; and they seem, by all evidence, to have borne in old times the same proportion to the human figure that they now bear.—Ed.]

nay, that five pickle shops can serve all the kingdom? Besides, sir, there is no harm done to any body by the making of pickles, or the eating of pickles."

We drank tea with the ladies; and Goldsmith sung Toney Lumkin's song in his comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," and a very pretty one, to an Irish tune², which he had designed for Miss Hardcastle; but as Mrs. Bulkeley, who played the part, could not sing, it was left out. He afterwards wrote it down for me, by which means it was preserved, and now appears amongst his poems. Dr. Johnson, in his way home, stopped at my lodgings in Piccadilly, and sat with me, drinking tea a second time, till a late hour.

I told him that Mrs. Macaulay said, she wondered how he could reconcile his political principles with his moral: his notions of inequality and subordination with wishing well to the happiness of all mankind, who might live so agreeably, had they all their portions of land, and none to dominate over another. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I reconcile my principles very well, because mankind are happier in a state of inequality and subordination. Were they to be in this pretty state of equality, they would soon degenerate into brutes; they would become Monboddos nation; their tails would grow. Sir, all would be losers, were all to work for all: they would have no intellectual improvement. All intellectual improvement arises from leisure; all leisure arises from one working for another."

Talking of the family of Stuart, he said, "It should seem that the family at present on the throne has now established as good a right as the former family, by the long consent of the people; and that to disturb this right might be considered as culpable. At the same time I own, that it is a very difficult question, when considered with respect to the house of Stuart. To oblige people to take oaths as to the disputed right is wrong. I know not whether I could take them: but I do not blame those who do." So conscientious and so delicate was he upon this subject, which has occasioned so much clamour against him.

Talking of law cases, he said, "The English reports, in general, are very poor: only the half of what has been said is taken down; and of that half, much is mistaken. Whereas, in Scotland, the arguments on each side are deliberately put in writing,

² The humours of Ballamagairy.—BOSWELL. [This air was not long since revived and vulgarized in a song sung by the late Mr. Johnstone, in a farce called "The Wags of Windsor." Mr. Moore has endeavoured to bring it back into good company; it is to be found in the ninth number of his Irish Melodies, p. 48.—Ed.]

to be considered by the court. I think a collection of your cases upon subjects of importance, with the opinions of the judges upon them, would be valuable."

On Thursday, April 15, I dined with him and Dr. Goldsmith at General Paoli's. We found here Signor Martinelli, of Florence, author of a History of England in Italian, printed at London.

I spoke of Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," in the Scottish dialect, as the best pastoral that had ever been written; not only abounding with beautiful rural imagery, and just and pleasing sentiments, but being a real picture of manners; and I offered to teach Dr. Johnson to understand it. "No, sir," said he, "I won't learn it. You shall retain your superiority by my not knowing it."

This brought on a question whether one man is lessened by another's acquiring an equal degree of knowledge with him. Johnson asserted the affirmative. I maintained that the position might be true in those kinds of knowledge which produce wisdom, power, and force, so as to enable one man to have the government of others; but that a man is not in any degree lessened by others knowing as well as he what ends in mere pleasure:—"eating fine fruits, drinking delicious wines, reading exquisite poetry."

The General observed, that Martinelli was a whig. JOHNSON. "I am sorry for it. It shows the spirit of the times; he is obliged to temporise." BOSWELL. "I rather think, sir, that toryism prevails in this reign." JOHNSON. "I know not why you should think so, sir. You see your friend Lord Lyttelton, a nobleman, is obliged in

his history to write the most vulgar whiggism."

An animated debate took place whether Martinelli should continue his "History of England" to the present day. GOLDSMITH. "To be sure he should." JOHNSON. "No, sir; he would give great offence. He would have to tell of almost all the living great what they do not wish told." GOLDSMITH. "It may, perhaps, be necessary for a native to be more cautious; but a foreigner who comes among us without prejudice may be considered as holding the place of a judge, and may speak his mind freely." JOHNSON. "Sir, a foreigner, when he sends a work from the press, ought to be on his guard against catching the error and mistaken enthusiasm of the people among whom he happens to be." GOLDSMITH. "Sir, he wants only to sell his history, and to tell truth; one an honest, the other a laudable motive." JOHNSON. "Sir, they are both laudable motives. It is laudable in a man to wish to live by his labours; but he should write so as he may *live* by them, not so as he may be knocked on the head. I would advise him to be at Calais before he publishes his history of the present age. A foreigner who attaches himself to a political party in this country, is in the worst state that can be imagined: he is looked upon as a mere intermeddler. A native may do it from interest." BOSWELL. "Or principle." GOLDSMITH. "There are people who tell a hundred political lies every day, and are not hurt by it. Surely, then, one may tell truth with safety." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, in the first place, he who tells a hundred lies has disarmed the force of his lies. But besides; a man had rather have a hundred lies told of him, than one truth which he does not wish should be told." GOLDSMITH. "For my part, I'd tell truth, and shame the devil." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but the devil will be angry. I wish to shame the devil as much as you do, but I should choose to be out of the reach of his claws." GOLDSMITH. "His claws can do you no harm, when you have the shield of truth."

It having been observed that there was little hospitality in London: JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, any man who has a name, or who has the power of pleasing, will be very generally invited in London. The man, Sterne, I have been told, has had engagements for three months." GOLDSMITH. "And a very dull fellow." JOHNSON. "Why, no, sir?"

¹ [Vincenzo Martinelli. He was an Italian, living chiefly among our nobility, many of whom he instructed in his native idiom. He is the author of several works in Italian. His History of England, in two quarto volumes, is a mere compilation from Rapin. Two volumes of moral philosophy on *La Vita Civile*, &c. An octavo volume of his "Lettere Familiare" is rather amusing, for the complacency of the writer respecting his own importance, and the narratives of his visits to various noblemen, whose names spangle his pages. Having prefixed his portrait to his works, Badini, another Italian scribbler, well known in his day, mortified at the success of his more fashionable rival, published a quarto pamphlet, entitled, I think, "La Bilancia." He also presented the portrait of Martinelli to the world, in a manner then perhaps novel. In a pair of scales, the head of Martinelli, weighed against a single feather, flies into the air. Martinelli disdained to reply to the scurrilities of his desperate compatriot, and to designate his low rank, and with an allusion to the well known grievance of the Lazzaroni of Naples caustically observed that he left his assailant to be tormented by another race of critics—*Lo lascio a i suoi pidochi*.—D'ISRAELI.]

² Sterne, as may be supposed, was no great favourite with Dr. Johnson; and a lady once ventured to ask him how he liked Yorick's sermons, "I know nothing about them, madam," was his reply. But some time afterwards, forgetting him-

Martinelli told us, that for several years he lived much with Charles Townshend, and that he ventured to tell him he was a bad joker. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, thus much I can say upon the subject. One day he and a few more agreed to go and dine in the country, and each of them was to bring a friend in his carriage with him. Charles Townshend asked Fitzherbert to go with him, but told him, 'You must find somebody to bring you back; I can only carry you there.' Fitzherbert did not much like this arrangement. He, however, consented, observing sarcastically, 'It will do very well; for then the same jokes will serve you in returning as in going.'"

An eminent public character¹ being mentioned:—JOHNSON. "I remember being present when he showed himself to be so corrupted, or at least something so different from what I think right, as to maintain that a member of parliament should go along with his party, right or wrong. Now, sir, this is so remote from native virtue, from scholastick virtue, that a good man must have undergone a great change before he can reconcile himself to such a doctrine. It is maintaining that you may lie to the pub-

self, he severely censured them, and the lady very aptly retorted, "I understood you to say, sir, that you had never read them." "No, madam, I did read them, but it was in a stage-coach. I should never have deigned even to look at them had I been *at large*."—*Crad. Mem.* 208.—Ed.]

¹ [The Editor once thought pretty confidently, that the "*eminent public character*" was Mr. Fox, and the friend of Johnson's, who had become too much the "*echo*" of the former, Mr. Burke; but Lord Wellesley and Sir James Mackintosh, who have been so kind as to favour the Editor with their advice on this and other points, think that Mr. Burke and Sir Joshua Reynolds were meant, doubting whether Mr. Fox was, in 1773, sufficiently prominent to be designated as "an eminent public character," whom Mr. Burke (whose reputation was then at its maturity) could be said to "echo." Mr. Chalmers, on the whole, *inclines* to the same opinion, though he agrees with the Editor, that the distant and formal manner in which the *eminent character* is spoken of, and the allusion to his being "*already bought*," (that is, being already in office,) suit Mr. Fox better than Mr. Burke. All, however, agree that Mr. Burke was one of the persons meant; he always maintained the opinion alluded to, (see *post*, 15th August, 1773,) and was, indeed, the first who, in his "Thoughts on the Present Discontents," openly avowed and advocated the principle of inviolable adherence to political connexions, "putting," as Mr. Prior says, "to silence the hitherto common reproach applied to most public characters of being *party-men*." *Life of Burke*, vol. i. p. 232. "This is an instance," as Sir James Mackintosh observes, "which proves that the task of elucidating Boswell has not been undertaken too soon."—Ed.]

lic; for you lie when you call that right which you think wrong, or the reverse. A friend of ours who is too much an echo of that gentleman, observed, that a man who does not stick uniformly to a party, is only waiting to be bought. Why, then, said I, he is only waiting to be what that gentleman is already."

We talked of the king's coming to see Goldsmith's new play².—"I wish he would," said Goldsmith; adding, however, with an affected indifference, "Not that it would do me the least good." JOHNSON. "Well, then, sir, let us say it would do *him* good (laughing). No, sir, this affectation will not pass;—it is mighty idle. In such a state as ours, who would not wish to please the chief magistrate?" GOLDSMITH. "I do wish to please him. I remember a line in Dryden,

'And every poet is the monarch's friend.'

It ought to be reversed." JOHNSON. "Nay, there are finer lines in Dryden on this subject:

'For colleges on bounteous kings depend,
And never rebel was to arts a friend.'

General Paoli observed, that successful rebels might. MARTINELLI. "Happy rebellions." GOLDSMITH. "We have no such phrase." GENERAL PAOLI. "But have you not the *thing*?" GOLDSMITH. "Yes, all our *happy* revolutions. They have hurt our constitution, and will hurt it, till we mend it by another *HAPPY REVOLUTION*." I never before discovered that my friend Goldsmith had so much of the old prejudice in him.

General Paoli, talking of Goldsmith's new play, said, "*Il a fait un compliment très gracieux à une certaine grande dame*;" meaning a duchess of the first rank³.

I expressed a doubt whether Goldsmith intended it, in order that I might hear the truth from himself. It, perhaps, was not quite fair to endeavour to bring him to a confession, as he might not wish to avow positively his taking part against the court. He smiled and hesitated. The general at once relieved him by this beautiful image: "*Monsieur Goldsmith est comme la mer, qui jette des perles et beaucoup d'autres belles choses, sans s'en apercevoir*." GOLD-

² ["She Stoops to Conquer" was played on Monday, 15th March.—Ed.]

³ [The lady, no doubt, was the Duchess of Cumberland, whose marriage made a great noise about this time. The "*compliment*" has escaped the Editor's observation, unless it be Hastings's speech to Miss Neville, in the second act, when he proposes to her to fly "to France, where, even among slaves, the laws of marriage are respected."—Ed.]

SMITH. "*Très bien dit, et très élégamment.*"

A person was mentioned, who it was said could take down in short-hand the speeches in parliament with perfect exactness.

JOHNSON. "Sir, it is impossible. I remember one Angel, who came to me to write for him a preface or dedication to a book upon short-hand, and he professed to write as fast as a man could speak. In order to try him, I took down a book, and read while he wrote; and I favoured him, for I read more deliberately than usual. I had proceeded but a very little way, when he begged I would desist, for he could not follow me." Hearing now for the first time of this preface or dedication, I said, "What an expense, sir, do you put us to in buying books, to which you have written prefaces or dedications." JOHNSON. "Why I have dedicated to the royal family all round; that is to say, to the last generation of the royal family." GOLDSMITH. "And perhaps, sir, not one sentence of wit in a whole dedication." JOHNSON. "Perhaps not, sir." BOSWELL. "What then is the reason for applying to a particular person to do that which any one may do as well?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, one man has greater readiness at doing it than another."

I spoke of Mr. Harris, of Salisbury, as being a very learned man, and in particular an eminent Grecian. JOHNSON. "I am not sure of that. His friends give him out as such, but I know not who of his friends are able to judge of it." GOLDSMITH. "He is what is much better: he is a worthy, humane man." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, that is not to the purpose of our argument: that will as much prove that he can play upon the fiddle as well as Giardini, as that he is an eminent Grecian." GOLDSMITH. "The greatest musical performers have but small emoluments. Giardini, I am told, does not get above seven hundred a year." JOHNSON. "That is indeed but little for a man to get, who does best that which so many endeavour to do. There is nothing, I think, in which the power of art is shown so much as in playing on the fiddle. In all other things we can do something at first. Any man will forge a bar of iron, if you give him a hammer; not so well as a smith, but tolerably. A man will saw a piece of wood, and make a box, though a clumsy one; but give him a fiddle and a fiddle-stick, and he can do nothing." [To Mrs. Piozzi, p. 46.] Piozzi he observed of Mr. Harris's dedication to his Hermes, that, though but fourteen lines long, there were six grammatical faults in it.]

On Monday, April 19, he called on me with Mrs. Williams, in Mr. Strahan's coach, and carried me out to dine with Mr. Elphin-

ston, at his academy at Kensington. A printer having acquired a fortune sufficient to keep his coach, was a good topic for the credit of literature. Mrs. Williams said, that another printer, Mr. Hamilton¹, had not waited so long as Mr. Strahan, but had kept his coach several years sooner. JOHNSON. "He was in the right. Life is short. The sooner that a man begins to enjoy his wealth, the better."

Mr. Elphinston talked of a new book that was much admired, and asked Dr. Johnson if he had read it. JOHNSON. "I have looked into it." "What," said Elphinston, "have you not read it through?" Johnson, offended at being thus pressed, and so obliged to own his cursory mode of reading, answered tartly, "No, sir, do *you* read books *through*?"

He this day again defended duelling, and put his argument upon what I have ever thought the most solid basis; that if publick war be allowed to be consistent with morality, private war must be equally so. Indeed we may observe what strained arguments are used to reconcile war with the Christian religion. But, in my opinion, it is exceedingly clear that duelling having better reasons for its barbarous violence, is more justifiable than war in which thousands go forth without any cause of personal quarrel, and massacre each other.

On Wednesday, April 21, I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's. A gentleman attacked Garrick for being vain. JOHNSON. "No wonder, sir, that he is vain; a man who is perpetually flattered in every mode that can be conceived. So many bellows have blown the fire, that one wonders he is not by this time become a cinder." BOSWELL. "And such bellows too! Lord Mansfield with his cheeks like to burst: Lord Chatham like an Æolus². I have read such notes from them to him, as were enough to turn his head." JOHNSON. "True. When he whom every body else flatters, flatters me, I then am truly happy." MRS. THRALE. "The sentiment is in Congreve, I think." JOHNSON. "Yes, madam, in 'The Way of the World':"

'If there's delight in love, 'tis when I see
That heart which others bleed for, bleed for me.'

No, sir, I should not be surprised though Garrick chained the ocean and lashed the winds." BOSWELL. "Should it not be, sir, lashed the ocean and chained the winds?" JOHNSON. "No, sir; recollect the original:

¹ [The Hamiltons were respectable publishers for three generations.—Ed.]

² Lord Chatham addressed to him those very pretty lines, beginning,

"Leave, Garrick, leave the landscape, proudly gay;
Dock, forts, and navies bright'ning all the bay."—Ed.]

' In Corum atque Eurum solitus sævire flagellis
Barbarus, Æolio nunquam hoc in carcere passos,
Ipsam compedibus qui vinxerat Ennosigæum.' "

This does very well, when both the winds and the sea are personified, and mentioned by their mythological names, as in Juvenal; but when they are mentioned in plain language, the application of the epithets suggested by me is the most obvious; and accordingly my friend himself, in his imitation of the passage which describes Xerxes, has

"The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind 1."

The modes of living in different countries, and the various views with which men travel in quest of new scenes, having been talked of, a learned gentleman who holds a considerable office in the law expatiated on the happiness of a savage life, and mentioned an instance of an officer who had actually lived for some time in the wilds of America, of whom, when in that state, he quoted this reflection with an air of admiration, as if it had been deeply philosophical: "Here am I, free and unrestrained, amidst the rude magnificence of Nature, with this Indian woman by my side, and this gun, with which I can procure food when I want it: what more can be desired for human happiness?" It did not require much sagacity to foresee that such a sentiment would not be permitted to pass without due animadversion. JOHNSON. "Do not allow yourself, sir, to be imposed upon by such gross absurdity. It is sad stuff; it is brutish. If a bull could speak, he might as well exclaim—Here am I with this cow and this grass; what being can enjoy greater felicity?"

We talked of the melancholy end of a gentleman² who had destroyed himself. JOHNSON. "It was owing to imaginary difficulties in his affairs, which, had he talked of with any friend, would soon have vanished." BOSWELL. "Do you think, sir, that all who commit suicide are mad?" JOHNSON. "Sir, they are often not universally disordered in their intellects, but one passion presses so upon them, that they yield to it, and commit suicide, as a passionate man will stab another." He added, "I have often thought, that after a man has

¹ So also Butler, *Hudibras*, P. II. c. i. v. 845.

"A Persian emperor whipt his grannam,
The sea, his mother Venus came on."—MALONE.

² [Sir John Hawkins (who, however, was not well disposed towards Mr. Dyer (affords some ground for suspecting that he (who had died in September, 1772) was the person alluded to. See, however, Malone's *Life of Dryden*, p. 85, which assigns reasons (though they have not quite convinced the Editor) for doubting that Mr. Dyer could be the person here meant. The gentleman was probably Mr. Fitzherbert, who terminated his own existence in January, 1772.—ED.]

taken the resolution to kill himself, it is not courage in him to do any thing, however desperate, because he has nothing to fear." GOLDSMITH. "I don't see that." JOHNSON. "Nay, but, my dear sir, why should you not see what every one else sees?" GOLDSMITH. "It is for fear of something that he has resolved to kill himself: and will not that timid disposition restrain him?" JOHNSON. "It does not signify that the fear of something made him resolve; it is upon the state of his mind after the resolution is taken that I argue. Suppose a man either from fear, or pride, or conscience, or whatever motive, has resolved to kill himself; when once the resolution is taken, he has nothing to fear. He may then go and take the King of Prussia by the nose, at the head of his army. He cannot fear the rack, who is resolved to kill himself. When Eustace Budgell was walking down to the Thames, determined to drown himself³, he might, if he pleased, without any apprehension of danger, have turned aside, and first set fire to St. James's palace."

On Tuesday, April 27, Mr. Beauclerk and I called on him in the morning. As we walked up Johnson's-court, I said, "I have a veneration for this court;" and was glad to find that Beauclerk had the same reverential enthusiasm. We found him alone. We talked of Mr. Andrew Stuart's elegant and plausible Letters to Lord Mansfield⁴; a copy of which had been sent by the author to Dr. Johnson. JOHNSON. "They have not answered the end. They have not been talked of; I have never heard of them. This is owing to their not being sold. People seldom read a book which is given to them; and few are given. The way to spread a work is to sell it at a low price. No man will send to buy a thing that costs even sixpence, without an intention to read it." BOSWELL. "May it not be doubted, sir, whether it be proper to publish letters, arraigning the ultimate decision of an important cause by the supreme judicature of the nation?" JOHNSON. "No, sir, I do not think it was wrong to publish these letters. If they are thought to do harm, why not answer them? But they will do no harm. If Mr. Douglas be indeed the son of Lady Jane, he cannot be hurt: if he be not her son, and yet has the great estate of the family of Douglas, he may well submit to have a pamphlet against him by Andrew Stuart. Sir, I think such a publi-

³ [A friend and relative of Addison's, who drowned himself to escape a prosecution on account of forging the will of Dr. Tindal, in which Budgell had provided himself with a legacy of 2000*l*. To this Pope alludes :

"Let Budgell charge low Grab-street on my quill,
And write whate'er he please—*except my will*."—ED.]

⁴ [On the Douglas Cause.—ED.]

cation does good, as it does good to show us the possibilities of human life. And, sir, you will not say that the Douglas cause was a cause of easy decision, when it divided your court as much as it could do, to be determined at all. When your judges are seven and seven, the casting vote of the president must be given on one side or other; no matter, for my argument, on which; one or the other *must* be taken; as when I am to move, there is no matter which leg I move first. And then, sir, it was otherwise determined here. No, sir, a more dubious determination of any question cannot be imagined.¹”

He said, “Goldsmith should not be forever attempting to shine in conversation: he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails. Sir, a game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance; a man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now Goldsmith’s putting himself against another, is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man’s while. A man should not lay a hundred to one, unless he can easily spare it, though he has a hundred chances for him: he can get but a guinea, and he may lose a hundred. Goldsmith is in this state. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation: if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed.”

Johnson’s own superlative powers of wit set him above any risk of such uneasiness. Garrick had remarked to me of him, a few days before, “Rabelais and all other wits are nothing compared with him. You may be diverted by them; but Johnson gives you a forcible hug, and shakes laughter out of you, whether you will or no.”

Goldsmith, however, was often very fortunate in his witty contests, even when he entered the lists with Johnson himself. Sir Joshua Reynolds was in company with them one day, when Goldsmith said that he thought he could write a good fable, mentioned the simplicity which that kind of composition requires, and observed that in most fables the animals introduced seldom talk in character. “For instance (said he),

¹ I regretted that Dr. Johnson never took the trouble to study a question which interested nations. He would not even read a pamphlet which I wrote upon it, entitled *The Essence of the Douglas Cause*; which I have reason to flatter myself had considerable effect in favour of Mr. Douglas; of whose legitimate filiation I was then, and am still, firmly convinced. Let me add, that no fact can be more respectably ascertained, than by the judgment of the most august tribunal in the world; a judgment in which Lord Mansfield and Lord Camden united in 1769, and from which only five of a numerous body entered a protest.—**BOSWELL.**

the fable of the little fishes, who saw birds fly over their heads, and, envying them, petitioned Jupiter to be changed into birds. The skill (continued he) consists in making them talk like little fishes.” While he indulged himself in this fanciful reverie, he observed Johnson shaking his sides, and laughing. Upon which he smartly proceeded, “Why, Dr. Johnson, this is not so easy as you seem to think; for if you were to make little fishes talk, they would talk like **WHALES.**”

Johnson, though remarkable for his great variety of composition, never exercised his talents in fable, except we allow his beautiful tale published in Mrs. Williams’s *Miscellanies* to be of that species. I have however found among his manuscript collections the following sketch of one:

“Glow-worm² lying in the garden saw a candle in a neighbouring palace,—and complained of the littleness of his own light; another observed—wait a little;—soon dark,—have outlasted *πῶλλ* [*many*] of these glaring lights, which are only brighter as they haste to nothing.”

On Thursday, April 29, I dined with him at General Oglethorpe’s, where were Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. Langton, Dr. Goldsmith, and Mr. Thrale. I was very desirous to get Dr. Johnson absolutely fixed in his resolution to go with me to the Hebrides this year; and I told him that I had received a letter from Dr. Robertson, the historian, upon the subject, with which he was much pleased, and now talked in such a manner of his long intended tour, that I was satisfied he meant to fulfil his engagement.

The custom of eating dogs at Otaheite being mentioned, Goldsmith observed that this was also a custom in China; that a dog-butcher is as common there as any other butcher; and that when he walks abroad all the dogs fall on him. **JOHNSON.** “That is not owing to his killing dogs, sir. I remember a butcher at Lichfield, whom a dog that was in the house where I lived always attacked. It is the smell of carnage which provokes this, let the animals he has killed be what they may.” **GOLDSMITH.** “Yes, there is a general abhorrence in animals at the signs of massacre. If you put a tub full of blood into a stable, the horses are like to go mad.” **JOHNSON.** “I doubt that.” **GOLDSMITH.** “Nay, sir, it is a fact well authenticated.” **THRALE.** “You had better prove it before you put it into your book on natural history. You may do it in my stable, if you will.” **JOHNSON.** “Nay, sir, I would not have him prove it.

² It has already been observed, that one of the first essays was a Latin poem on a glow-worm; but whether it be any where extant has not been ascertained.—**MALONE.**

If he is content to take his information from others, he may get through his book with little trouble, and without much endangering his reputation. But if he makes experiments for so comprehensive a book as his, there would be no end to them; his erroneous assertions would then fall upon himself; and he might be blamed for not having made experiments as to every particular."

The character of Mallet having been introduced, and spoken of slightly by Goldsmith: JOHNSON. "Why, sir, Mallet had talents enough to keep his literary reputation alive as long as he himself lived; and that, let me tell you, is a good deal." GOLDSMITH. "But I cannot agree that it was so. His literary reputation was dead long before his natural death. I consider an author's literary reputation to be alive only while his name will ensure a good price for his copy from the booksellers. I will get you (to Johnson) a hundred guineas for any thing whatever that you shall write, if you put your name to it."

Dr. Goldsmith's new play, "She Stoops to Conquer," being mentioned; JOHNSON. "I know of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated an audience, that has answered so much the great end of comedy—making an audience merry."

Goldsmith having said that Garrick's compliment to the queen, which he introduced into the play of "The Chances," which he had altered and revised this year, was mean and gross flattery;—JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I would not *write*, I would not give solemnly, under my hand, a character beyond what I thought really true; but a speech on the stage, let it flatter ever so extravagantly, is formular. It has always been formular to flatter kings and queens; so much so, that even in our church-service we have 'our most religious king,' used indiscriminately, whoever is king. Nay, they even flatter themselves;—'we have been graciously pleased to grant.'" No modern flattery, however, is so gross as that of the Augustan age, where the emperor was deified. '*Præsens Divus habebitur Augustus.*' And as to meanness"—(rising into warmth)—"how is it mean in a player,—a showman,—a fellow who exhibits himself for a shilling to flatter his queen? The attempt, indeed, was dangerous; for if it had missed, what became of Garrick, and what became of the queen? As Sir William Temple says of a great general, it is necessary not only that his designs be formed in a masterly manner, but that they should be attended with success. Sir, it is right, at a time when the royal family is not generally liked, to let it be seen that the people like at least one of them." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "I do not perceive why the profession of a player should be despised; for the great and ulti-

mate end of all the employments of mankind is to produce amusement. Garrick produces more amusement than any body."

BOSWELL. "You say, Dr. Johnson, that Garrick exhibits himself for a shilling. In this respect he is only on a footing with a lawyer, who exhibits himself for his fee, and even will maintain any nonsense or absurdity, if the case require it. Garrick refuses a play or a part which he does not like; a lawyer never refuses." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, what does this prove? only that a lawyer is worse; Boswell is now like Jack in 'The Tale of a Tub,' who, when he is puzzled by an argument, hangs himself. He thinks I shall cut him down, but I'll let him hang" (laughing vociferously). SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Mr. Boswell thinks that the profession of a lawyer being unquestionably honourable, if he can show the profession of a player to be more honourable, he proves his argument."

On Friday, April 30, I dined with him at Mr. Beauclerk's, where were Lord Chalkmont, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and some more members of the LITERARY CLUB, whom he had obligingly invited to meet me, as I was this evening to be balloted for as candidate for admission into that distinguished society. Johnson had done me the honour to propose me, and Beauclerk was very zealous for me.

Goldsmith being mentioned: JOHNSON. "It is amazing how little Goldsmith knows. He seldom comes where he is not more ignorant than any one else." SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS. "Yet there is no man whose company is more liked." JOHNSON. "To be sure, sir. When people find a man of most distinguished abilities as a writer, their inferior while he is with them, it must be highly gratifying to them. What Goldsmith comically says of himself is very true,—he always gets the better when he argues alone; meaning that he is master of a subject in his study, and can write well upon it; but when he comes into company, grows confused, and unable to talk. Take him as a poet, his 'Traveller' is a very fine performance; ay, and so is his 'Deserted Village,' were it not sometimes too much the echo of his 'Traveller.' Whether, indeed, we take him as a poet,—as a comick writer,—or as an historian, he stands in the first class." BOSWELL. "An historian! My dear sir, you surely will not rank his compilation of the Roman History with the works of other historians of this age?" JOHNSON. "Why, who are before him?" BOSWELL. "Hume,—Robertson,—Lord Lyttelton." JOHNSON. (His antipathy to the Scotch beginning to rise). "I have not read Hume; but, doubtless, Goldsmith's 'History' is better than the *verbiage* of Robertson, or the foppery of Dalrymple." BOSWELL. "Will

you not admit the superiority of Robertson, in whose history we find such penetration, such painting?" JOHNSON. "Sir, you must consider how that penetration and that painting are employed. It is not history, it is imagination. He who describes what he never saw, draws from fancy. Robertson paints minds as Sir Joshua paints faces in a history-piece: he imagines an heroic countenance. You must look upon Robertson's work as romance, and try it by that standard. History it is not. Besides, sir, it is the great excellence of a writer to put into his book as much as his book will hold. Goldsmith has done this in his history. Now Robertson might have put twice as much into his book. Robertson is like a man who has packed gold in wool; the wool takes up more room than the gold. No, sir; I always thought Robertson would be crushed by his own weight,—would be buried under his own ornaments. Goldsmith tells you shortly all you want to know: Robertson detains you a great deal too long. No man will read Robertson's cumbrous detail a second time; but Goldsmith's plain narrative will please again and again. I would say to Robertson what an old tutor of a college said to one of his pupils: 'Read over your compositions, and wherever you meet with a passage which you think is particularly fine, strike it out.' Goldsmith's abridgement is better than that of Lucius Florus or Eutropius; and I will venture to say, that if you compare him with Vertot, in the same places of the Roman History, you will find that he excels Vertot. Sir, he has the art of compiling, and of saying every thing he has to say in a pleasing manner. He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale."

I cannot dismiss the present topic without observing, that it is probable that Dr. Johnson, who owned that he often "talked for victory," rather urged plausible objections to Dr. Robertson's excellent historical works, in the ardour of contest, than expressed his real and decided opinion; for it is not easy to suppose that he should so widely differ from the rest of the literary world¹.

JOHNSON. "I remember once being with Goldsmith in Westminster-abbey. While we surveyed the Poets' Corner I said to him,

' Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis ? '

¹ [Mr. Boswell's friendship for both Johnson and Robertson is here sorely perplexed; but there seems no ground for doubting that Johnson's "real and decided opinion" of Robertson was very low. He on every occasion repeats it with a very contemptuous consistency. See *ante*, p. 247.—Ed.]

² Ovid. de Art. Amand. i. iii. v. 13.—BOSWELL.

When we got to Temple-bar, he stopped me, pointed to the heads upon it, and slyly whispered me,

' Forsitan et nostrum nomen miscebitur istis ? '

Johnson praised John Bunyan highly. "His 'Pilgrim's Progress' has great merit, both for invention, imagination, and the conduct of the story; and it has had the best evidence of its merit, the general and continued approbation of mankind. Few books, I believe, have had a more extensive sale. It is remarkable that it begins very much like the poem of Dante; yet there was no translation of Dante when Bunyan wrote. There is reason to think that he had read Spenser."

A proposition which had been agitated, that monuments to eminent persons should, for the time to come, be erected in St. Paul's church, as well as in Westminster-abbey, was mentioned; and it was asked who should be honoured by having his monument first erected there. Somebody suggested Pope. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, as Pope was a Roman Catholic, I would not have his to be first. I think Milton's rather should have the precedence⁴. I think more highly of him now than I did at twenty. There is more thinking in him and in Butler, than in any of our poets."

Some of the company expressed a wonder why the author of so excellent a book as 'The Whole Duty of Man,' should conceal himself⁵. JOHNSON. "There may be different reasons assigned for this, any one of which would be very sufficient. He may

³ In allusion to Dr. Johnson's supposed political principles, and perhaps his own.—BOSWELL.

⁴ Here is another instance of his high admiration of Milton as a poet, notwithstanding his just abhorrence of that sour republican's political principles. His candour and discrimination are equally conspicuous. Let us hear no more of his "injustice to Milton."—BOSWELL. [A monument to Milton in St. Paul's cathedral would be the more appropriate from his having received his early education in the adjoining public school.—HALL.]

⁵ In a manuscript in the Bodleian Library several circumstances are stated, which strongly incline me to believe that Dr. Accepted Frewen, Archbishop of York, was the author of this work.—MALONE. [Accepted Frewen was Dean of Gloucester, installed 1731, loco Geo. Warburton.—HALL. See, on the subject of the author of this celebrated and excellent work, *Gent. Mag.* vol. xxiv. p. 26, and *Ballard's Memoirs of Learned Ladies*, p. 300. The late eccentric but learned Dr. Barrett, of Trinity College, Dublin, believed that Dr. Chapel, formerly provost of that college, was the author. This gentleman was librarian of his college, and a perfect Magliabechi in dirt and condition, see *ante*, p. 135. It is odd too that Magliabechi's portrait was exceedingly like Dr. Barrett.—Ed.]

have been a clergyman, and may have thought that his religious counsels would have less weight when known to come from a man whose profession was theology. He may have been a man whose practice was not suitable to his principles, so that his character might injure the effect of his book, which he had written in a season of penitence. Or he may have been a man of rigid self-denial, so that he would have no reward for his pious labours while in this world, but refer it all to a future state."

The gentlemen went away to their club, and I was left at Beauclerk's till the fate of my election should be announced to me. I sat in a state of anxiety which even the charming conversation of Lady Di Beauclerk could not entirely dissipate. In a short time I received the agreeable intelligence that I was chosen. I hastened to the place of meeting, and was introduced to such a society as can seldom be found. Mr. Edmund Burke, whom I then saw for the first time, and whose splendid talents had long made me ardently wish for his acquaintance; Dr. Nugent, Mr. Garrick, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones, and the company with whom I had dined. Upon my entrance, Johnson placed himself behind a chair, on which he leaned as on a desk or pulpit, and with humorous formality gave me a *charge*, pointing out the conduct expected from me as a good member of this club.

Goldsmith produced some very absurd verses which had been publicly recited to an audience for money. JOHNSON. "I can match this nonsense. There was a poem called 'Eugenio,' which came out some years ago, and concludes thus:

'And now, ye trifling, self-assuming elves,
Brimful of pride, of nothing, of yourselves,
Survey Eugenio, view him o'er and o'er,
Then sink into yourselves, and be no more!'

¹ [Dr. Johnson's memory here was not perfectly accurate: "Eugenio" does not conclude thus. There are eight more lines after the last of those quoted by him; and the passage which he meant to recite is as follows:

"Say now, ye fluttering, poor, assuming elves,
Stark full of pride, of folly, of—yourselves;
Say, where's the wretch of all your impious crew
Who dares confront his character to view?
Behold Eugenio, view him o'er and o'er,
Then sink into yourselves, and be no more."

Mr. Reed informs me that the author of *Eugenio*, Thomas Beech, a wine-merchant at Wrexham, in Denbighshire, soon after its publication, viz. 17th May, 1737, cut his own throat; and that it appears by Swift's Works, that the poem had been shown to him, and received some of his corrections. Johnson had read "*Eugenio*" on his first coming to town, for we see it mentioned in one of his letters to Mr. Cave, which has been inserted in this work.—BOSWELL.

Nay, Dryden, in his poem on the Royal Society, has these lines:

'Then we upon our globe's last verge shall go,
And see the ocean leaning on the sky;
From thence our rolling neighbours we shall know,
And on the lunar world securely pry.'

Talking of puns, Johnson, who had a great contempt for that species of wit, deigned to allow that there was one good pun in "*Menagiana*," I think on the word *corps*?

Much pleasant conversation passed, which Johnson relished with great good-humour. But his conversation alone, or what led to it, or was interwoven with it, is the business of this work.

On Saturday, May 1, we dined by ourselves at our old rendezvous, the Mitre tavern. He was placid, but not much disposed to talk. He observed, that "The Irish mix better with the English than the Scotch do; their language is nearer to English; as a proof of which, they succeed very well as players, which Scotchmen do not. Then, sir, they have not that extreme nationality which we find in the Scotch. I will do you, Boswell, the justice to say, that you are the most *unscottified* of your countrymen. You are almost the only instance of a Scotchman that I have known, who did not at every other sentence bring in some other Scotchman³."

We drank tea with Mrs. Williams. I introduced a question which has been much

² I formerly thought that I had, perhaps, mistaken the word, and imagined it to be *corps*, from its similarity of sound to the real one. For an accurate and shrewd unknown gentleman, to whom I am indebted for some remarks on my work, observes on this passage, "Q. if not on the word *fort*? A vociferous French preacher said of Bourdaloue, 'Il pêche fort bien, et moi bien fort.'—*Menagiana*. See also *Anecdotes Littéraires, article Bourdaloue*." But my ingenious and obliging correspondent, Mr. Abercrombie of Philadelphia, has pointed out to me the following passage in "*Menagiana*;" which renders the preceding conjecture unnecessary, and confirms my original statement:

"Madame de Bourdonne, chanoinesse de Remiremont, venoit d'entendre un discours plein de feu et d'esprit, mais fort peu solide, et très irrégulier. Une de ses amies, qui y prenoit intérêt pour l'orateur, lui dit en sortant, 'Eh bien, madame, que vous semble-t-il de ce que vous venez d'entendre? Qu'il y a d'esprit?'—'Il y a tant,' répondit Madame de Bourdonne, 'que je n'y ai pas vu de *corps*.'"—*Menagiana*, tome ii. p. 64. Amsterd. 1713.—BOSWELL.

³ [Garrick, as Boswell himself tells us, used to rally him on his nationality, and there are abundant instances in these volumes to show that he was not exempt from that amiable prejudice. See *ante*, p. 24. 53. 189. 192. 197.—Ed.]

agitated in the church of Scotland, whether the claim of lay-patrons to present ministers to parishes be well founded; and supposing it to be well founded, whether it ought to be exercised without the concurrence of the people? That church is composed of a series of judicatures: a presbytery, a synod, and, finally, a general assembly; before all of which, this matter may be contended: and in some cases the presbytery having refused to induct, or *settle*, as they call it, the person presented by the patron, it has been found necessary to appeal to the general assembly. He said, I might see the subject well treated in the "Defence of Pluralities;" and although he thought that a patron should exercise his right with tenderness to the inclinations of the people of a parish, he was very clear as to his right. Then supposing the question to be pleaded before the general assembly, he dictated to me [the argument which will be found in the Appendix.]

Though I present to my readers Dr. Johnson's masterly thoughts on the subject, I think it proper to declare, that notwithstanding I am myself a lay-patron, I do not entirely subscribe to his opinion.

On Friday, May 7, I breakfasted with him at Mr. Thrale's in the Borough. While we were alone, I endeavoured as well as I could to apologise for a lady¹ who had been divorced from her husband by act of parliament. I said, that he had used her very ill, had behaved brutally to her, and that she could not continue to live with him without having her delicacy contaminated; that all affection for him was thus destroyed; that the essence of conjugal union being gone, there remained only a cold form, a mere civil obligation; that she was in the prime of life, with qualities to produce happiness; that these ought not to be lost; and that the gentleman on whose account she was divorced had gained her heart while thus unhappily situated. Seduced, perhaps, by the charms of the lady in question, I thus attempted to palliate what I was sensible could not be justified; for when I had finished my harangue, my venerable friend gave me a proper check:

¹ [No doubt Lady Diana Spencer, eldest daughter, of Charles Duke of Marlborough, born in 1734, married in 1757 to Frederick Viscount Bolingbroke, from whom she was divorced in 1768, and married immediately after Mr. Topham Beauclerk. All that Johnson says is very true; but he would have been better entitled to hold such high language if he had not *practically* waved his right by living in that lady's private society. He should either, as a strict moralist, have refused her his countenance, or, as a man of honour and gratitude, been silent as to her frailties. He had no right to enjoy her society, and disparage her character.—Ed.]

"My dear sir, never accustom your mind to mingle virtue and vice. The woman's a whore, and there's an end on't."

[One evening, in the rooms at Brighthelmstone, however, he fell Piozzi.
p. 84, 85. into a comical discussion with that lady's first husband, happening to sit by him, and choosing to harangue very loudly about the nature, and use, and abuse, of *divorces*. Many people gathered round them to hear what was said, and when Mr. Thrale called him away, and told him to whom he had been talking, received an answer which Mrs. Thrale did not venture to write down.]

He described the father² of one of his friends thus: "Sir he was so exuberant a talker at publick meetings, that the gentlemen of his county were afraid of him. No business could be done for his declamation."

He did not give me full credit when I mentioned that I had carried on a short conversation by signs with some Esquimaux, who were then in London, particularly with one of them who was a priest. He thought I could not make them understand me. No man was more incredulous as to particular facts which were at all extraordinary; and therefore no man was more scrupulously inquisitive, in order to discover the truth.

I dined with him this day at the house of my friends, Messieurs Edward and Charles Dilly, booksellers in the Poultry: there were present, their elder brother, Mr. Dilly of Bedfordshire, Dr. Goldsmith, Mr. Langton, Mr. Claxton, Rev. Dr. Mayo, a dissenting minister, the Rev. Mr. Toplady, and my friend the Rev. Mr. Temple.

Hawkesworth's compilation of the voyages to the South Sea being mentioned: JOHNSON. "Sir, if you talk of it as a subject of commerce, it will be gainful; if as a book that is to increase human knowledge, I believe there will not be much of that. Hawkesworth can tell only what the voyagers have told him; and they have found very little, only one new animal, I think." BOSWELL. "But many insects, sir." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, as to insects, Ray reckons of British insects twenty thousand species. They might have staid at home and discovered enough in that way."

Talking of birds, I mentioned Mr. Daines Barrington's ingenious Essay against the received notion of their migration. JOHNSON. "I think we have as good evidence for the migration of woodcocks as can be desired. We find they disappear at a certain time of the year, and appear again at a certain time of the year; and some of them, when weary in their flight, have been known to alight on the rigging of ships far

² [Old Mr. Langton.—Ed.]

out at sea." One of the company observed, that there had been instances of some of them found in summer in Essex. JOHNSON. "Sir, that strengthens our argument. *Exceptio probat regulam*. Some being found shows, that, if all remained, many would be found." GOLDSMITH. "There is a partial migration of the swallows; the stronger ones migrate, the others do not."

BOSWELL. "I am well assured that the people of Otaheite who have the bread tree, the fruit of which serves them for bread, laughed heartily when they were informed of the tedious process necessary with us to have bread; ploughing, sowing, harrowing, reaping, threshing, grinding, baking." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, all ignorant savages will laugh when they are told of the advantages of civilized life. Were you to tell men who live without houses, how we pile brick upon brick, and rafter upon rafter, and that after a house is raised to a certain height, a man tumbles off a scaffold, and breaks his neck; he would laugh heartily at our folly in building; but it does not follow that men are better without houses. No, sir (holding up a slice of a good loaf), this is better than the bread tree."

He repeated an argument, which is to be found in his "Rambler," against the notion that the brute creation is endowed with the faculty of reason: "Birds build by instinct; they never improve; they build their first nest as well as any one they ever build." GOLDSMITH. "Yet we see if you take away a bird's nest with the eggs in it, she will make a slighter nest and lay again." JOHNSON. "Sir, that is, because at first she has full time, and makes her nest deliberately. In the case you mention she is pressed to lay, and must therefore make her nest quickly, and consequently it will be slight." GOLDSMITH. "The nidification of birds is what is least known in natural history, though one of the most curious things in it."

I introduced the subject of toleration. JOHNSON. "Every society has a right to preserve public peace and order, and therefore has a good right to prohibit the propagation of opinions which have a dangerous tendency¹. To say the *magistrate* has this right, is using an inadequate word: it is the *society* for which the magistrate is agent. He may be morally or theologically wrong in restraining the propagation of opinions which he thinks dangerous, but he is politically right." MAYO. "I am of opinion, sir, that every man is entitled to liberty of conscience in religion; and that the magistrate cannot restrain that right." JOHNSON. "Sir, I agree with you. Eve-

ry man has a right to liberty of conscience; and with that the magistrate cannot interfere. People confound liberty of *thinking* with liberty of *talking*; nay, with liberty of *preaching*. Every man has a physical right to *think* as he pleases; for it cannot be discovered how he thinks. He has not a moral right, for he ought to inform himself, and think justly. But, sir, no member of a society has a right to *teach* any doctrine contrary to what the society holds to be true. The magistrate, I say, may be wrong in what he thinks; but while he thinks himself right, he may and ought to enforce what he thinks." MAYO. "Then, sir, we are to remain always in error, and truth never can prevail; and the magistrate was right in persecuting the first Christians." JOHNSON. "Sir, the only method by which religious truth can be established is by martyrdom. The magistrate has a right to enforce what he thinks; and he who is conscious of the truth has a right to suffer. I am afraid there is no other way of ascertaining the truth, but by persecution on the one hand and enduring it on the other." GOLDSMITH. "But how is a man to act, sir? Though firmly convinced of the truth of his doctrine, may he not think it wrong to expose himself to persecution? Has he a right to do so? Is it not, as it were, committing voluntary suicide?" JOHNSON. "Sir, as to voluntary suicide, as you call it, there are twenty thousand men in an army who will go without scruple to be shot at, and mount a breach for five-pence a day." GOLDSMITH. "But have they a moral right to do this?" JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, if you will not take the universal opinion of mankind, I have nothing to say. If mankind cannot defend their own way of thinking, I cannot defend it. Sir, if a man is in doubt whether it would be better for him to expose himself to martyrdom or not, he should not do it. He must be convinced that he has a delegation from heaven." GOLDSMITH. "I would consider whether there is the greater chance of good or evil upon the whole. If I see a man who has fallen into a well, I would wish to help him out; but if there is a greater probability that he shall pull me in, than that I shall pull him out, I would not attempt it. So were I to go to Turkey, I might wish to convert the grand signior to the christian faith; but when I considered that I should probably be put to death without effectuating my purpose in any degree, I should keep myself quiet." JOHNSON. "Sir, you must consider that we have perfect and imperfect obligations. Perfect obligations, which are generally not to do something, are clear and positive; as, 'Thou shalt not kill.' But charity, for instance, is not definable by limits. It is a duty to give

¹ [See *ante*, p. 229.—ED.]

to the poor, but no man can say how much another should give to the poor, or when a man has given too little to save his soul. In the same manner it is a duty to instruct the ignorant, and of consequence to convert infidels to Christianity; but no man in the common course of things is obliged to carry this to such a degree as to incur the danger of martyrdom, as no man is obliged to strip himself to the shirt, in order to give charity. I have said, that a man must be persuaded that he has a particular delegation from heaven." GOLDSMITH. "How is this to be known? Our first reformers who were burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ ——" JOHNSON. (interrupting him). "Sir, they were not burnt for not believing bread and wine to be Christ, but for insulting those who did believe it¹. And, sir, when the first reformers began, they did not intend to be martyred: as many of them ran away as could." BOSWELL. "But, sir, there was your countryman Elwal², who you told me challenged King George with his black-guards and his red-guards." JOHNSON. "My countryman, Elwal, sir, should have been put in the stocks—a proper pulpit for him; and he'd have had a numerous audience. A man who preaches in the stocks will always have hearers enough." BOSWELL. "But Elwal thought himself in the right." JOHNSON. "We are not providing for mad people; there are places for them in the neighbourhood" (meaning Moorfields). MAYO. "But, sir, is it not very hard that I should not be allowed to teach my children what I really believe to be the truth?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you might contrive to teach your children *extra scandalum*; but, sir, the magistrate, if he knows it, has a right to restrain you. Suppose you teach your children to be thieves?" MAYO. "This is making a joke of the subject." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, take it thus: that you teach them the community of goods; for which there are as many plausible arguments as for most erroneous doctrines. You teach them that all things at first were in common, and that no man had a right to any thing but as he laid his hands upon it; and that this still is, or ought to be, the rule amongst mankind. Here, sir, you sap a great principle in society—property. And don't you think the magistrate would have a right to prevent you? Or, suppose you should teach

your children the notion of the Adamites, and they should run naked into the streets, would not the magistrate have a right to flog 'em into their doublets?" MAYO. "I think the magistrate has no right to interfere till there is some overt act." BOSWELL. "So, sir, though he sees an enemy to the state charging a blunderbuss, he is not to interfere till it is fired off!" MAYO. "He must be sure of its direction against the state." JOHNSON. "The magistrate is to judge of that. He has no right to restrain your thinking, because the evil centres in yourself. If a man were sitting at this table, and chopping off his fingers, the magistrate, as guardian of the community, has no authority to restrain him, however he might do it from kindness as a parent. Though, indeed, upon more consideration, I think he may; as it is probable, that he who is chopping off his own fingers, may soon proceed to chop off those of other people. If I think it right to steal Mr. Dilly's plate, I am a bad man; but he can say nothing to me. If I make an open declaration that I think so, he will keep me out of his house. If I put forth my hand I shall be sent to Newgate. This is the gradation of thinking, preaching, and acting: if a man thinks erroneously, he may keep his thoughts to himself, and nobody will trouble him; if he preaches erroneous doctrine, society may expel him; if he acts in consequence of it, the law takes place, and he is hanged." MAYO. "But, sir, ought not christians to have liberty of conscience?" JOHNSON. "I have already told you so, sir. You are coming back to where you were." BOSWELL. "Dr. Mayo is always taking a return post-chaise, and going the stage over again. He has it at half-price." JOHNSON. "Dr. Mayo, like other champions for unlimited toleration, has got a set of words³. Sir, it is no matter, politically, whether the magis-

¹ [This seems to be altogether contrary to the fact. The first reformers, whether of Germany or England, were certainly not burned for insulting individuals: they were burned for heresy; and abominable as that was, it was less indefensible than what Johnson supposes, that they were burned for *insulting* individuals.—ED.]

² [See *ante*, p. 288.—ED.]

³ Dr. Mayo's calm temper and steady perseverance rendered him an admirable subject for the exercise of Dr. Johnson's powerful abilities. He never flinched; but, after reiterated blows, remained seemingly unmoved as at the first. The scintillations of Johnson's genius flashed every time he was struck, without his receiving any injury. Hence he obtained the epithet of *The Literary Anvil*.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell speaks as if contests between Johnson and Mayo were so frequent as to have obtained a distinctive epithet for the latter; but it would seem, from the following extract of one of Dr. Johnson's letters to Mrs. Thrale (published by that lady, under the erroneous date of 22d May, 1775), that Johnson scarcely knew Mayo. "I dined in a large company, at a dissenting bookseller's, yesterday, and disputed against toleration with one *Dr. Meyer*." *Letters*, vol. i. p. 218. Whether the error of the *name* be Johnson's or the transcriber's, it is clear that he had little previous acquaintance with his antagonist.—ED.]

trate be right or wrong. Suppose a club were to be formed, to drink confusion to King George the Third, and a happy restoration to Charles the Third, this would be very bad with respect to the state; but every member of that club must either conform to its rules, or be turned out of it. Old Baxter, I remember, maintains, that the magistrates should 'tolerate all things that are tolerable.' This is no good definition of toleration upon any principle; but it shows that he thought some things were not tolerable." **TOPLADY.** "Sir you have unwistly this difficult subject with great dexterity."

During this argument, Goldsmith sat in restless agitation, from a wish to get in and *shine*. Finding himself excluded, he had taken his hat to go away, but remained for some time with it in his hand, like a gamester, who, at the close of a long night, lingers for a little while, to see if he can have a favourable opening to finish with success. Once when he was beginning to speak, he found himself overpowered by the loud voice of Johnson, who was at the opposite end of the table, and did not perceive Goldsmith's attempt. Thus disappointed of his wish to obtain the attention of the company, Goldsmith in a passion threw down his hat, looking angrily at Johnson, and exclaimed in a bitter tone, "*Take it.*" When Toplady was going to speak, Johnson uttered some sound, which led Goldsmith to think that he was beginning again, and taking the words from Toplady. Upon which he seized this opportunity of venting his own envy and spleen, under the pretext of supporting another person: "Sir (said he to Johnson), the gentleman has heard you patiently for an hour: pray allow us now to hear him." **JOHNSON** (sternly). "Sir, I was not interrupting the gentleman. I was only giving him a signal of my attention. Sir, you are impertinent." Goldsmith made no reply, but continued in the company for some time.

A gentleman¹ present ventured to ask Dr. Johnson if there was not a material difference as to toleration of opinions which lead to action, and opinions merely speculative; for instance, would it be wrong in the magistrate to tolerate those who preach against the doctrine of the TRINITY? Johnson was highly offended, and said, "I wonder, sir, how a gentleman of your piety can introduce this subject in a mixed company." He told me afterwards that the impropriety was that perhaps some of the company might have talked on the subject in such terms as might have shocked him; or he might have been forced to appear in their

eyes a narrow-minded man. The gentleman, with submissive deference, said, he had only hinted at the question from a desire to hear Dr. Johnson's opinion upon it. **JOHNSON** "Why, then, sir, I think that permitting men to preach any opinion contrary to the doctrine of the established church tends, in a certain degree, to lessen the authority of the church, and consequently to lessen the influence of religion." "It may be considered (said the gentleman), whether it would not be politick to tolerate in such a case." **JOHNSON.** "Sir we have been talking of *right*: this is another question. I think it is *not* politick to tolerate in such a case."

Though he did not think it fit that so awful a subject should be introduced in a mixed company, and therefore at this time waved the theological question; yet his own orthodox belief in the sacred mystery of the TRINITY is evinced beyond doubt, by the following passages in his private devotions:

"O LORD, hear my prayer, for JESUS CHRIST'S sake; to whom, with thee and the HOLY GHOST, *three persons and one God*, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen."

BOSWELL. "Pray, Mr. Dilly, how does Dr. Leland's History of Ireland sell?" **JOHNSON** (bursting forth with a generous indignation). "The Irish are in a most unnatural state; for we see there the minority prevailing over the majority. There is no instance, even in the ten persecutions, of such severity as that which the protestants of Ireland have exercised against the Catholics. Did we tell them we have conquered them, it would be above board: to punish them by confiscation and other penalties, as rebels, was monstrous injustice. King William was not their lawful sovereign²: he had not been acknowledged by the parliament of Ireland when they appeared in arms against him."

I here suggested something favourable of the Roman Catholics. **TOPLADY.** "Does not their invocation of saints suppose omnipresence in the saints?" **JOHNSON.** "No, sir; it supposes only pluripresence², and when spirits are divested of matter, it seems probable that they should see with more extent than when in an embodied state. There is, therefore, no approach to an invasion of any of the divine attributes, in the invocation of saints. But I think it

² [We must not forget that Johnson had been a violent *Jacobite*. See *ante*, p. 194.—Ed.]

² [Surely it implies omnipresence in the same way that prayers to the Deity imply omnipresence. And, after all, what is the difference, to our bounded reason, between *pluripresence* and *omnipresence*?—Ed.]

¹ [No doubt Mr. Langton. See *post*, 22d August, 1773.—Ed.]

is will-worship, and presumption. I see no command for it, and therefore think it is safer not to practise it."

He and Mr. Langton and I went together to THE CLUB, where we found Mr. Burke, Mr. Garrick, and some other members, and amongst them our friend Goldsmith, who sat silently brooding over Johnson's reprimand to him after dinner. Johnson perceived this, and said aside to some of us, "I'll make Goldsmith forgive me;" and then called to him in a loud voice, "Dr. Goldsmith,—something passed to-day where you and I dined: I ask your pardon." Goldsmith answered placidly, "It must be much from you, sir, that I take ill." And so at once the difference was over, and they were on as easy terms as ever, and Goldsmith rattled away as usual.

In our way to the club to-night, when I regretted that Goldsmith would, upon every occasion, endeavour to shine, by which he often exposed himself, Mr. Langton observed, that he was not like Addison, who was content with the fame of his writings, and did not aim also at excellency in conversation, for which he found himself unfit: and that he said to a lady who complained of his having talked little in company, "Madam, I have but nine-pence in ready money, but I can draw for a thousand pounds." I observed that Goldsmith had a great deal of gold in his cabinet, but, not content with that, was always taking out his purse. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, and that so often an empty purse!"

Goldsmith's incessant desire of being conspicuous in company was the occasion of his sometimes appearing to such disadvantage as one should hardly have supposed possible in a man of his genius. When his literary reputation had risen deservedly high, and his society was much courted, he became very jealous of the extraordinary attention which was every where paid to Johnson. One evening, in a circle of wits, he found fault with me for talking of Johnson as entitled to the honour of unquestionable superiority. "Sir," said he, "you are for making a monarchy of what should be a republick¹."

He was still more mortified, when, talking in a company with fluent vivacity, and, as he flattered himself, to the admiration of all who were present, a German who sat next him, and perceived Johnson rolling himself as if about to speak, suddenly stop-

¹ [In some late publication it is stated that Buonaparte, repressing the flattery of one of his literary courtiers, said, "Pour Dieu, laissez-nous au moins la republique des lettres." It has been also, with more probability, stated, that instead of being said *by*, it was said *of* him. Perhaps, after all, the French story is but a version of this bon-mot of Goldsmith's.—ED.]

ped him, saying, "Stay, stay—Toctor Shonson is going to say something." This was, no doubt, very provoking, especially to one so irritable as Goldsmith, who frequently mentioned it with strong expressions of indignation.

It may also be observed, that Goldsmith was sometimes content to be treated with an easy familiarity, but upon occasions would be consequential and important. An instance of this occurred in a small particular. Johnson had a way of contracting the names of his friends; as, Beauclerk, Beau; Boswell, Bozzy; Langton, Lanky; Murphy, Mur; Sheridan, Sherry. I remember one day, when Tom Davies was telling that Dr. Johnson said, "We are all in labour for a name to *Goldy's* play," Goldsmith seemed displeased that such a liberty should be taken with his name, and said "I have often desired him not to call me *Goldy*." Tom was remarkably attentive to the most minute circumstance about Johnson. I recollect his telling me once, on my arrival in London, "Sir, our great friend has made an improvement on his appellation of old Mr. Sheridan: he calls him now *Sherry derry*."

"TO THE REVEREND MR. BAGSHAW, AT BROMLEY².

8th May, 1773.

"SIR,—I return you my sincere thanks for your additions to my Dictionary; but the new edition has been published some time, and therefore I cannot now make use of them. Whether I shall ever revise it more, I know not. If many readers had been as judicious, assiduous, and as communicative as yourself, my work had been better. The world must at present take it as it is. I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

² The Rev. Thomas Bagshaw, M. A. who died on the 20th November, 1787, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, chaplain of Bromley college, in Kent, and rector of Southfleet. He had resigned the cure of Bromley parish some time before his death. For this, and another letter from Dr. Johnson in 1784, to the same truly respectable man, I am indebted to Dr. John Loveday, of the commons, a son of the late learned and pious John Loveday, Esq. of Caversham, in Berkshire, who obligingly transcribed them for me from the originals in his possession. The worthy gentleman, having retired from business, now lives in Warwickshire. The world has been lately obliged to him as the editor of the late Rev. Dr. Townson's excellent work, modestly entitled "A Discourse on the Evangelical History, from the Interment to the Ascension of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" to which is prefixed a truly interesting and pleasing account of the author, by the Rev. Mr. Ralph Churton.—BOSWELL.

On Sunday, 8th May, I dined with Johnson at Mr. Langton's, with Dr. Beattie and some other company. He descanted on the subject of literary property. "There seems," said he, "to be in authours a stronger right of property than that by occupancy; a metaphysical right, a right, as it were, of creation, which should from its nature be perpetual; but the consent of nations is against it; and indeed reason and the interests of learning are against it; for were it to be perpetual, no book, however useful, could be universally diffused amongst mankind, should the proprietor take it into his head to restrain its circulation. No book could have the advantage of being edited with notes, however necessary to its elucidation, should the proprietor perversely oppose it. For the general good of the world, therefore, whatever valuable work has once been created by an authour, and issued out by him, should be understood as no longer in his power, but as belonging to the publick; at the same time the authour is entitled to an adequate reward. This he should have by an exclusive right to his work for a considerable number of years."

He attacked Lord Monboddos's strange speculation on the primitive state of human nature; observing, "Sir, it is all conjecture about a thing useless, even were it known to be true. Knowledge of all kinds is good. Conjecture, as to things useful, is good; but conjecture as to what it would be useless to know, such as whether men went upon all four, is very idle."

On Monday, 9th May, as I was to set out on my return to Scotland next morning, I was desirous to see as much of Dr. Johnson as I could. But I first called on Goldsmith to take leave of him. The jealousy and envy, which, though possessed of many most amiable qualities, he frankly avowed, broke out violently at this interview¹. Upon another occasion, when Goldsmith confessed himself to be of an envious disposition, I contended with Johnson that we ought not to be angry with him, he was so candid in owning it. "Nay, sir," said Johnson, "we must be angry that a man has such a superabundance of an odious quality, that he cannot keep it within his own breast, but it boils over." In my opinion, however, Goldsmith had not more of it than other people have, but only talked of it freely.

He now seemed very angry that Johnson was going to be a traveller; said "he would be a dead weight for me to carry, and that I should never be able to lug him along through the Highlands and Hebrides."

¹ [I wonder why Boswell so often displays a malevolent feeling towards Goldsmith? Rivalry for Johnson's good graces, perhaps.—WALTER SCOTT.]

Nor would he patiently allow me to enlarge upon Johnson's wonderful abilities; but exclaimed, "Is he like Burke, who winds into a subject like a serpent?" "But," said I, "Johnson is the Hercules who strangled serpents in his cradle."

I dined with Dr. Johnson at General Paoli's. He was obliged, by indisposition, to leave the company early; he appointed me, however, to meet him in the evening at Mr. (now Sir Robert) Chambers's in the Temple, where he accordingly came, though he continued to be very ill. Chambers, as is common on such occasions, prescribed various remedies to him. JOHNSON (fretted by pain). "Pr'ythee don't tease me. Stay till I am well, and then you shall tell me how to cure myself." He grew better, and talked with a noble enthusiasm of keeping up the representation of respectable families. His zeal on this subject was a circumstance in his character exceedingly remarkable, when it is considered that he himself had no pretensions to blood. I heard him once say, "I have great merit in being zealous for subordination and the honours of birth; for I can hardly tell who was my grandfather." He maintained the dignity and propriety of male succession, in opposition to the opinion of one of our friends², who had that day employed Mr. Chambers to draw his will, devising his estate to his three sisters, in preference to a remote heir male. Johnson called them "three *dowdies*," and said, with as high a spirit as the boldest baron in the most perfect days of the feudal system, "An ancient estate should always go to males. It is mighty foolish to let a stranger have it, because he marries your daughter, and takes your name. As for an estate newly acquired by trade, you may give it, if you will, to the dog *Towser*, and let him keep his *own* name."

I have known him at times exceedingly diverted at what seemed to others a very small sport. He now laughed immoderately, without any reason, that we could perceive, at our friend's making his will: called him the *testator*, and added, "I dare say he thinks he has done a mighty thing. He won't stay till he gets home to his seat in the country, to produce this wonderful deed: he'll call up the landlord of the first inn on the road; and, after a suitable preface upon

² [It seems, from many circumstances, that this was Mr. Langton; and that there was something more in the matter than a mere sally of obstreperous mirth. It is certain that the friendship of "twenty years' standing" (*post*, 22d August, 1773) between Johnson and Langton suffered, about this time, a serious interruption. Johnson chose to attribute it to the reproach he had lately given Langton at Mr. Dilly's table (*ante*, p. 319); but it is more probable that it arose from this affair of the will.—ED.]

mortality and the uncertainty of life, will tell him that he should not delay making his will; and here, sir, will he say, is my will, which I have just made, with the assistance of one of the ablest lawyers in the kingdom; and he will read it to him (laughing all the time). He believes he has made this will; but he did not make it; you, Chambers, made it for him. I trust you have had more conscience than to make him say, 'being of sound understanding!' ha, ha, ha! I hope he has left me a legacy. I'd have his will turned into verse, like a ballad."

In this playful manner did he run on, exulting in his own pleasantry, which certainly was not such as might be expected from the author of "The Rambler," but which is here preserved, that my readers may be acquainted even with the slightest occasional characteristic of so eminent a man.

Mr. Chambers did not by any means relish this jocularity upon a matter of which *pars magna fuit*¹, and seemed impatient till he got rid of us. Johnson could not stop his merriment, but continued it all the way till he got without the Temple-gate. He then burst into such a fit of laughter, that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion; and, in order to support himself, laid hold of one of the posts at the side of the foot pavement, and sent forth peals so loud, that in the silence of the night his voice seemed to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch.

This most ludicrous exhibition of the awful, melancholy, and venerable Johnson, happened well to counteract the feelings of sadness which I used to experience when parting with him for a considerable time. I accompanied him to his door, where he gave me his blessing.

He records of himself this year:

"Between Easter and Whitsuntide, having always considered that time as propitious to study, I attempted to learn the low Dutch language."

It is to be observed, that he here admits an opinion of the human mind being influenced by seasons, which he ridicules in his writings. His progress, he says, was interrupted by a fever, "which, by the imprudent use of a small print, left an inflammation in his useful eye." We cannot but admire his spirit when we know, that amidst a complication of bodily and mental distress, he was still animated with the desire of intellectual improvement². Various notes of

¹ [Mr. Chambers may have known more of the real state of the affair than Boswell, and been offended at the mode in which Johnson treated their common friend. It is absurd to think that he could have felt any displeasure on his own account.—ED.]

² Not six months before his death, he wished me to teach him the Scale of Musick: "Dr. Burney, teach me at least the alphabet of your language."—BURNLEY.

his studies appear on different days, in his manuscript diary of this year; such as,

"*Inchoavi lectionem Pentateuchi. Finivi lectionem Conf. Fab. Burdonum. Legi primum actum Troadum. Legi Dissertationem Clerici postreman de Pent. 2 of Clark's Sermons. L. Apollonii pugnam Betriciam. L. centum versus Homeri.*"

Let this serve as a specimen of what accessions of literature he was perpetually infusing into his mind, while he charged himself with idleness.

This year died Mrs. Salisbury Piozzi, (mother of Mrs. Thrale), a lady p. 131. whom he appears to have esteemed much, and whose memory he honoured with an epitaph. [This event also furnished him with a subject of meditation Ed. for the evening of June the 18th, on which day this lady died.]

"[Friday, June 18, 1773. This day, after dinner, died Mrs. Salisbury; she had for some days almost lost the power of speaking. Yesterday, as I touched her hand, and kissed it, she pressed my hand between her two hands, which she probably intended as the parting caress. At night herspeech returned a little; and she said, among other things, to her daughter, I have had much time, and I hope I have used it. This morning being called about nine to feel her pulse, I said at parting, God bless you, for Jesus Christ's sake. She smiled, as pleased. She had her senses perhaps to the dying moment."

[He complains, about this period, that his memory had been for a long time very much confused, and that names, and persons, and events, slide away strangely from him. "But," he adds, "I grow easier."]

In a letter from Edinburgh, dated the 29th of May, I pressed him to persevere in his resolution to make this year the projected visit to the Hebrides, of which he and I had talked for many years, and which I was confident would afford us much entertainment.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Johnson's-court, Fleet-street, 5th July, 1773.

"DEAR SIR,—When your letter came to me, I was so darkened by an inflammation in my eye that I could not for some time read it. I can now write without trouble, and can read large prints. My eye is gradually growing stronger; and I hope will be able to take some delight in the survey of a Caledonian loch.

"Chambers is going a judge, with six thousand a year, to Bengal. He and I shall come down together as far as Newcastle, and thence I shall easily get to Edinburgh. Let me know the exact time when your courts intermit. I must conform a little to Chambers's occasions, and he must conform a little to mine. The time which you shall fix must be the common point to

which we will come as near as we can. Except this eye, I am very well.

"Beattie is so caressed, and invited, and treated, and liked, and flattered by the great, that I can see nothing of him. I am in great hope that he will be well provided for, and then we will live upon him at the Marischal College, without pity or modesty.

"——¹ left the town without taking leave of me, and is gone in deep dudgeon to——¹. Is not this very childish? Where is now my legacy?"

"I hope your dear lady and her dear baby are both well. I shall see them too when I come; and I have that opinion of your choice, as to suspect that when I have seen Mrs. Boswell, I shall be less willing to go away. I am, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"Write to me as soon as you can. Chambers is now at Oxford."

I again wrote to him, informing him that the court of session rose on the twelfth of August, hoping to see him before that time, and expressing, perhaps in too extravagant terms, my admiration of him, and my expectation of pleasure from our intended tour.

² Dr. Johnson had, for many years, given me hopes that we should go together, and visit the Hebrides. Martin's account of those islands

¹ [Both these blanks must be filled with *Langton*. See *ante*, p. 321.—ED.]

² [Here begins the Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides, to which Mr. Boswell had prefixed two mottos, the first in the title-page, from Pope:

"O! while along the stream of time thy name
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph and partake the gale?"

The other on a fly-leaf, from Baker's Chronicle:

"He was of an admirable pregnancy of wit, and that pregnancy much improved by continual study from his childhood; by which he had gotten such a promptness in expressing his mind, that his extemporal speeches were little inferior to his premeditated writings. Many, no doubt, had read as much, and perhaps more than he; but scarce ever any concocted his reading into judgment as he did." Mr. Boswell tells us that Johnson read this journal as it proceeded, which, strange as the reader will think it, when he comes to read some passages of it, Johnson himself confirms; for he says to Mrs. Thrale, "You never told me, and I omitted to inquire, how you were entertained by Boswell's Journal. One would think the man had been hired to be a spy upon me. He was very diligent, and caught opportunities of writing from time to time. You may now conceive yourself tolerably well acquainted with the expedition."—*Letters*, v. l. p. 233.—ED.]

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"3d August, 1773.

"DEAR SIR,—I shall set out from London on Friday the sixth of this month, and purpose not to loiter much by the way. Which day I shall be at Edinburgh, I cannot exactly tell. I suppose I must drive to an inn, and send a porter to find you.

"I am afraid Beattie will not be at his college soon enough for us, and I shall be sorry to miss him; but there is no staying for the concurrence of all conveniences. We will do as well as we can. I am, sir, your most humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

"8d August, 1773.

"DEAR SIR,—Not being at Mr. Thrale's when your letter came, I had written the enclosed paper and sealed it; bringing it hither for a frank, I found yours. If any thing could repress my ardour, it would be such a letter as yours. To disappoint a friend is displeasing; and he that forms expectations like yours, must be disappointed. Think only when you see me, that you see a man who loves you, and is proud and glad that you love him. I am, sir, your most affectionate,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

had impressed us with a notion, that we might there contemplate a system of life almost totally different from what we had been accustomed to see; and to find simplicity and wildness, and all the circumstances of remote time or place, so near to our native great island, was an object within the reach of reasonable curiosity. Dr. Johnson has said in his "Journey," "that he scarcely remembered how the wish to visit the Hebrides was excited;" but he told me, in summer, 1763, that his father put Martin's account into his hands when he was very young, and that he was much pleased with it. We reckoned there would be some inconveniences and hardships, and perhaps a little danger; but these, we were persuaded, were magnified in the imagination of every body. When I was at Ferney, in 1764, I mentioned our design to Voltaire. He looked at me, as if I had talked of going to the North Pole, and said, "You do not insist on my accompanying you?" "No, sir." "Then I am very willing you should go." I was not afraid that our curious expedition would be prevented by such apprehensions; but I doubted that it would not be possible to prevail on Dr. Johnson to relinquish, for some time, the felicity of a London life, which, to a man who can enjoy it with full intellectual relish, is apt to make existence in any narrower sphere seem insipid or irksome. I doubted that he would not be willing to come down from his elevated state of philosophical digni-

ty; from a superiority of wisdom among the wise, and of learning among the learned; and from flashing his wit upon minds bright enough to reflect it.

He had disappointed my expectations so long, that I began to despair; but, in spring, 1773, he talked of coming to Scotland that year with so much firmness, that I hoped he was at last in earnest. I knew that, if he were once launched from the metropolis, he would go forward very well; and I got our common friends there to assist in setting him afloat. To Mrs. Thrale, in particular, whose enchantment over him seldom failed, I was much obliged¹. It was, "I'll give thee a wind." "Thou art kind." To attract him, we had invitations from the chiefs Macdonald and Macleod; and, for additional aid, I wrote to Lord Elibank, Dr. William Robertson, and Dr. Beattie.

To Dr. Robertson, so far as my letter concerned the present subject, I wrote as follows:

"Our friend, Mr. Samuel Johnson, is in great health and spirits; and, I do think, has a serious resolution to visit Scotland this year. The more attraction, however, the better; and, therefore, though I know he will be happy to meet you there, it will forward the scheme, if, in your answer to this, you express yourself concerning it with that power of which you are so happily possessed, and which may be so directed as to operate strongly upon him."

His answer to that part of my letter was quite as I could have wished. It was written with the address and persuasion of the historian of America.

"When I saw you last, you gave us some hopes that you might prevail with Mr. Johnson to make out that excursion to Scotland, with the expectation of which we have long flattered ourselves. If he could order matters so as to pass some time in Edinburgh, about the close of the summer season, and then visit some of the Highland scenes, I am confident he would be pleased with the grand features of nature in many parts of this country: he will meet with many persons here who respect him, and some whom I am persuaded he will think not unworthy of his esteem. I wish he would make the experiment. He sometimes cracks his jokes upon us; but he will find that we can distinguish between the stabs of malevolence and the rebukes of the right-

¹ [She gives, in one of her letters to Dr. Johnson, the reasons which induced her to approve this excursion: "Fatigue is profitable to your health, upon the whole, and keeps fancy from playing foolish tricks. Exercise for your body and exertion for your mind, will contribute more than all the medicine in the universe to preserve that life we all consider as invaluable."—*Letters*, v. l. p. 190.—*Ed.*]

eous, which are like excellent oil², and break not the head. Offer my best compliments to him, and assure him that I shall be happy to have the satisfaction of seeing him under my roof."

To Dr. Beattie I wrote, "The chief intention of this letter is to inform you, that I now seriously believe Mr. Samuel Johnson will visit Scotland this year: but I wish that every power of attraction may be employed to secure our having so valuable an acquisition, and therefore I hope you will, without delay, write to me what I know you think, that I may read it to the mighty sage, with proper emphasis, before I leave London, which I must do soon. He talks of you with the same warmth that he did last year. We are to see as much of Scotland as we can, in the months of August and September. We shall not be long of being at Marischal College³. He is particularly desirous of seeing some of the Western Islands."

Dr. Beattie did better: *ipse venit*. He was, however, so polite as to wave his privilege of *nil mihi rescribas*, and wrote from Edinburgh as follows:

"Your very kind and agreeable favour of the 20th of April overtook me here yesterday, after having gone to Aberdeen, which place I left about a week ago. I am to set out this day for London, and hope to have the honour of paying my respects to Mr. Johnson and you, about a week or ten days hence. I shall then do what I can to enforce the topick you mention; but at present I cannot enter upon it, as I am in a very great hurry, for I intend to begin my journey within an hour or two."

He was as good as his word, and threw some pleasing motives into the northern scale. But, indeed, Mr. Johnson loved all that he heard, from one whom he tells us, in his *Lives of the Poets*, Gray found "a poet, a philosopher, and a good man."

My Lord Elibank did not answer my letter to his lordship for some time. The reason will appear when we come to the Isle of Sky. I shall then insert my letter, with letters from his lordship, both to myself and Mr. Johnson. I beg it may be understood, that I insert my own letters, as I relate my own sayings, rather as keys to what is valuable belonging to others, than for their own sake.

Luckily, Mr. Justice (now Sir Robert)

² Our friend, Edmund Burke, who, by this time, had received some pretty severe strokes from Dr. Johnson, on account of the unhappy difference in their politics, upon my repeating this passage to him, exclaimed, "Oil of vitriol!"—*BOSWELL*.

³ This, I find, is a Scotticism. I should have said, "It will not be long before we shall be at Marischal College."—*BOSWELL*.

Chambers, who was about to sail for the East Indies, was going to take leave of his relations at Newcastle, and he conducted Dr. Johnson to that town [whence he wrote me the following]:

“Newcastle, 11th August, 1773.

“DEAR SIR,—I came hither last night, and hope, but do not absolutely promise, to be in Edinburgh on Saturday. Beattie will not come so soon. I am, sir, your most humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.
“My compliments to your lady.”

Mr. Scott, of University College, Oxford, afterwards Sir William Scott [and Lord Stowell], accompanied him from thence to Edinburgh. With such propitious convoys did he proceed to my native city. But lest metaphor should make it be supposed he actually went by sea, I choose to mention that he travelled in post-chaises, of which the rapid motion was one of his most favourite amusements.

Dr. Samuel Johnson's character, religious, moral, political, and literary; nay, his figure and manner are, I believe, more generally known than those of almost any man; yet it may not be superfluous here to attempt a sketch of him. Let my readers then remember that he was a sincere and zealous christian, of high church of England and monarchical principles, which he would not tamely suffer to be questioned; Steady and inflexible in maintaining the obligations of piety and virtue, both from a regard to the order of society, and from a veneration for the Great Source of all order; correct, nay, stern in his taste; hard to please, and easily offended; impetuous and irritable in his temper, but of a most humane and benevolent heart; having a mind stored with a vast and various collection of learning and knowledge, which he communicated with peculiar perspicuity and force, in rich and choice expression. He united a most logical head with a most fertile imagination, which gave him an extraordinary advantage in arguing; for he could reason close or wide, as he saw best for the moment. He could, when he chose it, be the greatest sophist that ever wielded a weapon in the schools of declamation, but he indulged this only in conversation; for he owned he sometimes talked for victory; he was too conscientious to make error permanent and pernicious, by deliberately writing it. He was conscious of his superiority. He loved praise when it was brought to him; but he was too proud to seek for it. He was somewhat susceptible of flattery. His mind was so full of imagery, that he might have been perpetually a poet. It has been often remarked, that in his poetical pieces, which it is to be regret-

ted are so few, because so excellent, his style is easier than in his prose. There is deception in this: it is not easier, but better suited to the dignity of verse; as one may dance with grace, whose motions, in ordinary walking, in the common step, are awkward. He had a constitutional melancholy, the clouds of which darkened the brightness of his fancy, and gave a gloomy cast to his whole course of thinking: yet, though grave and awful in his deportment, when he thought it necessary or proper, he frequently indulged himself in pleasantry and sportive sallies. He was prone to superstition, but not to credulity. Though his imagination might incline him to a belief of the marvellous and the mysterious, his vigorous reason examined the evidence with jealousy. He had a loud voice, and a slow, deliberate utterance, which no doubt gave some additional weight to the sterling metal of his conversation. Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, with a happy pleasantry, and some truth, that “Dr. Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his *bow-wow way*.” But I admit the truth of this only on some occasions. The Messiah played upon the Canterbury organ is more sublime than when played upon an inferior instrument; but very slight musick will seem grand, when conveyed to the ear through that majestic medium. While, therefore, Dr. Johnson's sayings are read, let his manner be taken along with them. Let it, however, be observed, that the sayings themselves are generally great; that, though he might be an ordinary composer at times, he was for the most part a Handel. His person was large, robust, I may say approaching to the gigantick, and grown unwieldy from corpulency. His countenance was naturally of the cast of an ancient statue, but somewhat disfigured by the scars of that evil, which, it was formerly imagined, the royal touch could cure. He was now in his sixty-fourth year, and was become a little dull of hearing. His sight had always been somewhat weak; yet, so much does mind govern, and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his perceptions were uncommonly quick and accurate. His head, and sometimes also his body, shook with a kind of motion like the effect of a palsy: he appeared to be frequently disturbed by cramps, or convulsive contractions¹, of the nature of that distemper

¹ Such they appeared to me; but since the first edition, Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed to me, “that Dr. Johnson's extraordinary gestures were only habits, in which he indulged himself at certain times. When in company, where he was not free, or when engaged earnestly in conversation, he never gave way to such habits, which

called St. Vitus's dance. He wore a full suit of plain brown clothes, with twisted hair-buttons of the same colour, a large bushy grayish wig, a plain shirt, black worsted stockings, and silver buckles. Upon this tour, when journeying, he wore boots, and a very wide brown cloth great coat, with pockets which might have almost held the two volumes of his folio dictionary, and he carried in his hand a large English oak stick. Let me not be censured for mentioning such minute particulars: every thing relative to so great a man is worth observing. I remember Dr. Adam Smith, in his rhetorical lectures at Glasgow, told us he was glad to know¹ that Milton wore latches in his shoes instead of buckles. When I mention the oak stick, it is but letting Hercules have his club; and, by and by, my readers will find this stick will bud, and produce a good joke.

This imperfect sketch of "the combination and the form" of that wonderful man, whom I venerated and loved while in this world, and after whom I gaze with humble hope, now that it has pleased Almighty God to call him to a better world, will serve to introduce to the fancy of my readers the capital object of the following journal, in the course of which I trust they will attain to a considerable degree of acquaintance with him.

His prejudice against Scotland was announced almost as soon as he began to appear in the world of letters. In his "London," a poem, are the following nervous lines:

"For who would leave, unbribed, Hibernia's land?
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away:
But all, whom hunger spares, with age decay."

The truth is, like the ancient Greeks and Romans, he allowed himself to look upon all nations but his own as barbarians: not only Hibernia, and Scotland, but Spain, Italy, and France, are attacked in the same poem. If he was particularly prejudiced against the Scots, it was because they were more in his way; because he thought their success in England rather exceeded the due proportion of their real merit; and because he could not but see in them that nationality which I believe no liberal-minded Scots-

proves that they were not involuntary." I still, however, think, that these gestures were involuntary; for surely had not that been the case, he would have restrained them in the public streets.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p. 56, Sir Joshua's reasoning at large; notwithstanding which, it seems the better opinion that these gestures were the consequence of nervous affections, and not of trick or habit.—ED.]

¹ [This was no great discovery; the fashion of shoe-buckles was long posterior to Milton's day.—ED.]

man will deny. He was indeed, if I may be allowed the phrase, at bottom much of a John Bull; much of a blunt true-born Englishman. There was a stratum of common clay under the rock of marble. He was voraciously fond of good eating; and he had a great deal of that quality called humour, which gives an oiliness and a gloss to every other quality.

I am, I flatter myself, completely a citizen of the world. In my travels through Holland, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Corsica, France, I never felt myself from home; and I sincerely love "every kindred and tongue and people and nation." I subscribe to what my late truly learned and philosophical friend Mr. Crosbie said, that the English are better animals than the Scots; they are nearer the sun; their blood is richer, and more mellow: but when I humour any of them in an outrageous contempt of Scotland, I fairly own I treat them as children. And thus I have, at some moments, found myself obliged to treat even Dr. Johnson.

To Scotland, however, he ventured; and he returned from it in great good humour, with his prejudices much lessened, and with very grateful feelings of the hospitality with which he was treated; as is evident from that admirable work, his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland," which, to my utter astonishment, has been misapprehended, even to rancour; by my own countrymen.

To have the company of Chambers and Scott, he delayed his journey so long, that the court of session, which rises on the 11th of August, was broke up before he got to Edinburgh.

On Saturday, the 14th of August, 1773, late in the evening, I received a note from him, that he was arrived a Boyd's inn², at the head of the Canon-gate.

"Saturday night.

"Mr. Johnson sends his compliments to Mr. Boswell, being just arrived at Boyd's."

I went to him directly. He embraced me cordially; and I exulted in the thought that I now had him actually in Caledonia. Mr. Scott's amiable manners, and attachment to our Socrates, at once united me to him. He told me that before I came in, the Doctor had unluckily had a bad specimen of Scottish cleanliness. He then drank no fer-

² [The sign of the White Horse. It continued a place from which *coaches* used to start till the end of the eighteenth century; some twelve or fifteen years ago it was a carrier's inn, and has since been held unworthy even of that occupation, and the sign is taken down. It was a base hovel.—WALTER SCOTT.]

mented liquor. He asked to have his lemonade made sweeter; upon which the waiter, with his greasy fingers, lifted a lump of sugar, and put into it. The Doctor, in indignation, threw it out of the window, Scott said he was afraid he would have knocked the waiter down¹. Mr. Johnson [has since] told me that such another trick was played him at the house of a lady in Paris². He was to do me the honour to lodge under my roof. I regretted sincerely that I had not also a room for Mr. Scott. Mr. Johnson and I walked arm-in-arm up the High-street, to my house in James's-court³: it was a dusky night: I could not prevent his being assailed by the evening effluvia of Edinburgh. I heard a late baronet, of some distinction in the political world in the beginning of the present reign, observe, that "walking the streets of Edinburgh at night was pretty perilous, and a good deal odoriferous." The peril is much abated by the care which the magistrates have taken to enforce the city laws against throwing foul water from the windows; but, from the structure of the houses in the old town, which consist of many stories, in each of which a different family lives, and there being no covered sewers, the odour still continues. A zealous Scotsman would have wished Mr. Johnson to be without one of his five senses upon this occasion. As we marched slowly along, he grumbled in my ear, "I smell you in the dark!" But he acknowledged that the breadth of the street, and the loftiness of the buildings on each side, made a noble appearance.

My wife had tea ready for him, which it is well known he delighted to drink at all hours, particularly when sitting up late, and of which his able defence against Mr. Jonas Hanway should have obtained him a magnificent reward from the East India company. He showed much complacency upon finding that the mistress of the house was so attentive to his singular habit; and as no man could be more polite when he chose to be so, his address to her was most courteous and engaging; and his conversation soon charmed her into a forgetfulness of his external appearance.

¹ ["The house," says Lord Stowell, "was kept by a woman, and she was called *Luckie*, which it seems is synonymous to *Goody*, in England. I, at first, thought the appellation very inappropriate, and that *Untucky* would have been better, for Doctor Johnson had a mind to have thrown the waiter, as well as the lemonade, out of the window."—ED.]

² [See *post*, Nov. 1775.—ED.]

³ ["Boswell," Dr. Johnson writes, "has very handsome and spacious rooms, level with the ground at one side of the house, and on the other four stories high."—*Lett.* i. 109.—ED.]

I did not begin to keep a regular full journal till some days after we had set out from Edinburgh; but I have luckily preserved a good many fragments of his Memorabilia from his very first evening in Scotland.

We had a little before this had a trial for murder, in which the judges had allowed the lapse of twenty years since its commission as a plea in bar, in conformity with the doctrine of prescription in the civil law, which Scotland and several other countries in Europe have adopted⁴. He at first disapproved of this; but then he thought there was something in it, if there had been for twenty years a neglect to prosecute a crime which was known. He would not allow that a murder, by not being discovered for twenty years, should escape punishment. We talked of the ancient trial by duel. He did not think it so absurd as is generally supposed; "For," said he, "it was only allowed when the question was in equilibrio, as when one affirmed and another denied; and they had a notion that Providence would interfere in favour of him who was in the right. But as it was found that in a duel, he who was in the right had not a better chance than he who was in the wrong, therefore society instituted the present mode of trial, and gave the advantage to him who is in the right."

We sat till near two in the morning, having chatted a good while after my wife left us. She had insisted that to show all respect to the sage she would give up her own bedchamber to him, and take a worse. This I cannot but gratefully mention as one of a thousand obligations which I owe her, since the great obligation of her being pleased to accept of me as her husband.

Sunday, 15th August.—Mr. Scott came to breakfast, at which I introduced to Dr. Johnson, and him, my friend Sir William Forbes, now of Pitsligo⁵, a man of whom too much good cannot be said, who, with distinguished abilities and application in his profession of a banker, is at once a good companion and a good christian, which I think is saying enough. Yet it is but justice to record, that once, when he was in a dangerous illness, he was watched with the anxious apprehension of a general calamity; day and night his house was beset with affectionate inquiries, and, upon his recovery, Te Deum was the universal chorus from the hearts of his countrymen.

Mr. Johnson was pleased with my daughter Veronica⁶, then a child of about four

⁴ [See *post*, 22d August, 1773.—ED.]

⁵ [This respectable baronet, who published a *Life of Beattie*, died in 1816, at the age of sixty-eight.—ED.]

⁶ The saint's name of Veronica was introduced

months old. She had the appearance of listening to him. His motions seemed to her to be intended for her amusement; and when he stopped she fluttered, and made a little infantine noise, and a kind of signal for him to begin again. She would be held close to him, which was a proof, from simple nature, that his figure was not horrid. Her fondness for him endeared her still more to me, and I declared she should have five hundred pounds of additional fortune.

We talked of the practice of the law. Sir William Forbes said, he thought an honest lawyer should never undertake a cause which he was satisfied was not a just one. "Sir," said Mr. Johnson, "a lawyer has no business with the justice or injustice of the cause which he undertakes, unless his client asks his opinion, and then he is bound to give it honestly. The justice or injustice of the cause is to be decided by the judge. Consider, sir, what is the purpose of courts of justice? It is, that every man may have his cause fairly tried, by men appointed to try causes. A lawyer is not to tell what he knows to be a lie: he is not to produce what he knows to be a false deed; but he is not to usurp the province of the jury and of the judge, and determine what shall be the effect of evidence,—what shall be the result of legal argument. As it rarely happens that a man is fit to plead his own cause, lawyers are a class of the community, who, by study and experience, have acquired the art and power of arranging evidence, and of applying to the points at issue what the law has settled. A lawyer is to do for his client all that his client might fairly do for himself, if he could. If, by a superiori-

into our family through my great grandmother Veronica, Countess of Kincardine, a Dutch lady of the noble house of Sommelsdyck, of which there is a full account in Bayle's Dictionary. The family had once a princely right at Surinam. The governor of that settlement was appointed by the states-general, the town of Amsterdam, and Sommelsdyck. The states-general have acquired Sommelsdyck's right; but the family has still great dignity and opulence, and by intermarriages is connected with many other noble families. When I was at the Hague, I was received with all the affection of kindred. The present Sommelsdyck has an important charge in the republic, and is as worthy a man as lives. He has honoured me with his correspondence for these twenty years. My great grandfather, the husband of Countess Veronica, was Alexander, Earl of Kincardine, that eminent royalist whose character is given by Burnet in his "History of his own Times." From him the blood of Bruce flows in my veins. Of such ancestry who would not be proud? And as "Nihil est, nisi hoc sciat alter" is peculiarly true of genealogy, who would not be glad to seize a fair opportunity to let it be known?—BOSWELL.

ty of attention, of knowledge, of skill, and a better method of communication, he has the advantage of his adversary, it is an advantage to which he is entitled. There must always be some advantage, on one side or other; and it is better that advantage should be had by talents than by chance. If lawyers were to undertake no causes till they were sure they were just, a man might be precluded altogether from a trial of his claim, though, were it judicially examined, it might be found a very just claim." This was sound practical doctrine, and rationally repressed a too refined scrupulosity of conscience.

Emigration was at this time a common topic of discourse. Dr. Johnson regretted it as hurtful to human happiness: "For," said he, "it spreads mankind, which weakens the defence of a nation, and lessens the comfort of living. Men, thinly scattered, make a shift, but a bad shift, without many things. A smith is ten miles off; they'll do without a nail or a staple. A tailor is far from them; they'll botch their own clothes. It is being concentrated which produces high convenience."

Sir William Forbes, Mr. Scott, and I, accompanied Mr. Johnson to the chapel, founded by Lord Chief Baron Smith, for the service of the church of England. The Rev. Mr. Carre, the senior clergyman, preached from these words, "Because the Lord reigneth, let the earth be glad." I was sorry to think Mr. Johnson did not attend to the sermon, Mr. Carre's low voice not being strong enough to reach his hearing. A selection of Mr. Carre's sermons has since his death been published by Sir William Forbes, and the world has acknowledged their uncommon merit. I am well assured Lord Mansfield has pronounced them to be excellent.

Here I obtained a promise from Lord Chief Baron Orde, that he would dine at my house next day. I presented Mr. Johnson to his lordship, who politely said to him, "I have not the honour of knowing you; but I hope for it, and to see you at my house. I am to wait on you to-morrow." This respectable English judge will be long remembered in Scotland, where he built an elegant house, and lived in it magnificently. His own ample fortune, with the addition of his salary, enabled him to be splendidly hospitable. It may be fortunate for an individual amongst ourselves to be lord chief baron, and a most worthy man¹ now has the office; but, in my opinion, it is better for Scotland in general, that some of our public employments should be filled by gentlemen of distinction from the south side

¹ [James Montgomery, created a baronet in 1801, on his resignation of the office of chief baron.—Ed.]

of the Tweed, as we have the benefit of promotion in England. Such an interchange would make a beneficial mixture of manners, and render our union more complete. Lord Chief Baron Orde was on good terms with us all, in a narrow country, filled with jarring interests and keen parties; and, though I well knew his opinion to be the same with my own, he kept himself aloof at a very critical period indeed, when the Douglas cause shook the sacred security of birthright in Scotland to its foundation; a cause, which had it happened before the union, when there was no appeal to a British House of Lords, would have left the great fortress of honours and of property in ruins¹.

When we got home, Dr. Johnson desired to see my books. He took down Ogden's Sermons on Prayer, on which I set a very high value, having been much edified by them, and he retired with them to his room. He did not stay long, but soon joined us in the drawing-room. I presented to him Mr. Robert Arbuthnot², a relation of the celebrated Dr. Arbuthnot, and a man of literature and taste. To him we were obliged for a previous recommendation, which secured us a very agreeable reception at St. Andrews, and which Dr. Johnson, in his "Journey," ascribes to "some invisible friend."

Of Dr. Beattie, Mr. Johnson said, "Sir, he has written like a man conscious of the truth, and feeling his own strength. Treating your adversary with respect, is giving him an advantage to which he is not entitled. The greatest part of men cannot judge of reasoning, and are impressed by character; so that, if you allow your adversary a respectable character, they will think, that though you differ from him, you may be in the wrong. Sir, treating your adversary with respect, is striking soft in a battle. And as to Hume, a man who has so much conceit as to tell all mankind that they have been bubbled for ages, and he is the wise man who sees better than they—a

man who has so little scrupulosity as to venture to oppose those principles which have been thought necessary to human happiness—is he to be surprised if another man comes and laughs at him? If he is the great man he thinks himself, all this cannot hurt him: it is like throwing peas against a rock." He added "something much too rough," both as to Mr. Hume's head and heart, which I suppress³. Violence is, in my opinion, not suitable to the christian cause. Besides, I always lived on good terms with Mr. Hume, though I have frankly told him, I was not clear that it was right in me to keep company with him. "But," said I, "how much better are you than your books!" He was cheerful, obliging, and instructive; he was charitable to the poor; and many an agreeable hour have I passed with him. I have preserved some entertaining and interesting memoirs of him, particularly when he knew himself to be dying, which I may some time or other communicate to the world. I shall not, however, extol him so very highly as Dr. Adam Smith does, who says, in a letter to Mr. Strahan, the printer (not a confidential letter to his friend, but a letter which is published⁴ with all formality): "Upon the whole, I have always considered him, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will

³ [It may be supposed that it was somewhat like what Mrs. Piozzi relates that he said of an eminent infidel, whose name she does not give, but who was probably either Hume or Gibbon (Malone thought Gibbon). "You will at least," said some one, "allow him the *lumieres*." "Just enough," replied the Doctor, "to light him to hell."—*Piozzi's Anecdotes*, p. 72.—Ed.]

⁴ This letter, though shattered by the sharp shot of Dr. Home of Oxford's wit, in the character of "One of the People called Christians," is still prefixed to Mr. Hume's excellent History of England, like a poor invalid on the piquet guard, or like a list of quack medicines sold by the same bookseller, by whom a work of whatever nature is published; for it has no connexion with his History, let it have what it may with what are called his Philosophical Works. A worthy friend of mine in London was lately consulted by a lady of quality, of most distinguished merit, what was the best History of England for her son to read. My friend recommended Hume's. But upon recollecting that its usher was a superlative panegyrick on one, who endeavoured to sap the credit of our holy religion, he revoked his recommendation. I am really sorry for this ostentatious alliance; because I admire "The Theory of Moral Sentiments," and value the greatest part of "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations." Why should such a writer be so forgetful of human comfort, as to give any countenance to that dreary infidelity which would "make us poor indeed!"—*BOSWELL*.

¹ [It must be recollected that Mr. Boswell was not only counsel, but a violent partisan in this cause. There was, in fact, no attempt at "shaking the sacred security of birthright." The question was, "to whom the birthright belonged; that is, whether Mr. Douglas was or was not the son of those he called his father and mother.—Ed.]

² [Robert Arbuthnot, Esq. was secretary to the board of trustees for the encouragement of the arts and manufactures of Scotland; in this office he was succeeded by his son William, lord provost of Edinburgh when King George the Fourth visited Scotland, who was made a baronet on that occasion, and has lately died much lamented. Both father and son were accomplished gentlemen, and elegant scholars.—*WALTER SCOTT*.]

permit." Let Dr. Smith consider, Was not Mr. Hume blest with good health, good spirits, good friends, a competent and increasing fortune? And had he not also a perpetual feast of fame? But, as a learned friend has observed to me, "What trials did he undergo, to prove the perfection of his virtue? Did he ever experience any great instance of adversity?" When I read this sentence, delivered by my old professor of moral philosophy, I could not help exclaiming with the Psalmist, "Surely I have now more understanding than my teachers!"

While we were talking, there came a note to me from Dr. William Robertson.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been expecting every day to hear from you of Dr. Johnson's arrival. Pray, what do you know about his motions? I long to take him by the hand. I write this from the college, where I have only this scrap of paper. Ever yours,
"Sunday." "W. R.

It pleased me to find Dr. Robertson thus eager to meet Dr. Johnson. I was glad I could answer that he was come; and I begged Dr. Robertson might be with us as soon as he could.

Sir William Forbes, Mr. Scott, Mr. Arbuthnot, and another gentleman, dined with us. "Come, Dr. Johnson," said I, "it is commonly thought that our veal in Scotland is not good. But here is some which I believe you will like." There was no catching him. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, what is commonly thought, I should take to be true. Your veal may be good; but that will only be an exception to the general opinion, not a proof against it."

Dr. Robertson, according to the custom of Edinburgh at that time, dined in the interval between the forenoon and afternoon service, which was then later than now; so we had not the pleasure of his company till dinner was over, when he came and drank wine with us; and then began some animated dialogue, of which here follows a pretty full note.

We talked of Mr. Burke. Dr. Johnson said, he had great variety of knowledge, store of imagery, copiousness of language. ROBERTSON. "He has wit too." JOHNSON. "No, sir; he never succeeds there. 'T is low; 't is conceit. I used to say, Burke never once made a good joke¹. What I

¹ This was one of the points upon which Dr. Johnson was strangely heterodox. For surely Mr. Burke, with his other remarkable qualities, is also distinguished for his wit, and for wit of all kinds too; not merely that power of language which Pope chooses to denominate wit:

"True wit is Nature to advantage dress'd;
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well express'd;"

most envy Burke for is, his being constantly the same. He is never what we call humdrum; never unwilling to begin to talk, nor in haste to leave off." BOSWELL. "Yet he can listen." JOHNSON. "No; I cannot say he is good at that. So desirous is he to

but surprising allusions, brilliant sallies of vivacity, and pleasant conceits. His speeches in parliament are strewn with them. Take, for instance, the variety which he has given in his wide range, yet exact detail, when exhibiting his reform bill. And his conversation abounds in wit. Let me put down a specimen. I told him I had seen, at a *blue stocking* assembly, a number of ladies sitting round a worthy and tall friend of ours [Mr. Langton], listening to his literature. "Ay," said he, "like maids round a May-pole." I told him, I had found out a perfect definition of human nature, as distinguished from the animal. An ancient philosopher said, man was "a two-legged animal without feathers;" upon which his rival sage had a cock plucked bare, and set him down in the school before all the disciples, as a "philosophick man." Dr. Franklin said, man was "a tool-making animal," which is very well; for no animal but man makes a thing, by means of which he can make another thing. But this applies to very few of the species. My definition of man is, "a cooking animal." The beasts have memory, judgment, and all the faculties and passions of our mind, in a certain degree; but no beast is a cook. The trick of the monkey using the cat's paw to roast a chestnut is only a piece of shrewd malice in that *turpissima bestia*, which humbles us so sadly by its similarity to us. Man alone can dress a good dish; and every man whatever is more or less a cook, in seasoning what he himself eats. "Your definition is good," said Mr. Burke, "and I now see the full force of the common proverb, 'There is reason in roasting of eggs.'" When Mr. Wilkes, in his days of tumultuous opposition, was borne upon the shoulders of the mob, Mr. Burke (as Mr. Wilkes told me himself, with classical admiration) applied to him what Horace says of Pindar,

— numerisque fertur
LEGE solutus."

Sir Joshua Reynolds, who agrees with me entirely as to Mr. Burke's fertility of wit, said, that this was "dignifying a pun." He also observed, that he has often heard Burke say, in the course of an evening, ten good things, each of which would have served a noted wit (whom he named) to live upon for a twelve-month.

I find, since the former edition, that some persons have objected to the instances which I have given of Mr. Burke's wit, as not doing justice to my very ingenious friend; the specimens produced having, it is alleged, more of conceit than real wit, and being merely sportive sallies of the moment, not justifying the encomium which they think, with me, he undoubtedly merits. I was well aware, how hazardous it was to exhibit particular instances of wit, which is of so airy and spiritual a nature as often to elude the hand that attempts to grasp it. The excellence and efficacy of a *bon mot* depend frequently so much on

talk, that if one is speaking at this end of the table, he'll speak to somebody at the other end. Burke, sir, is such a man, that if you met him for the first time in the street where you were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped aside to take shelter but for five minutes, he'd talk to you in such a manner, that, when you parted, you would say, this is an extraordinary man. Now, you may be long enough with me, without finding any thing extraordinary." He said, he believed Burke was intended for the law; but either had not money enough to follow it, or had not diligence enough. He said, he could not understand how a man could apply to one thing, and not to another. Robertson said, one man had more judgment, another more imagination. JOHNSON. "No, sir; it is only, one man has more mind than another. He may direct it differently; he may, by accident, see the success of one kind of study, and take a desire to excel in it. I am persuaded that had Sir Isaac Newton applied to poetry, he would have made a very fine

the occasion on which it is spoken, on the particular manner of the speaker, on the person of whom it is applied, the previous introduction, and a thousand minute particulars which cannot be easily enumerated, that it is always dangerous to detach a witty saying from the group to which it belongs, and to set it before the eye of the spectator, divested of those concomitant circumstances, which gave it animation, mellowness, and relief. I ventured, however, at all hazards, to put down the first instances that occurred to me, as proofs of Mr. Burke's lively and brilliant fancy: but am very sensible that his numerous friends could have suggested many of a superior quality. Indeed, the being in company with him, for a single day, is sufficient to show that what I have asserted is well founded; and it was only necessary to have appealed to all who know him intimately, for a complete refutation of the heterodox opinion entertained by Dr. Johnson on this subject. He allowed Mr. Burke, as the reader will find hereafter, to be a man of consummate and unrivalled abilities in every light except that now under consideration; and the variety of his allusions, and splendour of his imagery, have made such an impression on *all the rest* of the world, that superficial observers are apt to overlook his other merits, and to suppose that *wit* is his chief and most prominent excellence; when in fact it is only one of the many talents that he possesses, which are so various and extraordinary, that it is very difficult to ascertain precisely the rank and value of each.—BOSWELL. [Mr. Burke's happy application from Horace has been sometimes quoted as if he had said "*humerus fertur;*" but that, besides being a departure from the text, would not suit so well with *lege solutis*. "*Numeris fertur lege solutis*" is, according to Mr. Burke's witty perversion, "he is carried by *numbers unrestrained by law;*" that is, "*a lawless mob.*"—ED.]

epick poem. I could as easily apply to law as to tragick poetry¹." BOSWELL. "Yet, sir, you did apply to tragick poetry, not to law." JOHNSON. "Because, sir, I had not money to study law. Sir, the man who has vigour may walk to the east, just as well as to the west, if he happens to turn his head that way." BOSWELL. "But, sir, 'tis like walking up and down a hill; one man may naturally do the one better than the other. A hare will run up a hill best, from her fore-legs being short; a dog down." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir; that is from mechanical powers. If you make mind mechanical, you may argue in that manner. One mind is a vice, and holds fast; there's a good memory. Another is a file; and he is a disputant, a controversialist. Another is a razor; and he is sarcastical." We talked of Whitfield. He said, he was at the same college with him, and knew him before he began to be better than other people (smiling); that he believed he sincerely meant well, but had a mixture of politicks and ostentation: whereas Wesley thought of religion only². Robertson said, Whitfield had strong natural eloquence, which, if cultivated, would have done great things. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I take it he was at the height of what his abilities could do, and was sensible of it. He had the ordinary advantages of education; but he chose to pursue that oratory which is for the mob." BOSWELL. "He had great effect on the passions." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, I don't think so. He could not represent a succession of pathetick images. He vociferated, and made an impression. There, again, was a mind like a hammer." Dr. Johnson now said, a certain eminent political friend³ of ours was wrong in his maxim of sticking to a certain set of men on all occasions. "I can see that a man may do right to stick to a party," said he, "that is to say, he is a whig, or he is a tory, and

¹ [How much a man deceives himself! Johnson, who has shown such powers in other lines of literature, failed as a tragic poet.—ED.]

² That cannot be said now, after the flagrant part which Mr. John Wesley took against our American brethren, when, in his own name, he threw amongst his enthusiastick flock the very individual combustibles of Dr. Johnson's "*Taxation no Tyranny;*" and after the intolerant spirit which he manifested against our fellow-christians of the Roman Catholic communion, for which that able champion, Father O'Leary, has given him so hearty a drubbing. But I should think myself very unworthy, if I did not at the same time acknowledge Mr. John Wesley's merit, as a veteran "*Soldier of Jesus Christ,*" who has, I do believe, turned many from darkness into light, and from the power of Satan to the living God.—BOSWELL.

³ [Mr. Burke. See *ante*, p. 309.—ED.]

he thinks one of those parties upon the whole the best, and that to make it prevail, it must be generally supported, though, in particulars, it may be wrong. He takes its faggot of principles, in which there are fewer rotten sticks than in the other, though some rotten sticks, to be sure; and they cannot well be separated. But, to bind one's self to one man, or one set of men (who may be right to-day and wrong to-morrow), without any general preference of system, I must disapprove.¹

He told us of Cooke, who translated Hesiod, and lived twenty years on a translation of Plautus, for which he was always taking subscriptions; and that he presented Foote to a club in the following singular manner: "This is the nephew of the gentleman who was lately hung in chains for murdering his brother²."

¹ If due attention were paid to this observation, there would be more virtue even in politics. What Dr. Johnson justly condemned has, I am sorry to say, greatly increased in the present reign. At the distance of four years from this conversation, 21st February, 1777, my Lord Archbishop of York, in his "sermon before the society for the propagation of the gospel in foreign parts," thus indignantly describes the then state of parties:

"Parties once had a principle belonging to them, absurd, perhaps, and indefensible, but still carrying a notion of duty, by which honest minds might easily be caught. But they are now combinations of individuals, who, instead of being the sons and servants of the community, make a league for advancing their private interests. It is their business to hold high the notion of political honour. I believe and trust, it is not injurious to say, that such a bond is no better than that by which the lowest and wickedest combinations are held together; and that it denotes the last stage of political depravity."

To find a thought, which just showed itself to us from the mind of Johnson, thus appearing again at such a distance of time, and without any communication between them, enlarged to full growth in the mind of Markham, is a curious object of philosophical contemplation. That two such great and luminous minds should have been so dark in one corner; that they should have held it to be "wicked rebellion" in the British subjects established in America, to resist the abject condition of holding all their property at the mercy of British subjects remaining at home, while their allegiance to our common lord the king was to be preserved inviolate, is a striking proof, to me, either that "he who sitteth in heaven" scorns the loftiness of human pride, or that the evil spirit, whose personal existence I strongly believe, and even in this age am confirmed in that belief by a Fell, nay, by a Hurd, has more power than some choose to allow.—BOSWELL.

² [Mr. Foote's mother was the sister of Sir J. Dinely Gooddere, bart., and of Capt. Gooddere, who commanded H. M. S. Ruby, on board which, when lying in King's-road, Bristol, in January,

In the evening I introduced to Mr. Johnson³ two good friends of mine, Mr. William Nairne, advocate, and Mr. Hamilton of Sundrum, my neighbour in the country, both of whom supped with us. I have preserved nothing of what passed, except that Dr. Johnson displayed another of his heterodox opinions—a contempt of tragic acting. He said, "the action of all players in tragedy is bad. It should be a man's study to repress those signs of emotion and passion, as they are called." He was of a directly contrary opinion to that of Fielding, in his "Tom Jones;" who makes Partridge say of Garrick, "Why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did." For, when I asked him, "Would not you, sir, start as Mr. Garrick does, if you saw a ghost?" He answered, "I hope not. If I did, I should frighten the ghost."

Monday, 16th August.—Dr. William Robertson came to breakfast. We talked of Ogden on Prayer. Dr. Johnson said, "The same arguments which are used against God's hearing prayer will serve against his rewarding good, and punishing evil. He has resolved, he has declared, in the former case as in the latter." He had last night looked into Lord Hailes's "Remarks on the History of Scotland." Dr. Robertson and I said, it was a pity Lord Hailes⁴ did not write greater things. His lordship had not then published his "Annals of Scotland." JOHNSON. "I remember I was once on a visit at the house of a lady for whom I had a high respect. There was a good deal of company in the room. When they were gone, I said to this lady, 'What foolish talking have we had!' 'Yes,'

1741, the latter caused his brother to be forcibly carried, and there barbarously murdered. Capt. Gooddere was, with two accomplices, executed for this offence in the April following. The circumstances of the case, and some other facts connected with this family, led to an opinion that Capt. Gooddere was insane; and some unhappy circumstances in Foote's life render it probable that he had not wholly escaped this hereditary irregularity of mind.—ED. Foote's first publication was a pamphlet in defence of his uncle's memory.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ It may be observed, that I sometimes call my great friend Mr. Johnson, sometimes Dr. Johnson; though he had at this time a doctor's degree from Trinity College, Dublin. The university of Oxford afterwards conferred it upon him by a diploma, in very honourable terms. It was some time before I could bring myself to call him doctor; but, as he has been long known by that title, I shall give it to him in the rest of this Journal.—BOSWELL. [Johnson never, it seems, called himself doctor. See ante, p. 218, and post, 7th April, 1775.—ED.]

⁴ [See ante, p. 195.—ED.]

said she, 'but while they talked, you said nothing.' I was struck with the reproof. How much better is the man who does any thing that is innocent, than he who does nothing! Besides, I love anecdotes. I fancy mankind may come, in time, to write all aphoristically, except in narrative; grow weary of preparation, and connexion, and illustration, and all those arts by which a big book is made. If a man is to wait till he weaves anecdotes into a system, we may be long in getting them, and get but few, in comparison of what we might get."

Dr. Robertson said, the notions of Eupham Macallan, a fanatick woman, of whom Lord Hailes gives a sketch, were still prevalent among some of the presbyterians; and, therefore, it was right in Lord Hailes, a man of known piety, to undeceive them.

We walked out, that Dr. Johnson might see some of the things which we have to show at Edinburgh. We went to the parliament-house¹, where the parliament of Scotland sat, and where the ordinary lords of session hold their courts, and to the new session-house adjoining to it, where our court of fifteen (the fourteen ordinaries, with the lord president at their head) sit as a court of review. We went to the advocates' library, of which Dr. Johnson took a cursory view, and then to what is called the Laigh (or under) parliament-house, where the records of Scotland, which has an universal security by register, are deposited, till the great register office be finished. I was pleased to behold Dr. Samuel Johnson rolling about in this old magazine of antiquities. There was, by this time, a pretty numerous circle of us attending upon him. Somebody talked of happy moments for composition, and how a man can write at one time, and not at another. "Nay," said Dr. Johnson, "a man may write at any time, if he will set himself *doggedly*² to it."

I here began to indulge old Scottish sentiments, and to express a warm regret, that, by our union with England, we were no more; our independent kingdom was lost. JOHNSON. "Sir, never talk of your independency, who could let your queen remain twenty years in captivity, and then be put to death, without even a pretence of justice,

¹ [It was on this visit to the parliament-house that Mr. Henry Erskine (brother of Lord Buchan and Lord Erskine), after being presented to Dr. Johnson by Mr. Boswell, and having made his bow, slipped a shilling into Boswell's hand, whispering that it was for the sight of his *bear*.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² This word is commonly used to signify sullenly, gloomily; and in that sense alone it appears in Dr. Johnson's Dictionary. I suppose he meant by it, "with an obstinate resolution, similar to that of a sullen man."—BOSWELL.

without your ever attempting to rescue her; and such a queen too! as every man of any gallantry of spirit would have sacrificed his life for." Worthy MR. JAMES KERR, keeper of the records. "Half our nation was bribed by English money." JOHNSON. "Sir, that is no defence: that makes you worse." Good MR. BROWN, keeper of the advocates' library. "We had better say nothing about it." BOSWELL. "You would have been glad, however, to have had us last war, sir, to fight your battles!" JOHNSON. "We should have had you for the same price, though there had been no union, as we might have had Swiss, or other troops. No, no, I shall agree to a separation. You have only to *go home*." Just as he had said this, I, to divert the subject, showed him the signed assurances of the three successive kings of the Hanover family, to maintain the presbyterian establishment in Scotland. "We'll give you that," said he, "into the bargain³."

We next went to the great church of St. Giles, which has lost its original magnificence in the inside, by being divided into four places of presbyterian worship. "Come," said Dr. Johnson jocularly to Principal Robertson⁴, "let me see what was once a church!" We entered that division which was formerly called the New Church, and of late the High Church, so well known by the eloquence of Dr. Hugh Blair. It is now very elegantly fitted up; but it was then shamefully dirty. Dr. Johnson said nothing at the time; but when we came to the great door of the royal infirmary, where, upon a board, was this inscription, "Clean your feet!" he turned about slyly, and said, "There is no occasion for putting this at the doors of your churches!"

We then conducted him down the Post-house-stairs, Parliament-close, and made him look up from the Cowgate to the highest building in Edinburgh (from which he had just descended), being thirteen floors or stories from the ground upon the back elevation; the front wall being built upon the edge of the hill, and the back wall rising from the bottom of the hill several stories before it comes to a level with the front wall. We proceeded to the college, with the Principal at our head. Dr. Adam Fer-

³ [The meaning seems to be that, in a fit of *jacobite* jocularly, Johnson was willing, in consideration of the dissolution of the Union, to allow the *Hanover family* to reign in Scotland, inferring, of course, that the *Stuarts* were to reign in England.—ED.]

⁴ I have hitherto called him Dr. William Robertson, to distinguish him from Dr. James Robertson, who is soon to make his appearance, but Principal, from his being the head of our college, is his usual designation, and is shorter: so I shall use it hereafter.—BOSWELL.

gusson, whose "Essay on the History of Civil Society" gives him a respectable place in the ranks of literature, was with us. As the college buildings are indeed very mean, the Principal said to Dr. Johnson, that he must give them the same epithet that a jesuit did when showing a poor college abroad: "*Hæ miseræ nostræ.*" Dr. Johnson was, however, much pleased with the library, and with the conversation of Dr. James Robertson, professor of oriental languages, the librarian. We talked of Kennicott's edition¹ of the Hebrew Bible, and hoped it would be quite faithful. JOHNSON. "Sir, I know not any crime so great that a man could contrive to commit, as poisoning the sources of eternal truth."

I pointed out to him where there formerly stood an old wall enclosing part of the college, which I remember bulged out in a threatening manner, and of which there was a common tradition similar to that concerning Bacon's study at Oxford, that it would fall upon some very learned man. It had some time before this been taken down, that the street might be widened, and a more convenient wall built. Dr. Johnson, glad of an opportunity to have a pleasant hit at Scottish learning, said "they have been afraid it never would fall."

We showed him the royal infirmary, for which, and for every other exertion of generous publick spirit in his power, that noble-minded citizen of Edinburgh, George Drummond, will be ever held in honourable remembrance. And we were too proud not to carry him to the abbey of Holyrood House, that beautiful piece of architecture, but, alas! that deserted mansion [of royalty, which Hamilton of Bangour, in one of his elegant poems², calls

"A virtuous palace, where no monarch dwells."

I was much entertained while Principal Robertson fluently harangued to Dr. Johnson, upon the spot, concerning scenes of his celebrated History of Scotland. We surveyed that part of the palace appropriated to the Duke of Hamilton, as keeper, in which our beautiful Queen Mary lived, and in which David Rizzio was murdered, and also the state rooms. Dr. Johnson

was a great reciter of all sorts of things, serious or comical. I overheard him repeating here, in a kind of muttering tone, a line of the old ballad, "Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night."

"And ran him through the fair body"³!

We returned to my house, where there met him, at dinner, the Duchess of Douglas⁴, Sir Adolphus Oughton, Lord Chief Baron [Orde], Sir William Forbes, Principal Robertson, Mr. Cullen, advocate. Before dinner, he told us of a curious conversation between the famous George Faulkner and him. George said, that England had drained Ireland of fifty thousand pounds in specie, annually, for fifty years. "How so, sir?" said Dr. Johnson: "you must have very great trade?" "No trade." "Very rich mines?" "No mines." "From whence, then, does all this money come?" "Come! why out of the blood and bowels of the poor people of Ireland!"

He seemed to me to have an unaccountable prejudice against Swift⁵; for I once took the liberty to ask him, if Swift had personally offended him, and he told me, he had not. He said to-day, "Swift is clear, but he is shallow. In coarse humour he is inferior to Arbuthnot; in delicate humour he is inferior to Addison. So he is inferior to his contemporaries, without putting him against the whole world. I doubt if the 'Tale of a Tub' was his; it has so much more thinking, more knowledge, more power, more colour, than any of the works which are indisputably his. If it

³ The stanza from which he took this line is,

"But then rose up all Edinburgh,
They rose up by thousands three;
A cowardly Scot came John behind,
And ran him through the fair body!"—BOSWELL.

⁴ [Margaret, daughter of James Douglas, esq. of the Mains. "An old lady," writes Dr. Johnson, "who talks broad Scotch with a paralytic voice, and is scarce understood by her own countrymen."—*Letters*, v. i. 209.—ED.]

⁵ [There probably was no opportunity for what could be, in strictness, called *personal offence*, as there was no *personal intercourse* between Swift and Johnson; but the editor agrees with Mr. Boswell in suspecting that there was *some such* cause for Johnson's otherwise "unaccountable prejudice" (see *ante*, p. 51). What could Johnson mean by calling Swift "*shallow*?" If he be *shallow*, who, in his department of literature, is profound? Without admitting that Swift was "*inferior in coarse humour to Arbuthnot*" (of whose precise share in the works to which he is supposed to have contributed, we know little or nothing), it may be observed, that he who is *second* to the greatest masters of different styles may be said to be the first on the whole. See as to the Tale of a Tub, *ante*, p. 202.—ED.]

¹ [See *ante*, 171.—ED.]

² [We may suspect that Mr. Boswell's admiration of Hamilton was enhanced by something even stronger than mere *nationality*. Mr. Hamilton was a gentleman of Ayrshire, Mr. Boswell's own county, and actually bore arms at Culloden for the jacobite cause. The poem from which this line is quoted is called an epitaph, and is filled with alternate satire and eulogy on persons now forgotten. The line itself appears to be nonsense; "a virtuous hovel, were no shepherd dwells," would have just as much meaning.—ED.]

was his, I shall only say, he was *impar sibi.*"

We gave him as good a dinner as we could. Our Scotch muir-fowl, or grouse, were then abundant, and quite in season; and, so far as wisdom and wit can be aided by administering agreeable sensations to the palate, my wife took care that our great guest should not be deficient.

Sir Adolphus Oughton, then our deputy commander in chief, who was not only an excellent officer, but one of the most universal scholars¹ I ever knew, had learned the Erse language, and expressed his belief in the authenticity of Ossian's Poetry. Dr. Johnson took the opposite side of that perplexed² question, and I was afraid the dispute would have run high between them. But Sir Adolphus, who had a very sweet temper, changed the discourse, grew playful, laughed at Lord Monboddo's notion of men having tails, and called him a judge *à posteriori*, which amused Dr. Johnson, and thus hostilities were prevented.

At supper we had Dr. Cullen, his son the advocate, Dr. Adam Fergusson, and Mr. Crosbie, advocate³. Witchcraft was introduced. Mr. Crosbie said he thought it the greatest blasphemy to suppose evil spirits counteracting the Deity, and raising storms, for instance, to destroy his creatures. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if moral evil be consistent with the government of Deity, why may not physical evil be also consistent with it? It is not more strange that there should be evil spirits than evil men: evil unembodied spirits, than evil embodied spirits. And as to storms, we know there are such things; and it is no worse that evil spirits raise them than that they rise." CROSBIE. "But it is not credible that witches should have effected what they are said in stories to have done." JOHNSON. "Sir, I am not defending their credibility. I am only saying that your arguments are not good, and will not overturn the belief of witchcraft.—(Dr. Fergusson said to me aside, 'He is right.')

—And then, sir, you have all mankind, rude and civilized, agreeing in the belief of the agency of preternatural powers. You must take evidence;

¹ [Lord Stowell remembers with pleasure the elegance and extent of Sir Adolphus Oughton's literature, and the suavity of his manners.—ED.]

² [A question *perplexed* only by national prejudices, heightened, in a few cases, by individual obstinacy.—ED.]

³ [Lord Stowell recollects that Johnson was treated by the Scotch literati with a degree of deference bordering on pusillanimity; but he excepts from that observation Mr. Crosbie, whom he characterises as an *intrepid talker*, and the only man who was disposed to *stand up* (as the phrase is) to Johnson.—ED.]

you must consider that wise and great men have condemned witches to die." CROSBIE. "But an act of parliament put an end to witchcraft." JOHNSON. "No, sir, witchcraft had ceased; and, therefore, an act of parliament was passed to prevent persecution for what was not witchcraft. Why it ceased we cannot tell, as we cannot tell the reason of many other things. Dr. Cullen, to keep up the gratification of mysterious disquisition, with the grave address for which he is remarkable in his companionable as in his professional hours, talked, in a very entertaining manner, of people walking and conversing in their sleep. I am very sorry I have no note of this⁴. We talked of the ouran-ouang, and of Lord Monboddo's thinking that he might be taught to speak. Dr. Johnson treated this with ridicule. Mr. Crosbie said that Lord Monboddo believed the existence of every thing possible; in short, that all which is in *posse* might be found in *esse*. JOHNSON. "But, sir, it is as possible that the ouran-ouang does not speak, as that he speaks. However, I shall not contest the point. I should have thought it not possible to find a Monboddo; yet he exists." I again mentioned the stage. JOHNSON. "The appearance of a player, with whom I have drunk tea, counteracts the imagination that he is the character he represents. Nay, you know, nobody imagines that he is the character he represents. They say, 'See Garrick! how he looks to-night! See how he'll clutch the dagger!' That is the buzz of the theatre."

Tuesday, 17th August.—Sir William Forbes came to breakfast, and brought with him Dr. Blacklock⁵, whom he introduced to Dr. Johnson, who received him with a most humane complacency; "Dear Dr. Blacklock, I am glad to see you!" Blacklock seemed to be much surprised when Dr. Johnson said "it was easier to him to write poetry than to compose his Dictionary. His mind was less on the stretch in doing the one than the other⁶. Besides, composing a dictionary requires books and a desk: you can make a poem walking in the fields, or lying in bed." Dr. Blacklock spoke of scepticism in morals and religion with apparent uneasiness, as if he wished

⁴ [See in the Life of Blacklock, in *Anderson's Brit. Poets*, an anecdote of Dr. Blacklock's somnambulism, which may very probably have been one of the topics on this occasion.—ED.]

⁵ [See *ante*, p. 207.—ED.]

⁶ [There is hardly any operation of the intellect which requires nicer and deeper consideration than *definition*. A thousand men may write verses, for one who has the power of defining and discriminating the exact meaning of words and the principles of grammatical arrangement.—ED.]

for more certainty¹. Dr. Johnson, who had thought it all over, and whose vigorous understanding was fortified by much experience, thus encouraged the blind bard to apply to higher speculations what we all willingly submit to in common life: in short, he gave him more familiarly the able and fair reasoning of Butler's Analogy: "Why, sir, the greatest concern we have in this world, the choice of our profession, must be determined without demonstrative reasoning. Human life is not yet so well known, as that we can have it: and take the case of a man who is ill. I call two physicians; they differ in opinion. I am not to lie down, and die between them: I must do something." The conversation then turned on atheism; on that horrible book, *Système de la Nature*; and on the supposition of an eternal necessity without design, without a governing mind. JOHNSON. "If it were so, why has it ceased? Why don't we see men thus produced around us now? Why, at least, does it not keep pace, in some measure, with the progress of time? If it stops because there is now no need of it, then it is plain there is, and ever has been, an all-powerful intelligence. But stay! (said he, with one of his satirick laughs). Ha! ha! ha! I shall suppose Scotchmen made necessarily, and Englishmen by choice."

At dinner this day we had Sir Alexander Dick, whose amiable character and ingenious and cultivated mind are so generally known; (he was then on the verge of seventy, and is now (1785) eighty-one, with his faculties entire, his heart warm, and his temper gay); Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes; Mr. Maclaurin², advocate; Dr. Gregory, who now worthily fills his father's medical chair; and my uncle, Dr. Boswell. This was one of Dr. Johnson's best days. He was quite in his element. All was literature and taste, without any interruption. Lord Hailes, who is one of the best philologists in Great Britain, who has written papers in the *World*, and a variety of other works in prose and in verse, both Latin and English, pleased him highly. He told him he had discovered the *Life of Cheyne*, in the *Student*, to be his. JOHNSON. "No one else knows it." Dr. Johnson had before this dictated to me a law-paper³ upon a question purely in the law of Scotland, concerning *vicious intromission*, that is to say, intermeddling with the effects of a deceased person, without a regular title; which formerly was understood to subject the intermeddler to payment of all the defunct's debts. The principle has of late been re-

laxed. Dr. Johnson's argument was for a renewal of its strictness. The paper was printed, with additions by me, and given into the court of session. Lord Hailes knew Dr. Johnson's part not to be mine, and pointed out exactly where it began and where it ended. Dr. Johnson said "It is much now that his lordship can distinguish so."

In Dr. Johnson's *Vanity of Human Wishes* there is the following passage:

"The teeming mother, anxious for her race,
Begs, for each birth, the fortune of a face:
Yet Vane could tell what ills from beauty spring;
And Sedley cursed the charms which pleased a king."

Lord Hailes told him he was mistaken in the instances he had given of unfortunate fair ones; for neither Vane nor Sedley had a title to that description. His lordship has since been so obliging as to send me a note of this, for the communication of which I am sure my readers will thank me.

"The lines in the tenth Satire of Juvenal, according to my alteration, should have run thus:

'Yet Shore⁴ could tell —;
And Vallière⁵ cursed' —

"The first was a penitent by compulsion, the second by sentiment; though the truth is, Mademoiselle de la Vallière threw herself (but still from sentiment) in the king's way.

"Our friend chose Vane⁶, who was far from being well-looking; and Sedley⁷, who was so ugly that Charles II. said his brother had her by way of penance⁸."

⁴ Mistress of Edward IV.—BOSWELL.

⁵ Mistress of Louis XIV.—BOSWELL.

⁶ [See *ante*, p. 78.—ED.]

⁷ ["Catharine Sedley, created Countess of Dorchester for life. Her father, Sir Charles, resenting the seduction of his daughter, joined in the Whig measures of the Revolution, and excused his revolt from James under an ironical profession of gratitude. "His majesty," said he, "having done me the unlooked-for honour of making my daughter a *countess*, I cannot do less in return than endeavour to make his daughter a *queen*."—ED.]

⁸ [Lord Hailes was hypocritical. Vane was handsome, or, what is more to our purpose, appeared so to her royal lover; and Sedley, whatever others may have thought of her, had "the charms which pleased a king." So that Johnson's illustrations are morally just. His lordship's proposed substitution of a fabulous (or at least apochryphal) beauty like *Jane Shore*, whose story, even if true, was obsolete; or that of a foreigner, like *Mlle. De La Vallière*, little known and less cared for amongst us, is not only tasteless but inaccurate; for *Mlle. De La Vallière's* beauty was quite as much questioned by her contemporaries as *Miss Sedley's*. Bussy Rabutin was exiled for sneering at Louis's admiration of her *mouth*, which he calls

¹ See his letter on this subject in the Appendix.—BOSWELL.

² [See *ante*, p. 208.—ED.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 300, and Appendix.—ED.]

Mr. Maclaurin's¹ learning and talents enabled him to do his part very well in Dr. Johnson's company. He produced two epitaphs upon his father, the celebrated mathematician. One was in English, of which Dr. Johnson did not change one word. In the other, which was in Latin, he made several alterations. In place of the very words of Virgil, "Ubi luctus et pavor et plurima mortis imago," he wrote "Ubi luctus regnant et pavor." He introduced the word *prorsus* into the line "Mortalibus prorsus non absit solatium," and after "Hujus enim scripta evolve," he added, "Mentemque tantarum rerum capacem corpori caduco superstitem crede;" which is quite applicable to Dr. Johnson himself².

"———un bec amoureux,
Qui d'une oreille à l'autre va."

And Madame Du Plessis-Belièvre writes to Fouquet, "Mlle. De La Vallière a fait la capable envers moi. Je l'ay encensée par sa beauté, qui n'est pourtant pas grande." And, finally, after Lord Hailes had clipped down the name of *De La Vallière* into *Vallière*, his ear might have told him that it did not even yet fit the metre.—ED.]

¹ [Mr. Maclaurin, advocate, son of the great mathematician, and afterwards a judge of session by the title of Lord Dreghorn. He wrote some indifferent English poems; but was a good Latin scholar, and a man of wit and accomplishment. His quotations from the classics were particularly apposite. In the famous case of *Knicht*, which determined the right of a slave to freedom if he landed in Scotland, Maclaurin pleaded the cause of the negro. The counsel opposite was the celebrated Wight, an excellent lawyer, but of very homely appearance, with heavy features, a blind eye, which projected from the socket, a swag belly, and a limp. To him Maclaurin applied the lines of Virgil,

"Quamvis ille niger, quamvis tu candidus esses,
O formose puer, nimium ne crede colori."

Mr. Maclaurin wrote an essay against the Homeric tale of "Troy divine," I believe, for the sole purpose of introducing a happy motto,

"Non anni domiere decem, non mille carinæ."—
WALTER SCOTT.]

² Mr. Maclaurin's epitaph, as engraved on a marble tombstone, in the Gray-friars churchyard, Edinburgh:

Infra situs est
COLIN MACLAURIN,
Mathes. olim in Acad. Edin. Prof.
Electus ipso Newtono suadente.
H. L. P. F.
Non ut nomini paterno consulat,
Nam tali auxilio nil eget;
Sed ut in hoc infelici campo,
Ubi luctus regnant et pavor,
Mortalibus prorsus non absit solatium:
Hujus enim scripta evolve,
Mentemque tantarum rerum capacem
Corpori caduco superstitem crede.

[Johnson probably changed the "very words" of Virgil, not thinking an exact and ostentatious quotation from a heathen poet quite appropriate to a christian epitaph. The whole is, as it

Mr. Murray, advocate, who married a niece of Lord Mansfield's, and is now one of the judges of Scotland, by the title of Lord Henderland, sat with us a part of the evening; but did not venture to say any thing that I remember, though he is certainly possessed of talents which would have enabled him to have shown himself to advantage if too great anxiety had not prevented him.

At supper we had Dr. Alexander Webster³, who, though not learned, had such a knowledge of mankind, such a fund of information and entertainment, so clear a head, and such accommodating manners, that Dr. Johnson found him a very agreeable companion.

When Dr. Johnson and I were left by ourselves, I read to him my notes of the opinions of our judges upon the questions of literary property. He did not like them; and said, "they make me think of your judges not with that respect which I should wish to do." To the argument of one of them, that there can be no property in blasphemy or nonsense, he answered, "then your rotten sheep are mine!—By that rule, when a man's house falls into decay, he must lose it⁴." I mentioned an argument of mine, that literary performances are not taxed. As Churchill says,

"No statesman yet has thought it worth his pains
To tax our labours, or excise our brains;"

now stands, a very beautiful and affecting inscription.—ED.]

³ [Dr. Alexander Webster was remarkable for the talent with which he at once supported his place in convivial society, and a high character as a leader of the strict and rigid presbyterian party in the church of Scotland, which certainly seemed to require very different qualifications. He was ever gay amid the gayest: when it once occurred to some one present to ask, what one of his Elders would think, should he see his pastor in such a merry mood.—"Think!" replied the doctor, "why he would not believe his own eyes."—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁴ [Dr. Johnson's illustration is sophistical, and might have been retorted upon him: for if a man's sheep are so rotten as to render the meat unwholesome, or, if his house be so decayed as to threaten mischief to passengers, the law will confiscate the mutton and abate the house, without any regard to *property*, which the owner thus abuses. Moreover, Johnson should have discriminated between a *criminal* offence and a *civil* right. Blasphemy is a crime: would it not be in the highest degree absurd, that there should be a *right of property* in a crime, or that the law should be called upon to protect that which is illegal? If this be true in *law*, it is much more so in *equity*, as he who applies for the *extraordinary* assistance of a court of equity should have a right, consistent at least with equity and morals; and a late question was so decided, and upon that principle, by the greatest judge of modern times, Lord Eldon.—ED.]

and therefore they are not property. "Yet," said he, "we hang a man for stealing a horse, and horses are not taxed." Mr. Pitt has since put an end to that argument.

Wednesday, 18th August.—On this day we set out from Edinburgh. We should gladly have had Mr. Scott to go with us, but he was obliged to return to England. I have given a sketch of Dr. Johnson: my readers may wish to know a little of his fellow-traveller. Think, then, of a gentleman of ancient blood, the pride of which was his predominant passion. He was then in his thirty-third year, and had been about four years happily married. His inclination was to be a soldier, but his father, a respectable judge, had pressed him into the profession of the law. He had travelled a good deal, and seen many varieties of human life. He had thought more than any body had supposed, and had a pretty good stock of general learning and knowledge. He had all Dr. Johnson's principles, with some degree of relaxation. He had rather too little than too much prudence; and, his imagination being lively, he often said things of which the effect was very different from the intention. He resembled sometimes

"The best good man, with the worst-natured muse."

He cannot deny himself the vanity of finishing with the encomium of Dr. Johnson, whose friendly partiality to the companion of his tour represents him as one, "whose acuteness would help my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation, and civility of manners, are sufficient to counteract the inconveniences of travel, in countries less hospitable than we have passed¹."

Dr. Johnson thought it unnecessary to put himself to the additional expense of bringing with him Francis Barber, his faithful black servant; so we were attended only by my man, Joseph Ritter², a Bohemian, a fine stately fellow above six feet high, who had been over a great part of Europe, and spoke many languages. He was the best servant I ever saw. Let not my readers disdain his introduction. For Dr. Johnson gave him this character: "Sir, he is a civil man, and a wise man."

From an erroneous apprehension of violence, Dr. Johnson had provided a pair of pistols, some gunpowder, and a quantity of bullets: but upon being assured we should

run no risk of meeting any robbers, he left his arms and ammunition in an open drawer, of which he gave my wife the charge. He also left in that drawer one volume of a pretty full and curious Diary of his Life, of which I have a few fragments; but the book has been destroyed. I wish female curiosity had been strong enough to have had it all transcribed, which might easily have been done, and I should think the theft, being *pro bono publico*, might have been forgiven. But I may be wrong. My wife told me she never once looked into it. She did not seem quite easy when we left her: but away we went!

Mr. Nairne³, advocate, was to go with us as far as St. Andrews. It gives me pleasure that, by mentioning his name, I connect his title to the just and handsome compliment paid him by Dr. Johnson, in his book: "A gentleman who could stay with us only long enough to make us know how much we lost by his leaving us." When we came to Leith, I talked with perhaps too boasting an air, how pretty the Frith of Forth looked; as indeed, after the prospect from Constantinople, of which I have been told, and that from Naples, which I have seen, I believe the view of that Frith and its environs, from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh, is the finest prospect in Europe. "Ay," said Dr. Johnson, "that is the state of the world. Water is the same every where.

Una est injusti cæcula forma maris⁴."

I told him the port here was the mouth of the river or water of *Leith*. "Not *Lethe*," said Mr. Nairne. "Why, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "when a Scotchman sets out from this port for England, he forgets his native country." NAIRNE. "I hope, sir, you will forget England here." JOHNSON. "Then 't will be still more *Lethe*." He observed of the pier or quay, "you have no occasion for so large a one, your trade does not require it: but you are like a shopkeeper who takes a shop, not only for what he has to put into it, but that it may

³ [Mr. William Nairne, afterwards Sir William, and a judge of the court of session, by the title, made classical by Shakspeare, of Lord Dunsinnan. He was a man of scrupulous integrity. When sheriff depute of Perthshire, he found, upon reflection, that he had decided a poor man's case erroneously; and as the only remedy, supplied the litigant privately with money to carry the suit to the supreme court, where his judgment was reversed. Sir William was of the old school of manners, somewhat formal, but punctiliously well bred.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [He omits the tendency to *hypochondriasis*, (see *ante*, p. 23, *n.*), of which, however, several instances will appear in the course of the tour, and which was a very important feature in his character.—ED.]

² [Joseph Ritter afterwards undertook the management of the large inn at Paisley, called the Abercorn Arms, but did not succeed in that concern.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁴ Non illic urbes, non tu mirabere silvas
Una est injusti cæcula forma maris.
Ovid. Amor. l. ii. el. xi.

Nor groves nor towns the ruthless ocean shows,
Unvaried still its azure surface flows.—BOSWELL.

be believed he has a great deal to put into it." It is very true, that there is now, comparatively, little trade upon the eastern coast of Scotland. The riches of Glasgow show how much there is in the west; and, perhaps, we shall find trade travel westward on a great scale as well as a small.

We talked of a man's drowning himself. **JOHNSON.** "I should never think it time to make away with myself." I put the case of Eustace Budge, who was accused of forging a will, and sunk himself in the Thames, before the trial of its authenticity came on. "Suppose, sir," said I, "that a man is absolutely sure, that, if he lives a few days longer, he shall be detected in a fraud, the consequence of which will be utter disgrace and expulsion from society." **JOHNSON.** "Then, sir, let him go abroad to a distant country; let him go to some place where he is *not* known. Don't let him go to the devil, where he *is* known!"

He then said, "I see a number of people barefooted here: I suppose you all went so before the Union. Boswell, your ancestors went so when they had as much land as your family has now. Yet Auchinleck is the Field of Stones; there would be bad going bare-footed there. The lairds, however, did it." I bought some speldings, fish (generally whittings) salted and dried in a particular manner, being dipped in the sea and dried in the sun, and eaten by the Scots by way of a relish. He had never seen them, though they are sold in London. I insisted on Scottifying¹ his palate; but he was very reluctant. With difficulty I prevailed with him to let a bit of one of them lie in his mouth. He did not like it.

In crossing the Frith, Dr. Johnson determined that we should land upon Inch Keith. On approaching it, we first observed a high rocky shore. We coasted about, and put into a little bay on the north-west. We clambered up a very steep ascent, on which was very good grass, but rather a profusion of thistles. There were sixteen head of black cattle grazing upon the island. Lord Hailes observed to me, that Brantome calls it *L'isle des Chevaux*, and that it was probably "a *safer* stable" than many others in his time. The fort, with an inscription on it, *Maria Re, 1564*, is strongly built. Dr. Johnson examined it with much attention. He stalked like a giant among the luxuriant thistles and nettles. There are three wells in the island, but we could not find one in the fort. There must probably have been one, though now filled up, as a garrison could not subsist without it². But I have dwelt too long

on this little spot. Dr. Johnson afterwards bade me try to write a description of our discovering Inch Keith, in the usual style of travellers, describing fully every particular; stating the grounds on which we concluded that it must have once been inhabited, and introducing many sage reflections, and we should see how a thing might be covered in words, so as to induce people to come and survey it. All that was told might be true, and yet in reality there might be nothing to see. He said, "I'd have this island. I'd build a house, make a good landing-place, have a garden, and vines, and all sorts of trees. A rich man, of a hospitable turn, here, would have many visitors from Edinburgh." When we had got into our boat again, he called to me, "Come, now, pay a classical compliment to the *ist* and on quitting it." I happened luckily, in allusion to the beautiful Queen Mary, whose name is upon the fort, to think of what Virgil makes Æneas say, on having left the country of his charming Dido:

"Invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi³."

"Very well hit off!" said he.

We dined at Kinghorn, and then got into a post-chaise. Mr. Nairne and his servant, and Joseph, rode by us. We stopped at Cupar, and drank tea. We talked of Parliament; and I said, I supposed very few of the members knew much of what was going on, as indeed very few gentlemen know much of their own private affairs. **JOHNSON.** "Why, sir, if a man is not of a sluggish mind, he may be his own steward. If he will look into his affairs, he will soon learn. So it is as to publick affairs. There must always be a certain number of men of business in parliament." **BOSWELL.** "But consider, sir, what is the house of commons? Is not a great part of it chosen by peers? Do you think, sir, they ought to have such an influence?" **JOHNSON.** "Yes, sir. Influence must ever be in proportion to property; and it is right it should." **BOSWELL.** "But is there not reason to fear that the common people may be oppressed?" **JOHNSON.** "No, sir. Our great fear is from want of power in government. Such a storm of vulgar force has broken in." **BOSWELL.** "It has only roared." **JOHNSON.** "Sir, it has roared, till the judges in West-

to assist in constructing a very useful lighthouse upon the island.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ "Unhappy queen!

Unwilling I forsook your friendly state."—Dryden.—BOSWELL.

[Such is the translation which Mr. Boswell gives, though it loses one of the points of his very happy quotation, by substituting for "*shore*," which is the proper version, the words "*friendly state*," which, on this occasion, would have had no meaning whatsoever.—Ed.]

¹ My friend, General Campbell, Governour of Madras, tells me, that they make speldings in the East Indies, particularly at Bombay, where they call them Bambaloës.—BOSWELL.

² [The remains of the fort have been removed,

minster-Hall have been afraid to pronounce sentence in opposition to the popular cry. You are frightened by what is no longer dangerous, like presbyterians by popery." He then repeated a passage, I think, in Butler's *Remains*, which ends, "and would cry fire! fire! in Noah's flood!"

We had a dreary drive, in a dusky night, to St. Andrews, where we arrived late. We found a good supper at Glass's inn, and Dr. Johnson revived agreeably. He said, "The collection called 'The Muses' Welcome to King James' (first of England, and sixth of Scotland), on his return to his native kingdom, showed that there was then abundance of learning in Scotland; and that the conceits in that collection, with which people find fault, were mere mode." He added, "We could not now entertain a sovereign so; that Buchanan had spread the spirit of learning amongst us, but we had lost it during the civil wars." He did not allow the Latin poetry of Pitcairne so much merit as has been usually attributed to it; though he owned that one of his pieces, which he mentioned, but which I am sorry is not specified in my notes, was "very well." It is not improbable that it was the poem which Prior has so elegantly translated.¹

After supper, we made a procession to Saint Leonard's college, the landlord walking before us with a candle, and the waiter with a lantern. That college had some time before been dissolved; and Dr. Wat-

¹ The passage quoted by Dr. Johnson is in the "Character of the Assembly Man," Butler's *Remains*, p. 232, edit. 1754: "He preaches, indeed, both in season and out of season; for he rails at Popery, when the land is almost lost in Presbytery; and would cry fire! fire! in Noah's flood."

There is reason to believe that this piece was not written by Butler, but by Sir John Birkenhead; for Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, vol. ii. p. 640, enumerates it among that gentleman's works, and gives the following account of it: "'The Assembly Man' (or the character of an assembly man), written 1647, Lond. 1662-3, in three sheets in quo. The copy of it was taken from the author by those who said they could not rob, because all was theirs; so excised what they liked not; and so mangled and reformed it, that it was no character of an assembly, but of themselves. At length, after it had slept several years, the author published it, to avoid false copies. It is also reprinted in a book entitled 'Wit and Loyalty revived,' in a collection of some smart satyrs in verse and prose on the late times, Lond. 1682, qu., said to be written by Abr. Cowley, Sir John Birkenhead, and Hudibras, alias Sam. Butler." For this information I am indebted to Mr. Reed, of Staple Inn.—BOSWELL.

² [More likely the fine epitaph on John, Viscount of Dundee, translated by Dryden, and beginning *Ultimæ Scætorum*, &c.—WALTER SCOTT.]

son, a professor here (the historian of Philip II.), had purchased the ground, and what buildings remained. When we entered his court, it seemed quite academical; and we found in his house very comfortable and genteel accommodation.³

Thursday, 19th August.—We rose much refreshed. I had with me a map of Scotland, a Bible, which was given me by Lord Mountstuart when we were together in Italy, and Ogden's "Sermons on Prayer." Mr. Nairne introduced us to Dr. Watson, whom we found a well-informed man, of very amiable manners. Dr. Johnson, after they were acquainted, said, "I take great delight in him." His daughter, a very pleasing young lady, made breakfast. Dr. Watson observed, that Glasgow university had fewer home students since trade increased, as learning was rather incompatible with it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, as trade is now carried on by subordinate hands, men in trade have as much leisure as others; and now learning itself is a trade. A man goes to a bookseller, and gets what he can. We have done with patronage. In the infancy of learning, we find some great man praised for it. This diffused it among others. When it becomes general, an author leaves the great, and applies to the multitude." BOSWELL. "It is a shame that authors are not now better patronised." JOHNSON. "No, sir. If learning cannot support a man, if he must sit with his hands across till somebody feeds him, it is as to him a bad thing, and it is better as it is⁴. With patronage, what flattery! what falsehood! While a man is in equilibrio, he throws truth among the multitude, and lets them take it as they please; in patronage, he must say what pleases his patron, and it is an equal chance whether that be truth or falsehood." WATSON. "But is it not the case now, that, instead of flattering one person, we flatter the age?" JOHNSON. "No, sir. The world always lets a man tell what he thinks his own way. I wonder, however, that so many people have written, who might have let it alone. That people should endeavour to excel in conversation, I do not wonder; because in conversation praise is instantly reverberated."

We talked of change of manners. Dr. Johnson observed, that our drinking less than our ancestors was owing to the change from ale to wine. "I remember," said he, "when all the *decent* people in Lichfield got drunk⁵ every night, and were not the

³ My journal, from this day inclusive, was read by Dr. Johnson.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [All this is very just, but not very consistent with his complaint of Lord Chesterfield's inefficient patronage. See *ante*, p. 112, &c.—Ed.]

⁵ [As an item in the history of manners, it may be observed, that *drinking* to excess has diminished greatly in the memory even of those who

worse thought of. Ale was cheap, so you pressed strongly. When a man must bring a bottle of wine, he is not in such haste. Smoking has gone out. To be sure, it is a shocking thing, blowing smoke out of our mouths into other people's mouths, eyes, and noses, and having the same thing done to us. Yet I cannot account, why a thing which requires so little exertion, and yet preserves the mind from total vacuity, should have gone out. Every man has something by which he calms himself; beating with his feet, or so¹. I remember when people in England changed a shirt only once a week: a Pandour, when he gets a shirt, greases it to make it last. Formerly, good tradesmen had no fire but in the kitchen; never in the parlour, except on Sunday. My father, who was a magistrate of Lichfield, lived thus. They never began to have a fire in the parlour, but on leaving off business, or some great revolution of their life." Dr. Watson said, the hall was as a kitchen, in old squires' houses. JOHNSON. "No, sir. The hall was for great occasions, and never was used for domestick refection." We talked of the Union, and what money it had brought into Scotland. Dr. Watson observed, that a little money formerly went as far as a great deal now. JOHNSON. "In speculation, it seems that a smaller quantity of money, equal in value to a larger quantity, if equally divided, should produce the same effect. But it is not so in reality. Many more conveniencies and elegancies are enjoyed where money is plentiful, than where it is scarce. Perhaps a great familiarity with it, which arises from plenty, makes us more easily part with it."

After what Dr. Johnson had said of St. Andrews, which he had long wished to see, as our oldest university, and the seat of our primate in the days of episcopacy, I can say little. Since the publication of Dr. Johnson's book, I find that he has been censured for not seeing here the ancient chapel of St. Rule², a curious piece of sacred architecture. But this was neither his fault nor mine. We were both of us abundantly desirous of surveying such sort of antiquities;

can remember forty or fifty years. The taste for smoking, however, has revived, probably from the military habits of Europe during the French wars; but instead of the sober sedentary pipe, the ambulatory cigar is now chiefly used. See *ante*, p. 137, an observation of Johnson's that insanity had increased as smoking declined.—ED.]

¹ Dr. Johnson used to practise this himself very much.—BOSWELL.

² [It is very singular how they could miss seeing St. Rule's chapel, an ecclesiastical building, the most ancient, perhaps, in Great Britain. It is a square tower, which stands close by the ruins of the old cathedral. *Martin's Antiquitates Divi Andrei* are now published.—WALTER SCOTT.]

but neither of us knew of this. I am afraid the censure must fall on those who did not tell us of it. In every place, where there is any thing worthy of observation, there should be a short printed directory for strangers, such as we find in all the towns of Italy, and in some of the towns in England. I was told that there is a manuscript account of St. Andrews, by Martiu, secretary to Archbishop Sharp; and that one Douglas has published a small account of it. I inquired at a bookseller's, but could not get it. Dr. Johnson's veneration for the hierarchy is well known. There is no wonder, then, that he was affected with strong indignation, while he beheld the ruins of religious magnificence. I happened to ask where John Knox was buried. Dr. Johnson burst out, "I hope in the highway. I have been looking at his reformations."

It was a very fine day. Dr. Johnson seemed quite wrapt up in the contemplation of the scenes which were now presented to him. He kept his hat off while he was upon any part of the ground where the cathedral had stood. He said well, that, "Knox had set on a mob, without knowing where it would end; and that differing from a man in doctrine was no reason why you should pull his house about his ears." As we walked in the cloisters, there was a solemn echo, while he talked loudly of a proper retirement from the world. Mr. Nairne said, he had an inclination to retire. I called Dr. Johnson's attention to this, that I might hear his opinion if it was right. JOHNSON. "Yes, when he has done his duty to society. In general, as every man is obliged not only to 'love God, but his neighbour as himself,' he must bear his part in active life; yet there are exceptions. Those who are exceedingly scrupulous (which I do not approve, for I am no friend to scruples), and find their scrupulosity invincible, so that they are quite in the dark, and know not what they shall do,—or those who cannot resist temptations, and find they make themselves worse by being in the world, without making it better, may retire. I never read of a hermit, but in imagination I kiss his feet; never of a monastery, but I could fall on my knees, and kiss the pavement. But I think putting young people there, who know nothing of life, nothing of retirement, is dangerous and wicked. It is a saying as old as Hesiod,

Ἐργα νεῶν, βουλαῖτε μισῶν, εὐχαῖτε γερόντων³.

That is a very noble line: not that young men should not pray, or old men not give counsel, but that every season of life has its

³ "Let youth in deeds, in counsel man engage:
Prayer is the proper duty of old age."—BOSWELL.

[See, on this interesting subject, *ante*, p. 227.—ED.]

proper duties. I have thought of retiring, and have talked of it to a friend; but I find my vocation is rather to active life." I said, some young monks might be allowed, to show that it is not age alone that can retire to pious solitude; but he thought this would only show that they could not resist temptation.

He wanted to mount the steeples, but it could not be done. There are no good inscriptions here. Bad Roman characters he naturally mistook for half Gothick, half Roman. One of the steeples, which he was told was in danger, he wished not to be taken down; "for," said he, "it may fall on some of the posterity of John Knox; and no great matter¹!" Dinner was mentioned. JOHNSON. "Ay, ay, amidst all these sorrowful scenes, I have no objection to dinner."

We went and looked at the castle where Cardinal Beaton was murdered², and then visited Principal Murison at his college, where is a good library room; but the Principal was abundantly vain of it, for he seriously said to Dr. Johnson, "You have not such a one in England³."

The professors entertained us with a very good dinner. Present: Murison, Shaw, Cooke, Hill, Haddo, Watson, Flint, Brown. I observed, that I wondered to see him eat so well, after viewing so many sorrowful scenes of ruined religious magnificence. "Why," said he, "I am not sorry, after seeing these gentlemen, for they are not sorry." Murison said, all sorrow was bad,

¹ [These towers have been repaired by the government, with a proper attention to the antiquities of the country.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² David Beaton, cardinal and archbishop of St. Andrews, was murdered on the 29th May, 1546, in his castle of St. Andrews, by John and Norman Leslie (of the Rothes family), and some others, in vengeance, as they alleged (though no doubt they had also personal motives), of the share the cardinal had in the death of Mr. George Wishart, a protestant minister of great reputation, who had lately been burned for heresy in the cardinal's own presence. "The cardinal was murdered," says Dr. Johnson in his "Journey," "by the ruffians of reformation, in the manner of which Knox has given what he himself calls a merry narrative."—*Works*, vol. viii. p. 212.—Ed.]

³ ["The library," says Johnson, good-humouredly, "is not very spacious, but elegant and luminous. The Doctor by whom it was shown hoped to irritate or subdue my English vanity by telling me, that we had no such repository of books in England." The library at St. Andrews is, the editor is informed, seventy-five feet long. That of All Souls, in Oxford, is one hundred and ninety-eight feet; of Christ Church, one hundred and forty-one; of Queen's one hundred and twenty-three; and each of the three divisions of the Bodleian is more than twice as long as the library of St. Andrews.—Ed.]

as it was murmuring against the dispensations of Providence. JOHNSON. "Sir, sorrow is inherent in humanity. As you cannot judge two and two to be either five or three, but certainly four, so, when comparing a worse present state with a better which is past, you cannot but feel sorrow. It is not cured by reason, but by the incur-sion of present objects, which wear out the past. You need not murmur, though you are sorry." MURISON. "But St. Paul says, 'I have learnt, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content.'" JOHNSON. "Sir, that relates to riches and poverty; for we see St. Paul, when he had a thorn in the flesh, prayed earnestly to have it removed; and then he could not be content." MURISON, thus refuted, tried to be smart, and drank to Dr. Johnson, "Long may you lecture!" Dr. Johnson afterwards, speaking of his not drinking wine, said, "The Doctor spoke of *lecturing* (looking to him). I give all these lectures on water."

He defended requiring subscription in those admitted to universities, thus: "As all who come into the country must obey the king, so all who come into an university must be of the church."

And here I must do Dr. Johnson the justice to contradict a very absurd and ill-natured story, as to what passed at St. Andrews. It has been circulated, that, after grace was said in English, in the usual manner, he, with the greatest marks of contempt, as if he had held it to be no grace in an university, would not sit down till he had said grace aloud in Latin. This would have been an insult indeed to the gentlemen who were entertaining us. But the truth was precisely thus. In the course of conversation at dinner, Dr. Johnson, in very good humour, said, "I should have expected to have heard a Latin grace, among so many learned men: we had always a Latin grace at Oxford. I believe I can repeat it." Which he did, as giving the learned men in one place a specimen of what was done by the learned men in another place.

We went and saw the church, in which is Archbishop Sharp's⁴ monument⁵. I was struck with the same kind of feelings with which the churches of Italy impressed me. I was much pleased to see Dr. Johnson ac-

⁴ [James Sharp, Archbishop of St. Andrew's, was dragged from his coach, and murdered in the arms of his daughter, on Magus Moor, 3d of May, 1679. Sir Walter Scott, in his celebrated tale, entitled *Old Mortality*, has told this story with all the force of history and all the interest of romance.—Ed.]

⁵ [The monument is of Italian marble. The brother of the archbishop left a sum for preserving it, which, in one unhappy year, was expended in painting it in resemblance of reality. The daubing is now removed.—WALTER SCOTT.]

tually in St. Andrews, of which we had talked so long. Professor Haddo was with us this afternoon, along with Dr. Watson. We looked at St. Salvador's College. The rooms for students seemed very commodious, and Dr. Johnson said, the chapel was the neatest place of worship he had seen. The key of the library could not be found: for it seems Professor Hill, who was out of town, had taken it with him. Dr. Johnson told a joke he had heard of a monastery abroad, where the key of the library could never be found.

It was somewhat dispiriting, to see this ancient archiepiscopal city now sadly deserted. We saw in one of its streets a remarkable proof of liberal toleration; a non-juring clergyman, strutting about in his canonicals, with a jolly countenance and a round belly, like a well-fed monk.

We observed two occupations united in the same person, who had hung out two sign-posts. Upon one was "James Hood, White Iron Smith" (*i. e.* tin-plate worker). Upon another, "The Art of Fencing Taught, by James Hood." Upon this last were painted some trees, and two men fencing, one of whom had hit the other in the eye, to show his great dexterity; so that the art was well taught. JOHNSON. "Were I studying here, I should go and take a lesson. I remember Hope, in his book on this art, says, 'the Scotch are very good fencers.'" "

We returned to the inn, where we had been entertained at dinner, and drank tea in company with some of the professors, of whose civilities I beg leave to add my humble and very grateful acknowledgment to the honourable testimony of Dr. Johnson, in his "Journey."

We talked of composition, which was a favourite topick of Dr. Watson, who first distinguished himself by lectures on rhetoric. JOHNSON. "I advised Chambers, and would advise every young man beginning to compose, to do it as fast as he can, to get a habit of having his mind to start promptly; it is so much more difficult to improve in speed than in accuracy." WATSON. "I own I am for much attention to accuracy in composing, lest one should get bad habits of doing it in a slovenly manner." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you are confounding *doing* inaccurately with the *necessity* of doing inaccurately. A man knows when his composition is inaccurate, and when he thinks fit he'll correct it. But, if a man is accustomed to compose slowly, and with difficulty, upon all occasions, there is danger that he may not compose at all, as we do not like to do that which is not done easily; and, at any rate, more time is consumed in a small matter than ought to be." WATSON. "Dr. Hugh Blair has taken a week

to compose a sermon." JOHNSON. "Then, sir, that is for want of the habit of composing quickly, which I am insisting one should acquire." WATSON. "Blair was not composing all the week, but only such hours as he found himself disposed for composition." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, unless you tell me the time he took, you tell me nothing. If I say I took a week to walk a mile, and have had the gout five days, and been ill otherwise another day, I have taken but one day. I myself have composed about forty sermons. I have begun a sermon after dinner, and sent it off by the post that night. I wrote forty-eight of the printed octavo pages of the *Life of Savage* at a sitting; but then I sat up all night. I have also written six sheets in a day of translation from the French¹." BOSWELL. "We have all observed how one man dresses himself slowly, and another fast." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; it is wonderful how much time some people will consume in dressing; taking up a thing and looking at it, and laying it down, and taking it up again. Every one should get the habit of doing it quickly. I would say to a young divine, Here is your text; let me see how soon you can make a sermon. Then I'd say, Let me see how much better you can make it. Thus I should see both his powers and his judgment."

We all went to Dr. Watson's to supper. Miss Sharp, great grandchild of Archbishop Sharp², was there, as was Mr. Craig, the ingenious architect of the new town of Edinburgh, and nephew of Thomson, to whom Dr. Johnson has since done so much justice in his "Lives of the Poets."

We talked of memory, and its various modes. JOHNSON. "Memory will play strange tricks. One sometimes loses a single word. I once lost *fugaces* in the Ode 'Posthume, Posthume.'" I mentioned to him, that a worthy gentleman of my acquaintance actually forgot his own name. JOHNSON. "Sir, that was a morbid oblivion."

¹ [This must have been the translation of Lobo; for Johnson translated no other work, consisting of this number of pages (*viz.* ninety-six), from the French. This account of so much diligence does not seem to agree with that before given of his indolence in completing that translation. See *ante*, p. 31. But, as Sir W. Scott observes, "a pool is usually succeeded in a river by a current, and he may have written fast to make up lee way." —ED.]

² [It is very singular that Dr. Johnson, with all his episcopal partiality, should have visited Archbishop Sharp's monument, and been in company with his descendant, without making any observation on his character and melancholy death, or on the general subject of Scottish episcopacy.—WALTER SCOTT.]

Friday, 20th August.—Dr. Shaw, the professor of divinity, breakfasted with us. I took out my “Ogden on Prayer,” and read some of it to the company. Dr. Johnson praised him. “Abernethy¹ (said he) allows only of a physical effect of prayer upon the mind, which may be produced many ways as well as by prayer; for instance, by meditation. Ogden goes further. In truth, we have the consent of all nations for the efficacy of prayer, whether offered up by individuals or by assemblies; and Revelation has told us it will be effectual.” I said, “Leechman² seemed to incline to Abernethy’s doctrine.” Dr. Watson observed that Leechman meant to show that, even admitting no effect to be produced by prayer, respecting the Deity, it was useful to our own minds. He had given only a part of his system: Dr. Johnson thought he should have given the whole.

Dr. Johnson enforced the strict observance of Sunday³. “It should be different (he observed) from another day. People may walk, but not throw stones at birds. There may be relaxation, but there should be no levity.”

We went and saw Colonel Nairne’s garden and grotto. Here was a fine old plane tree. Unluckily the colonel said there was but this and another large tree in the country⁴. This assertion was an excellent cue for Dr. Johnson, who laughed enormously, calling to me to hear it. He had expatiated to me on the nakedness of that part of Scotland which he had seen. His “Journey” has been violently abused for what he has said upon this subject. But let it be considered that when Dr. Johnson talks of trees, he means trees of good size, such as he was accustomed to see in England; and of these there are certainly very few upon the eastern coast of Scotland. Besides, he

¹ [An Irish dissenting divine, whose “Discourses on the Divine Attributes,” and some volumes of sermons, are highly esteemed even by the clergy of the church of England. He died in 1740, in the sixtieth year of his age.—Ed.]

² [Dr. William Leechman, a Scotch divine, who published, amongst other valuable works, a discourse “On the Nature, Reasonableness, and Advantages of Prayer.” He died in 1785, aged eighty.—Ed.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 255.—Ed.]

⁴ [Johnson has been unjustly abused for dwelling on the barrenness of Fife. There are good trees in many parts of that county, but the east coast along which lay Johnson’s route is certainly destitute of wood, excepting young plantations. The *other* tree mentioned by Colonel Nairne is probably the Prior Letham plane, measuring in circumference at the surface nearly twenty feet, and at the setting on of the branches nineteen feet. This giant of the forest stands in a cold exposed situation, apart from every other tree.—WALTER SCOTT.]

said, that he meant to give only a map of the road; and let any traveller observe how many trees, which deserve the name, he can see from the road from Berwick to Aberdeen. Had Dr. Johnson said “there are no trees” upon this line, he would have said what is colloquially true; because, by no trees, in common speech, we mean few. When he is particular in counting, he may be attacked. I know not how Colonel Nairne came to say there were but two large trees in the county of Fife. I did not perceive that he smiled. There are certainly not a great many; but I could have shown him more than two at Balmuto, from whence my ancestors came, and which now belongs to a branch of my family.

The grotto was ingeniously constructed. In the front of it were petrified stocks of fir, plane, and some other tree. Dr. Johnson said “Scotland has no right to boast of this grotto; it is owing to personal merit. I never denied personal merit to many of you.” Professor Shaw said to me, as we walked, “This is a wonderful man: he is master of every subject he handles.” Dr. Watson allowed him a very strong understanding, but wondered at his total inattention to establish manners, as he came from London.

I have not preserved, in my Journal, any of the conversation which passed between Dr. Johnson and Professor Shaw; but I recollect Dr. Johnson said to me afterwards, “I took much to Shaw.”

We left St. Andrews about noon, and some miles from it observing, at Leuchars, a church with an old tower, we stopped to look at it. The manse, as the parsonage-house is called in Scotland, was close by. I waited on the minister, mentioned our names, and begged he would tell us what he knew about it. He was a very civil old man; but could only inform us, that it was supposed to have stood eight hundred years. He told us there was a colony of Danes in his parish; that they had landed at a remote period of time, and still remained a distinct people. Dr. Johnson shrewdly inquired whether they had brought women with them. We were not satisfied as to this colony⁵.

We saw, this day, Dundee and Aberbrothick, the last of which Dr. Johnson has celebrated in his “Journey.” Upon the road we talked of the Roman Catholic faith. He mentioned (I think) Tillotson’s argument against transubstantiation: “That we are as sure we see bread and wine only, as that we read in the Bible the text on which that false doctrine is found—

⁵ [The Danish colony at Leuchars is a vain imagination concerning a certain fleet of Danes wrecked on Sheughy Dikes.—WALTER SCOTT.]

ed. We have only the evidence of our senses for both." "If (he added) God had never spoken figuratively, we might hold that he speaks literally, when he says, 'This is my body.'" BOSWELL. "But what do you say, sir, to the ancient and continued tradition of the church upon this point?" JOHNSON. "Tradition, sir, has no place where the Scriptures are plain; and tradition cannot persuade a man into a belief of transubstantiation. Able men, indeed, have said they believed it."

This is an awful subject. I did not then press Dr. Johnson upon it; nor shall I now enter upon a disquisition concerning the import of those words uttered by our Saviour¹, which had such an effect upon many of his disciples, that they "went back, and walked no more with him." The catechism and solemn office for communion, in the church of England, maintain a mysterious belief in more than a mere commemoration of the death of Christ, by partaking of the elements of bread and wine.

Dr. Johnson put me in mind, that at St. Andrews I had defended my profession very well, when the question had again been started, Whether a lawyer might honestly engage with the first side that offers him a fee. "Sir (said I), it was with your arguments against Sir William Forbes; but it was much that I could wield the arms of Goliath."

He said, our judges had not gone deep in the question concerning literary property. I mentioned Lord Mouboddo's opinion, that if a man could get a work by heart, he might print it, as by such an act the mind is exercised. JOHNSON. "No sir; a man's repeating it no more makes it his property, than a man may sell a cow which he drives home." I said, printing an abridgment of a work was allowed, which was only cutting the horns and tail off the cow. JOHNSON. "No, sir; 'tis making the cow have a calf."

About eleven at night we arrived at Montrose. We found but a sorry inn, where I myself saw another waiter put a lump of sugar with his fingers into Dr. Johnson's lemonade, for which he called him "rascal!" It put me in great glee that our landlord was an Englishman. I rallied the Doctor upon this, and he grew quiet. Both Sir John Hawkins's and Dr. Burney's "History of Musick" had then been advertised. I asked if this was not unlucky: would they not hurt one another? JOHNSON. "No, sir. They will do good to one another. Some will buy the one, some the other, and

¹ "Then Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."—See St. John's Gospel, chap. vi. 53, and following verses.—BOSWELL.

compare them; and so a talk is made about a thing, and the books are sold."

He was angry at me for proposing to carry lemons with us to Sky, that he might be sure to have his lemonade. "Sir," said he, "I do not wish to be thought that feeble man who cannot do without any thing. Sir, it is very bad manners to carry provisions to any man's house, as if he could not entertain you. To an inferior, it is oppressive; to a superior, it is insolent."

Having taken the liberty, this evening, to remark to Dr. Johnson, that he very often sat quite silent for a long time, even when in company with only a single friend, which I myself had sometimes sadly experienced, he smiled and said, "It is true, sir. Tom Tyers (for so he familiarly called our ingenious friend, who since his death, has paid a biographical tribute to his memory), Tom Tyers described me best. He once said to me, 'Sir, you are like a ghost: you never speak till you are spoken to.'"

Saturday, 21st August.—Neither the Rev. Mr. Nisbet, the established minister, nor the Rev. Mr. Spooner, the episcopal minister, were in town. Before breakfast we went and saw the town-hall, where is a good dancing room, and other rooms for tea drinking. The appearance of the town from it is very well; but many of the houses are built with their ends to the street, which looks awkward. When we came down from it, I met Mr. Gleg, a merchant here. He went with us to see the English chapel. It is situated on a pretty dry spot, and there is a fine walk to it. It is really an elegant building, both within and without. The organ is adorned with green and gold. Dr. Johnson gave a shilling extraordinary to the clerk, saying, "He belongs to an honest church." I put him in mind, that episcopals were but dissenters here; they were only tolerated. "Sir," said he, "we are here, as Christians in Turkey." He afterwards went into an apothecary's shop, and ordered some medicine for himself, and wrote the prescription in technical characters. The boy took him for a physician.

I doubted much which road to take, whether to go by the coast, or by Lawrence Kirk and Mouboddo. I knew Lord Mouboddo and Dr. Johnson did not love each other; yet I was unwilling not to visit his lordship; and was also curious to see them together². I mentioned my

² This description of Dr. Johnson appears to have been borrowed from "Tom Jones," book xi. chap. 2: "The other, who, like a ghost, only wanted to be spoke to, readily answered," &c.—BOSWELL. [Both are borrowed from a general superstition, that ghosts must be first spoken to.—ED.]

³ There were several points of similarity be-

doubts to Dr. Johnson, who said he would go two miles out of his way to see Lord Monboddo. I therefore sent Joseph forward, with the following note:

“Montrose, 21st August.

“MY DEAR LORD,—Thus far I am come with Mr. Samuel Johnson. We must be at Aberdeen to-night. I know you do not admire him so much as I do; but I cannot be in this country without making you a bow at your old place, as I do not know if I may again have an opportunity of seeing Monboddo. Besides, Mr. Johnson says, he would go two miles out of his way to see Lord Monboddo. I have sent forward my servant, that we may know if your lordship be at home. I am ever, my dear lord, most sincerely yours,
“JAMES BOSWELL.”

As we travelled onwards from Montrose, we had the Grampian hills in our view, and some good land around us, but void of trees and hedges. Dr. Johnson has said ludicrously, in his “Journey,” that the *hedges* were of *stone*; for, instead of the verdant *thorn* to refresh the eye, we found the bare *wall* or *dike* intersecting the prospect. He observed, that it was wonderful to see a country so divested, so denuded of trees.

We stopped at Lawrence Kirk, where our great grammarian, Ruddiman, was once schoolmaster. We respectfully remembered that excellent man and eminent scholar, by whose labours a knowledge of the Latin language will be preserved in Scotland, if it shall be preserved at all. Lord Gardenston¹, one of our judges, collected money to raise a monument to him at this place, which I hope will be well executed. I know my father gave five guineas towards it. Lord Gardenston is the proprietor of

tween them; learning, clearness of head, precision of speech, and a love of research on many subjects which people in general do not investigate. Foote paid Lord Monboddo the compliment of saying, that he was “an Elzevir edition of Johnson.” It has been shrewdly observed, that Foote must have meant a diminutive, or pocket edition.—BOSWELL. [Johnson himself thus describes Lord Monboddo to Mrs. Thrale: “He is a Scotch judge, who has lately written a strange book about the origin of language, in which he traces monkeys up to men, and says that in some countries the human species have tails like other beasts. He inquired for these long-tailed men from [Sir Joseph] Banks, and was not pleased that they had not been found in all his peregrinations. He talked nothing of this to me”—*Letters*, v. i. p. 114.—ED.]

¹ [Francis Garden, a Scotch Lord of Session, who erected a very pretty temple over St. Bernard’s Well, on the bank of the Water of Leith. He was a man of talents, but of some irregularity of mind, and died (it is said, under melancholy circumstances) in 1794.—ED.]

Lawrence Kirk, and has encouraged the building of a manufacturing village, of which he is exceedingly fond, and has written a pamphlet upon it, as if he had founded Thebes, in which, however, there are many useful precepts strongly expressed. The village seemed to be irregularly built, some of the houses being of clay, some of brick, and some of brick and stone. Dr. Johnson observed, they thatched well here.

I was a little acquainted with Mr. Forbes, the minister of the parish. I sent to inform him that a gentleman desired to see him. He returned for answer, “that he would not come to a stranger.” I then gave my name, and he came. I remonstrated to him for not coming to a stranger; and, by presenting him to Dr. Johnson, proved to him what a stranger might sometimes be. His Bible inculcates “be not forgetful to entertain strangers,” and mentions the same motive². He defended himself by saying, “He had once come to a stranger, who sent for him; and he found him ‘a little worth person!’”

Dr. Johnson insisted on stopping at the inn, as I told him that Lord Gardenston had furnished it with a collection of books, that travellers might have entertainment for the mind as well as the body. He praised the design, but wished there had been more books, and those better chosen.

About a mile from Monboddo, where you turn off the road, Joseph was waiting to tell us my lord expected us to dinner. We drove over a wild moor. It rained, and the scene was somewhat dreary. Dr. Johnson repeated, with solemn emphasis, Macbeth’s speech on meeting the witches. As we travelled on, he told me, “Sir, you got into our club by doing what a man can do³. Several of the members wished to keep you out. Burke told me, he doubted if you were fit for it: but, now you are in, none of them are sorry. Burke says, that you have so much good humour naturally, it is scarce a virtue.” BOSWELL. “They were afraid of you, sir, as it was you who proposed me.” JOHNSON. “Sir, they knew, that if they refused you, they’d probably never have got in another. I’d have kept them all out. Beauclerk was very earnest for you.” BOSWELL. “Beauclerk has a keenness of mind which is very uncommon.” JOHNSON. “Yes, sir; and every thing comes from him so easily. It ap-

² [“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby some have entertained *angels* unawares.”—*Heb.* xiii. 2. A modest allusion on the part of Mr. Boswell!—ED.]

³ This, I find, is considered as obscure. I suppose Dr. Johnson meant, that I assiduously and earnestly recommended myself to some of the members, as in a canvass for an election into parliament.—BOSWELL

pears to me that I labour, when I say a good thing." BOSWELL. "You are loud, sir, but it is not an effort of mind."

Monboddo is a wretched place, wild and naked, with a poor old house, though, if I recollect right, there are two turrets, which mark an old baron's residence. Lord Monboddo received us at his gate most courteously; pointed to the Douglas arms upon his house, and told us that his great-grandmother was of that family. "In such houses," said he, "our ancestors lived, who were better men than we." "No, no, my lord," said Dr. Johnson; "we are as strong as they, and a great deal wiser." This was an assault upon one of Lord Monboddo's capital dogmas, and I was afraid there would have been a violent altercation in the very close, before we got into the house. But his lordship is distinguished not only for "ancient metaphysics," but for ancient politesse, "*la vieille cour*," and he made no reply.

His lordship was drest in a rustick suit, and wore a little round hat; he told us, we now saw him as Farmer Burnet, and we should have his family dinner, a farmer's dinner. He said, "I should not have forgiven Mr. Boswell, had he not brought you here, Dr. Johnson." He produced a very long stalk of corn, as a specimen of his crop, and said, "You see here the *lætæ segetes*:" he added, that Virgil seemed to be as enthusiastick a farmer as he, and was certainly a practical one. JOHNSON. "It does not always follow, my lord, that a man, who has written a good poem on an art, has practised it. Philip Miller¹ told me, that in Philips's "Cyder," a poem, all the precepts were just, and indeed better than in books written for the purpose of instructing; yet Philips had never made cyder."

I started the subject of emigration. JOHNSON. "To a man of mere animal life, you can urge no argument against going to America, but that it will be some time before he will get the earth to produce. But a man of any intellectual enjoyment will not easily go and immerse himself and his posterity for ages in barbarism."

He and my lord spoke highly of Homer. JOHNSON. "He had all the learning of his age. The shield of Achilles shows a nation in war, a nation in peace; harvest sport, nay stealing²." MONBODDO. "Ay, and

what we (looking to me) would call a parliament-house scene; a cause pleaded." JOHNSON. "That is part of the life of a nation in peace. And there are in Homer such characters of heroes, and combinations of qualities of heroes, that the united powers of mankind ever since have not produced any but what are to be found there."

MONBODDO. "Yet no character is described." JOHNSON. "No; they all develop themselves. Agamemnon is always a gentleman-like character; he has always ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΤΡΩΩΝ³. That the ancients held so, is plain from this; that Euripides, in his Hecuba, makes him the person to interpose⁴."

MONBODDO. "The history of manners is the most valuable. I never set a high value on any other history." JOHNSON. "Nor I; and therefore I esteem biography, as giving us what comes near to ourselves, what we can turn to use." BOSWELL. "But in the course of general history we find manners. In wars, we see the dispositions of people, their degrees of humanity, and other particulars." JOHNSON. "Yes; but then you must take all the facts to get this, and it is but a little you get."

MONBODDO. "And it is that little which makes history valuable." Bravo! thought I; they agree like two brothers. MONBODDO. "I am sorry, Dr. Johnson, you were not longer at Edinburgh, to receive the homage of our men of learning." JOHNSON. "My lord, I received great respect and great kindness."

BOSWELL. "He goes back to Edinburgh after our tour." We talked of the decrease of learning in Scotland, and of the "Muses' Welcome." JOHNSON. "Learning is much decreased in England, in my remembrance."

MONBODDO. "You, sir, have lived to see its decrease in England, I its extinction in Scotland." However, I brought him to confess that the high school of Edinburgh did well. JOHNSON. "Learning has decreased in England, because learning will

to change the genuine Journal. One of the best critics of our age conjectures that the imperfect passage above has probably been as follows: "In his book we have an accurate display of a nation in war, and a nation in peace; the peasant is delineated as truly as the general: nay, even harvest sport, and the modes of ancient theft, are described."—BOSWELL.

³ [*Something royal*.—ED.]

⁴ Dr. Johnson modestly said, he had not read Homer so much as he wished he had done. But this conversation shows how well he was acquainted with the Mæonian bard; and he has shown it still more in his criticism upon Pope's Homer, in his life of that poet. My excellent friend, Mr. Langton, told me, he was once present at a dispute between Dr. Johnson and Mr. Burke, on the comparative merits of Homer and Virgil, which was carried on with extraordinary abilities on both sides. Dr. Johnson maintained the superiority of Homer.—BOSWELL.

¹ [Author of the "Gardener's Dictionary."—ED.]

² My note of this is much too short. *Brevi esse laboro, obscurus fio*. Yet as I have resolved, that the very Journal which Dr. Johnson read shall be presented to the publick, I will not expand the text in any considerable degree, though I may occasionally supply a word to complete the sense, as I fill up the blanks of abbreviation in the writing, neither of which can be said

not do so much for a man as formerly. There are other ways of getting preferment. Few bishops are now made for their learning. To be a bishop, a man must be learned in a learned age, factious in a factious age, but always of eminence. Warburton is an exception, though his learning alone did not raise him. He was first an antagonist to Pope, and helped Theobald to publish his *Shakspeare*; but, seeing Pope the rising man, when Crousaz attacked his 'Essay on Man,' for some faults which it has, and some which it has not, Warburton defended it in the Review of that time. This brought him acquainted with Pope, and he gained his friendship. Pope introduced him to Allen, Allen married him to his niece; so, by Allen's interest and his own, he was made a bishop¹. But then his learning was the *sine quâ non*. He knew how to make the most of it, but I do not find by any dishonest means." MONBODDO. "He is a great man." JOHNSON. "Yes, he has great knowledge, great power of mind. Hardly any man brings greater variety of learning to bear upon his point." MONBODDO. "He is one of the greatest lights of your church." JOHNSON. "Why, we are not so sure of his being very friendly to us. He blazes, if you will, but that is not always the steadiest light. Lowth is another bishop who has risen by his learning."

Dr. Johnson examined young Arthur, Lord Monboddo's son, in Latin. He answered very well; upon which he said, with complacency, "Get you gone! When King James comes back², you shall be in the 'Muses' Welcome!" My lord and Dr. Johnson disputed a little, whether the savage or the London shop-keeper had the best existence. His lordship, as usual, preferring the savage. My lord was extremely hospitable, and I saw both Dr. Johnson and him liking each other better every hour.

Dr. Johnson having retired for a short time, his lordship spoke of his conversation as I could have wished. Dr. Johnson had said, "I have done greater feats with my knife than this;" though he had eaten a very hearty dinner. My lord, who affects

or believes he follows an abstemious system, seemed struck with Dr. Johnson's manner of living. I had a particular satisfaction in being under the roof of Monboddo, my lord being my father's old friend, and having been always very good to me. We were cordial together. He asked Dr. Johnson and me to stay all night. When I said we must be at Aberdeen, he replied, "Well, I am like the Romans: I shall say to you, 'Happy to come; happy to depart!'" He thanked Dr. Johnson for his visit. JOHNSON. "I little thought, when I had the honour to meet your lordship in London, that I should see you at Monboddo." After dinner, as the ladies were going away, Dr. Johnson would stand up³. He insisted that politeness was of great consequence in society. "It is (said he) fictitious benevolence. It supplies the place of it amongst those who see each other only in publick, or but little. Depend upon it the want of it never fails to produce something disagreeable to one or other. I have always applied to good breeding, what Addison in his *Cato* says of honour:

'Honour's a sacred tie; the law of kings;
The noble mind's distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens Virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions where she is not.'

When he took up his large oak stick, he said, "My lord, that's *Homerick*;" thus pleasantly alluding to his lordship's favourite writer.

Gory, my lord's black servant, was sent as our guide, to conduct us to the high road. The circumstance of each of them having a black servant was another point of similarity between Johnson and Monboddo. I observed how curious it was to see an African in the north of Scotland, with little or no difference of manners from those of the natives. Dr. Johnson laughed to see Gory and Joseph riding together most cordially. "Those two fellows (said he), one from Africa, the other from Bohemia, seem quite at home." He was much pleased with Lord Monboddo to-day. He said, he would have pardoned him for a few paradoxes, when he found he had so much that was good; but that, from his appearance in London, he thought him all paradox; which would not do. He observed that his lordship had talked no paradoxes to-day. "And as to the savage and the London shopkeeper (said he), I don't know but I might have taken the side of the savage equally, had any body else taken the side of the shop-

¹ [It was probably some conversation of the same tone as this, imperfectly recollected, or too slightly considered, which led Mr. Strahan to the statement, questioned *ante*, p. 240; that the king had told Johnson, that *Pope had made Warburton a bishop*. Johnson's account, here given, is rational in itself, and consistent with the known facts; Mr. Strahan's anecdote is neither.—ED.]

² I find some doubt has been entertained concerning Dr. Johnson's meaning here. It is to be supposed that he meant, "when a king shall again be entertained in Scotland."—BOSWELL. [Dr. Johnson meant, probably, a little touch of *Jacobite* pleasantry.—ED.]

³ [Such is the happy improvement of manners, that readers of this day will wonder that a mark of respect to ladies now so universal should ever have been withheld. It surely was not so in England at this period.—ED.]

keeper¹." He had said to my lord, in opposition to the value of the savage's courage, that it was owing to his limited power of thinking, and repeated Pope's verses, in which "Macedonia's madman" is introduced, and the conclusion is,

"Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his nose."

I objected to the last phrase, as being low. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is intended to be low: it is satire. The expression is debased, to debase the character."

When Gory was about to part from us, Dr. Johnson called to him, "Mr. Gory, give me leave to ask you a question! are you baptised?" Gory told him he was—and confirmed by the Bishop of Durham. He then gave him a shilling.

We had a tedious driving this afternoon, and were somewhat drowsy. Last night I was afraid Dr. Johnson was beginning to faint in his resolution; for he said, "If we must ride much, we shall not go; and there's an end on't." To-day, when he talked of Sky with spirit, I said, "Why, sir, you seemed to me to despond yesterday. You are a delicate Londoner; you are a macaroni; you can't ride." JOHNSON. "Sir, I shall ride better than you. I was only afraid I should not find a horse able to carry me." I hoped then there would be no fear of getting through our wild Tour.‡

We came to Aberdeen at half an hour past eleven. The New Inn, we were told, was full. This was comfortless. The waiter, however, asked if one of our names was Boswell, and brought me a letter left at the inn: it was from Mr. Thrale, enclosing one to Dr. Johnson. Finding who I was, we were told they would contrive to lodge us by putting us for a night into a room with two beds. The waiter said to me in the broad strong Aberdeenshire dialect, "I thought I knew you, by your {likeness to your father." My father puts up at the New Inn, when on his circuit. Little was said to-night. I was to sleep in a little press-bed in Dr. Johnson's room. I had it wheeled out into the dining-room, and there I lay very well.

Sunday, 22d August.—I sent a message to Professor Thomas Gordon, who came and breakfasted with us. He had secured

¹ Johnson says to Mrs. Thrale, "We agreed pretty well, only we disputed in adjusting the claim of merit between a shopkeeper of London and a savage of the American wildernesses. Our opinions were, I think, maintained on both sides without full conviction. Monbodo declared boldly for the savage, and I, perhaps for that reason, sided with the citizen."—*Letters*, v. i. p. 115. See also another avowal of his readiness to take the wrong side of a question for the sake of argument, *sub* 16th June, 1784.—ED.]

seats for us at the English chapel². We found a respectable congregation, and an admirable organ, well played by Mr. Tait.

We walked down to the shore. Dr. Johnson laughed to hear that Cromwell's soldiers taught the Aberdeen people to make shoes and stockings, and to plant cabbages. He asked, if weaving the plaids was ever a domestic art in the Highlands, like spinning or knitting. They could not inform him here. But he conjectured probably, that where people lived so remote from each other, it was likely to be a domestic art; as we see it was among the ancients, from Penelope. I was sensible to-day, of an extraordinary degree, of Dr. Johnson's excellent English pronunciation. I cannot account for its striking me more now than any other day; but it was as if new to me, and I listened to every sentence which he spoke, as to a musical composition. Professor Gordon gave him an account of the plan of education in his college. Dr. Johnson said, it was similar to that at Oxford. Waller, the poet's great grandson, was studying here. Dr. Johnson wondered that a man should send his son so far off, when there were so many good schools in England. He said, "At a great school there is all the splendour and illumination of many minds; the radiance of all is concentrated in each, or at least reflected upon each. But we must own that neither a dull boy, nor an idle boy, will do so well at a great school as at a private one. For at a great school there are always boys enough to do well easily, who are sufficient to keep up the credit of the school; and after whipping being tried to no purpose, the dull or idle boys are left at the end of a class, having the appearance of going through the course, but learning nothing at all. Such boys may do good at a private school, where constant attention is paid to them, and they are watched. So that the question of publick or private education is not properly a general one; but whether one or the other is best for *my son*."

We were told the present Mr. Waller was a plain country gentleman; and his son would be such another. I observed, a family could not expect a poet but in a hundred generations. "Nay," said Dr. Johnson, "not one family in a hundred can ex-

² It is not easy to say why Mr. Boswell here omits to state that at church Dr. Johnson was recognized by a London acquaintance, Lady Diana Middleton, who mentioning that she had seen him to Lord Errol's brother, Mr. Boyd, procured the travellers an invitation to Slains Castle.—*Letters*, v. i. p. 118. Lady Diana was the daughter of Harry Grey, third Earl of Stamford, and wife of George Middleton, of Lenton, Esq. She died in 1780.—ED.]

pect a poet in a hundred generations." He then repeated Dryden's celebrated lines,¹

"Three poets in three distant ages born," &c.

and a part of a Latin translation of it done at Oxford¹: he did not then say by whom.

He received a card from Sir Alexander Gordon, who had been his acquaintance twenty years ago in London, and who, "if forgiven for not answering a line from him," would come in the afternoon. Dr. Johnson rejoiced to hear of him, and begged he would come and dine with us. I was much pleased to see the kindness with which Dr. Johnson received his old friend Sir Alexander; a gentleman of good family (Lismore), but who had not the estate. The king's college here made him Professor of Medicine, which affords him a decent subsistence. He told us that the value of the stockings exported from Aberdeen was, in peace, a hundred thousand pounds; and amounted, in time of war, to one hundred and seventy thousand pounds. Dr. Johnson asked what made the difference? Here we had a proof of the comparative sagacity of the two professors. Sir Alexander answered, "Because there is more occasion for them in war." Professor Thomas Gordon answered, "Because the Germans, who are our great rivals in the manufacture of stockings, are otherwise employed in time of war." JOHNSON, "Sir, you have given a very good solution."

At dinner, Dr. Johnson ate several platefuls of Scotch broth, with barley and peas in it, and seemed very fond of the dish. I said, "You never ate it before." JOHNSON. "No, sir; but I don't care how soon I eat it again." My cousin, Miss Dallas, formerly of Inverness, was married to Mr. Riddoch, one of the ministers of the English chapel here. He was ill, and confined to his room; but she sent us a kind invitation to tea, which we all accepted. She was the same lively, sensible, cheerful woman, as ever. Dr. Johnson here threw out some jokes against Scotland. He said, "You go first to Aberdeen; then to *Enbru* (the Scottish pronunciation of Edinburgh); then to Newcastle, to be polished by the colliers; then to York; then to London." And he laid hold of a little girl, Stuart Dallas, niece to Mrs. Riddoch, and, representing himself as a giant, said, he would take her with him! telling her, in a hollow voice, that he

lived in a cave, and had a bed in the rock, and she should have a little bed cut opposite to it!

He thus treated the point, as to prescription² of murder in Scotland. "A jury in England would make allowance for deficiencies of evidence, on account of lapse of time: but a general rule that a crime should not be punished, or tried for the purpose of punishment, after twenty years, is bad. It is cant to talk of the king's advocate delaying a prosecution from malice. How unlikely is it the king's advocate should have malice against persons who commit murder, or should even know them at all. If the son of the murdered man should kill the murderer who got off merely by prescription, I would help him to make his escape; though, were I upon his jury, I would not acquit him. I would not advise him to commit such an act. On the contrary, I would bid him submit to the determination of society, because a man is bound to submit to the inconveniences of it, as he enjoys the good: but the young man, though politically wrong, would not be morally wrong. He would have to say, 'Here I am amongst barbarians, who not only refuse to do justice, but encourage the greatest of all crimes. I am therefore in a state of nature; for, so far as there is no law, it is a state of nature; and consequently, upon the eternal and immutable law of justice, which requires that he who sheds man's blood should have his blood shed, I will stab the murderer of my father.'"

We went to our inn, and sat quietly. Dr. Johnson borrowed, at Mr. Riddoch's, a volume of Massillon's Discourses on the Psalms; but I found he read little in it. Ogden too he sometimes took up, and glanced at; but threw it down again. I then entered upon religious conversation. Never did I see him in a better frame: calm, gentle, wise, holy. I said, "Would not the same objection hold against the Trinity as against transubstantiation?" "Yes," said he, "if you take three and one in the same sense. If you do so, to be sure you cannot believe it; but the three persons in the Godhead are three in one sense, and one in another. We cannot tell how; and that is the mystery!"

I spoke of the satisfaction of Christ. He said his notion was, that it did not atone for the sins of the world; but, by satisfying divine justice, by showing that no less than the Son of God suffered for sin, it showed to men and innumerable created beings the heinousness of it, and therefore rendered it unnecessary for divine vengeance to be exercised against sinners, as it otherwise must have been; that in this way it might

¹ London, 2d May, 1778. Dr. Johnson acknowledged that he was himself the author of the translation above alluded to, and dictated it to me as follows:

Quos laudet vates Grævus Romanus et Anglus
Tres tria temporibus secla dedere suis.
Sublime ingenium Grævus; Romanus habebat
Carmen grande sonans; Anglus utrumque tulit.
Nil majus Natura capit: clarare priores
Quæ potuere duos tertius unus habet. BOSWELL.

² [See ante, p. 327.—ED.]

operate even in favour of those who had never heard of it; as to those who did hear of it, the effect it should produce would be repentance and piety, by impressing upon the mind a just notion of sin; that original sin was the propensity to evil, which no doubt was occasioned by the fall. He presented this solemn subject in a new light to me¹, and rendered much more rational and clear the doctrine of what our Saviour has done for us; as it removed the notion of imputed righteousness in co-operating; whereas by this view, Christ has done all already that he had to do, or is ever to do, for mankind, by making his great satisfaction; the consequences of which will affect each individual according to the particular conduct of each. I would illustrate this by saying, that Christ's satisfaction resembles a sun placed to show light to men, so that it depends upon themselves whether they will walk the right way or not, which they could not have done without that sun, "*the sun of righteousness.*" There is, however, more in it than merely giving light—"a light to lighten the Gentiles;" for we are told, there is "*healing under his wings.*" Dr. Johnson said to me, "Richard Baxter commends a treatise by Grotius, '*De Satisfactione Christi.*' I have never read it; but I intend to read it; and you may read it." I remarked, upon the principle now laid down, we might explain the difficult and seemingly hard text, "They that believe shall be saved; and they that believe not shall be damned." They that believe shall have such an impression made upon their minds, as will make them act so that they may be accepted by God.

We talked of one of our friends² taking ill, for a length of time, a hasty expression of Dr. Johnson's to him, on his attempting to prosecute a subject that had a reference to religion, beyond the bounds within which the Doctor thought such topics should be

confined in a mixed company. JOHNSON. "What is to become of society, if a friendship of twenty years is to be broken off for such a cause?" As Bacon says,

"Who then to frail mortality shall trust,
But limns the water, or but writes in dust."

I said, he should write expressly in support of Christianity; for that, although a reverence for it shines through his works in several places, that is not enough. "You know," said I, "what Grotius has done, and what Addison has done, you should do also." He replied, "I hope I shall."

Monday, 23d August.—Principal Campbell, Sir Alexander Gordon, Professor Gordon, and Professor Ross, visited us in the morning, as did Dr. Gerard, who had come six miles from the country on purpose. We went and saw the Marischal College³, and at one o'clock we waited on the magistrates in the town-hall, as they had invited us, in order to present Dr. Johnson with the freedom of the town, which Provost Jopp did with a very good grace. Dr. Johnson was much pleased with this mark of attention, and received it very politely. There was a pretty numerous company assembled. It was striking to hear all of them drinking "Dr. Johnson! Dr. Johnson!" in the town-hall of Aberdeen, and then to see him with his burgessticket, or diploma⁴, in his hat, which he wore as he walked along the street, according to the usual custom. It gave me great satisfaction to observe the regard, and indeed fondness too, which every body here had for my father.

While Sir Alexander Gordon conducted Dr. Johnson to old Aberdeen, Professor Gordon and I called on Mr. Riddoch, whom I found to be a grave worthy clergyman. He observed that, whatever might be said of Dr. Johnson while he was alive, he would, after he was dead, be looked upon by the world with regard and astonishment, on account of his Dictionary.

¹ My worthy, intelligent, and candid friend, Dr. Kippis, informs me, that several divines have thus explained the mediation of our Saviour. What Dr. Johnson now delivered was but a temporary opinion; for he afterwards was fully convinced of the propitiatory sacrifice, as I shall show at large in my future work, "The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL. D."—BOSWELL. [Dr. Kippis was a dissenter. Dr. Johnson's *Prayers and Meditations* abundantly prove that he was, as far back as we have any record of his religious feelings, fully convinced of the propitiatory sacrifice. In the prayer on his birthday, in 1738 (transcribed by him in 1768), he expressly states his hope of salvation "through the satisfaction of Jesus Christ."—ED.]

² [No doubt Mr. Langton. But see ante, p. 321; where it is surmised that the affair at Mr. Dilly's was probably not the sole cause of Mr. Langton's resentment.—ED.]

³ Dr. Beattie was so kindly entertained in England, that he had not yet returned home.—BOSWELL.

⁴ Dr. Johnson's burgessticket was in these words:

Aberdonie, vigesimo tertio die mensis Augusti, anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo septuagesimo tertio, in presentia honorabilium virorum, Jacobi Jopp, armigeri, præpositi, Adami Duff, Gulielmi Young, Georgii Marr, et Gulielmi Forbes, Balivorum, Gulielmi Rainie Decani guildæ, et Joannis Nicoll Thesaurarii dicti burgi.

"Quo die vir generosus et doctrina clarus, Samuel Johnson, LL. D. receptus et admissus fuit in municipes et fratres guildæ præfati burgi de Aberdeen. In deditissimi amoris et affectus ac eximie observantiæ tesseram, quibus dicti magistratus eum amplectuntur. Extractum per me, ALEX. CARNEGIE."—BOSWELL.

Professor Gordon and I walked over to the old college, which Dr. Johnson had seen by this time. I stepped into the chapel, and looked at the tomb of the founder, Archbishop Elphinston, of whom I shall have occasion to write in my History¹ of James IV. of Scotland, the patron of my family.

We dined at Sir Alexander Gordon's. The provost, Professor Ross, Professor Dunbar, Professor Thomas Gordon, was there. After dinner came in Dr. Gerard, Professor Leslie, Professor Macleod. We had little or no conversation in the morning; now we were but barren. The professors seemed afraid to speak.

Dr. Gerard told us that an eminent printer² was very intimate with Warburton. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he has printed some of his works, and perhaps bought the property of some of them. The intimacy is such as one of the professors here may have with one of the carpenters who is repairing the college." "But," said Gerard, "I saw a letter from him to this printer, in which he says, that the one half of the clergy of the church of Scotland are fanatics, and the other half infidels." JOHNSON. "Warburton has accustomed himself to write letters just as he speaks, without thinking any more of what he throws out. When I read Warburton first, and observed his force, and his contempt of mankind, I thought he had driven the world before him; but I soon found that was not the case; for Warburton, by extending his abuse, rendered it ineffectual."

He told me, when we were by ourselves, that he thought it very wrong in the printer to show Warburton's letter, as it was raising a body of enemies against him. He thought it foolish in Warburton to write so to the printer; and added, "Sir, the worst way of being intimate is by scribbling." He called Warburton's "Doctrine of Grace" a poor performance, and so he said was Wesley's Answer. "Warburton," he observed, "had laid himself very open. In particular, he was weak enough to say, that, in some disorders of the imagination, people had spoken with tongues, had spoken languages which they never heard before; a thing as absurd as to say, that in some disorders of the imagination, people had been known to fly."

I talked of the difference of genius, to try if I could engage Gerard in a disquisition with Dr. Johnson; but I did not succeed. I mentioned, as a curious fact, that Locke had written verses. JOHNSON. "I know of none, sir, but a kind of exercise

prefixed to Dr. Sydenham's works, in which he has some conceits about the dropsy, in which water and burning are united; and how Dr. Sydenham removed fire by drawing off water, contrary to the usual practice, which is to extinguish fire by bringing water upon it. I am not sure that there is a word of all this; but it is such kind of talk³."

³ All this, as Dr. Johnson suspected at the time, was the immediate invention of his own lively imagination; for there is not one word of it in Mr. Locke's complimentary performance. My readers will, I have no doubt, like to be satisfied, by comparing them; and, at any rate, it may entertain them to read verses composed by our great metaphysician, when a bachelor in physick.

AUCTORI, IN TRACTATUM EJUS DE FEBRIBUS.

Febres æstus, victumque ardoribus orbem
Flevit, non tantis par medicina malis.
Quum post mille artes, medicæ tentamina curæ,
Ardet adhuc febris; nec vellet arte regi.
Præda sumus flammis; solum hoc speramus ab igne,
Ut restet paucis, quem capit urna, cinis.
Dum quærit medicus febris causamque, modumque,
Flammærum et tenebras, et sine luce faces;
Quas tractat patitur flammæ, et febre calescens,
Corruit ipse suis victima rapta focis.
Qui tardos potuit morbos, artusque trementes,
Sistere, febrili se videt igne rapi.
Sic faber exesos fulsit tibiçine nuros;
Dum trahit antiquas lenta ruina domos.
Sed si flamma vorax miserâs incenderit ædes,
Unica flagrantes tunc sepelire salvas.
Fit fuga, tectonicas nemo tunc invocat artes;
Cum perit artificis non minus usta domus.
Se tandem Sydenham febrisque scholæque furori
Opponens, morbi quærit, et artis opem.
Non temere incusat tecta putredinis ignis;
Nec fictus, febres qui fovet, humor erit.
Non bilem ille movet, nulla hic pituita; Salutis
Quæ spes, si fallax ardeat intus aqua?
Nec doctas magno rivas ostentat hiatus,
Quis ipsis major febribus ardor inest.
Innocuas placide corpus jubet urere flammæ,
Et justo rapidos temperat igne focos.
Quid febrim extinguat, varius quid postulat usus,
Solari ægrotos, qua potes arte, docet.
Hæctenus ipsa suum timuit natura calorem,
Dum sæpe incerto, quo calet, igne perit:
Dum reparat tacitos male provida sanguinis ignes,
Prælust busto, fit calor iste rogius.
Jam secunda suas foveant præcordia flammæ,
Quem natura negat, dat medicina modum.
Nec solum faciles compescit sanguinis æstus,
Dum dubia est inter spemque metumque salus;
Sed fatale malum domuit, quodque astra malignum
Credimus, iratam vel genuisse Stygem.
Extorsit Læthesi cultros, petisque venenum
Abstulit, et tantos non sinit esse metus.
Quis tandem arte nova domitam mitescere pestem
Credat, et antiquas ponere posse minas?
Post tot mille neces, cumulatæque funera busto,
Victa jacet, parvo vulnere, dira lues.
Ætheriæ quanquam spargunt contagia flammæ,
Quicquid inest istis ignibus, ignis erit.
Delapsæ cælo flammæ licet acris urant,
Hæc glida exstingui non nisi morte putas?
Tu meliora paras victrix medicina; tuisque
Pestis quæ superat cuncta, triumphus eris.
Vive liber, victis febrilibus ignibus; unus
Te simul et mundum qui hancet, ignis erit.
J. Locke, A. M. Ex. Aede Christi, Oxon.—BOSWELL

[Mr. Boswell says, that Dr. Johnson's observation was "the immediate invention of his own lively imagination;" and that there was "not one word of it in Mr. Locke's performance;" but did Mr. Boswell read the verses?—or what did he understand by "Nec fictas, febres qui fo-

¹ [This, like many similar intimations scattered through these volumes, does not appear to have been carried into effect.—Ed.]

² [Certainly Mr. Strahan.—Ed.]

We spoke of Fingal. Dr. Johnson said calmly, "If the poems were really translated, they were certainly first written down. Let Mr. Macpherson deposit the manuscript in one of the colleges at Aberdeen, where there are people who can judge; and, if the professors certify the authenticity, then there will be an end of the controversy. If he does not take this obvious and easy method, he gives the best reason to doubt; considering, too, how much is against it *à priori*."

We sauntered after dinner in Sir Alexander's garden, and saw his little grotto, which is hung with pieces of poetry written in a fair hand. It was agreeable to observe the contentment and kindness of this quiet, benevolent man. Professor Macleod was brother to Macleod of Talisker, and brother-in-law to the Laird of Col. He gave me a letter to young Col. I was weary of this day, and began to think wishfully of being again in motion. I was uneasy to think myself too fastidious, whilst I fancied Dr. Johnson quite satisfied. But he owned to me that he was fatigued and teased by Sir Alexander's doing too much to entertain him. I said, it was all kindness. JOHNSON. "True, sir; but sensation is sensation." BOSWELL. "It is so: we feel pain equally from the surgeon's probe, as from the sword of the foe."

We visited two booksellers' shops, and could not find Arthur Johnston's Poems¹. We went and sat near an hour at Mr. Riddoch's. He could not tell distinctly how much education at the college here costs, which disgusted Dr. Johnson. I had pledged myself that we should go to the inn, and not stay supper. They pressed us, but he was resolute. I saw Mr. Riddoch did not please him. He said to me, afterwards, "Sir, he has no vigour in his talk." But my friend should have considered, that he himself was not in good humour; so that it was not easy to talk to his satisfaction. We sat contentedly at our inn. He then became merry, and observed how little we had either heard or said at Aberdeen; that the Aberdonians

vet humor erit?" and "Si fallax ardeat intus aqua?" Surely these are the *conceits*, though not the precise expressions, which Johnson censured, and the whole is made up of the same "kind of talk."—ED.]

¹ [Johnston is one of the most eminent men that Aberdeen has produced. He was a native of the county, (born about 1587), and rector of the university. His works were originally printed at Aberdeen; and their not being to be found in that seat of learning to which he did so much honour is exceedingly strange. But such things sometimes happen. In Haarem, the cradle of the art of printing, the editor could not find a guide-book to the town.—ED.]

had not started a single *mawkin* (the Scottish word for hare) for us to pursue.

Tuesday, 24th August.—We set out about eight in the morning, and breakfasted at Ellon. The landlady said to me, "Is not this the great doctor that is going about through the country?" I said, "Yes." "Ay," said she, "we heard of him; I made an errand into the room on purpose to see him. There's something great in his appearance: it is a pleasure to have such a man in one's house; a man who does so much good. If I had thought of it, I would have shown him a child of mine, who has had a lump on his throat for some time." "But," said I, "he is not a doctor of physick." "Is he an oculist?" said the landlady. "No," said I; "he is only a very learned man." LANDLORD. "They say he is the greatest man in England, except Lord Mansfield." Dr. Johnson was highly entertained with this, and I do think he was pleased too. He said, "I like the exception. To have called me the greatest man in England, would have been an unmeaning compliment; but the exception marked that the praise was in earnest, and, in Scotland, the exception must be Lord Mansfield, or—Sir John Pringle."

He told me a good story of Dr. Goldsmith. Graham, who wrote "Telemachus, a Masque," was sitting one night with him and Dr. Johnson, and was half drunk. He rattled away to Dr. Johnson. "You are a clever fellow, to be sure; but you cannot write an essay like Addison, or verses like the Rape of the Lock." At last he said², "Doctor, I should be happy to see you at Eton³." "I shall be glad to wait on you," answered Goldsmith. "No," said Graham, "'t is not you I mean, Dr. *Minor*; 't is Dr. *Major*, there." Goldsmith was excessively hurt by this. He afterwards spoke of it himself. "Graham," said he, "is a fellow to make ore commit suicide."

We had received a polite invitation to Slains castle. We arrived there just at three o'clock, as the bell for dinner was ringing. Though, from its being just on the north-east ocean, no trees will grow here, Lord Errol has done all that can be done. He has cultivated his fields so as to bear rich crops of every kind, and he has

² I am sure I have related this story exactly as Dr. Johnson told it to me; but a friend who has often heard him tell it informs me, that he usually introduced a circumstance which ought not to be omitted. "At last, sir, Graham, having now got to about the pitch of looking at one man, and talking to another, said, Doctor, &c." "What effect," Dr. Johnson used to add, "this had on Goldsmith, who was as irascible as a hornet, may be easily conceived."—BOSWELL.

³ [Graham was one of the masters at Eton.—ED.]

made an excellent kitchen-garden, with a hot-house. I had never seen any of the family; but there had been a card of invitation written by the honourable Charles Boyd, the earl's brother. We were conducted into the house, and at the dining-room door were met by that gentleman, whom both of us at first took to be Lord Errol; but he soon corrected our mistake. My lord was gone to dine in the neighbourhood, at an entertainment given by Mr. Irvine of Drum. Lady Errol¹ received us politely, and was very attentive to us during the time of dinner. There was nobody at table but her ladyship, Mr. Boyd, and some of the children, their governour and governess. Mr. Boyd put Dr. Johnson in mind of having dined with him at Cumming² the quaker's, along with a Mr. Hall and Miss Williams: this was a bond of connexion between them. For me, Mr. Boyd's acquaintance with my father was enough. After dinner, Lady Errol favoured us with a sight of her young family, whom she made stand up in a row: there were six daughters and two sons. It was a very pleasing sight.

Dr. Johnson proposed our setting out. Mr. Boyd said, he hoped we would stay all night; his brother would be at home in the evening, and would be very sorry if he missed us. Mr. Boyd was called out of the room. I was very desirous to stay in so comfortable a house, and I wished to see Lord Errol. Dr. Johnson, however, was right in resolving to go, if we were not asked again, as it is best to err on the safe side in such cases, and to be sure that one is quite welcome. To my great joy, when Mr. Boyd returned, he told Dr. Johnson that it was Lady Errol who had called him out, and said that she would never let Dr. Johnson into the house again, if he went away that night; and that she had ordered the coach, to carry us to view a great curiosity on the coast, after which we should see the house. We cheerfully agreed.

Mr. Boyd was engaged, in 1745-6, on the same side with many unfortunate mistaken noblemen and gentlemen. He escaped, and lay concealed for a year in the island of Arran, the ancient territory of the Boyds. He then went to France, and was about twenty years on the continent. He married a French lady, and now lived very comfortably at Aberdeen, and was much at Slains castle. He entertained us with great civility. He had a pompousness or formal plentitude in his conversation, which I did not dislike. Dr. Johnson said, "there was too

much elaboration in his talk." It gave me pleasure to see him, a steady branch of the family, setting forth all its advantages with much zeal. He told us that Lady Errol was one of the most pious and sensible women in the island; had a good head, and as good a heart. He said, she did not use force or fear in educating her children. JOHNSON. "Sir, she is wrong; I would rather have the rod to be the general terror to all, to make them learn, than tell a child, if you do thus or thus, you will be more esteemed than your brothers or sisters. The rod produces an effect which terminates in itself. A child is afraid of being whipped, and gets his task, and there's an end on't; whereas, by exciting emulation and comparisons of superiority, you lay the foundation of lasting mischief; you make brothers and sisters hate each other."

During Mr. Boyd's stay in Arran, he had found a chest of medical books, left by a surgeon there, and had read them till he acquired some skill in physick, in consequence of which he is often consulted by the poor. There were several here waiting for him as patients.

We walked round the house till stopped by a cut made by the influx of the sea. The house is built quite upon the shore; the windows look upon the main ocean, and the King of Denmark is Lord Errol's nearest neighbour on the north-east.

We got immediately into the coach, and drove to Dunbui, a rock near the shore, quite covered with sea-fowls; then to a circular basin of large extent, surrounded with tremendous rocks. On the quarter next the sea, there is a high arch in the rock, which the force of the tempest has driven out. This place is called Buchan's Buller, or the Buller of Buchan, and the country people call it the Pot. Mr. Boyd said it was so called from the French *bouloir*. It may be more simply traced from *boiler* in our own language. We walked round this monstrous cauldron. In some places, the rock is very narrow; and on each side there is a sea deep enough for a man of war to ride in; so that it is somewhat horrid to move along. However, there is earth and grass upon the rock, and a kind of road marked out by the print of feet; so that one makes it out pretty safely: yet it alarmed me to see Dr. Johnson striding irregularly along. He insisted on taking a boat, and sailing into the Pot. We did so. He was stout, and wonderfully alert. The Buchan-men all showing their teeth, and speaking with that strange sharp accent which distinguishes them, was to me a matter of curiosity. He was not sensible of the difference of pronunciation in the south and north of Scotland, which I wondered at.

As the entry into the Buller is so narrow that oars cannot be used as you go in, the

¹ [Isabella, daughter of Sir William Carr, of Etal, in Northumberland, bart. She died in 1808; having had, by Lord Errol, three sons and nine daughters.—Ed.]

² [See, as to Cumming, *post*, 20th August, 1773.—Ed.]

method taken is, to row very hard when you come near it, and give the boat such a rapidity of motion that it glides in. Dr. Johnson observed what an effect this scene would have had, were we entering into an unknown place. There are caves of considerable depth; I think, one on each side. The boatman had never entered either of them far enough to know the size. Mr. Boyd told us that it is customary for the company at Peter-head-well to make parties, and come and dine in one of the caves here!

He told us that, as Slains is at a considerable distance from Aberdeen, Lord Errol, who has a very large family, resolved to have a surgeon of his own. With this view he educated one of his tenant's sons, who is now settled in a very neat house and farm just by, which we saw from the road. By the salary which the earl allows him, and the practice which he has had, he is in very easy circumstances. He had kept an exact account of all that had been laid out on his education, and he came to his lordship one day, and told him that he had arrived at a much higher situation than ever he expected; that he was now able to repay what his lordship had advanced, and begged he would accept of it. The earl was pleased with the generous gratitude and genteel offer of the man; but refused it. Mr. Boyd also told us, Cumming the quaker first began to distinguish himself, by writing against Dr. Leechman on Prayer, to prove it unnecessary, as God knows best what should be, and will order it without our asking: the old hackneyed objection.

When we returned to the house, we found coffee and tea in the drawing-room. Lady Errol was not there, being, as I supposed, engaged with her young family. There is a bow-window fronting the sea. Dr. Johnson repeated the ode, "Jam satis terris," while Mr. Boyd was with his patients. He spoke well in favour of entails, to preserve lines of men whom mankind are accustomed to reverence. His opinion was, that so much land should be entailed as that families should never fall into contempt, and as much left free as to give them all the advantages of property in case of any emergency. "If," said he, "the nobility are suffered to sink into indigence, they of course become corrupt; they are ready to do whatever the king chooses; therefore it is fit they should be kept from becoming poor, unless it is fixed that when they fall below a certain standard of wealth they shall lose their peerages. We know the house of peers have made noble stands, when the house of commons durst not. The two last years of parlia-

ment they dare not contradict the populace."

This room is ornamented with a number of fine prints, and with a whole length picture of Lord Errol, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. This led Dr. Johnson and me to talk of our amiable and elegant friend, whose panegyric he concluded by saying, "Sir Joshua Reynolds, sir, is the most invulnerable man I know; the man with whom if you should quarrel, you would find the most difficulty how to abuse."

Dr. Johnson observed, the situation here was the noblest he had ever seen; better than Mount Edgecumbe, reckoned the first in England; because, at Mount Edgecumbe, the sea is bounded by land on the other side, and, though there is there the grandeur of a fleet, there is also the impression of there being a dock-yard, the circumstances of which are not agreeable. At Slains is an excellent old house. The noble owner has built of brick, along the square in the inside, a gallery, both on the first and second story, the house being no higher; so that he has always a dry walk; and the rooms, to which formerly there was no approach but through each other, have now all separate entries from the gallery, which is hung with Hogarth's works, and other prints. We went and sat a while in the library. There is a valuable numerous collection. It was chiefly made by Mr. Falconer, husband to the late Countess of Errol in her own right. This earl has added a good many modern books.

About nine the earl² came home. Captain Gordon, of Park, was with him. His lordship put Dr. Johnson in mind of their having dined together in London, along with Mr. Beauclerk. I was exceedingly pleased with Lord Errol. His dignified person and agreeable countenance, with the most unaffected affability, gave me high satisfaction. From perhaps a weakness, or, as I rather hope, more fancy and warmth of feeling than is quite reasonable, my mind is ever impressed with admiration for persons of high birth, and I could, with the most perfect honesty, expatiate on Lord Errol's good qualities; but he stands in no need of my praise. His agreeable manners and softness of address prevented that constraint which the idea of his being Lord High Constable of Scotland might otherwise have occasioned³. He talked very easily and sensibly

² [Sir W. Forbes, in his *Life of Beattie*, says, that Dr. Johnson discovered a likeness between Lord Errol and Sarpedon; the points of resemblance (except that Lord Errol was of heroic stature, six feet four inches high) we are left to guess: but his lordship was, whether like Sarpedon or not, a very handsome, high-spirited, and amiable nobleman.—Ed.]

³ [Mr. Boswell need not have been in such awe on this account; for Lord Errol's title to that dignity was, at this period, not quite estab-

¹ [They were also used by smugglers. The path round the *Buller* is about three feet broad; so that there is little danger, though very often much fear.—WALTER SCOTT.]

with his learned guest. I observed that Dr. Johnson, though he showed that respect to his lordship which, from principle, he always does to high rank, yet, when they came to argument, maintained that manliness which becomes the force and vigour of his understanding. To show external deference to our superiors is proper: to seem to yield to them in opinion is meanness¹. The earl said grace both before and after supper, with much decency. He told us a story of a man who was executed at Perth, some years ago, for murdering a woman who was with child by him, and a former child he had by her. His hand was cut off: he was then pulled up; but the rope broke, and he was forced to lie an hour on the ground, till another rope was brought from Perth, the execution being in a wood at some distance—at the place where the murders were committed. “There (said my lord) I see the hand of Providence.” I was really happy here. I saw in this nobleman the best dispositions and best principles; and I saw him, in my mind’s eye, to be the representative of the ancient Boyds of Kilmarnock. I was afraid he might have urged drinking, as, I believe, he used formerly to do; but he drank port and water out of a large glass himself, and let us do as we pleased. He went with us to our rooms at night; said he

lished. For he not only was not descended from the Earls of Errol, in the *male* line, but the right of his mother and grandmother rested on the *nomination* of Gilbert, the tenth Earl of Errol, who, having no children of his own, nominated (under a charter of Charles II.) his relation, Sir John Hay, of Kellour, to his honours, who accordingly succeeded as eleventh earl; but his son, the twelfth earl, having no issue, was succeeded by his two sisters successively. The youngest, Lady Margaret, the grandmother of the earl who received Dr. Johnson, was married to the Earl of Linlithgow, who was attainted for the rebellion of 1715. They left an only daughter, married to Lord Kilmarnock, beheaded and attainted for the rebellion of 1745, whose son was the earl mentioned in the text. Lord Lauderdale, at the election of the Scottish peers in 1796, protested against Lord Errol’s claim to the peerage, questioning not only the right of conferring a peerage by *nomination*, but denying that any such nomination had been in fact made; but the house of lords decided that the earldom, though originally a male fief, had become descendable to females, and also that Earl Gilbert had acquired and exercised the right of nomination. It was still more doubtful how the office of Hereditary High Constable could be transferred, either by nomination or through females; but all the late Earls of Errol have enjoyed it without question, and the present earl executed it by deputy at the coronation of George IV., and in person during his majesty’s visit to Scotland.—Ed.]

¹ Lord Chesterfield, in his letters to his son, complains of one who argued in an indiscriminate manner with men of all ranks. Probably the no-

took the visit very kindly; and told me my father and he were very old acquaintance; that I now knew the way to Slains, and he hoped to see me there again.

I had a most elegant room; but there was a fire in it which blazed; and the sea, to which my windows looked, roared; and the pillows were made of the feathers of some sea-fowl, which had to me a disagreeable smell: so that, by all these causes, I was kept awake a good while. I saw, in imagination, Lord Errol’s father, Lord Kilmarnock (who was beheaded on Tower-hill in 1746), and I was somewhat dreary. But the thought did not last long, and I fell asleep.

Wednesday, 25th August.—We got up between seven and eight, and found Mr. Boyd in the dining-room, with tea and coffee before him, to give us breakfast. We were in an admirable humour. Lady Errol had given each of us a copy of an ode by Beattie, on the birth of her son, Lord Hay. Mr. Boyd asked Dr. Johnson how he liked it. Dr. Johnson, who did not admire it, got off very well, by taking it out, and reading the second and third stanzas of it with much melody. This, without his saying a word, pleased Mr. Boyd. He observed, however, to Dr. Johnson, that the expression as to the family of Errol,

“A thousand years have seen it shine,”

compared with what went before, was an anti-climax, and that it would have been better,

“Ages have seen,” &c.

ble lord had felt with some uneasiness what it was to encounter stronger abilities than his own. If a peer will engage at foils with his inferior in station, he must expect that his inferior in station will avail himself of every advantage; otherwise it is not a fair trial of strength and skill. The same will hold in a contest of reason, or of wit. A certain king entered the lists of genius with Voltaire. The consequence was that, though the king had great and brilliant talents, Voltaire had such a superiority that his majesty could not bear it; and the poet was dismissed, or escaped, from that court. In the reign of James I. of England, Crichton, Lord Sanquhar, a peer of Scotland, from a vain ambition to excel a fencing-master, in his own art, played at rapier and dagger with him. The fencing-master, whose fame and bread were at stake, put out one of his lordship’s eyes. Exasperated at this, Lord Sanquhar hired ruffians, and had the fencing-master assassinated; for which his lordship was capitally tried, condemned, and hanged. Not being a peer of England, he was tried by the name of Robert Crichton, Esq.; but he was admitted to be a baron of three hundred years standing. See the *State Trials*; and the *History of England* by Hume, who applauds the impartial justice executed upon a man of high rank.—BOSWELL. [Lord Chesterfield’s observation is in the character of the *respectable Hottentot* (see *ante*, p. 115), which was probably meant for Dr. Johnson.—ED.]

Dr. Johnson said, "So great a number as a thousand is better. *Dolus lalet in universilibus*. Ages might be only two ages." He talked of the advantage of keeping up the connexions of relationship, which produce much kindness. "Every man (said he) who comes into the world has need of friends. If he has to get them for himself, half his life is spent before his merit is known. Relations are a man's ready friends who support him. When a man is in real distress, he flies into the arms of his relations. An old lawyer, who had much experience in making wills, told me, that after people had deliberated long, and thought of many for their executors, they settled at last by fixing on their relations. This shows the universality of the principle.

I regretted the decay of respect for men of family, and that a nabob now would carry an election from them. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the nabob will carry it by means of his wealth, in a country where money is highly valued, as it must be where nothing can be had without money; but, if it comes to personal preference, the man of family will always carry it. There is generally a *scoundrelism* about a low man." Mr. Boyd said, that was a good *ism*.

I said, I believed mankind were happier in the ancient feudal state of subordination, than they are in the modern state of independency. JOHNSON. "To be sure, the *chief* was: but we must think of the number of individuals. That *they* were less happy seems plain; for that state from which all escape as soon as they can, and to which none return after they have left it, must be less happy; and this is the case with the state of dependence on a chief or great man."

I mentioned the happiness of the French in their subordination, by the reciprocal benevolence¹ and attachment between the great and those in lower rank. Mr. Boyd gave us an instance of their gentlemanly spirit. An old Chevalier de Malthe, of ancient *noblesse*, but in low circumstances, was in a coffee-house at Paris, where was Julien, the great manufacturer at the Gobelins, of the fine tapestry, so much distinguished both for the figures and the *colours*. The chevalier's carriage was very old. Says Julien, with a plebeian insolence, "I think, sir, you had better have your carriage new painted." The chevalier looked at him with indignant contempt, and answered, "Well, sir, you may take it home and *dye* it!" All the coffee-house rejoiced at Julien's confusion.

We set out about nine. Dr. Johnson was curious to see one of those structures,

¹ [What a commentary on this opinion has the French revolution written!—Ed.]

which northern antiquarians call a Druid's temple. I had a recollection of one at Strichen, which I had seen fifteen years ago; so we went four miles out of our road, after passing Old Deer, and went thither. Mr. Fraser, the proprietor, was at home, and showed it to us. But I had augmented it in my mind; for all that remains is two stones set up on end, with a long one laid upon them, as was usual, and one stone at a little distance from them. That stone was the capital one of the circle which surrounded what now remains. Mr. Fraser was very hospitable². There was a fair at Strichen; and he had several of his neighbours from it at dinner. One of them, Dr. Fraser, who had been in the army, remembered to have seen Dr. Johnson, at a lecture on experimental philosophy, at Lichfield. The Doctor recollected being at the lecture, and he was surprised to find here somebody who knew him.

Mr. Fraser sent a servant to conduct us by a short passage into the high road. I observed to Dr. Johnson, that I had a most disagreeable notion of the life of country gentlemen; that I left Mr. Fraser just now, as one leaves a prisoner in a jail. Dr. Johnson said, that I was right in thinking them unhappy, for that they had not enough to keep their minds in motion.

I started a thought this afternoon which amused us a great part of the way. "If," said I, "our club should come and set up in St. Andrews, as a college, to teach all that each of us can, in the several departments of learning and taste, we should rebuild the city: we should draw a wonderful concourse of students." Dr. Johnson entered fully

² He is the worthy son of a worthy father, the late Lord Strichen, one of our judges, to whose kind notice I was much obliged. Lord Strichen was a man not only honest, but highly generous; for, after his succession to the family estate, he paid a large sum of debts, contracted by his predecessor, which he was not under any obligation to pay. Let me here, for the credit of Ayrshire, my own county, record a noble instance of liberal honesty in William Hutchison, drover, in Lanehead, Kyle, who formerly obtained a full discharge from his creditors upon a composition of his debts; but, upon being restored to good circumstances, invited his creditors last winter to a dinner, without telling the reason, and paid them their full sums, principal and interest. They presented him with a piece of plate, with an inscription to commemorate this extraordinary instance of true worth; which should make some people in Scotland blush, while, though mean themselves, they strut about under the protection of great alliance, conscious of the wretchedness of numbers who have lost by them, to whom they never think of making reparation, but indulge themselves and their families in most unsuitable expense.—BOSWELL.

into the spirit of this project. We immediately fell to distributing the offices. I was to teach civil and Scotch law; Burke, politics and eloquence; Garrick, the art of public speaking; Langton was to be our Grecian, Colman our Latin professor; Nugent to teach physick; Lord Charlemont, modern history; Beauclerk, natural philosophy; Vesey, Irish antiquities, or Celtick learning;¹ Jones, Oriental learning; Goldsmith, poetry and ancient history; Chamier, commercial politics; Reynolds, painting, and the arts which have beauty for their object; Chambers, the law of England. Dr. Johnson at first said, "I'll trust theology to nobody but myself." But, upon due consideration, that Percy is a clergyman, it was agreed that Percy should teach practical divinity and British antiquities; Dr. Johnson himself, logick, metaphysics, and scholastick divinity. In this manner did we amuse ourselves, each suggesting, and each varying or adding, till the whole was adjusted. Dr. Johnson said, we only wanted a mathematician since Dyer died, who was a very good one; but as to every thing else, we should have a very capital university².

We got at night to Banff. I sent Joseph on to Duff-house: but Earl Fife was not at home, which I regretted much, as we should have had a very elegant reception from his lordship. We found here but an indifferent inn³. Dr. Johnson wrote a long letter to Mrs. Thrale. I wondered to see him write

so much so easily. He verified his own doctrine that "a man may always write when he will set himself doggedly to it."

Thursday, 26th August.—We got a fresh chaise here, a very good one, and very good horses. We breakfasted at Cullen. They set down dried haddocks broiled, along with our tea. I ate one; but Dr. Johnson was disgusted by the sight of them, so they were removed⁴. Cullen has a comfortable appearance, though but a very small town, and the houses mostly poor buildings.

I called on Mr. Robertson, who has the charge of Lord Findlater's affairs, and was formerly Lord Monboddos clerk, was three times in France with him, and translated Condamine's Account of the Savage Girl, to which his lordship wrote a preface, containing several remarks of his own. Robertson said he did not believe so much as his lordship did; that it was plain to him the girl confounded what she imagined with what she remembered; that, besides, she perceived Condamine and Lord Monboddos forming theories, and she adapted her story to them.

Dr. Johnson said, "It is a pity to see Lord Monboddos publish such notions as he has done; a man of sense, and of so much elegant learning. There would be little in a fool doing it; we should only laugh: but when a wise man does it, we are sorry. Other people have strange notions; but they conceal them:—If they have tails, they hide them; but Monboddos is as jealous of his tail as a squirrel." I shall here put down some more remarks of Dr. Johnson's on Lord Monboddos, which were not made exactly at this time, but come in well from connexion. He said he did not approve of a judge's calling himself Farmer Burnett⁵,

⁴ [A protest may be entered on the part of most Scotsmen against the Doctor's taste in this particular. A Finnon haddock dried over the smoke of the sea-weed, and sprinkled with salt water during the process, acquires a relish of a very peculiar and delicate flavour, inimitable on any other coast than that of Aberdeenshire. Some of our Edinburgh philosophers tried to produce their equal in vain. I was one of a party at a dinner, where the philosophical haddocks were placed in competition with the genuine Finnon-fish. These were served round without distinction whence they came; but only one gentleman, out of twelve present, espoused the cause of philosophy.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁵ It is the custom in Scotland for the judges of the court of session to have the title of lords, from their estates; thus Mr. Burnett is Lord Monboddos, as Mr. Home was Lord Kames. There is something a little awkward in this; for they are denominated in deeds by their names, with the addition of "one of the senators of the collegē of justice;" and subscribe their christian and surname, as James Burnett, Henry Home, even in judicial acts.—BOSWELL. [We see that the

¹ Since the first edition, it has been suggested by one of the club, who knew Mr. Vesey better than Dr. Johnson and I, that we did not assign him a proper place, for he was quite unskilled in Irish antiquities and Celtick learning, but might with propriety have been made professor of architecture, which he understood well, and has left a very good specimen of his knowledge and taste in that art, by an elegant house built on a plan of his own formation, at Lucan, a few miles from Dublin.—BOSWELL.

² [Here Mr. Boswell has inserted a note relative to the CLUB, the substance of which will be found in the appendix to the first volume.—ED.]

³ Here, unluckily, the windows had no pulleys, and Dr. Johnson, who was constantly eager for fresh air, had much struggling to get one of them kept open. Thus he had a notion impressed upon him, that this wretched defect was general in Scotland, in consequence of which he has erroneously enlarged upon it in his "Journey." I regretted that he did not allow me to read over his book before it was printed. I should have changed very little, but I should have suggested an alteration in a few places where he has laid himself open to be attacked. I hope I should have prevailed with him to omit or soften his assertion, that "a Scotsman must be a sturdy moralist, who does not prefer Scotland to truth,"—for I really think it is not founded, and it is harshly said.—BOSWELL.

and going about with a little round hat. He laughed heartily at his lordship's saying he was an enthusiastical farmer; "for (said he), what can he do in farming by his enthusiasm?" Here, however, I think Dr. Johnson mistaken. He who wishes to be successful, or happy, ought to be enthusiastical, that is to say, very keen in all the occupations or diversions of life. An ordinary gentleman-farmer will be satisfied with looking at his fields once or twice a day: an enthusiastical farmer will be constantly employed on them; will have his mind earnestly engaged; will talk perpetually of them. But Dr. Johnson has much of the *nil admirari* in smaller concerns. That survey of life which gave birth to his "Vanity of Human Wishes" early sobered his mind. Besides, so great a mind as his cannot be moved by inferior objects: an elephant does not run and skip like lesser animals.

Mr. Robertson sent a servant with us, to show us through Lord Findlater's wood, by which our way was shortened, and we saw some part of his domain, which is indeed admirably laid out. Dr. Johnson did not choose to walk through it. He always said that he was not come to Scotland to see fine places, of which there were enough in England; but wild objects,—mountains,—water-falls,—peculiar manners; in short, things which he had not seen before. I have a notion that he at no time has had much taste for rural beauties. I have myself very little.

Dr. Johnson said there was nothing more contemptible than a country gentleman living beyond his income, and every year growing poorer and poorer. He spoke strongly of the influence which a man has by being rich. "A man (said he) who keeps his money, has in reality more use from it than he can have by spending it." I observed that this looked very like a paradox; but he explained it thus: "If it were certain that a man would keep his money locked up forever, to be sure he would have no influence; but as so many want money, and he has the power of giving it, and they know not but by gaining his favour they may obtain it, the rich man will always have the greatest influence. He again who lavishes his money is laughed at as foolish, and in a great degree with justice, considering how much is spent from

same custom prevailed amongst other gentlemen as well as the judges. All the lairds who are called by the names of their estates, as Rasay, Col, &c. sign their christian and surnames, as J. Macleod, A. Maclean, &c. The dignity of the judicial bench has consecrated, in the case of the judges, what was once the common practice of the country.—ED.]

¹ [Why not, in a remote country retirement? —ED.]

vanity. Even those who partake of a man's hospitality have but a transient kindness for him. If he has not the command of money, people know he cannot help them if he would; whereas the rich man always can, if he will, and for the chance of that, will have much weight." BOSWELL. "But philosophers and satirists have all treated a miser as contemptible." JOHNSON. "He is so philosophically; but not in the practice of life." BOSWELL. "Let me see now: I do not know the instances of misers in England, so as to examine into their influence." JOHNSON. "We have had few misers in England." BOSWELL. "There was Lowther²." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, Lowther, by keeping his money, had the command of the county, which the family has now lost, by spending it³. I take it he lent a great deal; and that is the way to have influence, and yet preserve one's wealth. A man may lend his money upon very good security, and yet have his debtor much under his power." BOSWELL. "No doubt, sir. He can always distress him for the money; as no man borrows who is able to pay on demand quite conveniently."

We dined at Elgin, and saw the noble ruins of the cathedral. Though it rained much, Dr. Johnson examined them with the most patient attention. He could not here feel any abhorrence at the Scottish reformers, for he had been told by Lord Hailes, that it was destroyed before the reformation, by the Lord of Badenoch⁴, who

² [He means, no doubt, Sir James Lowther, of Whitehaven, bart., who died in 1755, immensely rich, but without issue, and his estates devolved on his relation, Sir James, afterwards first Earl of Lonsdale.—ED.]

³ I do not know what was at this time the state of the parliamentary interest of the ancient family of Lowther; a family before the conquest: but all the nation knows it to be very extensive at present. A due mixture of severity and kindness, economy and munificence, characterizes its present representative.—BOSWELL. [The second viscount and first Earl Lonsdale of his branch, who was recommended to Boswell's peculiar favour by having married Lady Mary Stuart, the daughter of John, Earl of Bute.—ED.]

⁴ Note, by Lord Hailes.—"The cathedral of Elgin was burnt by the Lord of Badenoch, because the Bishop of Moray had pronounced an award not to his liking. The indemnification that the see obtained was, that the Lord of Badenoch stood for three days barefooted at the great gate of the cathedral. The story is in the chartulary of Elgin."—BOSWELL. [Light as this penance was, an Irish chieftain fared still better. The eighth Earl of Kildare was charged before Henry VII. with having burned the cathedral of Cashel: he expressed his contrition for this sacrilege, adding, that he never would have done it had he not thought that the *archbishop had been in it*. The king made him lord-lieutenant.—ED.]

had a quarrel with the bishop. The bishop's house, and those of the other clergy, which are still pretty entire, do not seem to have been proportioned to the magnificence of the cathedral, which has been of great extent, and had very fine carved work. The ground within the walls of the cathedral is employed as a burying-place. The family of Gordon have their vault here; but it has nothing grand.

We passed Gordon Castle¹ this forenoon, which has a princely appearance. Fochabers, the neighbouring village, is a poor place, many of the houses being ruinous; but it is remarkable, they have in general orchards well stored with apple-trees. Elgin has what in England are called piazzas, that run in many places on each side of the street. It must have been a much better place formerly. Probably it had piazzas all along the town, as I have seen at Bologna. I approved much of such structures in a town, on account of their conveniency in wet weather. Dr. Johnson disapproved of them, "because," said he, "it makes the under story of a house very dark, which greatly overbalances the conveniency, when it is considered how small a part of the year it rains; how few are usually in the street at such times; that many who are might as well be at home; and the little that people suffer, supposing them to be as much wet as they commonly are in walking a street."

We fared but ill at our inn here; and Dr. Johnson said, this was the first time he had seen a dinner in Scotland that he could not eat.

In the afternoon, we drove over the very heath where Macbeth met the witches, according to tradition. Dr. Johnson again solemnly repeated

"How far is't called to Fores? What are these, So wither'd, and so wild in their attire?
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't?"

He repeated a good deal more of Macbeth. His recitation was grand and affecting, and, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed to me, had no more tone than it should have: it was the better for it. He then parodied the

¹ I am not sure whether the duke was at home; but, not having the honour of being much known to his grace, I could not have presumed to enter his castle, though to introduce even so celebrated a stranger. We were at any rate in a hurry to get forward to the wildness which we came to see. Perhaps, if this noble family had still preserved that sequestered magnificence which they maintained when catholics, corresponding with the Grand Duke of Tuscany, we might have been induced to have procured proper letters of introduction, and devoted some time to the contemplation of venerable superstitious state.—BOSWELL.

"all hail" of the witches to Macbeth, addressing himself to me. I had purchased some land called Dalblair; and, as in Scotland it is customary to distinguish landed men by the name of their estates, I had thus two titles, Dalblair and young Auchinleck. So my friend, in imitation of

"All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!"

condescended to amuse himself with uttering

"All hail, Dalblair! hail to thee, Laird of Auchinleck!"

We got to Fores at night, and found an admirable inn, in which Dr. Johnson was pleased to meet with a landlord, who styled himself "Wine-Cooper, from London."

Friday, 27th August.—It was dark when we came to Fores last night; so we did not see what is called King Duncan's monument³. I shall now mark some gleanings of Dr. Johnson's conversation. I spoke of Leonidas, and said there were some good passages in it. JOHNSON. "Why, you must seek for them." He said, Paul Whitehead's Manners was a poor performance. Speaking of Derrick, he told me "he had a kindness for him, and had often said, that if his letters had been written by one of a more established name, they would have been thought very pretty letters."

This morning I introduced the subject of the origin of evil. JOHNSON. "Moral evil is occasioned by free will, which implies choice between good and evil. With all the evil that there is, there is no man but would rather be a free agent, than a mere machine without the evil; and what is best for each individual, must be best for the whole. If a man would rather be the machine, I cannot argue with him. He is a different being from me." BOSWELL. "A man, as a machine, may have agreeable sensations; for instance, he may have pleasure in musick." JOHNSON. "No, sir, he cannot have pleasure in musick; at least, no power of producing musick; for he who can produce musick may let it alone: he who can play upon a fiddle may break it: such a man is not a machine." This reasoning satisfied me. It is certain, there cannot be a free agent, unless there is the power of being evil as well as good. We must take the inherent possibilities of things into consideration, in our reasonings or conjectures concerning the works of God.

² Pronounced as a dissyllable, *Affleck*.—BOSWELL.

³ [Duncan's monument; a huge column on the road-side near Fores, more than twenty feet high, erected in commemoration of the final retreat of the Danes from Scotland, and properly called Swene's Stone.—WALTER SCOTT.]

We came to Nairn to breakfast. Though a county town and a royal burgh, it is a miserably place. Over the room where we sat, a girl was spinning wool with a great wheel, and singing an Erse song: "I'll warrant you," said Dr. Johnson, "one of the songs of Ossian." He then repeated these lines:

"Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound.

All at her work the village maiden sings;

Nor, while she turns the giddy wheel around,

Revolves the sad vicissitude of things¹."

I thought I had heard these lines before. JOHNSON. "I fancy not, sir; for they are in a detached poem, the name of which I do not remember, written by one Giffard, a parson."

I expected Mr. Kenneth M'Aulay, the minister of Calder, who published the history of St. Kilda, a book which Dr. Johnson liked, would have met us here, as I had written to him from Aberdeen. But I received a letter from him, telling me that he could not leave home, as he was to administer the sacrament the following Sunday, and earnestly requesting to see us at his manse. "We'll go," said Dr. Johnson; which we accordingly did. Mrs. M'Aulay received us, and told us her husband was in the church distributing tokens². We arrived between twelve and one o'clock, and it was near three before he came to us.

Dr. Johnson thanked him for his book, and said "it was a very pretty piece of topography." M'Aulay did not seem much to mind the compliment. From his conversation, Dr. Johnson was persuaded that he had not written the book which goes under his name. I myself always suspected so; and I have been told it was written by the learned Dr. John M'Pherson of Sky, from the materials collected by M'Aulay. Dr. Johnson said privately to me, "There is a combination in it of which M'Aulay is not capable." However, he was exceedingly hospitable; and as he obligingly promised us a route for our Tour through the Western Isles, we agreed to stay with him all night.

After dinner, we walked to the old castle of Calder (pronounced Cawder³), the Thane

of Cawdor's seat. I was sorry that my friend, this "prosperous gentleman," was not there. The old tower must be of great antiquity. There is a draw-bridge over what has been a moat, and an ancient court. There is a hawthorn tree, which rises like a wooden pillar through the rooms of the castle; for, by a strange conceit, the walls have been built round it. The thickness of the walls, the small slanting windows, and a great iron door at the entrance on the second story as you ascend the stairs, all indicate the rude times in which this castle was erected. There were here some large venerable trees⁴.

I was afraid of a quarrel between Dr. Johnson and Mr. M'Aulay, who talked slightly of the lower English clergy. The doctor gave him a frowning look, and said, "This is a day of novelties: I have seen old trees in Scotland, and I have heard the English clergy treated with disrespect."

I dreaded that a whole evening at Caldermanse would be heavy; however, Mr. Grant, an intelligent and well-bred minister in the neighbourhood, was there, and assisted us by his conversation. Dr. Johnson, talking of hereditary occupations in the Highlands, said, "There is no harm in such a custom as this; but it is wrong to enforce it, and oblige a man to be a tailor or a smith, because his father has been one." This custom, however, is not peculiar to our Highlands; it is well known that in India a similar practice prevails.

Mr. M'Aulay began a rhapsody against creeds and confessions. Dr. Johnson showed, that "what he called *imposition*, was only a voluntary declaration of agreement in certain articles of faith, which a church has a right to require, just as any other society can insist on certain rules being observed by its members. Nobody is compelled to be of the church, as nobody is compelled to enter into a society." This was a very clear and just view of the subject; but M'Aulay could not be driven out of his track. Dr. Johnson said, "Sir, you are a *bigot to laxness*."

Mr. M'Aulay and I laid the map of Scotland before us; and he pointed out a route for us from Inverness, by Fort Augustus, to Glenelg, Sky, Mull, Icolmkill, Lorn, and Inverary, which I wrote down. As my father was to begin the northern circuit about the 18th of September, it was necessary for us either to make our tour with great expedition, so as to get to Auchinleck before he set out, or to protract it, so as not to be there till his return, which would be about the 10th of October. By M'Aulay's calcu-

—knew the proper pronunciation of this name?—
Ed.]

⁴ [Cawder Castle, here described, has been since much damaged by fire.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [See *ante*, p. 174.—Ed.]

² In Scotland there is a great deal of preparation before administering the sacrament. The minister of the parish examines the people as to their fitness, and to those whom he approves gives little pieces of tin, stamped with the name of the parish, as *tokens*, which they must produce before receiving it. This is a species of priestly power, and sometimes may be abused. I remember a lawsuit brought by a person against his parish minister, for refusing him admission to that sacred ordinance.—BOSWELL.

³ [Is it not a strong though minute instance of the general knowledge of Shakspeare, that he

lation, we were not to land in Lorn till the 20th of September. I thought that the interruptions by bad days, or by occasional excursions, might make it ten days later; and I thought too, that we might perhaps go to Benbecula, and visit Clanranald, which would take a week of itself.

Dr. Johnson went up with Mr. Grant to the library, which consisted of a tolerable collection; but the Doctor thought it rather a lady's library, with some Latin books in it by chance, than the library of a clergyman. It had only two of the Latin fathers, and one of the Greek fathers in Latin. I doubted whether Dr. Johnson would be present at a presbyterian prayer. I told Mr. M'Aulay so, and said that the Doctor might sit in the library while we were at family worship. Mr. M'Aulay said, he would omit it, rather than give Dr. Johnson offence: but I would by no means agree that an excess of politeness, even to so great a man, should prevent what I esteem as one of the best pious regulations. I know nothing more beneficial, more comfortable, more agreeable, than that the little societies of each family should regularly assemble, and unite in praise and prayer to our heavenly Father, from whom we daily receive so much good, and may hope for more in a higher state of existence. I mentioned to Dr. Johnson the over-delicate scrupulosity of our host. He said, he had no objection to hear the prayer. This was a pleasing surprise to me; for he refused to go and hear Principal Robertson preach. "I will hear him," said he, "if he will get up into a tree and preach; but I will not give a sanction, by my presence, to a presbyterian assembly."

Mr. Grant having prayed, Dr. Johnson said, his prayer was a very good one, but objected to his not having introduced the Lord's Prayer¹. He told us, that an Italian of some note in London said once to him, "We have in our service a prayer called the *Pater Noster*, which is a very fine composition. I wonder who is the author of it." A singular instance of ignorance in a man of some literature and general inquiry!

Saturday, 28th August.—Dr. Johnson had brought a Sallust with him in his pocket from Edinburgh. He gave it last night to Mr. M'Aulay's son, a smart young lad about eleven years old. Dr. Johnson had given an account of the education at Oxford, in all its gradations. The advantage of being a servitor to a youth of little fortune struck Mrs. M'Aulay much. I observed it aloud. Dr. Johnson very handsomely and kindly said, that, if they would send their boy to him, when he was ready for the university, he would get him made a servitor,

and perhaps would do more for him. He could not promise to do more; but would undertake for the servitorship².

I should have mentioned that Mr. White, a Welshman, who has been many years factor (*i. e.* steward) on the estate of Calder, drank tea with us last night, and, upon getting a note from Mr. M'Aulay, asked us to his house. We had not time to accept of his invitation. He gave us a letter of introduction to Mr. Ferne, master of stores at Fort George. He showed it to me. It recommended "two celebrated gentlemen; no less than Dr. Johnson, *author of his Dictionary*, and Mr. Boswell, known at Edinburgh by the name of Paoli." He said, he hoped I had no objection to what he had written; if I had, he would alter it. I thought it was a pity to check his effusions, and acquiesced; taking care, however, to seal the letter, that it might not appear that I had read it.

A conversation took place about saying grace at breakfast (as we do in Scotland), as well as at dinner and supper; in which Dr. Johnson said, "It is enough if we have stated seasons of prayer; no matter when. A man may as well pray when he mounts his horse, or a woman when she milks her cow (which Mr. Grant told us is done in the Highlands), as at meals; and custom is to be followed³."

We proceeded to Fort George. When we came into the square, I sent a soldier with the letter to Mr. Ferne. He came to us immediately, and along with him Major Brewse of the Engineers, pronounced Bruce. He said he believed it was originally the same Norman name with Bruce: that he dined at a house in London, where were three Bruces, one of the Irish line, one of the Scottish line, and himself of the English line. He said he was shown it in the Herald's office, spelt fourteen different ways⁴. I told him the different spellings of

² Dr. Johnson did not [as we shall see] neglect what he had undertaken. By his interest with the Rev. Dr. Adams, master of Pembroke College, Oxford, where he was educated for some time, he obtained a servitorship for young M'Aulay. But it seems he had other views; and I believe went abroad.—BOSWELL.

³ He could not bear to have it thought that, in any instance whatever, the Scots are more pious than the English. I think grace as proper at breakfast as at any other meal. It is the pleasantest meal we have. Dr. Johnson has allowed the peculiar merit of breakfast in Scotland.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, found in the annals of that region a king named *Brus*, which he chooses to consider the genuine orthography of the name. This circumstance occasioned some mirth at the court of Gondar.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [See, on this subject, Johnson's own *Journey*.—ED.]

my name. Dr. Johnson observed, that there had been great disputes about the spelling of Shakspeare's name; at last it was thought it would be settled by looking at the original copy of his will; but, upon examining it, he was found to have written it himself no less than three different ways.

Mr. Ferne and Major Brewse first carried us to wait on Sir Eyre Coote, whose regiment, the 37th, was lying here, and who then commanded the fort. He asked us to dine with him, which we agreed to do.

Before dinner we examined the fort. The major explained the fortification to us, and Mr. Ferne gave us an account of the stores. Dr. Johnson talked of the proportions of charcoal and saltpetre in making gunpowder, of granulating it, and of giving it a gloss. He made a very good figure upon these topics. He said to me afterwards, that "he had talked ostentatiously." We reposed ourselves a little in Mr. Ferne's house. He had every thing in neat order as in England; and a tolerable collection of books; I looked into Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*. He says little of this fort; but that "the barracks, &c. form several streets." This is aggrandising. Mr. Ferne observed, if he had said they form a square, with a row of buildings before it, he would have given a juster description. Dr. Johnson remarked, "how seldom descriptions correspond with realities; and the reason is, the people do not write them till some time after, and then their imagination has added circumstances."

We talked of Sir Adolphus Oughton. The Major said, he knew a great deal for a military man. JOHNSON. "Sir, you will find few men, of any profession, who know more. Sir Adolphus is a very extraordinary man; a man of boundless curiosity and unwearied diligence."

I know not how the Major contrived to introduce the contest between Warburton and Lowth. JOHNSON. "Warburton kept his temper all along, while Lowth was in a passion. Lowth published some of Warburton's letters. Warburton drew him on to write some very abusive letters, and then asked his leave to publish them; which he knew Lowth could not refuse, after what he had done. So that Warburton contrived that he should publish, apparently with Lowth's consent, what could not but show Lowth in a disadvantageous light¹."

At three the drum beat for dinner. I,

¹ Here Dr. Johnson gave us part of a conversation held between a Great Personage and him, in the library at the Queen's Palace, in the course of which this contest was considered. I have been at great pains to get that conversation as perfectly preserved as possible. It may perhaps at some future time be given to the publick.—Boswell. [It is given *ante*, p. 240.—Ed.]

for a little while, fancied myself a military man, and it pleased me. We went to Sir Eyre Coote's, at the governour's house, and found him a most gentlemanlike man. His lady is a very agreeable woman, with an uncommonly mild and sweet tone of voice. There was a pretty large company: Mr. Ferne, Major Brewse, and several officers. Sir Eyre had come from the East Indies by land, through the deserts of Arabia. He told us, the Arabs could live five days without victuals, and subsist for three weeks on nothing else but the blood of their camels, who could lose so much of it as would suffice for that time, without being exhausted. He highly praised the virtue of the Arabs; their fidelity, if they undertook to conduct any person; and said, they would sacrifice their lives rather than let him be robbed. Dr. Johnson, who is always for maintaining the superiority of civilized over uncivilized men, said, "Why, sir, I can see no superior virtue in this. A serjeant and twelve men, who are my guard, will die rather than that I shall be robbed." Colonel Pennington, of the 37th regiment, took up the argument with a good deal of spirit and ingenuity. PENNINGTON. "But the soldiers are compelled to this, by fear of punishment." JOHNSON. "Well, sir, the Arabs are compelled by the fear of infamy." PENNINGTON. "The soldiers have the same fear of infamy, and the fear of punishment besides; so have less virtue; because they act less voluntarily." Lady Coote observed very well, that it ought to be known if there was not, among the Arabs, some punishment for not being faithful on such occasions.

We talked of the stage. I observed, that we had not now such a company of actors as in the last age; Wilks, Booth, &c. &c. JOHNSON. "You think so, because there is one who excels all the rest so much: you compare them with Garrick, and see the deficiency. Garrick's great distinction is his universality. He can represent all modes of life, but that of an easy fine-bred gentleman²." PENNINGTON. "He should give over playing young parts." JOHNSON. "He does not take them now; but he does not leave off those which he has been used to

² [Garrick used to tell that Johnson was so ignorant of what the manners of a fine gentleman were, that he said of some stroller at Lichfield, that there was a *courtly vivacity* about him; "whereas in fact," added Garrick, "he was the most vulgar ruffian that ever trod the boards," (*post*, 12th March, 1776). No doubt the most difficult, though perhaps not the highest, branch of the actor's art is to catch the light colours and forms of fashionable life; but if Garrick, who lived so much in the highest society, had not this quality, what actor could ever hope to possess it? —Ed.]

play, because he does them better than any one else can do them. If you had generations of actors, if they swarmed like bees, the young ones might drive off the old. Mrs. Cibber, I think, got more reputation than she deserved, as she had a great sameness; though her expression was, undoubtedly, very fine. Mrs. Clive was the best player I ever saw. Mrs. Pritchard was a very good one; but she had something affected in her manner: I imagine she had some player of the former age in her eye, which occasioned it."

Colonel Pennington said, Garrick sometimes failed in emphasis; as for instance, in Hamlet,

"I will speak daggers to her; but use none," instead of

"I will *speak* daggers to her; but use none."

We had a dinner of two complete courses, variety of wines, and the regimental band of musick playing in the square, before the windows, after it. I enjoyed this day much. We were quite easy and cheerful. Dr. Johnson said, "I shall always remember this fort with gratitude." I could not help being struck with some admiration, at finding upon this barren sandy point such buildings, such a dinner, such company: it was like enchantment. Dr. Johnson, on the other hand, said to me more rationally, that "it did not strike *him* as any thing extraordinary; because he knew, here was a large sum of money expended in building a fort; here was a regiment. If there had been less than what we found, it would have surprised him." He looked coolly and deliberately through all the gradations: *my* warm imagination jumped from the barren sands to the splendid dinner and brilliant company, to borrow the expression of an absurd poet,

"Without ands or ifs,
I leapt from off the sands upon the cliffs."

The whole scene gave me a strong impression of the power and excellence of human art.

We left the fort between six and seven o'clock: Sir Eyre Coote, Colonel Pennington, and several more, accompanied us down stairs, and saw us into our chaise. There could not be greater attention paid to any visitors. Sir Eyre spoke of the hardships which Dr. Johnson had before him. BOSWELL. "Considering what he has said of us, we must make him feel something rough in Scotland." Sir Eyre said to him, "You must change your name, sir," BOSWELL. "Ay, to Dr. M'Gregor."

We got safely to Inverness, and put up at Mackenzie's inn. Mr. Keith, the collector of excise here, my old acquaintance at Ayr, who had seen us at the fort, visited us in the evening, and engaged us to dine with

him next day, promising to breakfast with us, and take us to the English chapel; so that we were at once commodiously arranged.

Not finding a letter here that I expected, I felt a momentary impatience to be at home. Transient clouds darkened my imagination, and in those clouds I saw events from which I shrunk; but a sentence or two of the Rambler's conversation gave me firmness, and I considered that I was upon an expedition for which I had wished for years, and the recollection of which would be a treasure to me for life.

Sunday, 29th August.—Mr. Keith breakfasted with us. Dr. Johnson expatiated rather too strongly upon the benefits derived to Scotland from the Union, and the bad state of our people before it. I am entertained with his copious exaggeration upon that subject; but I am uneasy when people are by, who do not know him as well as I do, and may be apt to think him narrow-minded¹. I therefore diverted the subject.

The English chapel, to which we went this morning, was but mean. The altar was a bare fir table, with a coarse stool for kneeling on, covered with a piece of thick sailcloth doubled, by way of cushion. The congregation was small. Mr. Tait, the clergyman, read prayers very well, though with much of the Scotch accent. He preached on "Love your enemies." It was remarkable that, when talking of the connexions amongst men, he said, that some connected themselves with men of distinguished talents, and since they could not equal them, tried to deck themselves with their merit, by being their companions. The sentence was to this purpose. It had an odd coincidence with what might be said of my connecting myself with Dr. Johnson.

After church, we walked down to the quay. We then went to Macbeth's castle. I had a romantick satisfaction in seeing Dr. Johnson actually in it. It perfectly corresponds with Shakspeare's description, which Sir Joshua Reynolds has so happily illustrated, in one of his notes on our immortal poet:

"This castle hath a pleasant seat: the air
Nimble and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle sense," &c.

Just as we came out of it, a raven perched

¹ It is remarkable that Dr. Johnson read this gentle remonstrance, and took no notice of it to me.—BOSWELL. [Dr. Johnson's having read this Journal gives it a great and very peculiar interest; and we must not withhold from Mr. Boswell the merit of great candour and courage in writing so freely about his great friend. Yet it is to be suspected, that had Johnson not seen it, the Journal might have had still greater poignancy.—ED.]

on one of the chimney-tops, and croaked. Then I repeated

“———The raven himself is hoarse,
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan,
Under my battlements.”

We dined at Mr. Keith's. Mrs. Keith was rather too attentive to Dr. Johnson, asking him many questions about his drinking only water. He repressed that observation, by saying to me, “You may remember that Lady Errol took no notice of this¹.”

Dr. Johnson has the happy art (for which I have heard my father praise the old Earl of Aberdeen²) of instructing himself, by making every man he meets tell him something of what he knows best. He led Keith to talk to him of the excise in Scotland, and, in the course of conversation, mentioned that his friend Mr. Thrale, the great brewer, paid twenty thousand pounds a year to the revenue; and that he had four casks, each of which holds sixteen hundred barrels, above a thousand hogsheads.

After this there was little conversation that deserves to be remembered. I shall, therefore, here again glean what I have omitted on former days. Dr. Gerrard, at Aberdeen, told us, that when he was in Wales, he was shown a valley inhabited by Danes, who still retain their own language, and are quite a distinct people. Dr. Johnson thought it could not be true, or all the kingdom must have heard of it. He said to me, as we travelled, “These people, sir, that Gerrard talks of, may have somewhat of a *peregrinity* in their dialect, which relation has augmented to a different language.” I asked him if *peregrinity* was an English word. He laughed and said, “No.” I told him this was the second time that I had heard him coin a word. When Foote broke his leg, I observed that it would make him fitter for taking off George Faulkner as Peter Paragraph, poor George having a wooden leg. Dr. Johnson at that time said, “George will rejoice at the *depeditation* of Foote;” and when I challenged that word, laughed, and owned he had made it, and added that he had not made above three or four in his Dictionary.³

¹ [Of the two, however, was not Dr. Johnson's observation the least well-bred?—ED.]

² [William Gordon, second Earl of Aberdeen, who died in 1746.—ED.]

³ When upon the subject of this *peregrinity*, he told me some particulars concerning the compilation of his Dictionary, and concerning his throwing off Lord Chesterfield's patronage, of which very erroneous accounts have been circulated. These particulars, with others which he afterwards gave me, as also his celebrated letter to Lord Chesterfield, which he dictated to me, I reserve for his “Life.”—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p. 112.—ED.]

Having conducted Dr. Johnson to our inn, I begged permission to leave him for a little, that I might run about and pay some short visits to several good people of Inverness. He said to me, “You have all the old-fashioned principles, good and bad.” I acknowledge I have. That of attention to relations in the remotest degree, or to worthy persons in every state, whom I have once known, I inherit from my father. It gave me much satisfaction to hear every body at Inverness speak of him with uncommon regard. Mr. Keith and Mr. Grant, whom we had seen at Mr. M'Aulay's, supplied with us at the inn. We had roasted kid, which Dr. Johnson had never tasted before. He relished it much.

Monday, 30th August.—This day we were to begin our *equitation*, as I said; for I would needs make a word too. It is remarkable, that my noble, and to me most constant friend, the Earl of Pembroke (who, if there is too much ease on my part, will please to pardon what his benevolent, gay, social intercourse, and lively correspondence have insensibly produced), has since hit upon the very same word. The title of the first edition of his lordship's very useful book was, in simple terms, “A Method of Breaking Horses and Teaching Soldiers to ride.” The title of the second edition is, “Military Equitation.”

We might have taken a chaise to Fort Augustus, but, had we not hired horses at Inverness, we should not have found them afterwards: so we resolved to begin here to ride. We had three horses, for Dr. Johnson, myself, and Joseph, and one which carried our portmanteaus, and two Highlanders who walked along with us, John Hay and Lauchland Vass, whom Dr. Johnson has remembered with credit in his Journey, though he has omitted their names. Dr. Johnson rode very well.

About three miles beyond Inverness, we saw, just by the road, a very complete specimen of what is called a Druid's temple. There was a double circle, one of very large, the other of smaller stones. Dr. Johnson justly observed, that, “to go and see one druidical temple is only to see that it is nothing, for there is neither art nor power in it⁴; and seeing one is quite enough.”

It was a delightful day. Lochness, and the road upon the side of it, shaded with birch trees, and the hills above it, pleased us much. The scene was as sequestered and agreeably wild as could be desired, and for a time engrossed all our attention.

To see Dr. Johnson in any new situation is always an interesting object to me; and, as I saw him now for the first time on horse-

⁴ [This seems hastily said; there must surely have been some *art* and vast *power* to erect Stonehenge.—ED.]

back, jaunting about at his ease in quest of pleasure and novelty, the very different occupations of his former laborious life, his admirable productions, his "London," his "Rambler," &c. &c. immediately presented themselves to my mind, and the contrast made a strong impression on my imagination.

When we had advanced a good way by the side of Lochness, I perceived a little hut, with an old-looking woman at the door of it. I thought here might be a scene that would amuse Dr. Johnson; so I mentioned it to him. "Let's go in," said he. We dismounted, and we and our guides entered the hut. It was a wretched little hovel of earth only, I think, and for a window had only a small hole, which was stopped with a piece of turf, that was taken out occasionally to let in light. In the middle of the room or space which we entered was a fire of peat, the smoke going out at a hole in the roof. She had a pot upon it, with goat's flesh, boiling. There was at one end under the same roof, but divided by a kind of partition made of wattles, a pen or fold in which we saw a good many kids.

Dr. Johnson was curious to know where she slept. I asked one of the guides, who questioned her in Erse. She answered with a tone of emotion, saying (as he told us), she was afraid we wanted to go to bed to her. This coquetry, or whatever it may be called, of so wretched a being, was truly ludicrous. Dr. Johnson and I afterwards were merry upon it. I said, it was he who alarmed the poor woman's virtue. "No, sir (said he), she'll say, 'There came a wicked young fellow, a wild dog, who I believe would have ravished me, had there not been with him a grave old gentleman, who repressed him: but when he gets out of the sight of his tutor, I'll warrant you he'll spare no woman he meets, young or old.'" "No, sir (I replied), she'll say, 'There was a terrible ruffian who would have forced me, had it not been for a civil decent young man, who, I take it, was an angel sent from heaven to protect me.'"

Dr. Johnson would not hurt her delicacy, by insisting on "seeing her bed-chamber," like Archer in the *Beaux Stratagem*. But my curiosity was more ardent; I lighted a piece of paper, and went into the place where the bed was. There was a little partition of wicker, rather more neatly done than that for the fold, and close by the wall was a kind of bedstead of wood, with heath upon it by way of bed; at the foot of which I saw some sort of blankets or covering rolled up in a heap. The woman's name was Fraser; so was her husband's. He was a man of eighty. Mr. Fraser, of Balnain, allows him to live in this hut, and keep sixty goats, for taking care of his woods, where

he then was. They had five children, the eldest only thirteen. Two were gone to Inverness to buy meal; the rest were looking after the goats. This contented family had four stacks of barley, twenty-four sheaves in each. They had a few fowls. We were informed that they lived all the spring without meal, upon milk and curds and whey alone. What they get for their goats, kids, and fowls, maintains them during the rest of the year.

She asked us to sit down and take a dram. I saw one chair. She said she was as happy as any woman in Scotland. She could hardly speak any English except a few detached words. Dr. Johnson was pleased at seeing, for the first time, such a state of human life. She asked for snuff. It is her luxury, and she uses a great deal. We had none; but gave her sixpence apiece. She then brought out her whiskey bottle. I tasted it; as did Joseph and our guides: so I gave her sixpence more. She sent us away with many prayers in Erse.

We dined at a publick-house called the *General's Hut*¹, from General Wade, who was lodged there when he commanded in the North. Near it is the meanest parish kirk I ever saw. It is a shame it should be on a high road². After dinner we passed through a good deal of mountainous country. I had known Mr. Trapaud, the deputy-governour of Fort Augustus, twelve years ago, at a circuit at Inverness, where my father was judge. I sent forward one of our guides, and Joseph, with a card to him, that he might know Dr. Johnson and I were coming up, leaving it to him to invite us or not. It was dark when we arrived. The inn was wretched. Government ought to build one, or give the resident governour an additional salary; as in the present state of things, he must necessarily be put to a great expense in entertaining travellers. Joseph announced to us, when we alighted, that the governour waited for us at the gate of the fort. We walked to it. He met us, and with much civility conducted us to his house. It was comfortable to find ourselves in a well-built little square, and a neatly furnished house, in good company, and with a good supper before us; in short, with all the conveniencies of civilized life in the midst of rude mountains. Mrs. Trapaud, and the governour's daughter, and her husband, Captain Newmarsh, were all most

¹ [It is very odd that when these roads were made there was no care taken for *Inns*. The *King's House* and the *General's Hut* are miserable places; but the project and plans were purely military.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [Mr. Boswell's shame seems to have been not that the kirk should have been so mean, but that it should have been unfortunately placed in so visible a situation.—ED.]

obliging and polite. The governour had excellent animal spirits, the conversation of a soldier, and somewhat of a Frenchman, to which his extraction entitles him. He is brother to General Cyrus Trapaud. We passed a very agreeable evening.

Tuesday, 31st August.—The governour has a very good garden. We looked at it, and at the rest of the fort, which is but small, and may be commanded from a variety of hills around. We also looked at the galley or sloop belonging to the fort, which sails upon the Loch, and brings what is wanted for the garrison. Captains Urie and Darippe, of the 15th regiment of foot, breakfasted with us. They had served in America, and entertained Dr. Johnson much with an account of the Indians. He said he could make a very pretty book out of them, were he to stay there. Governour Trapaud was much struck with Dr. Johnson. "I like to hear him (said he) it is so majestick. I should be glad to hear him speak in your court." He pressed us to stay dinner; but I considered that we had a rude road before us, which we could more easily encounter in the morning, and that it was hard to say when we might get up, were we to sit down to good entertainment, in good company: I therefore begged the governour would excuse us. Here, too, I had another very pleasing proof how much my father is regarded. The governour expressed the highest respect for him, and bade me tell him that, if he would come that way on the northern circuit, he would do him all the honours of the garrison.

Between twelve and one we set out, and travelled eleven miles, through a wild country, till we came to a house in Glenmorison, called Anoch, kept by a M^cQueen¹. Our landlord was a sensible fellow: he had learnt his grammar, and Dr. Johnson justly observed that "a man is the better for that as long as he lives." There were some books here: a Treatise against Drunkenness, translated from the French; a volume of the Spectator; a volume of Prideaux's Connexion, and Cyrus's Travels. M^cQueen said he had more volumes; and his pride seemed to be much piqued that we were surprised at his having books.

Near to this place we had passed a party of soldiers, under a serjeant's command, at work upon the road. We gave them two shillings to drink. They came to our inn,

¹ A M^cQueen is a Highland mode of expression. An Englishman would say *one* M^cQueen. But where there are clans or tribes of men, distinguished by patronymick surnames, the individuals of each are considered as if they were of different species, at least as much as nations are distinguished; so that a M^cQueen, a M^cDonald, a M^cLean, is said, as we say a Frenchman, an Italian, a Spaniard.—BOSWELL.

and made merry in the barn. We went and paid them a visit, Dr. Johnson saying, "Come, let 's go and give 'em another shilling apiece." We did so; and he was saluted "My lord" by all of them. He is really generous, loves influence, and has the way of gaining it. He said, "I am quite feudal, sir." Here I agree with him. I said, I regretted I was not the head of a clan: however, though not possessed of such an hereditary advantage, I would always endeavour to make my tenants follow me. I could not be a patriarchal chief, but I would be a feudal chief.

The poor soldiers got too much liquor. Some of them fought, and left blood upon the spot, and cursed whiskey next morning. The house here was built of thick turfs, and thatched with thinner turfs and heath. It had three rooms in length, and a little room which projected. Where we sat, the side-walls were wainscoted, as Dr. Johnson said, with wicker, very neatly plaited. Our landlord had made the whole with his own hands.

After dinner, M^cQueen sat by us a while, and talked with us. He said, all the Laird of Glenmorison's people would bleed for him, if they were well used; but that seventy men had gone out of the Glen to America. That he himself intended to go next year; for that the rent of his farm, which, twenty years ago, was only five pounds, was now raised to twenty pounds. That he could pay ten pounds, and live, but no more. Dr. Johnson said, he wished M^cQueen laird of Glenmorison, and the laird to go to America. M^cQueen very generously answered, he should be sorry for it, for the laird could not shift for himself in America as he could do.

I talked of the officers whom we had left to-day; how much service they had seen, and how little they got for it, even of fame. JOHNSON. "Sir, a soldier gets as little as any man can get." BOSWELL. "Goldsmith has acquired more fame than all the officers last war, who were not generals." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, you will find ten thousand fit to do what they did, before you find one who does what Goldsmith has done. You must consider, that a thing is valued according to its rarity. A pebble that paves the street is in itself more useful than the diamond upon a lady's finger." I wish our friend Goldsmith had heard this.

I yesterday expressed my wonder that John Hay, one of our guides, who had been pressed aboard a man of war, did not choose to continue in it longer than nine months, after which time he got off. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, no man will be a sailor, who has contrivance enough to get himself into a jail; for, being in a ship is be-

ing in a jail, with the chance of being drowned."

We had tea in the afternoon, and our landlord's daughter, a modest civil girl, very neatly dressed, made it for us. She told us, she had been a year at Inverness, and learnt reading and writing, sewing, knotting, working lace, and pastry. Dr. Johnson made her a present of a book which he had bought at Inverness¹.

The room had some deals laid across the joists, as a kind of ceiling. There were two beds in the room, and a woman's gown was hung on a rope to make a curtain of separation between them. Joseph had sheets, which my wife had sent with us, laid on them. We had much hesitation, whether to undress, or lie down with our clothes on. I said at last, "I'll plunge in! There will be less harbour for vermin about me when I am stripped." Dr. Johnson said, he was like one hesitating whether to go into the cold bath. At last he resolved too. I observed he might serve a campaign. JOHNSON. "I could do all that can be done by patience: whether I should have strength enough, I know not." He was in excellent humour. To see the *Rambler* as I saw him to-night, was really an amusement. I yesterday told him, I was thinking of writing a poetical letter to him, on his return from Scotland, in the style of Swift's humorous epistle in the character of Mary Gulliver to her husband, Captain Lemuel Gulliver, on his return to England from the country of the Houyhnhnms:

"At early morn I to the market haste,
Studios in ev'ry thing to please thy taste.

¹ This book has given rise to much inquiry which has ended in ludicrous surprise. Several ladies, wishing to learn the kind of reading which the great and good Dr. Johnson esteemed most fit for a young woman, desired to know what book he had selected for this Highland nymph. "They never adverted," said he, "that I had no choice in the matter. I have said that I presented her with a book, which I happened to have about me." And what was this book? My readers, prepare your features for merriment. It was Cocker's *Arithmetic*! Wherever this was mentioned, there was a loud laugh, at which Dr. Johnson, when present, used sometimes to be a little angry. One day, when we were dining at General Oglethorpe's, where we had many a valuable day, I ventured to interrogate him, "But, sir, is it not somewhat singular that you should happen to have Cocker's *Arithmetic* about you on your journey? What made you buy such a book at Inverness?" He gave me a very sufficient answer. "Why, sir, if you are to have but one book with you upon a journey, let it be a book of science. When you have read through a book of entertainment, you know it, and it can do no more for you; but a book of science is inexhaustible."—BOSWELL.

A curious *fowl* and *sparagrass* I chose;
(For I remember you were fond of those:)
Three shillings cost the first, the last seven groats;
Sullen you turn from both, and call for OATS."

He laughed, and asked in whose name I would write it. I said, in Mrs. Thrale's. He was angry. "Sir, if you have any sense of decency or delicacy, you won't do that." BOSWELL. "Then let it be in Cole's, the landlord of the Mitre tavern, where we have so often sat together." JOHNSON. "Ay, that may do."

After we had offered up our private devotions, and had chatted a little from our beds, Dr. Johnson said, "God bless us both, for Jesus Christ's sake! Good night." I pronounced "Amen." He fell asleep immediately. I was not so fortunate for a long time. I fancied myself bit by innumerable vermin under the clothes; and that a spider was travelling from the *wainscot* towards my mouth. At last I fell into insensibility.

Wednesday, 1st September.—I awaked very early. I began to imagine that the landlord, being about to emigrate, might murder us to get our money, and lay it upon the soldiers in the barn. Such groundless fears will arise in the mind, before it has resumed its vigour after sleep. Dr. Johnson had had the same kind of ideas; for he told me afterwards, that he considered so many soldiers, having seen us, would be witnesses, should any harm be done, and that circumstance, I suppose, he considered as a security. When I got up, I found him sound asleep in his miserable sty, as I may call it, with a coloured handkerchief tied round his head. With difficulty could I awaken him. It reminded me of Henry the Fourth's fine soliloquy² on sleep, for there was here as uneasy a pallet as the poet's imagination could possibly conceive.

A red coat of the 15th regiment, whether officer, or only serjeant, I could not be sure, came to the house, in his way to the mountains to shoot deer, which it seems the Laird of Glenmorison does not hinder any one to do. Few, indeed, can do them harm. We had him to breakfast with us. We got away about eight. M^cQueen walked some miles to give us a convoy. He had, in 1745, joined the Highland army at Fort Augustus, and continued in it till after the battle of Culloden. As he narrated the particulars of that ill-advised, but brave attempt, I could not refrain from tears. There is a certain association of ideas in my mind upon that subject, by which I am strongly affected. The very Highland names, or the sound of a bagpipe, will stir my blood, and fill me with a mixture of melancholy and respect for courage;

² [Shakespeare's *Henry the Fourth*, act iii., scene i.—ED.]

with pity for an unfortunate and superstitious regard for antiquity, and thoughtless inclination for war; in short, with a crowd of sensations with which sober rationality has nothing to do.

We passed through Glensheal¹, with prodigious mountains on each side. We saw where the battle was fought, in the year 1719. Dr. Johnson owned he was now in a scene of as wild nature as he could see; but he corrected me sometimes in my inaccurate observations. "There," said I, "is a mountain like a cone." JOHNSON. "No, sir. It would be called so in a book; and when a man comes to look at it, he sees it is not so. It is indeed pointed at the top; but one side of it is larger than the other²." Another mountain I called immense. JOHNSON. "No; it is no more than a considerable protuberance."

We came to a rich green valley, comparatively speaking, and stopped a while to let our horses rest and eat grass³. We

¹ [In 1719, Spain projected an invasion of Scotland in behalf of the *Chevalier*, and destined a great force for that purpose, under the command of the Duke of Ormond. But owing to storms, only three frigates, with three hundred or four hundred Spaniards on board, arrived in Scotland. They had with them the banished Earl of Seaforth, chief of the Mackenzies, a man of great power, exiled for his share in the rebellion of 1715. He raised a considerable body of Highlanders of his own and friendly clans, and disembarking the Spaniards, came as far as the great valley called Glensheal, in the West Highlands. General Wightman marched against them from Inverness with a few regular forces, and several of the Grants, Rosses, Muirs, and other clans friendly to government. He found the insurgents in possession of a very strong pass called Strachel, from which, after a few days' skirmishing, they retired, Seaforth's party not losing a man, and the others having several slain. But the Earl of Seaforth was dangerously wounded in the shoulder, and obliged to be carried back to the ships. His clan deserted or dispersed, and the Spaniards surrendered themselves prisoners of war to General Wightman.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [This was hypercritical; the hill is indeed not a cone, but it is *like one*.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ Dr. Johnson, in his *Journey*, thus beautifully describes his situation here: "I sat down on a bank, such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had, indeed, no trees to whisper over my head, but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air soft, and all was rudeness, silence and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which, by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment for itself. Whether I spent the hour well, I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narration." The Critical Reviewers, with a spirit and expression worthy of the subject, say, "We congratulate the public on the event with which this quotation concludes, and are fully persuaded that the hour in

soon afterwards came to Auchnasheal, a kind of rural village, a number of cottages being built together, as we saw all along in the Highlands. We passed many miles this day without seeing a house, but only little summer huts, called shielings. Even Campbell, servant to Mr. Murchison, factor to the Laird of Macleod in Glenelg, ran along with us to-day. He was a very obliging fellow. At Auchnasheal, we sat down on a green turf-seat at the end of a house; they brought us out two wooden dishes of milk, which we tasted. One of them was frothed like a syllabub. I saw a woman preparing it with such a stick as is used for chocolate, and in the same manner. We had a considerable circle about us, men, women, and children, all M' Craas⁴, Lord Seaforth's people. Not one of them could speak English. I observed to Dr. Johnson, it was much the same as being with a tribe of Indians. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, but not so terrifying." I gave all who chose it snuff and tobacco. Governour Traupad had made us buy a quantity at Fort Augustus, and put them up in small parcels. I also gave each person a piece of wheat bread, which they had never tasted before. I then gave a penny apiece to each child. I told Dr. Johnson of this: upon which he called to Joseph and our guides, for change for a shilling, and declared that he would distribute among the children. Upon this being announced in Erse, there was a great stir; not only did some children come running down from neighbouring huts, but I observed one black-haired man, who had been with us all along, had gone off, and returned, bringing a very young child. My fellow traveller then ordered the children to be drawn up in a row, and he dealt about his copper, and made them and their parents all happy. The poor M' Craas,

which the entertaining traveller conceived this narrative will be considered, by every reader of taste, as a fortunate event in the annals of literature. Were it suitable to the task in which we are at present engaged, to indulge ourselves in a poetical flight, we would invoke the winds of the Caledonian mountains to blow forever, with their softest breezes, on the bank where our author reclined, and request of Flora, that it might be perpetually adorned with the gayest and most fragrant productions of the year."—BOSWELL.

⁴ [The Mac Raes are an example of what sometimes occurred in the Highlands, a clan who had no chief or banner of their own, but mustered under that of another tribe. They were originally attached to the Frasers, but on occasion of an intermarriage, they were transferred to the Mackenzies, and have since mustered under Seaforth's standard. They were always, and are still, a set of bold hardy men, as much attached to the *Caberfae* (or stag's head) as the Mackenzies, to whom the standard properly belongs.—WALTER SCOTT.]

whatever may be their present state, were of considerable estimation in the year 1715, when there was a line in a song:

“And aw the brave M’Craas are coming¹.”

There was great diversity in the faces of the circle around us; some were as black and wild in their appearance as any American savages whatever. One woman was as comely almost as the figure of Sappho, as we see it painted. We asked the old woman, the mistress of the house where we had the milk (which, by the by, Dr. Johnson told me, for I did not observe it myself, was built not of turf, but of stone), what we should pay. She said, what we pleased. One of our guides asked her, in Erse, if a shilling was enough. She said, “Yes.” But some of the men bade her ask more. This vexed me; because it showed a desire to impose upon strangers, as they knew that even a shilling was high payment. The woman, however, honestly persisted in her first price; so I gave her half a crown. Thus we had one good scene of life uncommon to us. The people were very much pleased, gave us many blessings, and said they had not had such a day since the old Laird of Macleod’s time.

Dr. Johnson was much refreshed by this repast. He was pleased when I told him he would make a good chief. He said, “Were I a chief, I would dress my servants better than myself, and knock a fellow down if he looked saucy to a Macdonald in rags; but I would not treat men as brutes. I would let them know why all of my clan were

to have attention paid to them. I would tell my upper servants why, and make them tell the others.”

We rode on well, till we came to the high mountain called the Rattakin, by which time both Dr. Johnson and the horses were a good deal fatigued. It is a terrible steep to climb, notwithstanding the road is formed slanting along it; however, we made it out. On the top of it we met Captain Macleod, of Balmenoch (a Dutch officer who had come from Sky), riding with his sword slung across him. He asked, “Is this Mr. Boswell?” which was a proof that we were expected. Going down the hill on the other side was no easy task. As Dr. Johnson was a great weight, the two guides agreed that he should ride the horses alternately. Hay’s were the two best, and the Doctor would not ride but upon one or other of them, a black or a brown. But, as Hay complained much after ascending the Rattakin, the Doctor was prevailed with to mount one of Vass’s grays. As he rode upon it down hill, it did not go well, and he grumbled. I walked on a little before, but was excessively entertained with the method taken to keep him in good humour. Hay led the horse’s head, talking to Dr. Johnson as much as he could; and (having heard him, in the forenoon, express a pastoral pleasure on seeing the goats browsing) just when the Doctor was uttering his displeasure, the fellow cried, with a very Highland accent, “See, such pretty goats!” Then he whistled *whu!* and made them jump. Little did he conceive what Dr. Johnson was. Here now was a common ignorant Highland clown imagining that he could divert, as one does a child, Dr. Samuel Johnson! The ludicrousness, absurdity, and extraordinary contrast between what the fellow fancied, and the reality, was truly comick.

It grew dusky; and we had a very tedious ride for what was called five miles, but I am sure would measure ten. We had no conversation. I was riding forward to the inn at Glenelg, on the shore opposite to Sky, that I might take proper measures, before Dr. Johnson, who was now advancing in dreary silence, Hay leading his horse, should arrive. Vass also walked by the side of his horse, and Joseph followed behind. As, therefore, he was thus attended, and seemed to be in deep meditation, I thought there could be no harm in leaving him for a little while. He called me back with a tremendous shout, and was really in a passion with me for leaving him. I told him my intentions, but he was not satisfied, and said, “Do you know, I should as soon have thought of picking a pocket, as doing so.” BOSWELL. “I am diverted with you, sir.” JOHNSON. “Sir, I could never be

¹ The M’Craas, or Macraes, were, since that time, brought into the king’s army, by the late Lord Seaforth. When they lay in Edinburgh Castle, in 1778, and were ordered to embark for Jersey, they, with a number of other men in the regiment, for different reasons, but especially an apprehension that they were to be sold to the East India Company, though enlisted not to be sent out of Great Britain without their own consent, made a determined mutiny, and encamped upon the lofty mountain, Arthur’s Seat, where they remained three days and three nights, bidding defiance to all the force in Scotland. At last they came down, and embarked peaceably, having obtained formal articles of capitulation, signed by Sir Adolphus Oughton, commander-in-chief, General Skene, deputy commander, the Duke of Buccleugh, and the Earl of Dunmore, which quieted them. Since the secession of the Commons of Rome to the Mons Sacer, a more spirited exertion has not been made. I gave great attention to it from first to last, and have drawn up a particular account of it. Those brave fellows have since served their country effectually at Jersey, and also in the East Indies, to which, after being better informed, they voluntarily agreed to go.—BOSWELL.

diverted with incivility. Doing such a thing makes one lose confidence in him who has done it, as one cannot tell what he may do next." His extraordinary warmth confounded me so much, that I justified myself but lamely to him; yet my intentions were not improper. I wished to get on, to see how we were to be lodged, and how we were to get a boat; all which I thought I could best settle myself, without his having any trouble. To apply his great mind to minute particulars is wrong: it is like taking an immense balance (such as is kept on quays for weighing cargoes of ships) to weigh a guinea. I knew I had neat little scales, which would do better; and that his attention to every thing which falls in his way, and his uncommon desire to be always in the right, would make him weigh, if he knew of the particulars: it was right therefore for me to weigh them, and let him have them only in effect. I however continued to ride by him, finding he wished I should do so.

As we passed the barracks at Bernéra, I looked at them wishfully, as soldiers have always every thing in the best order; but there was only a serjeant and a few men there. We came on to the inn at Glenelg. There was no provender for our horses; so they were sent to grass, with a man to watch them. A maid showed us up stairs into a room damp and dirty, with bare walls, a variety of bad smells, a coarse black greasy fir table, and forms [benches] of the same kind; and out of a wretched bed started a fellow from his sleep, like Edgar in King Lear, "*Poor Tom's a cold* 1."

This inn was furnished with not a single article that we could either eat or drink; but Mr. Murchison, factor to the Laird of Macleod, in Glenelg, sent us a bottle of rum and some sugar, with a polite message, to acquaint us, that he was very sorry that he did not hear of us till we had passed his house, otherwise he should have insisted on our sleeping there that night; and that, if he were not obliged to set out for Inverness early next morning, he would have waited upon us. Such extraordinary attention from this gentleman, to entire strangers, deserves the most honourable commemoration.

Our bad accommodation here made me uneasy, and almost fretful. Dr. Johnson was calm. I said he was so from vanity. JOHNSON. "No, sir; it is from philosophy." It pleased me to see that the *Rambler* could practise so well his own lessons.

I resumed the subject of my leaving him on the road, and endeavoured to defend it

¹ It is amusing to observe the different images which this being presented to Dr. Johnson and me. The Doctor, in his "*Journey*," compares him to a *Cyclops*.—BOSWELL.

better. He was still violent upon that head, and said, "Sir, had you gone on, I was thinking that I should have returned with you to Edinburgh, and then have parted from you, and never spoken to you more."

I sent for fresh hay, with which we made beds for ourselves, each in a room equally miserable. Like Wolfe, we had a "*choice of difficulties* 2." Dr. Johnson made things easier by comparison. At M'Queen's, last night, he observed, that few were so well lodged in a ship. To-night, he said, we were better than if we had been upon the hill. He lay down buttoned up in his great coat. I had my sheets spread on the hay, and my clothes and great coat laid over me, by way of blankets 3.

Thursday, 2d September.—I had slept ill. Dr. Johnson's anger had affected me much. I considered that, without any bad intention, I might suddenly forfeit his friendship; and was impatient to see him this morning. I told him how uneasy he had made me by what he had said, and reminded him of his own remark at Aberdeen, upon old friendships being hastily broken off. He owned, he had spoken to me in passion; that he would not have done what he threatened; and that, if he had, he should have been ten times worse than I; that forming intimacies would indeed be "limning the water," were they liable to such sudden dissolution; and he added, "Let's think no more on't." BOSWELL. "Well then, sir, I shall be easy. Remember, I am to have fair warning in case of any quarrel. You are never to spring a mine upon me. It was absurd in me to believe you." JOHNSON. "You deserved about as much, as to believe me from night to morning."

After breakfast, we got into a boat for Sky. It rained much when we set off, but cleared up as we advanced. One of the boatmen, who spoke English, said, that a mile at land was two miles at sea. I then observed, that from Glenelg to Armidale in Sky, which was our present course, and is called twelve, was only six miles; but this he could not understand. "Well," said Dr. Johnson, "never talk to me of the native good sense of the Highlanders.

² [This phrase, now so common, excited some surprise and criticism when used by General Wolfe, in his despatch from before Quebec. See *London Gazette Extraordinary*, 16th Oct. 1759.—ED.]

³ [Johnson thus describes this scene to Mrs. Thrale, "*I ordered hay to be laid thick upon the bed, and slept upon it in my great coat. Boswell laid sheets upon his bed, and reposed in linen, like a gentleman.*"—*Letters*, vol. i. p. 137.—ED.]

Here is a fellow who calls one mile two, and yet cannot comprehend that twelve such imaginary miles make in truth but six."

We reached the shore of Armidale before one o'clock. Sir Alexander Macdonald came down to receive us. He and his lady (formerly Miss Boswell, of Yorkshire), were then in a house built by a tenant at this place, which is in the district of Slate, the family mansion here having been burned in Sir Donald Macdonald's time.

(¹ The most ancient seat of the chief of the Macdonalds in the Isle of Sky ^{2d Ed.} was at Duntulm, where there are the remains of a stately castle. The principal residence of the family is now at Mugstot, at which there is a considerable building. Sir Alexander and Lady Macdonald had come to Armidale in their way to Edinburgh, where it was necessary for them to be soon after this time.

Armidale is situated on a pretty bay of the narrow sea, which flows between the main land of Scotland and the Isle of Sky. In front there is a grand prospect of the rude mountains of Moidart and Knoidart. Behind are hills gently rising and covered with a finer verdure than I expected to see

¹ [The paragraphs between () were inserted by Mr. Boswell in the second edition to fill the space of those between [], which were in the first edition, and omitted in the second. In one of these substituted paragraphs, Boswell says, that Sir Alexander and his lady "came to Armidale on their way to Edinburgh, where it was necessary they should be;" but both Boswell and Dr. Johnson really believed that they had come to this hovel, to escape the necessity of entertaining them at their usual residence. Johnson, in a letter to Mrs. Thrale, says, "We had a passage of about twelve miles to the point where [Sir Alexander Macdonald] resided, having come from his seat, in the middle of the island, to a small house on the shore, as we believe, that he might *with less reproach entertain us meanly*. If he aspired to meanness, his retrograde ambition was completely gratified; but he did not succeed equally in escaping reproach. He had no cook, nor I suppose much provision; nor had the lady the common decencies of her tea-table; we picked up our sugar with our fingers. Boswell was very angry, and reproached him with his improper parsimony."—*Letters*, vol. i. p. 137. And again: "I have done thinking of [Sir Alexander Macdonald], whom we now call Sir Sawney; he has disgusted all mankind by injudicious parsimony, and given occasion to so many stories, that [Boswell] has some thoughts of collecting them, and making a novel of his life."

These passages, and the extracts from the first edition, leave no doubt as to the person meant in the various allusions to the *mean and parsimonious landlord and chieftain*, which the reader will find in the subsequent parts of the Tour.—*Ed.*]

in this climate, and the scene is enlivened by a number of little clear brooks.)

[Instead of finding the head of ^{1st Ed.} the Macdonalds surrounded with his clan, and a festive entertainment, we had a small company, and cannot boast of our cheer. The particulars are minuted in my "Journal," but I shall not trouble the publick with them. I shall mention but one characteristic circumstance. My shrewd and hearty friend, Sir Thomas (Wentworth) Blacket, Lady Macdonald's uncle, who had preceded us in a visit to this chief, upon being asked by him, if the punch-bowl, then upon the table, was not a very handsome one, replied, "Yes, if it were full.]"

Sir Alexander Macdonald having been an Eton scholar², and being a gentleman of talents, Dr. Johnson had been very well pleased with him in London. But my fellow-traveller and I were now full of the old Highland spirit, and were dissatisfied at hearing [heavy complaints] of rents ^{1st Ed.} racked and [the people driven to] emigration; and finding a chief not surrounded by his clan. Dr. Johnson said, ["It grieves me to see the chief of a great ^{1st Ed.} clan appear to such disadvantage.

This gentleman has talents, nay, some learning; but he is totally unfit for his situation."] Sir, the Highland chiefs should not be allowed to go farther south than Aberdeen. A strong-minded man, like Sir James Macdonald, may be improved by an English education; but in general, they will be tamed into insignificance."

[I meditated an escape from this ^{1st Ed.} house the very next day; but Dr. Johnson resolved that we should weather it out till Monday.]

We found here Mr. Janes of Aberdeenshire, a naturalist. Janes said he had been at Dr. Johnson's in London, with Ferguson the astronomer. JOHNSON. "It is strange that, in such distant places, I should meet with any one who knows me. I should have thought I might hide myself in Sky."

Friday, 3d September.—This day proving wet, we should have passed our time very uncomfortably, had we not found in the house two chests of books, which we eagerly ransacked. After dinner, when I alone was left at table with the few Highland gentlemen who were of the company, having talked³ with very high respect of

² [See his Latin verses addressed to Dr. Johnson, in the Appendix.—*BOSWELL*. [Indifferent as these verses are, they probably suggested to Dr. Johnson's mind the writing those Latin verses in *Skie and Inch-Kenneth*, which we shall see presently.—*Ed.*]

³ [Here, in the first edition, was a leaf *cancel-*

Sir James Macdonald, they were all so much affected as to shed tears. One of them was Mr. Donald Macdonald, who had been lieutenant of grenadiers in the Highland regiment, raised by Colonel Montgomery, now Earl of Elingtoun, in the war before last; one of those regiments which the late Lord Chatham prided himself in having brought from "the mountains of the north:" by doing which he contributed to extinguish in the Highlands the remains of disaffection to the present royal family. From this gentleman's conversation, I first learnt how very popular his colonel was among the Highlanders; of which I had such continued proofs, during the whole course of my Tour, that on my return I could not help telling the noble earl himself, that I did not before know how great a man he was.

We were advised by some persons here to visit Rasay, in our way to Dunvegan, the seat of the Laird of Macleod. Being informed that the Rev. Mr. Donald M'Queen was the most intelligent man in Sky, and having been favoured with a letter of introduction to him, by the learned Sir James Foulis¹, I sent it to him by an express, and requested he would meet us at Rasay; and at the same time enclosed a letter to the Laird of Macleod, informing him that we intended in a few days to have the honour of waiting on him at Dunvegan.

Dr. Johnson this day endeavoured to obtain some knowledge of the state of the country; but complained that he could get no distinct information about any thing, from those with whom he conversed.

Saturday, 4th September.—My endeavours to rouse the English-bred chieftain, in whose house we were, to the feudal and patriarchal feelings, proving ineffectual, Dr. Johnson this morning tried to bring him to our way of thinking. JOHNSON. "Were I in your place, sir, in seven years I would make this an independent island. I would roast oxen whole, and hang out a flag as a signal to the Macdonalds to come and get beef and whiskey." Sir Alexander was still starting difficulties. JOHNSON. "Nay,

led, which, no doubt, contained some of the original strictures of the "Journal" on Sir Alexander Macdonald's want of hospitality and spirit.—Ed.]

¹ [Sir James Foulis, of Collinton, Bart., was a man of an ancient family, a good scholar, and a hard student; duly imbued with a large share both of Scottish shrewdness and Scottish prejudice. His property, his income at least, was very moderate. Others might have increased it in a voyage to India, which he made in the character of a commissioner; but Sir James returned as poor as he went there. Sir James Foulis was one of the Lowlanders whom Highlanders allowed to be well skilled in the Gaelick, an acquaintance which he made late in life.—WALTER SCOTT.]

if you are born to object, I have done with you. Sir, I would have a magazine of arms." SIR ALEXANDER. "They would rust." JOHNSON. "Let there be men to keep them clean. Your ancestors did not use to let their arms rust²."

We attempted in vain to communicate to him a portion of our enthusiasm. He bore with so polite a good-nature our warm, and what some might call Gothick, expostulations on this subject, that I should not forgive myself were I to record all that Dr. Johnson's ardour led him to say. This day was little better than a blank.

Sunday, 5th September.—I walked to the parish church of Slate, which is a very poor one. There are no church bells in the island. I was told there were once some; what was become of them, I could not learn. The minister not being at home, there was no service. I went into the church, and saw the monument of Sir James Macdonald, which was elegantly executed at Rome, and has an inscription, written by his friend, George Lord Lyttelton: [which, as Ed. well as two letters, written by Sir James, in his last illness, to his mother, will be found in the Appendix.]

Dr. Johnson said, the inscription should have been in Latin, as every thing intended to be universal and permanent should be³.

This being a beautiful day, my spirits were cheered by the mere effect of climate. I had felt a return of spleen during my stay at Armidale, and had it not been that I had Dr. Johnson to contemplate, I should have sunk into dejection; but his firmness supported me. I looked at him, as a man whose head is turning giddy at sea looks at a rock, or any fixed object. I wondered at his tranquillity. He said, "Sir, when a man retires into an island, he is to turn his thoughts en-

² [Dr. Johnson seems to have forgotten that a Highlander going armed at this period incurred the penalty of serving as a common soldier for the first, and of transportation beyond sea for a second offence. And as "for calling out his clan," twelve Highlanders and a bagpipe made a rebellion.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ [What a strange perversion of language!—universal! Why, if it had been in Latin, so far from being *universally* understood, it would have been an utter blank to one (the *better*) half of the creation, and, even of the *men* who might visit it, *ninety-nine* will understand it in English for *one* who could in Latin. Something may be said for epitaphs and inscriptions addressed, as it were, to the *world* at large—a triumphal arch—the pillar at Blenheim—the monument on the field of Waterloo; but a Latin epitaph, in an English church, appears, in principle, as absurd as the *dinner*, which the doctor gives in Peregrine Pickle, *after the manner of the ancients*. A mortal may surely be well satisfied if his fame lasts as long as the language in which he spoke or wrote.—Ed.]

tirely to another world. He has done with this." BOSWELL. "It appears to me, sir, to be very difficult to unite a due attention to this world, and that which is to come; for, if we engage eagerly in the affairs of life, we are apt to be totally forgetful of a future state; and, on the other hand, a steady contemplation of the awful concerns of eternity renders all objects here so insignificant, as to make us indifferent and negligent about them." JOHNSON. "Sir, Dr. Cheyne has laid down a rule to himself on this subject, which should be imprinted on every mind: 'To neglect nothing to secure my eternal peace, more than if I had been certified I should die within the day: nor to mind any thing that my secular obligations and duties demanded of me, less than if I had been ensured to live fifty years more.'"

I must here observe, that though Dr. Johnson appeared now to be philosophically calm, yet his genius did not shine forth as in companies, where I have listened to him with admiration. The vigour of his mind was, however, sufficiently manifested, by his discovering no symptoms of feeble relaxation in the dull, "weary, flat, and unprofitable" state in which we now were placed.

I am inclined to think that it was on this day he composed the following ode upon the Isle of Sky, which a few days afterwards he showed me at Rasay:

"ODA.

- "Ponti profundis clausa recessibus,
Strepens procellis, rupibus obsita,
Quam grata defesso virentem
Skia sinum nebulosa pandis.
- "His cura, credo, sedibus exulat;
His blanda certe pax habitat locis:
Non ira, non mœror quietis
Insidias meditatur horis.
- "At non cavata rupe latescere,
Menti nec agræ montibus aviis
Prodest vagari, nec frementes
E scopulo numerare fluctus.
- "Humana virtus non sibi sufficit,
Datur nec æquum cuique animum sibi
Parare posse, ut Stoicorum
Secta crepet nimis alta fallax.
- "Exæstantis pectoris impetum,
Rex summe, solus tu regis arbiter,
Mentisque, te tollente, surgunt,
Te recidunt moderante fluctus¹."

¹ Various readings.—Line 2. In the manuscript, Dr. Johnson, instead of *rupibus obsita*, had written *imbribus uvida*, and *uvida nubibus*, but struck them both out.

Lines 15 and 16. Instead of these two lines, he had written, but afterwards struck out, the following.

After supper, Dr. Johnson told us, that Isaac Hawkins Browne drank freely for thirty years, and that he wrote his poem, "De Animi Immortalitate," in some of the last of these years. I listened to this with the eagerness of one, who, conscious of being himself fond of wine, is glad to hear that a man of so much genius and good thinking as Browne had the same propensity.

Monday, 6th September.—We set out, accompanied by Mr. Donald M'Leod, late of Canna, as our guide. We rode for some time along the district of Slate, near the shore. The houses in general are made of turf, covered with grass. The country seemed well peopled. We came into the district of Strath, and passed along a wild moorish tract of land till we arrived at the shore. There we found good verdure, and some curious whin-rocks, or collections of stones, like the ruins of the foundations of old buildings. We saw also three cairns of considerable size.

About a mile beyond Broadfoot is Corrichatachin, a farm of Sir Alexander Macdonald's, possessed by Mr. M'Kinnon²,

*Parare posse, utcumque jactet
Grandiloquus nimis alta Zeno.*—BOSWELL.

[It is very curious that, in ALL the editions of JOHNSON'S WORKS, which the editor has seen, even down to the Oxford edition of 1825, this poem is given with certain *variations*, which the Editor confesses he does not understand. The first amendment, noted by Mr. Boswell, "*obsita rupibus*" is adopted, but the second is not, and the two lines rejected by Dr. Johnson are replaced. But this is not all: the words "*E scopulo*," in the 12th line, are changed into "*In specula*," of which the sense is not obvious; and in the penultimate line, "*surgunt*," which seems necessary to the meaning, is altered to "*fluctus*," which appears wholly unintelligible. These last variations look like mere errors of the press; but is it possible, that Johnson's Latin poetry has been so little attended to, that the public has been, for forty years past, acquiescing in what appears to be stark nonsense? In the last line, too, "*resident*" is printed for "*recidunt*," but that is of minor importance. It seems wonderful that Mr. Murphy (who was himself a Latin poet) and the late Oxford editor should, in their splendid editions, have overlooked these errors.—ED.]

² That my readers may have my narrative in the style of the country through which I am travelling, it is proper to inform them, that the chief of a clan is denominated by his surname alone, as M'Leod, M'Kinnon, M'Intosh. To prefix *Mr.* to it would be a degradation from the M'Leod, &c. My old friend, the Laird of M'Farlane, the great antiquary, took it highly amiss, when General Wade called him Mr. M'Farlane. Dr. Johnson said, he could not bring himself to use this mode of address; it seemed to him to be too familiar, as it is the way in which, in all other places, intimates or inferiors are addressed. When the chiefs have titles, they are denominated

who received us with a hearty welcome, as did his wife, who was what we call in Scotland a *lady-like* woman¹. Mr. Pennant, in the course of his tour to the Hebrides, passed two nights at this gentleman's house. On its being mentioned, that a present had here been made to him of a curious specimen of Highland antiquity, Dr. Johnson said, "Sir, it was more than he deserved: the dog is a whig²."

We here enjoyed the comfort of a table plentifully furnished, the satisfaction of which was heightened by a numerous and cheerful company; and we, for the first time, had a specimen of the joyous social manners of the inhabitants of the Highlands. They talked in their own ancient language, with fluent vivacity, and sung many Erse songs with such spirit, that, though Dr. Johnson was treated with the greatest respect and attention, there were moments in which he seemed to be forgotten. For myself, though but a Lowlander, having picked up a few words of the language, I presumed to mingle in their mirth, and joined in the choruses with as much glee as any of the company. Dr. Johnson being fatigued with his journey, retired early to his chamber, where he composed the following Ode, addressed to Mrs. Thrale³:

“ODA.

“Permeo terras, ubi nuda rupes
Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,
Torva ubi rident steriles coloni
Rura labores.

“Pervagor gentes hominum ferorum⁴,
Vita ubi nullo decorata cultu

by them, as Sir James Grant, Sir Allen M'Lean. The other Highland gentlemen, of landed property, are denominated by their estates, as Rasay, Boisdale; and the wives of all of them have the title of *ladies*. The tacksmen, or principal tenants, are named by their farms, as Kingsburgh, Corrichatachin; and their wives are called the *mistress* of Kingsburgh, the *mistress* of Corrichatachin. Having given this explanation, I am at liberty to use that mode of speech which generally prevails in the Highlands and the Hebrides.—BOSWELL.

¹ [The editor has not been able to discover that these words have any different meaning in Scotland from that attached to them in England.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Boswell does not do full justice to Dr. Johnson, when he leaves it in doubt, whether this was not said (as surely it was) in a spirit of jocularity. Johnson seems to have had a regard for Pennant.—Ed.]

³ [About fourteen years since, I landed in Sky, with a party of friends, and had the curiosity to ask what was the first idea on every one's mind at landing. All answered separately that it was this ode.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁴ [Gibbon says, that he veiled *indelicacy*

Squallet informis, tugurique fumis
Fœda latescit.

“Inter erroris salebrosa longi,
Inter ignotæ strepitus loquelæ,
Quot modis mecum, quid agat, requiro,
Thralia dulcis?

“Seu viri curas pia nupta mulcet,
Seu fovet mater sobolem benigna,
Sive cum libris novitate pascet
Sedula mentem;

“Sit memor nostri, fideique merces
Stet fides constans, meritoque blandum
Thraliæ discant resonare nomen
Littora Skie.

“Scriptum in Skiâ, 6th Sept. 1773.”

Tuesday, 7th September.—Dr. Johnson was much pleased with his entertainment here. There were many good books in the house: Hector Boethius in Latin; Cave's Lives of the Fathers; Baker's Chronicle; Jeremy Collier's Church History; Dr. Johnson's small Dictionary; Craufurd's Officers of State, and several more;—a mezzotinto of Mrs. Brooks the actress (by some strange chance in Sky⁵); and also a print of Macdonald of Clanranald, with a Latin inscription about the cruelties after the battle of Culloden, which will never be forgotten.

It was a very wet stormy day; we were therefore obliged to remain here, it being impossible to cross the sea to Rasay.

I employed a part of the forenoon in writing this journal. The rest of it was somewhat dreary, from the gloominess of the weather, and the uncertain state which we were in, as we could not tell but it might clear up every hour. Nothing is more painful to the mind than a state of suspense, especially when it depends upon the weather, concerning which there can be so little cal-

under the obscurity of a learned language. Johnson seems to have done the same with *ingratitude*. Surely, after the jocund and hospitable scene which we have just left, the "*hominum ferorum*," and the "*vita nullo decorata cultu*," and the "*squallet informis*," might have been spared. The "*ignotæ strepitus loquelæ*" is amusing and not offensive; but whatever may be said of the Doctor's gratitude to his friends in Sky, the classical reader will not have failed to observe how much his taste, and even his Latinity, have improved since the days of the ode "*Ad Urbanum*," and the epigrams to *Savage* and *Eliza*. His verses "*In Theatro*," and those in Sky and in Inch Kenneth, and this ode to Mrs. Thrale are, if the editor may venture to give his opinion, much more natural in their thoughts, and more elegant in their expressions, than his earlier attempts in this line.—Ed.]

⁵ [Mrs. Brooks's father was a Scotchman of the name of Watson.—Ed.]

culation. As Dr. Johnson said of our weariness on the Monday at Aberdeen, "Sensation is sensation:" Corrichatachin, which was last night a hospitable house, was in my mind, changed to-day into a prison. After dinner I read some of Dr. Macpherson's "Dissertations on the Ancient Caledonians." I was disgusted by the unsatisfactory conjectures as to antiquity, before the days of record. I was happy when tea came. Such, I take it, is the state of those who live in the country¹. Meals are wished for from the cravings of vacuity of mind, as well as from the desire of eating. I was hurt to find even such a temporary feebleness, and that I was so far from being that robust wise man who is sufficient for his own happiness. I felt a kind of lethargy of indolence. I did not exert myself to get Dr. Johnson to talk, that I might not have the labour of writing down his conversation. He inquired here, if there were any remains of the second sight. Mr. Macpherson, minister of Slate, said, he was *resolved* not to believe it, because it was founded on no principle. JOHNSON. "There are many things then, which we are sure are true, that you will not believe. What principle is there, why a loadstone attracts iron? why an egg produces a chicken by heat? why a tree grows upwards, when the natural tendency of all things is downwards? Sir, it depends upon the degree of evidence that you have." Young Mr. M'Kinnon mentioned one M'Kenzie, who is still alive, who had often fainted in his presence, and when he recovered, mentioned visions which had been presented to him. He told Mr. M'Kinnon, that at such a place he should meet a funeral, and that such and such people would be the bearers, naming four; and three weeks afterwards he saw what M'Kenzie had predicted. The naming the very spot in a country where a funeral comes a long way, and the very people as bearers, when there are so many out of whom a choice may be made, seems extraordinary. We should have sent for M'Kinnon, had we not been informed that he could speak no English. Besides, the facts were not related with sufficient accuracy.

Mrs. M'Kinnon, who is a daughter of old Kingsburgh [a Macdonald], told us that her father was one day riding in Sky, and some women, who were at work in a field

¹ [Mr. Boswell should have recollected, that he and Dr. Johnson were probably the only persons of the party who had nothing to do. A country gentleman's life would be miserable, if he had no more business or interest in the scenes around him than the visitor of a few days at a stranger's house can have. M'Kinnon would probably have been more, and with more reason, *ennuyé* in Bolt Court than Johnson and Boswell were at Corrichatachin.—ED.]

on the side of the road, said to him, they had heard two *taischs* (that is, two voices of persons about to die), and what was remarkable, one of them was an *English taisch*, which they never heard before. When he returned, he at that very place met two funerals, and one of them was that of a woman who had come from the main land, and could speak only English. This, she remarked, made a great impression upon her father.

How all the people here were lodged, I know not. It was partly done by separating man and wife, and putting a number of men in one room, and of women in another.

Wednesday, 8th September.—When I waked, the rain was much heavier than yesterday; but the wind had abated. By breakfast, the day was better, and in a little while it was calm and clear. I felt my spirits much elated. The propriety of the expression, "*the sunshine of the breast*"², now struck me with peculiar force; for the brilliant rays penetrated into my very soul. We were all in better humour than before. Mrs. M'Kinnon, with unaffected hospitality and politeness, expressed her happiness in having such company in her house, and appeared to understand and relish Dr. Johnson's conversation, as indeed all the company seemed to do. When I knew she was old *Kingsburgh's* daughter, I did not wonder at the good appearance which she made.

She talked as if her husband and family would emigrate, rather than be oppressed by their landlord³; and said, "How agreeable would it be, if these gentlemen should come in upon us when we are in America." Somebody observed that Sir Alexander Macdonald was always frightened at sea. JOHNSON. "*He is frightened at sea; and his tenants are frightened when he comes to land.*"

We resolved to set out directly after breakfast. We had about two miles to ride to the sea side, and there we expected to get one of the boats belonging to the fleet of bounty⁴ herring-busses then on the coast, or at least a good country fishing-boat. But while we were preparing to set out, there arrived a man with the following card⁵ from the Reverend Mr. Donald M'Queen:

² [Gray's "Ode on the Prospect of Eton College." It may be here observed that no poet has, in proportion to the quantity of his works, furnished so many expressions which, by their felicity, have become proverbial, as Gray. He has written little, but his lines are in every mouth, and fall from every pen.—ED.]

³ [Sir Alexander Macdonald.—ED.]

⁴ [Boats which fished under the encouragement of a *bounty*.—ED.]

⁵ [What is now called a *note* was, at the pe-



No more the Grecian Mute unrival'd reigns :
To Britain let the Nations homage pay ;
She felt a HOMER'S fire in MILTON'S strains .
A PINDAR'S rapture in the Lyre of GRAY .

Mr. Gray's Monument.

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“Mr. McQueen’s compliments to Mr. Boswell, and begs leave to acquaint him that, fearing the want of a proper boat, as much as the rain of yesterday, might have caused a stop, he is now at Skianwden with *Macgillichallum’s*¹ carriage, to convey him and Dr. Johnson to Rasay, where they will meet with a most hearty welcome, and where Macleod, being on a visit, now attends their motions.

“Wednesday afternoon.”

This card was most agreeable; it was a prologue to that hospitable and truly polite reception which we found at Rasay. In a little while arrived Mr. Donald McQueen himself; a decent minister, an elderly man with his own² black hair, courteous, and rather slow of speech, but candid, sensible, and well informed, nay learned. Along with him came, as our pilot, a gentleman whom I had a great desire to see, Mr. Malcolm Macleod, one of the Rasay family, celebrated in the year 1745-6. He was now sixty-two years of age, hale, and well-proportioned,—with a manly countenance, tanned by the weather, yet having a ruddiness in his cheeks, over a great part of which his rough beard extended. His eye was quick and lively, yet his look was not fierce, but he appeared at once firm and good-humoured. He wore a pair of brogues; tartan hose which came up only near to his knees, and left them bare; a purple camlet kilt³; a black waistcoat; a short green cloth coat bound with gold cord: a yellowish bushy wig; a large blue bonnet with a gold thread button. I never saw a figure that gave a more perfect representation of a Highland gentleman. I wished much to have a picture of him just as he was. I found him frank and *polite*, in the true sense of the word.

The good family at Corrichatachin said they hoped to see us on our return. We rode down to the shore; but Malcolm walked with graceful agility.

We got into *Rasay’s* carriage, which was

riod at which Mr. Boswell wrote, frequently called a *card*.—ED.]

¹ The Highland expression for Laird of Rasay.—BOSWELL. [Meaning “*the son of the youth, Colin*,”—the ancestor of this branch, having been, no doubt, in his day designated as “young Colin Macleod.”—ED.]

² [Wigs were, at this period, still generally worn; a fashion at which posterity will wonder, as we now do, at the *excess* of the fashion, as exhibited in the pictures of Lely and Kneller. We can hardly reconcile ourselves to “a yellowish, bushy wig” as part of the costume of “a perfect Highland gentleman.”—ED.]

³ [A purple camlet kilt.—To evade the law against the tartan dress, the Highlands used to dye their variegated plaids and kilts into blue, green, or any single colour.—WALTER SCOTT.]

a good strong open boat made in Norway. The wind had now risen pretty high, and was against us; but we had four stout rowers, particularly a Macleod, a robust, black-haired fellow, half naked, and bare-headed, something between a wild Indian and an English tar. Dr. Johnson sat high on the stern, like a magnificent Triton. Malcolm sung an Erse song⁴, the chorus of which was “*Hatyin foam foam eri*,” with words of his own. The tune resembled “*Owr the muir among the heather*.” The boatmen and Mr. McQueen chorused, and all went well. At length Malcolm himself took an oar, and rowed vigorously. We sailed along the coast of Scalpa, a rugged island, about four miles in length. Dr. Johnson proposed that he and I should buy it, and found a good school, and an episcopal church (Malcolm said he would come to it⁵), and have a printing-press, where he would print all the Erse that could be found.

Here I was strongly struck with our long projected scheme of visiting the Hebrides being realized. I called to him; “We are contending with seas;” which I think were the words of one of his letters to me. “Not much,” said he; and though the wind made the sea lash considerably upon us, he was not discomposed. After we were out of the shelter of Scalpa, and in the sound between it and Rasay, which extended about a league, the wind made the sea very rough. I did not like it⁶. JOHNSON. “This now is the Atlantick. If I should tell at a tea-table in London, that I have crossed the Atlantick in an open boat, how they’d shudder, and what a fool they’d think me to expose myself to such danger!” He then repeated Horace’s ode,

“*Otium divos rogat in patenti
Prensus Ægeo*——.”

In the confusion and hurry of this boisterous sail, Dr. Johnson’s spurs, of which Joseph had charge, were carried overboard into the sea, and lost. This was the first misfortune that had befallen us. Dr. Johnson was a little angry at first, observing that “there was something wild in letting a pair of spurs be carried into the sea out of a boat;” but then he remarked, “that, as *Janes* the naturalist had said⁷ upon losing

⁴ [See *post*, 5th Oct. 1773, a translation of this song.—ED.]

⁵ The Highlanders were all well inclined to the episcopalian form, *provisio* that the right king was prayed for. I suppose Malcolm meant to say, “I will come to your church because you are *honest folk*;” viz. *Jacobites*.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁶ [Johnson, in his letters to Mrs. Thrale, intimates that Mr. Boswell was a timid sailor.—ED.]

⁷ [Probably at their recent meeting at Armidale, &c. *ante*, 2d Sept.—ED.]

his pocket-book, it was rather an inconvenience than a loss." He told us, he now recollected that he dreamt the night before, that he put his staff into a river, and chanced to let it go, and it was carried down the stream and lost. "So now you see (said he) that I have lost my spurs; and this story is better than many of those which we have concerning second sight and dreams." Mr. McQueen said he did not believe the second sight; that he never met with any well-attested instances; and if he should, he should impute them to chance; because all who pretend to that quality often fail in their predictions, though they take a great scope, and sometimes interpret literally, sometimes figuratively, so as to suit the events. He told us that, since he came to be minister of the parish where he now is, the belief of witchcraft, or charms, was very common, insomuch that he had many prosecutions before his session (the parochial ecclesiastical court) against women, for having by these means carried off the milk from people's cows. He disregarded them; and there is not now the least vestige of that superstition. He preached against it; and in order to give a strong proof to the people that there was nothing in it, he said from the pulpit, that every woman in the parish was welcome to take the milk from his cows, provided she did not touch them¹.

Dr. Johnson asked him as to Fingal. He said he could repeat some passages in the original, that he heard his grandfather had a copy of it; but that he could not affirm that Ossian composed all that poem as it is now published. This came pretty much to what Dr. Johnson had maintained²; though he goes farther, and contends that it is no better than such an epic poem as he could make from the song of Robin Hood; that is to say, that, except a few passages, there is nothing truly ancient but the names and some vague traditions. Mr. McQueen alleged that Homer was made up of detached fragments. Dr. Johnson denied this; observing, that it had been one work originally, and that you could not put a book of the Iliad out of its place; and he believed the same might be said of the Odyssey.

The approach to Rasay was very pleasing. We saw before us a beautiful bay, well defended by a rocky coast; a good

family mansion; a fine verdure about it, with a considerable number of trees; and beyond it hills and mountains in gradation of wildness. Our boatmen sung with great spirit. Dr. Johnson observed, that naval musick was very ancient. As we came near the shore, the singing of our rowers was succeeded by that of reapers, who were busy at work, and who seemed to shout as much as to sing, while they worked with a bounding activity. Just as we landed, I observed a cross, or rather the ruins of one, upon a rock, which had to me a pleasing vestige of religion. I perceived a large company coming out from the house. We met them as we walked up. There were Rasay himself; his brother Dr. Macleod; his nephew the Laird of M'Kinnon; the Laird of Macleod; Colonel Macleod of Talisker, an officer in the Dutch service, a very genteel man, and a faithful branch of the family; Mr. Macleod of Muiravenside, best known by the name of Sandie Macleod, who was long in exile on account of the part which he took in 1745; and several other persons. We were welcomed upon the green, and conducted into the house, where we were introduced to Lady Rasay, who was surrounded by a numerous family, consisting of three sons and ten daughters³. The Laird of Rasay is a sensible, polite, and most hospitable gentleman. I was told that his island of Rasay, and that of Rona (from which the eldest son of the family has his title), and a considerable extent of land which he has in Sky, do not altogether yield him a very large revenue⁴; and yet he lives in great splendour; and so far is he from distressing his people, that, in the present rage for emigration, not a man has left his estate.

It was past six o'clock when we arrived. Some excellent brandy was served round immediately, according to the custom of the Highlands, where a dram is generally taken every day. They call it a *scalch*.

³ ["We were," says Johnson, "introduced into the house, which one of the company called the 'Court of Rasay,' with politeness which not the *Court of Versailles* could have thought defective." *Lett.* vol. i. p. 103.—ED.]

⁴ [Johnson says, "The money which Rasay raises from all his dominions, which contain, at least, fifty thousand acres, is not believed to exceed 250*l.*; but as he keeps a large farm in his own hands, he sells every year a large number of cattle, which adds to his revenue; and his table is furnished from the farm and from the sea with very little expense, except for those things which this country does not produce, and of those he is very liberal. The wine circulates liberally, and the tea, coffee, and chocolate, however they are got, are always at hand." *Lett.* vol. i. p. 142.—ED.]

¹ [Such spells are still believed in. A lady of property in Mull, a friend of mine, had a few years since much difficulty in rescuing from the superstitious fury of the people an old woman, who used a *charm* to injure her neighbour's cattle. It is now in my possession, and consists of feathers, parings of nails, hair, and such like trash, wrapt in a lump of clay.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [This seems the common sense of this once furious controversy.—WALTER SCOTT.]

On a side-board was placed for us, who had come off the sea, a substantial dinner, and a variety of wines. Then we had coffee and tea. I observed in the room several elegantly bound books and other marks of improved life. Soon afterwards a fiddler appeared, and a little ball began. *Rasay* himself danced with as much spirit as any man, and *Malcolm* bounded like a roe. *Sandie Macleod*, who has at times an excessive flow of spirits, and had it now, was, in his days of absconding, known by the name of *M'Cruslick*¹, which it seems was the designation of a kind of wild man in the Highlands, something between *Proteus* and *Don Quixote*; and so he was called here. He made much jovial noise. *Dr. Johnson* was so delighted with this scene, that he said, "I know not how we shall get away." It entertained me to observe him sitting by, while we danced, sometimes in deep meditation, sometimes smiling complacently, sometimes looking upon *Hooke's Roman History*, and sometimes talking a little, amidst the noise of the ball, to *Mr. Donald M'Queen*, who anxiously gathered knowledge from him. He was pleased with *M'Queen*, and said to me, "This is a critical man, sir. There must be a great vigour of mind to make him cultivate learning so much in the Isle of Sky, where he might do without it. It is wonderful how many of the new publications he has. There must be a snatch of every opportunity." *Mr. M'Queen* told me that his brother (who is the fourth generation of the family following each other as ministers of the parish of *Snizort*) and he joined together, and bought from time to time such books as had reputation. Soon after we came in, a black cock and gray hen, which had been shot, were shown, with their feathers on, to *Dr. Johnson*, who had never seen that species of bird before. We had a company of thirty at supper; and all was good humour and gaiety, without intemperance.

Thursday, 9th September.—At breakfast this morning, among a profusion of other

¹ [*Alexander Macleod*, of *Muiravenside*, advocate, became extremely obnoxious to government by his zealous personal efforts to engage his chief, *Macleod*, and *Macdonald* of *Sky*, in the *Chevalier's* attempt of 1745. Had he succeeded, it would have added one-third at least to the *Jacobite* army. *Boswell* has oddly described *M'Cruslick*, the being whose name was conferred upon this gentleman, as something betwixt *Proteus* and *Don Quixote*. It is the name of a species of satyr, or *esprit follet*, a sort of mountain Puck or hobgoblin, seen among the wilds and mountains, as the old Highlanders believed, sometimes mischievous, and sometimes mischievous. *Alexander Macleod's* precarious mode of life, and variable spirits, occasioned the *soubriquet*.—*WALTER SCOTT.*]

things, there were oat-cakes, made of what is called *graddaned* meal, that is, meal made of grain separated from the husks, and toasted by fire, instead of being threshed and kiln-dried. This seems to be bad management, as so much fodder is consumed by it. *Mr. M'Queen* however defended it, by saying, that it is doing the thing much quicker, as one operation effects what is otherwise done by two. His chief reason however was, that the servants in *Sky* are, according to him, a faithless pack, and steal what they can; so that much is saved by the corn passing but once through their hands, as at each time they pilfer some. It appears to me, that the *graddaning* is a strong proof of the laziness of the Highlanders, who will rather make fire act for them, at the expense of fodder, than labour themselves. There was also, what I cannot help disliking at breakfast, cheese: it is the custom over all the Highlands to have it; and it often smells very strong, and poisons to a certain degree the elegance of an *Indian* repast². The day was showery; however, *Rasay* and I took a walk, and had some cordial conversation. I conceived a more than ordinary regard for this worthy gentleman. His family has possessed this island above four hundred years. It is the remains of the estate of *Macleod of Lewis*, whom he represents. When we returned, *Dr. Johnson* walked with us to see the old chapel. He was in fine spirits. He said, "This is truly the patriarchal life: this is what we came to find."

After dinner, *M'Cruslick*, *Malcolm*, and I went out with guns to try if we could find any black cock; but we had no sport, owing to a heavy rain. I saw here what is called a *Danish fort*. Our evening was passed as last night was. One of our company³, I was told, had hurt himself by too much study, particularly of infidel metaphysicians, of which he gave a proof, on second sight being mentioned. He immediately retailed some of the fallacious arguments of *Voltaire* and *Hume* against miracles in general. Infidelity in a Highland gentleman appeared to me peculiarly offensive. I was sorry for him, as he had otherwise a good character. I told *Dr. Johnson* that he had studied himself into infidelity. *Johnson*. "Then he must study himself out of it again; that is the way. Drinking largely will sober him again."

Friday, 10th September.—Having resolved to explore the island of *Rasay*, which could be done only on foot, I last night obtained my fellow-traveller's permission to leave

² [*Mr. Boswell* forgets that there were breakfasts before the *Indian* luxuries of tea and sugar had been introduced.—*ED.*]

³ [Probably *Talisker*, who had been a good deal abroad.—*WALTER SCOTT.*]

him for a day, he being unable to take so hardy a walk. Old Mr. Malcolm Macleod, who had obligingly promised to accompany me, was at my bedside between five and six. I sprang up immediately, and he and I, attended by two other gentlemen, traversed the country during the whole of this day. Though we had passed over not less than four-and-twenty miles of very rugged ground, and had a Highland dance on the top of Dun Can, the highest mountain in the island, we returned in the evening not at all fatigued, and piqued ourselves at not being outdone at the nightly ball by our less active friends, who had remained at home.

My survey of Rasay did not furnish much which can interest my readers; I shall therefore put into as short a compass as I can the observations upon it, which I find registered in my journal. It is about fifteen English miles long and four broad. On the south side is the laird's family seat, situated on a pleasing low spot. The old tower of three stories, mentioned by Martin, was taken down soon after 1746, and a modern house supplies its place. There are very good grass-fields and corn-lands about it, well dressed. I observed, however, hardly any inclosures, except a good garden plentifully stocked with vegetables, and strawberries, raspberries, currants, &c.

On one of the rocks just where we landed, which are not high, there is rudely carved a square, with a crucifix in the middle. Here, it is said, the Lairds of Rasay, in old times, used to offer up their devotions. I could not approach the spot, without a grateful recollection of the event commemorated by this symbol.

A little from the shore, westward, is a kind of subterraneous house. There has been a natural fissure, or separation of the rock, running towards the sea, which has been roofed over with long stones, and above them turf has been laid. In that place the inhabitants used to keep their oars. There are a number of trees near the house, which grow well; some of them of a pretty good size. They are mostly plane and ash. A little to the west of the house is an old ruinous chapel, unroofed, which never has been very curious. We here saw some human bones of an uncommon size. There was a heel-bone, in particular, which Dr. Macleod said was such, that if the foot was in proportion, it must have been twenty-seven inches long. Dr. Johnson would not look at the bones. He started back from them with a striking appearance of horror¹. Mr. M'Queen told

us, it was formerly much the custom, in these isles, to have human bones lying above ground, especially in the windows of churches². On the south of the chapel is the family burying-place. Above the door, on the last end of it, is a small bust or image of the Virgin Mary, carved upon a stone which makes part of the wall. There is no church upon the island. It is annexed to one of the parishes of Sky; and the minister comes and preaches either in *Rasay's* house, or some other house, on certain Sundays. I could not but value the family seat more, for having even the ruins of a chapel close to it. There was something comfortable in the thought of being so near a piece of consecrated ground. Dr. Johnson said, "I look with reverence upon every place that has been set apart for religion;" and he kept off his hat while he was within the walls of the chapel.

The eight crosses, which Martin mentions as pyramids for deceased ladies, stood in a semicircular line, which contained within it the chapel. They marked out the boundaries of the sacred territory within which an asylum was to be had. One of them, which we observed upon our landing, made the first point of the semicircle. There are few of them now remaining. A good way farther north, there is a row of buildings about four feet high: they run from the shore on the east along the top of a pretty high eminence, and so down to the shore on the west, in much the same direction with the crosses. *Rasay* took them to be the marks for the asylum; but Malcolm thought them to be false sentinels, a common deception, of which instances occur in Martin, to make invaders imagine an island better guarded. Mr. Donald M'Queen justly, in my opinion, supposed the crosses which form the inner circle to be the church's landmarks.

The south end of the island is much covered with large stones or rocky strata. The laird has enclosed and planted part of it with firs, and he showed me a considerable space marked out for additional plantations.

Dun Can is a mountain, three computed miles from the laird's house. The ascent to it is by consecutive risings, if that expression may be used when valleys intervene, so that there is but a short rise at once; but it is certainly very high above

which are not unfrequently seen in maritime districts. Johnson expressed great horror at the sight of these bones; and called the people, who could use such relics of mortality as an ornament, mere savages.—Ed.]

² [It is perhaps a Celtic custom; for I observed it in Ireland occasionally, especially at the celebrated promontory of Mucross, at Killarny.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [Lord Stowell informs the editor, that on the road from Newcastle to Berwick, Dr. Johnson and he passed a cottage, at the entrance of which were set up two of those great bones of the whale,

the sea. The palm of altitude is disputed for by the people of Rasay and those of Sky; the former contending for Dun Can, the latter for the mountains in Sky, over against it. We went up the east side of Dun Can pretty easily. It is mostly rocks all around, the points of which hem the summit of it. Sailors, to whom it was a good object as they pass along, call it Rasay's cap. Before we reached this mountain, we passed by two lakes. Of the first, Malcolm told me a strange fabulous tradition. He said, there was a wild beast in it, a sea-horse, which came and devoured a man's daughter; upon which the man lighted a great fire, and had a sow roasted at it, the smell of which attracted the monster. In the fire was put a spit. The man lay concealed behind a low wall of loose stones, and he had an avenue formed for the monster, with two rows of large flat stones, which extended from the fire over the summit of the hill, till it reached the side of the loch. The monster came, and the man with the red-hot spit destroyed it. Malcolm showed me the little hiding-place and the rows of stones. He did not laugh when he told this story. I recollect having seen in the Scots Magazine, several years ago, a poem upon a similar tale, perhaps the same, translated from the Erse, or Irish, called "Albin and the Daughter of Mey¹."

There is a large tract of land, possessed as a common, in Rasay. They have no regulations as to the number of cattle; every man puts upon it as many as he chooses. From Dun Can northward, till you reach the other end of the island, there is much good natural pasture, unencumbered by stones. We passed over a spot which is appropriated for the exercising-ground. In 1745, a hundred fighting men were reviewed here, as Malcolm told me, who was one of the officers that led them to the field. They returned home all but about fourteen. What a princely thing it is to be able to furnish such a band! *Rasay* has the true spirit of a chief. He is, without exaggeration, a father to his people.

There is plenty of limestone in the island, a great quarry of freestone, and some natural woods, but none of any age, as they cut the trees for common country uses. The lakes, of which there are many, are well stocked with trout. Malcolm caught one of four-and-twenty pounds weight in the loch next to Dun Can, which, by the way, is certainly a Danish name², as most names of places in these islands are.

¹ [An Hebridean version, it would seem, of the story of Perseus and Andromeda.—Ed.]

² [It is clearly an Erse or Celtic name, compounded of *Dun* a hill, and *Can* the head—*i. e.* the highest hill. So in Scotland, *Kan-tyr*, the head land or promontory. It may be observed

The old castle, in which the family of Rasay formerly resided, is situated upon a rock very near the sea. The rock is not one mass of stone, but a concretion of pebbles and earth, so firm that it does not appear to have mouldered. In this remnant of antiquity I found nothing worthy of being noticed, except a certain accommodation rarely to be found at the modern houses of Scotland, and which Dr. Johnson and I sought for in vain at the Laird of Rasay's new-built mansion, where nothing else was wanting. I took the liberty to tell the laird it was a shame there should be such a deficiency in civilized times. He acknowledged the justice of the remark. But perhaps some generations may pass before the want is supplied. Dr. Johnson observed to me, how quietly people will endure an evil, which they might at any time very easily remedy; and mentioned as an instance, that the present family of Rasay had possessed the island for more than four hundred years³, and never made a commodious landing-place, though a few men with pickaxes might have cut an ascent of stairs out of any part of the rock in a week's time.

The north end of Rasay is as rocky as the south end. From it I saw the little isle of Fladda, belonging to *Rasay*, all fine green ground; and Rona, which is of so rocky a soil that it appears to be a pavement. I was told, however, that it has a great deal of grass in the interstices. The laird has it all in his own hands. At this end of the island of Rasay is a cave in a striking situation; it is in a recess of a great cleft, a good way up from the sea. Before it the ocean roars, being dashed against monstrous broken rocks; grand and awful *propugnacula*. On the right hand of it is a longitudinal cave, very low at the entrance, but higher as you advance. The sea having scooped it out, it seems strange and unaccountable that the interior part, where the water must have operated with less force, should be loftier than that which is more immediately exposed to its violence. The roof of it is all covered with a kind of petrifications formed by drops, which perpetually distil from it. The first cave has been a place of much safety. I find a great difficulty in describing visible objects. I must own too that the old castle and cave,

that *Kent*, in England, is probably a contraction of *Kan-tyr*, as the name of the capital—*Cant-tyr-bury*, the town of the promontorial land—denotes.—Ed.]

³ [Though Johnson thus censured *Rasay* and his ancestors for having remained four hundred years without rendering their island accessible by a landing-place, yet, when he came to write his Journal, he remembered that, perhaps, it was only for the last few years that it was desirable it should be accessible.—Ed.]

like many other things, of which one hears much, did not answer my expectations. People are every where apt to magnify the curiosities of their country.

This island has abundance of black cattle, sheep, and goats; a good many horses, which are used for ploughing, carrying out dung, and other works of husbandry. I believe the people never ride. There are indeed no roads through the island, unless a few detached beaten tracks deserve that name. Most of the houses are upon the shore; so that all the people have little boats, and catch fish. There is great plenty of potatoes here. There are black-cock in extraordinary abundance, moor-fowl, plover and wild pigeons, which seem to me to be the same as we have in pigeon-houses, in their state of nature. *Rasay* has no pigeon-house. There are no hares nor rabbits in the island, nor was there ever known to be a fox, till last year, when one was landed on it by some malicious person, without whose aid he could not have got thither, as that animal is known to be a very bad swimmer. He has done much mischief. There is a great deal of fish caught in the sea round *Rasay*: it is a place where one may live in plenty, and even in luxury. There are no deer; but *Rasay* told us he would get some.

They reckon it rains nine months in the year in this island, owing to its being directly opposite to the *western*¹ coast of Sky, where the watery clouds are broken by high mountains. The hills here, and indeed all the heathy grounds in general, abound with the sweet-smelling plant which the Highlanders call *gaul*, and (I think) with dwarf juniper in many places. There is enough of turf, which is their fuel, and it is thought there is a mine of coal. Such are the observations which I made upon the island of *Rasay*, upon comparing it with the description given by *Martin*, whose book we had with us.

There has been an ancient league between the families of *Macdonald* and *Rasay*. Whenever the head of either family dies, his sword is given to the head of the other. The present *Rasay* has the late *Sir James Macdonald's* sword. Old *Rasay* joined the Highland army in 1745, but prudently guarded against a forfeiture, by previously conveying his estate to the present gentleman, his eldest son. On that occasion, *Sir Alexander*, father of the late *Sir James Macdonald*, was very friendly to his neighbour. "Do n't be afraid, *Rasay*," said he, "I'll use all my interest to keep you safe; and if your estate should be taken, I'll buy it for the family." And he would have done it.

¹ [So in all the editions; but the *eastern* coast of Sky is next to *Rasay*.—E.]

Let me now gather some gold dust, some more fragments of *Dr. Johnson's* conversation, without regard to order of time. He said, "he thought very highly of *Bentley*; that no man now went so far in the kinds of learning that he cultivated; that the many attacks on him were owing to envy, and to a desire of being known, by being in competition with such a man; that it was safe to attack him, because he never answered his opponents, but let them die away. It was attacking a man who would not beat them, because his beating them would make them live the longer. And he was right not to answer; for, in his hazardous method of writing, he could not but be often enough wrong; so it was better to leave things to their general appearance, than own himself to have erred in particulars." He said, "*Mallet* was the prettiest dressed puppet about town, and always kept good company. That, from his way of talking, he saw, and always said, that he had not written any part of the *Life of the Duke of Marlborough*, though perhaps he intended to do it at some time; in which case he was not culpable in taking the pension. That he imagined the duchess furnished the materials for her *Apology*, which *Hooke* wrote, and *Hooke* furnished the words and the order, and all that in which the art of writing consists. That the duchess had not superior parts, but was a bold frontless woman, who knew how to make the most of her opportunities in life. That *Hooke* got a *large* sum of money for writing her *Apology*. That he wondered *Hooke* should have been weak enough to insert so profligate a maxim, as that to tell another's secret to one's friend is no breach of confidence; though perhaps *Hooke*, who was a virtuous man, as his *History* shows, and did not wish her well, though he wrote her *Apology*, might see its ill tendency, and yet insert it at her desire. He was acting only ministerially." I apprehend, however, that *Hooke* was bound to give his best advice. I speak as a lawyer. Though I have had clients whose causes I could not, as a private man, approve; yet, if I undertook them, I would not do any thing that might be prejudicial to them, even at their desire, without warning them of their danger.

Saturday, 11th September.—It was a storm of wind and rain, so we could not set out. I wrote some of this journal, and talked awhile with *Dr. Johnson* in his room, and passed the day, I cannot well say how, but very pleasantly. I was here amused to find *Mr. Cumberland's* comedy of the "Fashionable Lover," in which he has very well drawn a Highland character, *Colin Macleod*, of the same name with the family under whose roof we now were. *Dr. Johnson* was much pleased with the *Laird*

of Macleod¹, who is indeed a most promising youth, and with a noble spirit struggles with difficulties, and endeavours to preserve his people. He has been left with an incumbrance of forty thousand pounds debt, and annuities to the amount of thirteen hundred pounds a year. Dr. Johnson said, "If he gets the better of all this, he'll be a hero; and I hope he will. I have not met with a young man who had more desire to learn, or who has learnt more. I have seen nobody that I wish more to do a kindness to than Macleod." Such was the honourable eulogium on this young chieftain, pronounced by an accurate observer, whose praise was never lightly bestowed.

There is neither justice of peace nor constable in Rasay. Sky has Mr. Macleod of Ulinish, who is the sheriff substitute, and no other justice of peace. The want of the execution of justice is much felt among the islanders. Macleod very sensibly observed, that taking away the heritable jurisdictions had not been of such service in the islands as was imagined. They had not authority enough in lieu of them. What could formerly have been settled at once, must now either take much time and trouble, or be neglected. Dr. Johnson said, "A country is in a bad state, which is governed only by laws; because a thousand things occur for which laws cannot provide, and where authority ought to interpose. Now destroying the authority of the chiefs sets the people loose. It did not pretend to bring any positive good, but only to cure some evil; and I am not well enough acquainted with the country to know what degree of evil the heritable jurisdictions occasioned." I maintained hardly any; because the chiefs generally acted right, for their own sakes.

Dr. Johnson was now wishing to move. There was not enough of intellectual en-

¹ [The late General Macleod, born in 1754. In 1776 he entered the army, raising, then, an independent company, and in 1780, the second battalion of the forty-second, which he led to India, where he served with great distinction, and rose to the rank of a general officer. On his return home, he became M. P. for the county of Inverness, as his grandfather had been; but so far from extinguishing the debt on his estate, he increased it; for though he had sold a great tract of land in Harris, he left at his death, in 1801, the original debt of 50,000*l.* increased to 70,000*l.* He began, in the year 1785, to write the memoirs of his life; but did not proceed far. By the favour of his son, the present Macleod, now M. P. for Sudbury, the editor is in possession of this interesting fragment of auto-biography; and as the greater part of it relates to Dr. Johnson's visit, and to subjects discussed in his and Mr. Boswell's tours, the editor thinks that it will not be an inappropriate, and certainly not an unacceptable addition to the appendix of this work.—Ed.]

tainment for him, after he had satisfied his curiosity, which he did, by asking questions, till he had exhausted the island; and where there was so numerous a company, mostly young people, there was such a flow of familiar talk, so much noise, and so much singing and dancing, that little opportunity was left for his energetic conversation. He seemed sensible of this; for when I told him how happy they were at having him there, he said, "Yet we have not been able to entertain them much." I was fretted, from irritability of nerves, by *M^r Cruslick's*² too obstreperous mirth. I complained of it to my friend, observing we should be better if he was gone. "No, sir," said he. "He puts something into our society, and takes nothing out of it." Dr. Johnson, however, had several opportunities of instructing the company; but I am sorry to say, that I did not pay sufficient attention to what passed, as his discourse now turned chiefly on mechanics, agriculture, and such subjects, rather than on science and wit. Last night Lady Rasay showed him the operation of *wawking* cloth, that is, thickening it in the same manner as is done by a mill. Here it is performed by women, who kneel upon the ground, and rub it with both their hands, singing an Erse song all the time. He was asking questions while they were performing this operation, and, amidst their loud and wild howl, his voice was heard even in the room above.

They dance here every night. The queen of our ball was the eldest Miss Macleod, of Rasay, an elegant well-bred woman, and celebrated for her beauty over all those regions, by the name of Miss Flora Rasay³. There seemed to be no jealousy, no discontent among them; and the gaiety of the scene was such, that I for a moment doubted whether unhappiness had any place in Rasay. But my delusion was soon dispelled, by recollecting the following lines of my fellow-traveller:

"Yet hope not life from pain or danger free,
Or think the doom of man reversed for thee!"

Sunday, 12th September.—It was a beautiful day, and although we did not approve of travelling on Sunday, we resolved to set out, as we were in an island from

² [It was probably these high animal spirits that obtained this gentleman the appellation of *M^r Cruslick.*—Ed.]

³ She had been some time at Edinburgh, to which she again went, and was married [1777] to my worthy neighbour, Colonel Mure Campbell, now Earl of Loudoun; but she died soon afterwards, leaving one daughter.—BOSWELL. [Her daughter, Countess of Loudoun in her own right, married the late Earl of Moira, created Marquis of Hastings, and is the mother of the present marquis.—Ed.]

whence one must take occasion as it serves. Macleod and *Talisker* sailed in a boat of Rasay's for Sconser, to take the shortest way to Dunvegan. *McCruslick* went with them to Sconser, from whence he was to go to Slate, and so to the main land. We were resolved to pay a visit at Kingsburgh, and see the celebrated Miss Flora Macdonald, who is married to the present Mr. Macdonald of Kingsburgh; so took that road, though not so near. All the family, but Lady Rasay, walked down to the shore to see us depart. *Rasay* himself went with us in a large boat, with eight oars, built in his island; as did Mr. Malcolm Macleod, Mr. Donald M'Queen, Dr. Macleod, and some others. We had a most pleasant sail between Rasay and Sky; and passed by a cave, where Martin says fowls were caught by lighting fire in the mouth of it. Malcolm remembers this. But it is not now practised, as few fowls come into it.

We spoke of Death. Dr. Johnson on this subject observed, that the boastings of some men, as to dying easily, were idle talk, proceeding from partial views. I mentioned Hawthornden's Cypress-grove, where it is said that the world is a mere show; and that it is unreasonable for a man to wish to continue in the show-room after he has seen it. Let him go cheerfully out, and give place to other spectators. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, if he is sure he is to be well, after he goes out of it. But if he is to grow blind after he goes out of the show-room, and never to see any thing again; or if he does not know whither he is to go next, a man will not go cheerfully out of a show-room. No wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to go into a state of punishment. Nay, no wise man will be contented to die, if he thinks he is to fall into annihilation: for however unhappy any man's existence may be, he yet would rather have it, than not exist at all. No; there is no rational principle by which a man can die contented, but a trust in the mercy of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ." This short sermon, delivered with an earnest tone, in a boat upon the sea, which was perfectly calm, on a day appropriated to religious worship, while every one listened with an air of satisfaction, had a most pleasing effect upon my mind.

Pursuing the same train of serious reflection, he added, that it seemed certain that happiness could not be found in this life, because so many had tried to find it, in such a variety of ways, and had not found it.

We reached the harbour of Portree, in Sky, which is a large and good one. There was lying in it a vessel to carry off the emigrants, called the Nestor. It made a short settlement of the differences between a chief and his clan.

Nestor componere lites
Inter Peleiden festinat et inter Atriden.

We approached her, and she hoisted her colours. Dr. Johnson and Mr. M'Queen remained in the boat: *Rasay* and I, and the rest, went on board of her. She was a very pretty vessel, and, as we were told, the largest in Clyde. Mr. Harrison, the captain, showed her to us. The cabin was commodious, and even elegant. There was a little library, finely bound. Portree has its name from King James the Fifth having landed there in his tour through the Western Isles, *ree* in Erse being king¹, as *re* is in Italian; so it is Port-Royal. There was here a tolerable inn. On our landing, I had the pleasure of finding a letter from home; and there were also letters to Dr. Johnson and me, from Lord Elibank, which had been sent after us from Edinburgh. His lordship's letter to me was as follows:

"21st August, 1773.

"DEAR BOSWELL,—I flew to Edinburgh the moment I heard of Mr. Johnson's arrival; but so defective was my intelligence, that I came too late.

"It is but justice to believe, that I could never forgive myself, nor deserve to be forgiven by others, if I was to fail in any mark of respect to that very great genius. I hold him in the highest veneration; for that very reason I was resolved to take no share in the merit, perhaps guilt, of enticing him to honour this country with a visit. I could not persuade myself there was any thing in Scotland worthy to have a summer of Samuel Johnson bestowed on it; but since he has done us that compliment, for heaven's sake inform me of your motions. I will attend them most religiously; and though I should regret to let Mr. Johnson go a mile out of his way on my account, old as I am², I shall be glad to go five hundred miles to enjoy a day of his company. Have the charity to send a council-post³ with intelligence; the post does not suit us in the country. At any rate, write to me. I will attend you in the north, when I shall know where to find you. I am, my dear Boswell, your sincerely obedient humble servant,
"ELIBANK."

¹ [Why does not Mr. Boswell also discover that *port* is, in *Erse*, *port*? It may be inferred, that the original Erse was the language of a very poor and barbarous people; for the names now employed for the principal objects of commerce, and of social or political life, seem to have been borrowed from foreigners, as *king*, *port*, *horse*, *cow*, &c.—ED.]

² [His lordship was now 70, having been born in 1703.—ED.]

³ A term in Scotland for a special messenger, such as was formerly sent with despatches by the lords of the council.—BOSWELL.

The letter to Dr. Johnson was in these words:

“DEAR SIR,—I was to have kissed your hands at Edinburgh, the moment I heard of you, but you was gone.

“I hope my friend Boswell will inform me of your motions. It will be cruel to deprive me an instant of the honour of attending you. As I value you more than any king in Christendom, I will perform that duty with infinitely greater alacrity than any courtier. I can contribute but little to your entertainment; but my sincere esteem for you gives me some title to the opportunity of expressing it.

“I dare say you are by this time sensible that things are pretty much the same as when Buchanan complained of being born *solo et seculo inerudito*. Let me hear of you, and be persuaded that none of your admirers is more sincerely devoted to you, than, dear sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,
“ELIBANK.”

Dr. Johnson, on the following Tuesday, answered for both of us, thus:

“Skie, 14th Sept. 1773.

“MY LORD,—On the rugged shore of Skie, I had the honour of your lordship's letter, and can with great truth declare that no place is so gloomy but that it would be cheered by such a testimony of regard, from a mind so well qualified to estimate characters, and to deal out approbation in its due proportions. If I have more than my share, it is your lordship's fault; for I have always revered your judgment too much, to exalt myself in your presence by any false pretensions.

“Mr. Boswell and I are at present at the disposal of the winds, and therefore cannot fix the time at which we shall have the honour of seeing your lordship. But we should either of us think ourselves injured by the supposition that we would miss your lordship's conversation when we could enjoy it; for I have often declared that I never met you without going away a wiser man. I am, my lord, your lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

At Portree, Mr. Donald M'Queen went to church and officiated in Erse, and then came to dinner. Dr. Johnson and I resolved that we should treat the company; so I played the landlord, or master of the feast, having previously ordered Joseph to pay the bill.

Sir James Macdonald intended to have built a village here, which would have done great good. A village is like a heart to a

country. It produces a perpetual circulation, and gives the people an opportunity to make profit of many little articles, which would otherwise be in a good measure lost. We had here a dinner, *et præterea nihil*. Dr. Johnson did not talk. When we were about to depart, we found that *Rasay* had been beforehand with us, and that all was paid: I would fain have contested this matter with him, but seeing him resolved, I declined it. We parted with cordial embraces from him and worthy Malcolm. In the evening Dr. Johnson and I remounted our horses, accompanied by Mr. M'Queen and Dr. Macleod. It rained very hard. We rode what they call six miles, upon *Rasay's* lands in Sky, to Dr. Macleod's house. On the road Dr. Johnson “appeared to be somewhat out of spirits. When I talked of our meeting Lord Elibank, he said, “I cannot be with him much. I long to be again in civilized life; but can stay but a short while;” (he meant at Edinburgh). He said, “let us go to Dunvegan to-morrow.” “Yes (said I), if it is not a deluge.” “At any rate,” he replied. This showed a kind of fretful impatience; nor was it to be wondered at, considering our disagreeable ride. I feared he would give up Mull and Icolmkill, for he said something of his apprehensions of being detained by bad weather in going to Mull and *Iona*. However, I hoped well. We had a dish of tea at Dr. Macleod's, who had a pretty good house, where was his brother, a half-pay officer. His lady was a polite, agreeable woman. Dr. Johnson said, he was glad to see that he was so well married, for he had an esteem for physicians. The doctor accompanied us to Kingsburgh, which is called a mile farther; but the computation of Sky has no connexion whatever with real distance.

I was highly pleased to see Dr. Johnson safely arrived at Kingsburgh, and received by the hospitable Mr. Macdonald, who, with a most respectful attention, supported him into the house. *Kingsburgh* was completely the figure of a gallant Highlander,—exhibiting “the graceful mien and manly looks,” which our popular Scotch song has justly attributed to that character. He had his tartan plaid thrown about him, a large blue bonnet with a knot of black riband like a cockade, a brown short coat of a kind of duffil, a tartan waistcoat with gold buttons and gold button-holes, a bluish philibeg, and tartan hose. He had jet black hair tied behind, and was a large stately man, with a steady sensible countenance.

There was a comfortable parlour with a good fire, and a dram went round. By and by supper was served, at which there appeared the lady of the house, the celebrated

Miss Flora Macdonald¹. She is a little woman, of a genteel appearance, and uncommonly mild and well bred. To see Dr. Samuel Johnson, the great champion of the English Tories, salute Miss Flora Macdonald in the Isle of Sky, was a striking sight; for though somewhat congenial in their notions, it was very improbable they should meet here.

Miss Flora Macdonald (for so I shall call her) told me, she heard upon the main land, as she was returning home about a fortnight before, that Mr. Boswell was coming to Sky, and one Mr. Johnson, a young English *buck*², with him. He was highly entertained with this fancy. Giving an account of the afternoon which we passed at Anock, he said, "I, being a *buck*, had *Miss* in to make tea." He was rather quiescent to-night, and went early to bed. I was in a cordial humour, and promoted a cheerful glass. The punch was excellent. Honest Mr. M^cQueen observed that I was in high glee, "my *governour* being gone to bed." Yet in reality my heart was grieved, when I recollected that *Kingsburgh*

¹ [It is stated in the account of the rebellion, published under the title of "*Ascanius*," that she was the daughter of Mr. Macdonald, a tacksmen or gentleman-farmer, of Melton, in South Uist, and was, in 1746, about twenty-four years old. It is also said, that her portrait was painted in London in 1747, for Commodore Smith, in whose ship she had been brought prisoner from Scotland; but the editor has not been able to trace it. Dr. Johnson says of her to Mrs. Thrale, "She must then have been a very young lady; she is now not old; of a pleasing person, and elegant behaviour. She told me that she thought herself honoured by my visit; and I am sure that whatever regard she bestowed on me was liberally repaid. 'If thou liest her opinions, thou wilt praise her virtue.' She was carried to London, but dismissed without a trial, and came down with Malcolm Macleod, against whom sufficient evidence could not be procured. She and her husband are poor, and are going to try their fortune in America. Sic rerum volvitur orbis."—*Letters*, i. 153. They did emigrate to America; but returned to Sky, where she died on the 4th March, 1790, leaving a son, Colonel John Macdonald, now, as the Editor is informed, residing at Exeter, and a daughter, still alive in Sky, married to a Macleod, a distant relation of the *Macleod*.—ED. It is remarkable that this distinguished lady signed her name *Flory*, instead of the more classical orthography. Her marriage contract, which is in my possession, bears the name spelled *Flory*.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [It may be useful to future readers to know that the word "*macaroni*," used in a former passage of this work, and the word "*buck*" here used, are nearly synonymous with the term "*dandy*," employed now-a-days to express a young gentleman who in his dress and manners affects the extreme of the fashion.—ED.]

was embarrassed in his affairs, and intended to go to America. However, nothing but what was good was present, and I pleased myself in thinking that so spirited a man would be well every where. I slept in the same room with Dr. Johnson. Each had a neat bed, with tartan curtains, in an upper chamber.

Monday, 13th September.—The room where we lay was a celebrated one. Dr. Johnson's bed was the very bed³ in which the grandson of the unfortunate King James the Second⁴ lay, on one of the nights after the failure of his rash attempt in 1745-6, while he was eluding the pursuit of the emissaries of government, which had offered thirty thousand pounds as a reward for

³ [In the examination of *Kingsburgh* and his wife, by Captain Fergusson, of the Furnace man of war, relative to this affair, Fergusson asked "where Miss Flora, and the person in woman's clothes who was with her, lay?" *Kingsburgh* answered with gentlemanly spirit, "He knew where Miss Flora lay; but as for servants he never asked any questions about them." The captain then, brutally enough, asked Mrs. Macdonald "whether she laid the young Pretender and Miss Flora in the same bed?" She answered, with great temper and readiness, "Sir, whom you mean by the young Pretender, I do not pretend to guess; but I can assure you it is not the fashion in Sky to lay mistress and maid in the same bed together." The captain then desired to see the rooms where they lay, and remarked shrewdly enough that the room wherein the supposed maid-servant lay was better than that of her mistress.—*Ascanius*.—ED.]

⁴ I do not call him *the Prince of Wales*, or *the Prince*, because I am quite satisfied that the right which the house of Stuart had to the throne is extinguished. I do not call him *the Pretender*, because it appears to me as an insult to one who is still alive, and, I suppose, thinks very differently. It may be a parliamentary expression; but it is not a gentlemanly expression. I know, and I exult in having it in my power to tell, that "the only person in the world who is entitled to be offended at this delicacy thinks and feels as I do;" and has liberality of mind and generosity of sentiment enough to approve of my tenderness for what even *has been* blood royal. That he is a prince by courtesy cannot be denied; because his mother was the daughter of Sobiesky, king of Poland. I shall, therefore, on that account alone, distinguish him by the name of Prince Charles Edward.—BOSWELL. [The generosity of King George the Third, alluded to in this note, was felt by his successor, who caused a monument to be erected over the remains of the Cardinal of York, in whom the line of James the Second ended. It was a royal and a national tribute to private and to public feeling: the political danger had been extinguished for more than half a century; and the claims of kindred, the honour of the English name, and the personal feelings of a generous prince, not only justified, but seemed to require such an evidence of British generosity.—ED.]

apprehending him. To see Dr. Samuel Johnson lying in that bed, in the Isle of Sky, in the house of Miss Flora Macdonald, struck me with such a group of ideas as it is not easy for words to describe, as they passed through the mind. He smiled, and said, "I have had no ambitious thoughts in it!" The room was decorated with a great variety of maps and prints. Among others, was Hogarth's print of Wilkes grinning, with the cap of liberty on a pole by him. That too was a curious circumstance in the scene this morning; such a contrast was Wilkes to the above group. It reminded me of Sir William Chambers's "Account of Oriental Gardening," in which we are told all odd, strange, ugly, and even terrible objects, are introduced for the sake of variety; a wild extravagance of taste which is so well ridiculed in the celebrated epistle to him. The following lines of that poem immediately occurred to me;

"Here too, O king of vengeance! in thy fane,
Tremendous Wilkes shall rattle his gold chain."

Upon the table in our room I found in the morning a slip of paper, on which Dr. Johnson had written with his pencil these words:

"Quantum cedit virtutibus aurum?"

What he meant by writing them I could not tell³. He had caught cold a day or two ago, and the rain yesterday having made it worse, he was become very deaf. At breakfast he said, he would have given a good deal rather than not have lain in that bed. I owned he was the lucky man; and observed, that without doubt it had been contrived between Mrs. Macdonald and him. She seemed to acquiesce; adding, "You know young *bucks* are always favourites of the ladies." He spoke of Prince Charles being here, and asked Mrs. Macdonald, "*Who* was with him? We

¹ This, perhaps, was said in allusion to some lines ascribed to Pope, on his lying, at John, Duke of Argyll's, at Adderbury, in the same bed in which Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, had slept:

"With no poetick ardour fired,
I press the bed where Wilmot lay;
That here he lived, or here expired,
Begets no numbers, grave or gay."—BOSWELL.

² "With virtue weigh'd, what worthless trash is gold!"
—BOSWELL.

³ Since the first edition of this book, an ingenious friend has observed to me, that Dr. Johnson had probably been thinking on the reward which was offered by government for the apprehension of the grandson of King James II., and that he meant by these words to express his admiration of the Highlanders, whose fidelity and attachment had resisted the golden temptation that had been held out to them.—BOSWELL.

were told, madam, in England, there was one Miss Flora Macdonald with him." She said, "They were very right;" and perceiving Dr. Johnson's curiosity, though he had delicacy enough not to question her, very obligingly entertained him with a recital of the particulars which she herself knew of that escape, which does so much honour to the humanity, fidelity, and generosity of the Highlanders. Dr. Johnson listened to her with placid attention, and said, "All this should be written down."

From what she told us, and from what I was told by others personally concerned, and from a paper of information which *Rasay* was so good as to send me, at my desire, I have compiled an abstract [see Appendix], which, as it contains some curious anecdotes, will, I imagine, not be uninteresting to my readers, and even, perhaps, be of some use to future historians.

The gallant Malcolm [who had succeeded Flora Macdonald as guide to the Prince, and had so greatly contributed to his escape] was apprehended in about ten days after they separated, put aboard a ship, and carried prisoner to London. He said, the prisoners in general were very ill treated in their passage; but there were soldiers on board who lived well, and sometimes invited him to share with them: that he had the good fortune not to be thrown into jail, but was confined in the house of a messenger of the name of Dick. To his astonishment, only one witness could be found against him, though he had been so openly engaged; and therefore, for want of sufficient evidence, he was set at liberty. He added, that he thought himself in such danger, that he would gladly have compounded for banishment. Yet, he said, "he should never be so ready for death as he then was." There is philosophical truth in this. A man will meet death much more firmly at one time than another. The enthusiasm even of a mistaken principle warms the mind, and sets it above the fear of death; which, in our cooler moments, if we really think of it, cannot but be terrible, or at least very awful.

Miss Flora Macdonald being then also in London⁴, under the protection⁵ of Lady

⁴ [When arrested, which was a few days after parting from the Prince, Flora was conveyed on board the *Furnace*, Captain Fergusson, and conveyed to Leith. There she was removed on board Commodore Smith's ship, and conveyed to the Nore, whence, on the 6th December, after being five months on ship-board, she was transferred to the custody of the messenger Dick, in which she remained till July, 1747, when she was discharged, and returned to Edinburgh.—*Ascanius*.—ED.]

⁵ [It seems strange that Mr. Boswell, affecting

Primrose, that lady provided a postchaise to convey her to Scotland, and desired she might choose any friend she pleased to accompany her. She chose Malcolm. "So," said he, with a triumphant air, "I went to London to be hanged, and returned in a postchaise with Miss Flora Macdonald."

Mr. Macleod of Muiravenside [*M. Cruslick*], whom we saw at Rasay, assured us that Prince Charles was in London in 1759, and that there was then a plan in agitation for restoring his family. Dr. Johnson could scarcely credit this story, and said, there could be no probable plan at that time. Such an attempt could not have succeeded, unless the King of Prussia had stopped the army in Germany; for both the army and the fleet would, even without orders, have fought for the king, to whom they had engaged themselves.

Having related so many particulars concerning the grandson of the unfortunate King James the Second; having given due praise to fidelity and generous attachment, which, however erroneous the judgment may be, are honourable for the heart; I must do the Highlanders the justice to attest, that I found every where amongst them a high opinion of the virtues of the king now upon the throne, and an honest disposition to be faithful subjects to his majesty, whose family has possessed the sovereignty of this country so long, that a change, even for the abdicated family, would now hurt the best feelings of all his subjects.

The abstract point of right would involve us in a discussion of remote and perplexed questions; and, after all, we should have no clear principle of decision. That establishment, which, from political necessity, took place in 1688, by a breach in the succession of our kings, and which, what-

to give an *accurate* account of all this affair, should use expressions which not only give no intimation of Flora's arrest and confinement, but seem even to negative the fact. Is it possible that the lady's delicacy wished to suppress all recollection of her having been a *prisoner*? It will be seen, by a comparison of Mr. Boswell's account with other statements of the transaction, that Flora gave him very little information—*none*, indeed, that had not been already forty years in print. Lady Primrose's *protection* must have been very short, for Flora returned, it seems, to Scotland immediately after her release from confinement. Lady Primrose was Miss Drelicourt, daughter of the Dean of Armagh, and relict of Hugh, third Viscount Primrose. It is not known how she became so ardent a Jacobite; but she certainly was so, for she was in the secret of the young Pretender's visit to London, which (notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's disbelief) did certainly occur, though some years earlier than 1759. See *King's Anecdotes*, p. 196, and *ante*, p. 120.—**ED.]**

ever benefits may have accrued from it, certainly gave a shock to our monarchy, the able and constitutional Blackstone wisely rests on the solid footing of authority. "Our ancestors having most indisputably a competent jurisdiction to decide this great and important question, and having, in fact, decided it, it is now become our duty, at this distance of time, to acquiesce in their determination¹."

Mr. Paley, the present Archdeacon of Carlisle, in his "Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy," having, with much clearness of argument, shown the duty of submission to civil government to be founded neither on an indefeasible *jus divinum*, nor on compact, but on expediency, lays down this rational position: "Irregularity in the first foundation of a state, or subsequent violence, fraud, or injustice, in getting possession of the supreme power, are not sufficient reasons for resistance, after the government is once peaceably settled. No subject of the British empire conceives himself engaged to vindicate the justice of the Norman claim or conquest, or apprehends that his duty in any manner depends upon that controversy. So likewise, if the house of Lancaster, or even the posterity of Cromwell, had been at this day seated upon the throne of England, we should have been as little concerned to inquire how the founder of the family came there²."

¹ Commentaries on the Laws of England, book i. chap. 3.—**BOSWELL.**

² Book vi. chap. 3. Since I have quoted Mr. Archdeacon Paley upon one subject, I cannot but transcribe, from his excellent work, a distinguished passage in support of the Christian revelation. After showing, in decent but strong terms, the unfairness of the *indirect* attempts of modern infidels to unsettle and perplex religious principles, and particularly the irony, banter, and sneer of one, whom he politely calls "an eloquent historian," the archdeacon thus expresses himself:—

"Seriousness is not constraint of thought; nor levity, freedom. Every mind which wishes the advancement of truth and knowledge, in the most important of all human researches, must abhor this licentiousness, as violating no less the laws of reasoning than the rights of decency. There is but one description of men to whose principles it ought to be tolerable. I mean that class of reasoners who can see *little* in christianity, even supposing it to be true. To such adversaries we address this reflection. Had Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following, 'The hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done well unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation,' he had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles with which his mission was introduced and attested: a message in which the wisest of man-

In conformity with this doctrine, I myself, though fully persuaded that the house of Stuart had originally no right to the crown of Scotland, for that Baliol, and not Bruce, was the lawful heir, should yet have thought it very culpable to have rebelled, on that account, against Charles the First, or even a prince of that house much nearer the time, in order to assert the claim of the posterity of Baliol.

However convinced I am of the justice of that principle, which holds allegiance and protection to be reciprocal, I do, however, acknowledge, that I am not satisfied with the cold sentiment which would confine the exertions of the subject within the strict line of duty. I would have every breast animated with the fervour of loyalty; with that generous attachment which delights in doing somewhat more than is required, and makes "service perfect freedom." And, therefore, as our most gracious sovereign, on his accession to the throne, gloried in being *born a Briton*; so, in my more private sphere, *Ego me nunc denique natum, gratulor*. I am happy that a disputed succession no longer distracts our minds; and that a monarchy, established by law, is now so sanctioned by time, that we can fully indulge those feelings of loyalty which I am ambitious to excite. 'They are feelings which have ever actuated the inhabitants of the Highlands and the Hebrides. 'The plant of loyalty is there in full vigour, and the Brunswick graft now flourishes like a native shoot. To that spirited race of people I may with propriety apply the elegant lines of a modern poet, on the "facile temper of the beauteous sex:"

"Like birds new-caught, who flutter for a time,
And struggle with captivity in vain;
But by-and-by they rest, they smooth their plumes,
And to *new masters* sing their former notes¹."

Surely such notes are much better than the querulous growlings of suspicious whigs and discontented republicans.

kind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their inquiries. It is idle to say that a future state had been discovered already. It had been discovered as the Copernican system was; it was one guess amongst many. He alone discovers who *proves*; and no man can prove this point but the teacher who testifies by miracles that his doctrine comes from God."—Book v. chap. 9.

If infidelity be disingenuously dispersed in every shape that is likely to allure, surprise, or beguile the imagination, in a fable, a tale, a novel, a poem, in books of travels, of philosophy, of natural history, as Mr. Paley has well observed, I hope it is fair in me thus to meet such poison with an unexpected antidote, which I cannot doubt will be found powerful.—BOSWELL.

¹ Agis, a tragedy, by John Home.—BOSWELL.

Kingsburgh conducted us in his boat, across one of the lochs, as they call them, or arms of the sea, which flow in upon all the coasts of Sky, to a mile beyond a place called Grishinish. Our horses had been sent round by land to meet us. By this sail we saved eight miles of bad riding. Dr. Johnson said, "When we take into the computation what we have saved, and what we have gained by this agreeable sail, it is a great deal." He observed, "It is very disagreeable riding in Sky. The way is so narrow, one only at a time can travel, so it is quite unsocial; and you cannot indulge in meditation by yourself, because you must be always attending to the steps which your horse takes." This was a just and clear description of its inconveniences.

The topick of emigration being again introduced, Dr. Johnson said, that "a rapacious chief would make a wilderness of his estate." Mr. Donald M'Queen told us, that the oppression, which then made so much noise, was owing to landlords listening to bad advice in the letting of their lands²; that interested and designing people flattered them with golden dreams of much higher rents than could reasonably be paid; and that some of the gentlemen tacksmen, or upper tenants, were themselves in part the occasion of the mischief, by overrating the farms of others. That many of the tacksmen, rather than comply with exorbitant demands, had gone off to America, and impoverished the country, by draining it of its wealth; and that their places were filled by a number of poor people, who had lived under them, properly speaking, as servants, paid by a certain proportion of the produce of the lands, though called sub-tenants. I observed, that if the men of substance were once banished from a Highland estate, it might probably be greatly reduced in its value; for one bad year might ruin a set of poor tenants, and men of any property would not settle in such a country, unless from the temptation of getting land extremely cheap; for an inhabitant of any good county in Britain had better go to America than to the Highlands or the Hebrides. Here, therefore, was a consideration that ought to induce a chief to act a more liberal part, from a mere motive of interest, independent of the lofty and honourable principle of keeping a clan together, to be in readiness to serve his king. I added, that I could not help thinking a little arbitrary power in the sovereign, to control the bad policy and greediness of the chiefs, might sometimes be of service. In France a chief would not be permitted to force a number of the king's subjects out of the country. Dr. Johnson concurred with

² [See General Macleod's account of this matter in his Memoirs, *Appendix*.—Ed.]

me, observing, that “were an oppressive chieftain a subject of the French king, he would, probably, be admonished by a *lettre* ¹.”

During our sail, Dr. Johnson asked about the use of the dirk, with which he imagined the Highlanders cut their meat. He was told, they had a knife and fork besides to eat with. He asked, how did the women do? and was answered, some of them had a knife and fork too; but in general the men, when they had cut their meat, handed their knives and forks to the women, and they themselves eat with their fingers. The old *tutor* ² of Macdonald always eat fish with his fingers, alleging that a knife and fork gave it a bad taste. I took the liberty to observe to Dr. Johnson, that he did so. “Yes,” said he, “but it is because I am short-sighted, and afraid of bones, for which reason I am not fond of eating many kinds of fish, because I must use my fingers.”

Dr. McPherson’s Dissertations on Scottish Antiquities, which he had looked at when at Corrichatachin, being mentioned, he remarked, that “you might read half an hour, and ask yourself what you had been reading: there were so many words to so little matter, that there was no getting through the book.”

As soon as we reached the shore, we took leave of *Kingsburgh*, and mounted our horses. We passed through a wild moor, in many places so soft that we were obliged to walk, which was very fatiguing to Dr. Johnson. Once he had advanced on horseback to a very bad step. There was a steep declivity on his left, to which he was so near, that there was not room for him to dismount in the usual way. He tried to alight on the other side, as if he had been a young buck indeed, but in the attempt he fell at his length upon the ground; from which, however, he got up immediately without being hurt. During this dreary ride, we were sometimes relieved by a view of branches of the sea, that universal medium of connexion amongst mankind. A guide, who had been sent with us from *Kingsburgh*, explored the way (much in the same manner as, I suppose, is pursued in the wilds of America) by observing certain marks known only to the inhabitants. We arrived at *Dunvegan* late in the afternoon. The great size of the castle, which is partly old and partly new, and is built upon a rock close to the sea, while the land around it presents nothing but wild, moorish, hilly, and craggy appearances, gave a rude magnificence to the scene. Having dismount-

ed, we ascended a flight of steps, which was made by the late *Macleod*, for the accommodation of persons coming to him by land, there formerly being, for security, no other access to the castle but from the sea; so that visitors who came by the land were under the necessity of getting into a boat, and sailed round to the only place where it could be approached. We were introduced into a stately dining-room, and received by *Lady Macleod*, mother of the laird, who, with his friend *Talisker*, having been detained on the road, did not arrive till some time after us.

We found the lady of the house a very polite and sensible woman, who had lived for some time in London, and had there been in Dr. Johnson’s company. After we had dined, we repaired to the drawing-room, where some of the young ladies of the family, with their mother, were at tea. This room had formerly been the bed-chamber of *Sir Roderick Macleod*, one of the old lairds: and he chose it, because, behind it, there was a considerable cascade, the sound of which disposed him to sleep. Above his bed was this inscription: “*Sir Rorie Macleod of Dunvegan, Knight. God send good rest!*” *Rorie* is the contraction of *Roderick*. He was called *Rorie More*, that is, great *Rorie*, not from his size, but from his spirit. Our entertainment here was in so elegant a style, and reminded my fellow-traveller so much of England, that he became quite joyous. He laughed, and said, “*Boswell*, we came in at the wrong end of this island.” “*Sir*,” said I, “it was best to keep this for the last.” He answered, “I would have it both first and last.”

Tuesday, 14th September.—Dr. Johnson said in the morning, “Is not this a fine lady?” There was not a word now of his “impatience to be in civilized life;” though indeed I should beg pardon—he found it here. We had slept well, and lain long. After breakfast we surveyed the castle and the garden. *Mr. Bethune*, the parish minister, *Magnus Macleod*, of *Claggan*, brother to *Talisker*, and *Macleod*, of *Bay*, two substantial gentlemen of the clan, dined with us. We had admirable venison, generous wine; in a word, all that a good table has. This was really the hall of a chief. *Lady*

³ [She was the daughter of *Alexander Brodie*, Esq. of *Brodie*, *Lyon King at Arms*. She had lately come with her daughters out of *Hampshire*, to superintend her son’s household at *Dunvegan*. See his *Memoirs* in the Appendix. This respectable lady died in 1803. It has been said that she expressed considerable dissatisfaction at Dr. Johnson’s rude behaviour at *Dunvegan*. Her grandson, the present *Macleod*, assures me that it was not so: “they were all,” he says emphatically, “delighted with him;” and, indeed, his father’s *memoirs* give the same impression.—Ed.]

¹ [Meaning, no doubt, a “*lettre de cachet*.”—Ed.]

² [He means one of the family (an uncle probably) who was guardian during the minority of the young heir.—Ed.]

Macleod had been much obliged to my father, who had settled by arbitration a variety of perplexed claims between her and her relation, the Laird of Brodie, which she now repaid by particular attention to me. Macleod started the subject of making women do penance in the church for fornication. JOHNSON. "It is right, sir. Infamy is attached to the crime, by universal opinion, as soon as it is known. I would not be the man who would discover it, if I alone knew it, for a woman may reform; nor would I commend a person who divulges a woman's first offence; but being once divulged, it ought to be infamous. Consider of what importance to society the chastity of women is. Upon that all the property in the world depends. We hang a thief for stealing a sheep, but the unchastity of a woman transfers sheep, and farm, and all, from the right owner. I have much more reverence for a common prostitute than for a woman who conceals her guilt. The prostitute is known. She cannot deceive: she cannot bring a strumpet into the arms of an honest man, without his knowledge." BOSWELL. "There is, however, a great difference between the licentiousness of a single woman, and that of a married woman." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; there is a great difference between stealing a shilling and stealing a thousand pounds; between simply taking a man's purse, and murdering him first, and then taking it. But when one begins to be vicious, it is easy to go on. Where single women are licentious, you rarely find faithful married women." BOSWELL. "And yet we are told, that in some nations in India, the distinction is strictly observed." JOHNSON. "Nay, don't give us India. That puts me in mind of Montesquieu, who is really a fellow of genius too in many respects; whenever he wants to support a strange opinion, he quotes you the practice of Japan, or of some other distant country, of which he knows nothing. To support polygamy, he tells you of the island of Formosa, where there are ten women born for one man. He had but to suppose another island, where there are ten men born for one woman, and so make a marriage between them¹."

At supper, Lady Macleod mentioned Dr. Cadogan's book on the gout. JOHNSON. "It is a good book in general, but a foolish one in particulars. It is good in general, as recommending temperance, and exercise, and cheerfulness. In that respect it is only Dr. Cheyne's book told in a new way;

¹ What my friend treated as so wild a supposition has actually happened in the western islands of Scotland, if we may believe Martin, who tells of the islands of Col and Tyr-yi, and says that it is proved by the parish registers.—BOSWELL.

and there should come out such a book every thirty years, dressed in the mode of the times. It is foolish, in maintaining that the gout is not hereditary, and that one fit of it, when gone, is like a fever when gone." Lady Macleod objected that the author does not practise what he teaches². JOHNSON. "I cannot help that, madam. That does not make his book the worse. People are influenced more by what a man says, if his practice is suitable to it, because they are blockheads. The more intellectual people are, the readier will they attend to what a man tells them. If it is just, they will follow it, be his practice what it will. No man practises so well as he writes. I have, all my life long, been lying till noon; yet I tell all young men, and tell them with great sincerity, that nobody who does not rise early will ever do any good. Only consider! You read a book; you are convinced by it; you do not know the authour. Suppose you afterwards know him, and find that he does not practise what he teaches; are you to give up your former conviction? At this rate you would be kept in a state of equilibrium, when reading every book, till you knew how the authour practised." "But," said Lady Macleod, "you would think better of Dr. Cadogan, if he acted according to his principles." JOHNSON. "Why, madam, to be sure, a man who acts in the face of light is worse than a man who does not know so much; yet I think no man should be worse thought of for publishing good principles. There is something noble in publishing truth, though it condemns one's self." I expressed some surprise at Cadogan's recommending good humour, as if it were quite in our own power to attain it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, a man grows better humoured as he grows older. He improves by experience. When young, he thinks himself of great consequence, and every thing of importance. As he advances in life, he learns to think himself of no consequence, and little things of little importance; and so he becomes more patient, and better pleased. All good-humour and complaisance are acquired. Naturally a child seizes directly what it sees, and thinks of pleasing itself only. By degrees, it is taught to please others, and to prefer others; and that this will ultimately produce the greatest happiness. If a man is not convinced of that, he never will practise it. Common language

² This was a general reflection against Dr. Cadogan, when his very popular book was first published. It was said, that whatever precepts he might give to others, he himself indulged freely in the bottle. But I have since had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with him, and, if his own testimony may be believed (and I have never heard it impeached), his course of life has been conformable to his doctrine.—BOSWELL.

speaks the truth as to this: we say, a person is well bred. As it is said, that all material motion is primarily in a right line, and is never *per circuitum*, never in another form, unless by some particular cause; so it may be said intellectual motion is." Lady Macleod asked, if no man was naturally good? JOHNSON. "No, madam, no more than a wolf." BOSWELL. "Nor no woman, sir?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." Lady Macleod started at this, saying, in a low voice, "This is worse than Swift¹."

Mr. Leod of Ulinish had come in the afternoon. We were a jovial company at supper. The laird, surrounded by so many of his clan, was to me a pleasing sight. They listened with wonder and pleasure, while Dr. Johnson harangued. I am vexed that I cannot take down his full strain of eloquence.

Wednesday, 15th September.—The gentlemen of the clan went away early in the morning to the harbour of Lochbraccadale, to take leave of some of their friends who were going to America. It was a very wet day. We looked at *Rorie More's* horn, which is a large cow's horn, with the mouth of it ornamented with silver curiously carved. It holds rather more than a bottle and a half. Every Laird of Macleod, it is said, must, as a proof of his manhood, drink it off full of claret, without laying it down. From *Rorie More* many of the branches of the family are descended; in particular, the Talisker branch; so that his name is much talked of. We also saw his bow, which hardly any man now can bend, and his *glaymore*, which was wielded with both hands, and is of a prodigious size. We saw here some old pieces of iron armour, immensely heavy. The broad-sword now used, though called the *glaymore*² (*i. e.* the *great sword*), is much smaller than that used in *Rorie More's* time. There is hardly a target now to be found in the Highlands. After the disarming act, they made them serve as covers to their butter-milk barrels; a kind of change, like beating spears into pruning-hooks.

Sir George Mackenzie's Works (the folio edition) happened to lie in the window in the dining-room. I asked Dr. Johnson to look at the *Characteres Advocatorum*. He allowed him power of mind, and that he understood very well what he tells; but said, that there was too much declamation, and that the Latin was not correct. He

¹ [It seems as if Boswell and Lady Macleod had expected that Johnson would have excepted women from the general lot of mankind.—Ed.]

² [Commonly called *claymore*, but more properly *glaymore*, *quasi glaivemore*, the great sword. Every one knows that to this day a larger sword is, in French, called *glaive*, the old Celtic word, no doubt from the same root as *gladius*.—Ed.]

found fault with *appropinquabant*, in the character of Gilmour. I tried him with the opposition between *gloria* and *palma*, in the comparison between Gilmour and Nisbet, which Lord Hailes, in his "Catalogue of the Lords of Session," thinks difficult to be understood. The words are, "*penes illum gloria, penes hunc palma*." In a short Account of the Kirk of Scotland, which I published some years ago, I applied these words to the two contending parties, and explained them thus: "The popular party has most eloquence; Dr. Robertson's party most influence." I was very desirous to hear Dr. Johnson's explication. JOHNSON. "I see no difficulty. Gilmour was admired for his parts; Nisbet carried his cause by his skill in law. *Palma* is victory." I observed, that the character of Nicholson, in this book, resembled that of Burke: for it is said, in one place, "*in omnes lusus et jocos se sæpe resolvebat*³;" and in another, "*sed accipitris more è conspectu aliquando astantium sublimi se protrahens volatu, in prædam miro impetu descendebat*⁴." JOHNSON. "No, sir; I never heard Burke make a good joke in my life." BOSWELL. "But, sir, you will allow he is a hawk." Dr. Johnson, thinking that I meant this of his joking, said, "No, sir, he is not the hawk there. He is the beetle in the mire." I still adhered to my metaphor, "But he *soars* as the hawk." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but he catches nothing." Macleod asked, what is the particular excellence of Burke's eloquence? JOHNSON. "Copiousness and fertility of allusion; a power of diversifying his matter, by placing it in various relations. Burke has great information, and great command of language; though, in my opinion, it has not in every respect the highest elegance." BOSWELL. "Do you think, sir, that Burke has read Cicero much?" JOHNSON. "I do not believe it, sir. Burke has great knowledge, great fluency of words, and great promptness of ideas, so that he can speak with great illustration on any subject that comes before him. He is neither like Cicero, nor like Demosthenes, nor like any one else, but speaks as well as he can."

In the sixty-fifth page of the first volume of Sir George Mackenzie, Dr. Johnson pointed out a paragraph beginning with Aristotle, and told me there was an error in the text, which he bade me try to discover. I was lucky enough to hit it at once. As the passage is printed, it is said that the

³ He often indulged himself in every species of pleasantry and wit.—BOSWELL.

⁴ But like the hawk, having soared with a lofty flight to a height which the eye could not reach, he was wont to swoop upon his quarry with wonderful rapidity.—BOSWELL.

devil answers *even in engines*. I corrected it to—*ever in enigmas*. “Sir,” said he, “you are a good critick. This would have been a great thing to do in the text of an ancient authour.”

Thursday, 16th September.—Last night much care was taken of Dr. Johnson, who was still distressed by his cold. He had hitherto most strangely slept without a nightcap. Miss Macleod made him a large flannel one, and he was prevailed with to drink a little brandy when he was going to bed. He has great virtue, in not drinking wine or any fermented liquor, because, as he acknowledged to us, he could not do it in moderation. Lady Macleod would hardly believe him, and said, “I am sure, sir, you would not carry it too far.” JOHNSON. “Nay, madam, it carried me. I took the opportunity of a long illness to leave it off. It was then prescribed to me not to drink wine; and having broken off the habit, I have never returned to it.”

In the argument on Tuesday night, about natural goodness, Dr. Johnson denied that any child was better than another, but by difference of instruction; though, in consequence of greater attention being paid to instruction by one child than another, and of a variety of imperceptible causes, such as instruction being counteracted by servants, a notion was conceived, that of two children, equally well educated, one was naturally much worse than another. He owned, this morning, that one might have a greater aptitude to learn than another, and that we inherit dispositions from our parents. “I inherited,” said he, “a vile melancholy from my father, which has made me *mad* all my life, at least not sober.” Lady Macleod wondered he should tell this. “Madam,” said I, “he knows that with that madness¹ he is superior to other men.”

I have often been astonished with what exactness and perspicuity he will explain the process of any art. He this morning explained to us all the operation of coining, and, at night, all the operation of brewing, so very clearly, that Mr. M^{Queen} said, when he heard the first, he thought he had been bred in the Mint; when he heard the second, that he had been bred a brewer.

I was elated by the thought of having been able to entice such a man to this remote part of the world. A ludicrous, yet just image presented itself to my mind, which I expressed to the company. I compared myself to a dog who has got hold of a large piece of meat, and runs away with it to a corner, where he may devour it in

peace, without any fear of others taking it from him. “In London, Reynolds, Beauclerk, and all of them, are contending who shall enjoy Dr. Johnson’s conversation. We are feasting upon it, undisturbed, at Dunvegan.”

It was still a storm of wind and rain. Dr. Johnson however walked out with Macleod, and saw *Rorie More’s* cascade in full perfection. Colonel Macleod, instead of being all life and gaiety, as I have seen him, was at present grave, and somewhat depressed by his anxious concern about Macleod’s affairs, and by finding some gentlemen of the clan by no means disposed to act a generous or affectionate part to their chief in his distress, but bargaining with him as with a stranger². However, he was agreeable and polite, and Dr. Johnson said he was a very pleasing man. My fellow-traveller and I talked of going to Sweden; and, while we were settling our plan, I expressed a pleasure in the prospect of seeing the king. JOHNSON. “I doubt, sir, if he would speak to us.” Colonel Macleod said, “I am sure Mr. Boswell would speak to *him*.” But seeing me a little disconcerted by his remark, he politely added, “and with great propriety.” Here let me offer a short defence of that propensity in my disposition, to which this gentleman alluded. It has procured me much happiness. I hope it does not deserve so hard a name as either forwardness or impudence. If I know myself, it is nothing more than an eagerness to share the society of men distinguished either by their rank or their talents, and a diligence to attain what I desire. If a man is praised for seeking knowledge, though mountains and seas are in his way, may he not be pardoned, whose ardour, in the pursuit of the same object, leads him to encounter difficulties as great, though of a different kind?

After the ladies were gone from table, we talked of the Highlanders not having sheets; and this led us to consider the advantage of wearing linen. JOHNSON. “All animal substances are less cleanly than vegetables. Wool, of which flannel is made, is an animal substance; flannel therefore is not so cleanly as linen. I remember I used to think tar dirty; but when I knew it to be only a preparation of the juice of the pine, I thought so no longer. It is not disagreeable to have the gum that oozes from a plum-tree upon your fingers, because it is vegetable; but if you have any candle-grease, any tallow upon your fingers, you are uneasy till you rub it off.—I have often thought that, if I kept a seraglio, the ladies should all wear linen gowns, or cotton—I mean stuffs made of vegetable substances. I would

¹ [Mr. Boswell was, we see, the first to publish this fact, though he chose to blame others for alluding to it; see *ante*, p. 23. See also Miss Reynolds’s *Recollections of Dr. Johnson*, in the appendix to the second vol.—*Ed.*]

² [See an interesting account of these negotiations in Macleod’s *Memoirs*, Appendix.—*Ed.*]

have no silk; you cannot tell when it is clean: it will be very nasty before it is perceived to be so. Linen detects its own dirtiness."

To hear the grave Dr. Samuel Johnson, "that majestick teacher of moral and religious wisdom," while sitting solemn in an arm-chair in the Isle of Sky, talk, *ex cathedra*, of his keeping a seraglio, and acknowledge that the supposition had *often* been in his thoughts, struck me so forcibly with ludicrous contrast, that I could not but laugh immoderately. He was too proud to submit, even for a moment, to be the object of ridicule, and instantly retaliated with such keen sarcastick wit, and such a variety of degrading images, of every one of which I was the object, that, though I can bear such attacks as well as most men, I yet found myself so much the sport of all the company, that I would gladly expunge from my mind every trace of this severe retort.

Talking of our friend Langton's house in Lincolnshire, he said, "The old house of the family was burnt. A temporary building was erected in its room; and to this day they have been always adding as the family increased. It is like a shirt made for a man when he was a child, and enlarged always as he grows older."

We talked to-night of Luther's allowing the Landgrave of Hesse two wives, and that it was with the consent of the wife to whom he was first married. JOHNSON. "There was no harm in this, so far as she only was concerned, because *volenti non fit injuria*. But it was an offence against the general order of society, and against the law of the Gospel, by which one man and one woman are to be united. No man can have two wives, but by preventing somebody else from having one¹."

Friday, 17th September.—After dinner yesterday, we had a conversation upon cunning. Macleod said that he was not afraid of cunning people; but would let them play their tricks about him like monkeys. "But (said I), they'll seratch;" and Mr. M'Queen added, "They'll invent new tricks, as soon as you find out what they do." JOHNSON. "Cunning has effect from the credulity of others, rather than from the abilities of those who are cunning. It requires no extraordinary talents to lie and deceive." This led us to consider whether it did not require great abilities to be very wicked. JOHNSON. "It requires great abilities to have the *power* of being very wicked; but not to *be* very wicked. A man who has the power, which great abilities procure him, may use it well

or ill; and it requires more abilities to use it well, than to use it ill. Wickedness is always easier than virtue; for it takes the short cut to every thing. It is much easier to steal a hundred pounds, than to get it by labour, or any other way. Consider only what act of wickedness requires great abilities to commit it, when once the person who is to do it has the power; for *there* is the distinction. It requires great abilities to conquer an army, but none to massacre it after it is conquered."

The weather this day was rather better than any that we had since we came to Dunvegan. Mr. M'Queen had often mentioned a curious piece of antiquity near this, which he called a temple of the goddess Anaitis. Having often talked of going to see it, he and I set out after breakfast, attended by his servant, a fellow quite like a savage. I must observe here, that in Sky there seems to be much idleness; for men and boys follow you, as colts follow passengers upon a road. The usual figure of a Sky-boy is a lown with bare legs and feet, a dirty kilt, ragged coat and waistcoat, a bare head, and a stick in his hand, which, I suppose, is partly to help the lazy rogue to walk, partly to serve as a kind of a defensive weapon. We walked what is called two miles, but is probably four, from the castle, till we came to the sacred place. The country around is a black dreary moor on all sides, except to the sea-coast, towards which there is a view through a valley; and the farm of Bay shows some good land. The place itself is green ground, being well drained, by means of a deep glen on each side, in both of which there runs a rivulet with a good quantity of water, forming several cascades, which make a considerable appearance and sound. The first thing we came to was an earthen mound, or dyke, extending from the one precipice to the other. A little farther on was a strong stone wall, not high, but very thick, extending in the same manner. On the outside of it were the ruins of two houses, one on each side of the entry or gate to it. The wall is built all along of uncemented stones, but of so large a size as to make a very firm and durable rampart. It has been built all about the consecrated ground, except where the precipice is steep enough to form an enclosure of itself. The sacred spot contains more than two acres. There are within it the ruins of many houses, none of them large,—a cairn,—and many graves marked by clusters of stones. Mr. M'Queen insisted that the ruin of a small building, standing east and west, was actually the temple of the goddess Anaitis, where her statue was kept, and from whence processions were made to wash it in one of the brooks. There is, it must be owned, a hollow road

¹ [This is a false, and, if it had even more of truth in it, too narrow a ground on which to build this great doctrine—a doctrine which is the foundation of all human civilization, and of all individual happiness.—ED.]

visible for a good way from the entrance ; but Mr. M'Queen, with the keen eye of an antiquary, traced it much farther than I could perceive it. There is not above a foot and a half in height of the walls now remaining ; and the whole extent of the building was never, I imagine, greater than an ordinary Highland house. Mr. M'Queen has collected a great deal of learning on the subject of the temple of Anaitis ; and I had endeavoured, in my Journal, to state such particulars as might give some idea of it, and of the surrounding scenery ; but from the great difficulty of describing visible objects, I found my account so unsatisfactory, that my readers would probably have exclaimed

“ And write about it, goddess, and about it ! ; ”

and therefore I have omitted it.

When we got home, and were again at table with Dr. Johnson, we first talked of portraits. He agreed in thinking them valuable in families. I wished to know which he preferred, fine portraits, or those of which the merit was resemblance. JOHNSON. “ Sir, their chief excellence is being like.” BOSWELL. “ Are you of that opinion as to the portraits of ancestors, whom one has never seen ? ” JOHNSON. “ It then becomes of more consequence that they should be like ; and I would have them in the dress of the times, which makes a piece of history. One should like to see how *Rorie More* looked. Truth, sir, is of the greatest value in these things.” Mr. M'Queen observed, that if you think it of no consequence whether portraits are like, if they are but well painted, you may be indifferent whether a piece of history is true or not, if well told.

Dr. Johnson said at breakfast to-day, “ that it was but of late that historians bestowed pains and attention in consulting records, to attain to accuracy. Bacon, in writing his History of Henry VII., does not seem to have consulted any, but to have just taken what he found in other histories, and blended it with what he learnt by tradition.” He agreed with me that there should be a chronicle kept in every considerable family, to preserve the characters and transactions of successive generations.

After dinner, I started the subject of the temple of Anaitis. Mr. M'Queen had laid stress on the name given to the place by the country people,—*Ainnit* ; and added, “ I knew not what to make of this piece of antiquity, till I met with the *Anaitidis delubrum* in Lydia, mentioned by Pausanias and the elder Pliny.” Dr. Johnson, with his usual acuteness, examined Mr. M'Queen as to the meaning of the word *Ainnit*, in Erse ; and it proved to be a water-place, or

a place near water, “ which,” said Mr. M'Queen, “ agrees with all the descriptions of the temples of that goddess, which were situated near rivers, that there might be water to wash the statue.” JOHNSON. “ Nay, sir, the argument from the name is gone. The name is exhausted by what we see. We have no occasion to go to a distance for what we can pick up under our feet. Had it been an accidental name, the similarity between it and *Anaitis* might have had something in it ; but it turns out to be a mere physiological name.” Macleod said, Mr. M'Queen's knowledge of etymology had destroyed his conjecture. JOHNSON. “ Yes, sir ; Mr. M'Queen is like the eagle mentioned by Waller, who was shot with an arrow feathered from his own wing.” Mr. M'Queen would not, however, give up his conjecture. JOHNSON. “ You have one possibility for you, and all possibilities against you. It is possible it may be the temple of Anaitis ; but it is also possible that it may be a fortification ; or it may be a place of Christian worship, as the first Christians often chose remote and wild places, to make an impression on the mind ; or, if it was a heathen temple, it may have been built near a river, for the purpose of lustration ; and there is such a multitude of divinities, to whom it may have been dedicated, that the chance of its being a temple of Anaitis is hardly any thing. It is like throwing a grain of sand upon the sea-shore to-day, and thinking you may find it to-morrow. No, sir, this temple, like many an ill-built edifice, tumbles down before it is roofed in.” In his triumph over the reverend antiquarian, he indulged himself in a conceit ; for, some vestige of the *allar* of the goddess being much insisted on in support of the hypothesis, he said, “ Mr. M'Queen is fighting *pro aris et focis*.”

It was wonderful how well time passed in a remote castle, and in dreary weather. After supper, we talked of Pennant. It was objected that he was superficial. Dr. Johnson defended him warmly. He said, “ Pennant has greater variety of inquiry than almost any man, and has told us more than perhaps one in ten thousand could have done, in the time that he took. He has not said what he was to tell ; so you cannot find fault with him for what he has not told. If a man comes to look for fishes, you cannot blame him if he does not attend to fowls.” “ But,” said Colonel Macleod, “ he mentions the unreasonable rise of rents in the Highlands, and says ‘ the gentlemen are for emptying the bag without filling it,’ for that is the phrase he uses. Why does he not tell how to fill it ? ” JOHNSON. “ Sir, there is no end of negative criticism. He tells what he observes, and as much as he chooses. If he tells what is not true, you may find fault with him ; but, though he

¹ [*Dunciad*, b. 4. v. 252.—ED.]

tells that the land is not well cultivated, he is not obliged to tell how it may be well cultivated. If I tell that many of the Highlanders go bare-footed, I am not obliged to tell how they may get shoes. Pennant tells a fact. He need go no farther, except he pleases. He exhausts nothing; and no subject whatever has yet been exhausted. But Pennant has surely told a great deal. Here is a man six feet high, and you are angry because he is not seven." Notwithstanding this eloquent *Oratio pro Pennantio*, which they who have read this gentleman's Tours, and recollect the savage and the shopkeeper at Monboddoo, will probably impute to the spirit of contradiction, I still think that he had better had given more attention to fewer things, than have thrown together such a number of imperfect accounts.

Saturday, 18th September.—Before breakfast, Dr. Johnson came up to my room, to forbid me to mention that this was his birthday; but I told him I had done it already; at which he was displeas'd—I suppose from wishing to have nothing particular done on his account. Lady Macleod and I got into a warm dispute. She wanted to build a house upon a farm which she had taken, about five miles from the castle, and to make gardens and other ornaments there; all of which I approved of; but insisted that the seat of the family should always be upon the rock of Dunvegan. JOHNSON. "Ay, in time we'll build all round this rock. You may make a very good house at the farm; but it must not be such as to tempt the Laird of Macleod to go thither to reside. Most of the great families of England have a secondary residence, which is called a jointure-house; let the new house be of that kind." The lady insisted that the rock was very inconvenient; that there was no place near it where a good garden could be made; that it must always be a rude place; that it was a *Herculean* labour to make a dinner here. I was vexed to find the alloy of modern refinement in a lady who had so much old family spirit. "Madam," said I, "if once you quit this rock, there is no knowing where you may settle. You move five miles first; then to St. Andrews, as the late laird did; then to Edinburgh; and so on till you end at Hampstead, or in France. No, no; keep to the rock; it is the very jewel of the estate. It looks as if it had been let down from heaven by the four corners, to be the residence of a chief. Have all the comforts and conveniences of life upon it, but never leave *Rorie More's* cascade." "But," said she, "is it not enough if we keep it? Must we never have more convenience than *Rorie More* had? he had his beef brought to dinner in one basket, and his bread in another. Why not as well he

Rorie More all over, as live upon his rock? And should not we tire, in looking perpetually on this rock? It is very well for you, who have a fine place, and every thing easy, to talk thus, and think of chaming honest folks to a rock. You would not live upon it yourself." "Yes, madam," said I, "I would live upon it, were I Laird of Macleod, and should be unhappy if I were not upon it." JOHNSON, (with a strong voice and most determined manner). "Madam, rather than quit the old rock, Boswell would live in the pit; he would make his bed in the dungeon." I felt a degree of elation, at finding my resolute feudal enthusiasm thus confirmed by such a sanction. The lady was puzzled a little. She still returned to her pretty farm—rich ground—fine garden. "Madam," said Dr. Johnson, "were they in Asia, I would not leave the rock¹." My opinion on this subject is still the same. An ancient family residence ought to be a primary object; and though the situation of Dunvegan be such that little can be done here in gardening or pleasure ground, yet, in addition to the veneration acquired by the lapse of time, it has many circumstances of natural grandeur, suited to the seat of a Highland chief: it has the sea—*islands—rocks—hills—a noble cascade*; and when the family is again in opulence, something may be done by art².

¹ [Dunvegan well deserves the stand which was made by Dr. Johnson in its defence. Its greatest inconvenience was that of access. This had been originally obtained from the sea, by a subterranean staircase, partly arched, partly cut in the rock, which, winding up through the cliff, opened into the court of the castle. This passage, at all times very inconvenient, had been abandoned, and was ruinous. A very indifferent substitute had been made by a road, which, rising from the harbour, reached the bottom of the moat, and then ascended to the gate by a very long stair. The present chief, whom I am happy to call my *friend*, has made a perfectly convenient and characteristic access, which gives a direct approach to the further side of the moat, in front of the castle gate, and surmounts the chasm by a drawbridge, which would have delighted *Rorie More* himself. I may add that neither Johnson nor Boswell were antiquaries, otherwise they must have remarked, amongst the *Cinelia* of Dunvegan, the fated or fairy banner, said to be given to the clan by a Banshee, and a curious drinking cup (probably), said to have belonged to the family when kings of the Isle of Man—certainly of most venerable antiquity.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [Something has indeed been done, partly in the way of accommodation and ornament, partly in improvements yet more estimable, under the direction of the present beneficent Lady of Macleod. She has completely acquired the language of her husband's clan, in order to qualify herself to be their effectual benefactress. She has erected schools, which she superintends herself, to intro-

Mr. Donald M^cQueen went away to-day, in order to preach at Braccadale next day. We were so comfortably situated at Dunvegan, that Dr. Johnson could hardly be moved from it. I proposed to him that we should leave it on Monday. "No, sir," said he, "I will not go before Wednesday. I will have some more of this good." However, as the weather was at this season so bad, and so very uncertain, and we had a great deal to do yet, Mr. M^cQueen and I prevailed with him to agree to set out on Monday, if the day should be good. Mr. M^cQueen, though it was inconvenient for him to be absent from his harvest, engaged to wait on Monday at Ulinish for us. When he was going away, Dr. Johnson said, "I shall ever retain a great regard for you;" then asked him if he had the "Rambler." Mr. M^cQueen said, "No, but my brother has it." JOHNSON. "Have you the 'Idler?'" M^cQUEEN. "No, sir." JOHNSON. "Then I will order one for you at Edinburgh, which you will keep in remembrance of me." Mr. M^cQueen was much pleased with this. He expressed to me, in the strongest terms, his admiration of Dr. Johnson's wonderful knowledge, and every other quality for which he is distinguished. I asked Mr. M^cQueen if he was satisfied with being a minister in Sky. He said he was; but he owned that his forefathers having been so long there, and his having been born there, made a chief ingredient in forming his contentment. I should have mentioned, that on our left hand, between Portree and Dr. Macleod's house, Mr. M^cQueen told me there had been a college of the Knights Templars; that tradition said so; and that there was a ruin remaining of their church, which had been burnt: but I confess Dr. Johnson has weakened my belief in remote tradition. In the dispute about *Anaitis*, Mr. M^cQueen said, Asia Minor was peopled by Scythians, and, as they were the ancestors of the Celts, the same religion might be in Asia Minor and Sky. JOHNSON. "Alas! sir, what can a nation that has not letters tell of its original? I have always difficulty to be patient when I hear authors gravely quoted, as giving accounts of savage nations, which accounts they had from the savages themselves. What can the M^cCraas tell about themselves a thousand years ago?"

duce among them the benefits, knowledge, and comforts of more civilized society; and a young and beautiful woman has done more for the enlarged happiness of this primitive people than had been achieved for ages before.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ ["What can the M^cCraas tell of themselves a thousand years ago?" More than the Doctor would suppose. I have a copy of their family history, written by Mr. John Mac Ra, minister of Dingwal, in Rosshire, in 1702. In this history, they are averred to have come over with those

There is no tracing the connexion of ancient nations, but by language; and therefore I am always sorry when any language is lost, because languages are the pedigree of nations. If you find the same language in distant countries, you may be sure that the inhabitants of each have been the same people; that is to say, if you find the languages a good deal the same; for a word here and there being the same will not do. Thus Butler, in his 'Hudibras,' remembering that *penguin*, in the Straits of Magellan, signifies a bird with a white head, and that the same word has, in Wales, the signification of a white-headed wench² (*pen* head, and *guin* white), by way of ridicule, concludes that the people of those straits are Welsh."

A young gentleman of the name of M^cLean, nephew to the laird of the Isle of Muck, came this morning; and, just as we sat down to dinner, came the laird of the Isle of Muck himself, his lady, sister to *Talisker*, two other ladies, their relations, and a daughter of the late M^cLeod of Hamer, who wrote a treatise on the second-sight, under the designation of "Theophilus Insulanus³." It was somewhat droll to hear this laird called by his title. *Muck* would have sounded ill; so he was called *Isle of Muck*, which went off with great readiness. The name, as now written, is unseemly, but is not so bad in the original Erse, which is *Mouach*, signifying the Sows' Island. Buchanan calls it *Insula Porcorum*. It is so called from its form. Some call it Isle of *Monk*. The laird insists that this is the proper name. It was formerly church-land belonging to Icolmkill, and a hermit lived in it. It is two miles long, and about three quarters of a mile broad. The laird said, he had seven score of souls upon it. Last year he had eighty persons inoculated, mostly children, but some of them eighteen years of age. He

Fitzgeralds now holding the name of M^cKenzie, at the period of the battle of Largs, in 1263. I was indulged with a copy of the pedigree by the consent of the principal persons of the clan in 1826, and had the original in my possession for some time. It is modestly drawn up, and apparently with all the accuracy which can be expected when tradition must be necessarily much relied upon. The name was in Irish: Mac Grath, softened in the Highlands into Mac Ra, Mac Corow, Mac Rae, &c.; and in the Lowlands, where the patronymic was often dropped, by the names of Crow, Craw, &c.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [It is not very intelligible why the white-headed wench is mentioned: *any white head* would be called *penguin*.—ED.]

³ [The work of "Theophilus Insulanus" was written in as credulous a style as either Dr. Johnson or his biographer could have desired.—WALTER SCOTT.]

agreed with the surgeon to come and do it, at half a crown a head. It is very fertile in corn, of which they export some; and its coasts abound in fish. A tailor comes there six times in a year. They get a good blacksmith from the Isle of Egg.

Sunday, 19th September.—It was rather worse weather than any that we had yet. At breakfast Dr. Johnson said, "Some cunning men choose fools for their wives, thinking to manage them, but they always fail. There is a spaniel fool and a mule fool. The spaniel fool may be made to do by beating. The mule fool will neither do by words nor blows; and the spaniel fool often turns mule at last: and suppose a fool to be made to do pretty well, you must have the continual trouble of making her do. Depend upon it, no woman is the worse for sense and knowledge." Whether afterwards he meant merely to say a polite thing, or to give his opinion, I could not be sure; but he added, "Men know that women are an overmatch for them, and therefore they choose the weakest or most ignorant. If they did not think so, they never could be afraid of women knowing as much as themselves." In justice to the sex, I think it but candid to acknowledge, that, in a subsequent conversation, he told me that he was serious in what he had said.

He came to my room this morning before breakfast, to read my Journal, which he has done all along. He often before said, "I take great delight in reading it." To-day he said, "You improve: it grows better and better." I observed, that there was a danger of my getting a habit of writing in a slovenly manner. "Sir," said he, "it is not written in a slovenly manner. It might be printed, were the subject fit for printing!" While Dr. Bethune preached to us in the dining-room, Dr. Johnson sat in his own room, where I saw lying before him a volume of Lord Bacon's works, "The Decay of Christian Piety," Monboddo's "Origin of Language," and Sterne's Sermons. He asked me to-day, how it happened that we were so little together: I told him, my Journal took up much time. Yet, on reflection, it appeared strange to me, that although I will run from one end of London to another, to pass an hour with him, I should omit to seize any spare time to be in his company, when I am settled in the same house with him. But my Journal is really a task of much time and labour, and he forbids me to contract it.

I omitted to mention, in its place, that Dr. Johnson told Mr. M^cQueen that he had found the belief of the second-sight uni-

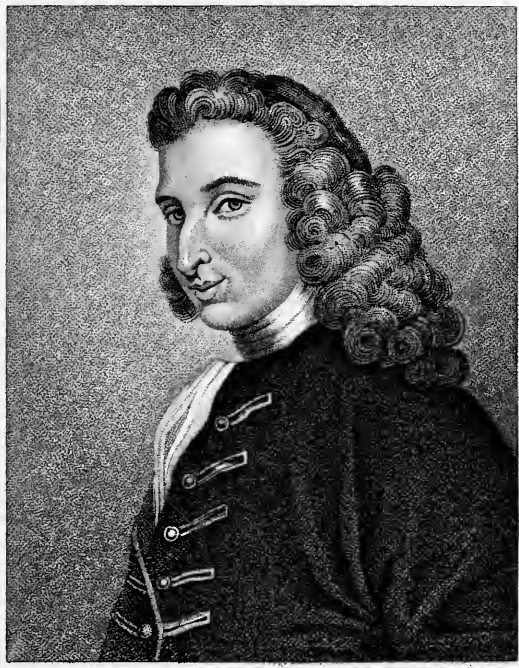
versal in Sky, except among the clergy, who seemed determined against it. I took the liberty to observe to Mr. M^cQueen, that the clergy were actuated by a kind of vanity. "The world," say they, "takes us to be credulous men in a remote corner. We'll show them that we are more enlightened than they think." The worthy man said, that his disbelief of it was from his not finding sufficient evidence; but I could perceive that he was prejudiced² against it.

After dinner to-day, we talked of the extraordinary fact of Lady Grange's being sent to St. Kilda, and confined there for several years, without any means of relief³.

² [By the very use of this word, Mr. Boswell shows, that he was prejudiced in favour of the *second-sight*, either because it suited the credulous temper of his own mind, or because it looked like a national honour. The clergy were probably not *prejudiced* against it, otherwise than as being the best educated and most intelligent persons in those regions, they saw the absurdity of the fables on which the superstition was supported.—See General Macleod's *Memoirs*, as to Johnson's willingness to believe in the second-sight.—Ed.]

³ The true story of this lady, which happened in this century, is as frightfully romantic as if it had been the fiction of a gloomy fancy. She was the wife of one of the lords of session in Scotland, a man of the very first blood of his country. For some mysterious reasons, which have never been discovered, she was seized and carried off in the dark, she knew not by whom, and by nightly journeys was conveyed to the Highland shores, from whence she was transported by sea to the remote rock of St. Kilda, where she remained, amongst its few wild inhabitants, a forlorn prisoner, but had a constant supply of provisions, and a woman to wait on her. No inquiry was made after her, till she at last found means to convey a letter to a confidential friend, by the daughter of a Catechist, who concealed it in a clue of yarn. Information being thus obtained at Edinburgh, a ship was sent to bring her off; but intelligence of this being received, she was conveyed to Macleod's island of Herries, where she died; [but was buried, as Macleod informs the Editor, at Dunvegan.]—BOSWELL. [The story of Lady Grange is well known. I have seen her Journal. She had become privy to some of the jacobite intrigues, in which her husband, Lord Grange (brother of the Earl of Mar, and a lord of session), and his family were engaged. Being on indifferent terms with her husband, she is said to have thrown out hints that she knew as much as would cost him his life. The judge probably thought with Mrs. Peachum, that it is rather an awkward state of domestic affairs when the wife has it in her power to hang the husband. Lady Grange was the more to be dreaded, as she came of a vindictive race, being the grandchild of that Chiesley of Dalry, who assassinated Sir George Lockhart, the lord president. Many persons of importance in the Highlands were concerned in removing her testimony. The notorious Lovat, with a party of

¹ As I have faithfully recorded so many minute particulars, I hope I shall be pardoned for inserting so flattering an encomium on what is now offered to the publick.—BOSWELL.



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Dr. Johnson said, if Macleod would let it be known that he had such a place for naughty ladies, he might make it a very profitable island. We had, in the course of our tour, heard of St. Kilda poetry. Dr. Johnson observed, "It must be very poor, because they have very few images." BOSWELL. "There may be a poetical genius shown in combining these, and in making poetry of them." JOHNSON. "Sir, a man cannot make fire but in proportion as he has fuel. He cannot coin guineas but in proportion as he has gold." At tea he talked of his intending to go to Italy in 1775. Macleod said, he would like Paris better. JOHNSON. "No, sir; there are none of the French literati now alive, to visit whom I would cross a sea. I can find in Buffon's book all that he can say¹."

After supper he said, "I am sorry that prize-fighting is gone out; every art should be preserved, and the art of defence is surely important. It is absurd that our soldiers should have swords, and not be taught the

his men, were the direct agents in carrying her off (see *ante*, p. 72); and St. Kilda, belonging then to Macleod, was selected as the place of confinement. The name by which she was spoken or written of was *Corpach*, an ominous distinction, corresponding to what is called *subject* in the lecture-room of an anatomist, or *shot* in the slang of the Westport murderers.—WALTER SCOTT.]

In "Carstares's State Papers," we find an authentic narrative of Connor, a catholic priest, who turned protestant, being seized by some of Lord Seaforth's people, and detained prisoner in the island of Harris several years: he was fed with bread and water, and lodged in a house where he was exposed to the rains and cold. Sir James Ogilvy writes, June 18, 1667, "that the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Advocate, and himself, were to meet next day, to take effectual methods to have this redressed." Connor was then still detained."—P. 310. This shows what private oppression might in the last century be practised in the Hebrides. In the same collection, the Earl of Argyle gives a picturesque account of an embassy from the great *M'Neil of Barra*, as that insular chief used to be denominated. "I received a letter yesterday from M'Neil of Barra, who lives very far off, sent by a gentleman in all formality, offering his service, which had made you laugh to see his entry. The style of his letter runs as if he were of another kingdom."—P. 643.—BOSWELL. [It was said of M'Neil of Barra, that when he dined, his bagpipes blew a particular strain, intimating that all the world might go to dinner.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ I doubt the justice of my fellow-traveller's remark concerning the French literati, many of whom, I am told, have considerable merit in conversation, as well as in their writings. That of Monsieur de Buffon, in particular, I am well assured is highly instructive and entertaining.—BOSWELL.

use of them. Prize-fighting² made people accustomed not to be alarmed at seeing their own blood, or feeling a little pain from a wound. I think the heavy *glaymore* was an ill-contrived weapon. A man could only strike once with it. It employed both his hands, and he must of course be soon fatigued with wielding it; so that if his antagonist could only keep playing awhile, he was sure of him. I would fight with a dirk against *Rorie More's* sword. I could ward off a blow with a dirk, and then run in upon my enemy. When within that heavy sword, I have him; he is quite helpless, and I could stab him at my leisure, like a calf. It is thought by sensible military men, that the English do not enough avail themselves of their superior strength of body against the French; for that must always have a great advantage in pushing with bayonets. I have heard an officer say, that if women could be made to stand, they would do as well as men in a mere interchange of bullets from a distance; but, if a body of men should come close up to them, then to be sure they must be overcome: now," said he, "in the same manner the weaker-bodied French must be overcome by our strong soldiers."

The subject of duelling was introduced. JOHNSON. "There is no case in England where one or other of the combatants *must* die: if you have overcome your adversary by disarming him, that is sufficient, though you should not kill him; your honour, or the honour of your family, is restored, as much as it can be by a duel. It is cowardly to force your antagonist to renew the combat, when you know that you have the advantage of him by superior skill. You might just as well go and cut his throat while he is asleep in his bed. When a duel begins, it is supposed there may be an equality; because it is not always skill that prevails. It depends much on presence of mind; nay, on accidents. The wind may be in a man's face. He may fall³. Many such things may decide the superiority. A man is sufficiently punished by being called

² [Mrs. Piozzi says, "Mr. Johnson was very conversant in the art of attack and defence by boxing, which science he had learned from his uncle Andrew, I believe; and I have heard him descant upon the age when people were received, and when rejected, in the schools once held for that brutal amusement, much to the admiration of those who had no expectation of his skill in such matters, from the sight of a figure which precluded all possibility of personal prowess."—*Anecdotes*, p. 4.—Ed.]

³ [Johnson considers duels as only fought with *swords*, a practice now wholly superseded by the use of pistols, a weapon which, generally speaking, is more equal than the sword could be.—Ed.]

out, and subjected to the risk that is in a duel." But on my suggesting that the injured person is equally subjected to risk, he fairly owned he could not explain the rationality of duelling.

Monday, 20th September.—When I awoke, the storm was higher still. It abated about nine, and the sun shone; but it rained again very soon, and it was not a day for travelling. At breakfast, Dr. Johnson told us, "There was once a pretty good tavern in Catharine-street in the Strand, where very good company met in an evening, and each man called for his own half-pint of wine, or gill, if he pleased; they were frugal men, and nobody paid but for what he himself drank. The house furnished no supper; but a woman attended with mutton-pies, which any body might purchase. I was introduced to this company by Cumming the Quaker¹, and used to go there sometimes when I drank wine. In the last age, when my mother lived in London, there were two sets of people, those who gave the wall, and those who took it;

¹ [Thomas Cumming was a bold and busy man, who mistook his vocation when he turned quaker (for he was not born in that sect). He planned and almost commanded a military expedition to the coast of Africa, in 1758; which ended in the capture of Senegal. It and its author make a considerable figure in Smollett's *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 278, where the anomaly of a *quaker's* heading an army is attempted to be excused by the event of the enemy's having surrendered without fighting; and a protest that Cumming would not have engaged in it had he not been assured, that against an overpowering force the enemy could not have resisted. This reminds us of another story of Cumming. During the rebellion of 1745, he was asked, whether the time was not come when even he, as a quaker, ought to take arms for the civil and religious liberties of his country? "No," said Cumming, "but I will drive an ammunition waggon." Yet this bustling man was, it seems, morbidly sensitive. Mrs. Piozzi says he died heart-broken by a libel in a periodical paper. "Dr. Johnson once told me that Cummings, the famous quaker, whose friendship he valued very highly, fell a sacrifice to the insults of the newspapers, having declared on his death-bed to Dr. Johnson, that the pain of an anonymous letter, written in some of the common prints of the day, fastened on his heart, and threw him into the slow fever of which he died."—*Piozzi's Anecdotes*, p. 143. Mr. Chalmers is in possession of one of those libels, found, as he believes, in the *Town and Country Magazine*, in which, by a *wooden cut*, and under the name of *Tomocomingo*, the political quaker, his person and principles are certainly severely handled, but nothing to die of. The date, however, of this paper, which Mr. Chalmers believes to have been published in 1774, the year in which Cumming died, gives some countenance to Johnson's anecdote.—*Ed.*]

the peaceable and the quarrelsome. When I returned to Lichfield, after having been in London, my mother asked me, whether I was one of those who gave the wall, or those who took it. Now, it is fixed that every man keeps to the right; or, if one is taking the wall, another yields it, and it is never a dispute." He was very severe on a lady, whose name was mentioned. He said, he would have sent her to St. Kilda. That she was as bad as negative badness could be, and stood in the way of what was good: that insipid beauty would not go a great way; and that such a woman might be cut out of a cabbage, if there was a skilful artificer.

Macleod was too late in coming to breakfast. Dr. Johnson said, laziness was worse than the toothache. BOSWELL. "I cannot agree with you, sir; a basin of cold water, or a horsewhip, will cure laziness." JOHNSON. "No, sir; it will only put off the fit; it will not cure the disease. I have been trying to cure my laziness all my life, and could not do it." BOSWELL. "But if a man does in a shorter time what might be the labour of a life, there is nothing to be said against him." JOHNSON (perceiving at once that I alluded to him and his Dictionary). "Suppose that flattery to be true, the consequence would be, that the world would have no right to censure a man; but that will not justify him to himself."

After breakfast he said to me, "A Highland chief should now endeavour to do every thing to raise his rents, by means of the industry of his people. Formerly, it was right for him to have his house full of idle fellows; they were his defenders, his servants, his dependants, his friends. Now they may be better employed. The system of things is now so much altered, that the family cannot have influence but by riches, because it has no longer the power of ancient feudal times. An individual of a family may have it; but it cannot now belong to a family, unless you could have a perpetuity of men with the same views. Macleod has four times the land that the Duke of Bedford has. I think, with his spirit, he may in time make himself the greatest man in the king's dominions: for land may always be improved to a certain degree. I would never have any man sell land, to throw money into the funds, as is often done, or to try any other species of trade. Depend upon it, this rage of trade will destroy itself. You and I shall not see it; but the time will come when there will be an end of it. Trade is like gaming. If a whole company are gamblers, play must cease; for there is nothing to be won. When all nations are traders, there is nothing to be gained by trade, and it will stop

first where it is brought to the greatest perfection. Then the proprietors of land only will be the great men." I observed, it was hard that Macleod should find ingratitude in so many of his people. JOHNSON. "Sir, gratitude is a fruit of great cultivation; you do not find it among gross people." I doubt of this. Nature seems to have implanted gratitude in all living creatures. The lion, mentioned by Aulus Gellius, had it¹. It appears to me that culture, which brings luxury and selfishness with it, has a tendency rather to weaken than promote this affection. ●

Dr. Johnson said this morning, when talking of our setting out, that he was in the state in which Lord Bacon represents kings. He desired the end, but did not like the means. He wished much to get home, but was unwilling to travel in Sky. "You are like kings too in this, sir," said I, "that you must act under the direction of others."

Tuesday, 21st September.—The uncertainty of our present situation having prevented me from receiving any letters from home for some time, I could not help being uneasy. Dr. Johnson had an advantage over me in this respect, he having no wife or child to occasion anxious apprehensions in his mind. It was a good morning; so we resolved to set out. But, before quitting this castle, where we have been so well entertained, let me give a short description of it.

Along the edge of the rock, there are the remains of a wall, which is now covered with ivy. A square court is formed by buildings of different ages, particularly some towers, said to be of great antiquity; and at one place there is a row of false cannon² of stone. There is a very large unfinished pile, four stories high, which we were told was here when Leod, the first of this family, came from the Isle of Man, married the heiress of the Mc'Crails, the ancient possessors of Dunvegan, and afterwards acquired by conquest as much land as he had got by marriage. He surpassed the house of Austria; for he was *felix* both *bella gerere et nubere*³. John Breck⁴ Macleod, the grand-

¹ Aul. Gellius, lib. v. c. xiv.—BOSWELL.

² [Dunvegan Castle is mounted with real cannon; not unnecessarily, for its situation might expose it in war time to be plundered by privateers.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ [This is an allusion to a celebrated epigram, quoted with so much effect by the late Mr. Whitbread, in a speech in the house of commons (9th March, 1810), in allusion to the marriage of the Archduchess Maria Louisa with Buonaparte.

"Bella gerant alii; tu, felix Austria, nube;
Quæ dat Mars aliis, dat tibi regna Venus."—ED.]

⁴ [Breck means marked with the small-pox.—ED.]

father of the late laird, began to repair the castle, or rather to complete it; but he did not live to finish his undertaking. Not doubting, however, that he should do it, he, like those who have had their epitaphs written before they died, ordered the following inscription, composed by the minister of the parish, to be cut upon a broad stone above one of the lower windows, where it still remains to celebrate what was not done, and to serve as a memento of the uncertainty of life, and the presumption of man⁵:

"Joannes Macleod Beganoduni Dominus gentis suæ Philarchus⁶, Durinesia Haraiaæ Vaternesia, &c. Baro D. Floræ Macdonald matrimoniali vinculo conjugatus turrem hanc Beganodunensem proavorum habitaculum longe vetustissimum diu penitus labefactam Anno æræ vulgaris MDCLXXXVI instauravit.

"Quem stabilire juvat proavorum tecta vetusta,
Omne scelus fugiat, justitiamque colat.
Vertit in aerias turres magalia virtus,
Inque casas humiles tecta superba nefas."

Macleod and *Talisker* accompanied us. We passed by the parish church of Durinish. The churchyard is not enclosed, but a pretty murmuring brook runs along one side of it. In it is a pyramid erected to the memory of Thomas Lord Lovat, by his son Lord Simon, who suffered on Tower-hill. It is of free-stone, and, I suppose, about thirty feet high. There is an inscription on a piece of white marble inserted in it, which I suspect to have been the composition of Lord Lovat himself, being much in his pompous style.

I have preserved this inscription⁷, though

⁵ [It is now finished, though not on so lofty a scale as was originally designed.—ED.]

⁶ [The minister seems to have been no contemptible Latinist. Is not *Philarchus* a very happy term to express the paternal and kindly authority of the head of a clan? Macleod's titles run in English, "*Lord of Dunvegan, Chief of his Clan, Baron of Durinish, Harris, Waterness,*" &c.—ED.] See *Appendix*.

⁷ "This pyramid was erected by Simon Lord Fraser, of Lovat, in honour of Lord Thomas his father, a peer of Scotland, and chief of the great and ancient clan of the Frasers. Being attacked for his birthright by the family of Atholl, then in power and favour with King William, yet, by the valour and fidelity of his clan, and the assistance of the Campbells, the old friends and allies of his family, he defended his birthright with such greatness and ferocity of soul, and such valour and activity, that he was an honour to his name, and a good pattern to all brave chiefs of clans. He died in the month of May, 1699, in the sixty-third year of his age, in Dunvegan, the house of the Laird of Macleod, whose sister he had married: by whom he had the above Simon Lord Fraser, and several other children. And, for the great love he bore to the family of Macleod, he

of no great value, thinking it characteristic of a man who has made some noise in the world. Dr. Johnson said, it was poor stuff, such as Lord Lovat's butler might have written.

I observed, in this churchyard, a parcel of people assembled at a funeral, before the grave was dug. The coffin, with the corpse in it, was placed on the ground, while the people alternately assisted in making a grave. One man, at a little distance, was busy cutting a long turf for it, with the crooked spade¹ which is used in Sky; a very awkward instrument. The iron part of it is like a plough-coulter. It has a rude tree for a handle, in which a wooden pin is placed for the foot to press upon. A traveller might, without further inquiry, have set this down as the mode of burying in Sky. I was told, however, that the usual way is to have a grave previously dug.

I observed to-day, that the common way of carrying home their grain here is in loads on horseback. They have also a few sleds, or *cars*, as we call them in Ayrshire, clumsily made, and rarely used.

We got to Ulinish about six o'clock, and found a very good farm-house, of two stories. Mr. Macleod of Ulinish, the sheriff-substitute of the island, was a plain honest gentleman, a good deal like an English justice of peace; not much given to talk, but sufficiently sagacious, and somewhat droll. His daughter, though she was never out of Sky, was a very well-bred woman. Our reverend friend, Mr. Donald M'Queen, kept his appointment, and met us here.

Talking of Phipps's voyage to the North Pole, Dr. Johnson observed, that it "was conjectured that our former navigators have kept too near land, and so have found the sea frozen far north, because the land hinders the free motion of the tide; but, in the wide ocean, where the waves tumble at their full convenience, it is imagined that the frost does not take effect."

Wednesday, 22d September.—In the morning I walked out, and saw a ship, the Margaret of Clyde, pass by with a number of emigrants on board. It was a melancholy sight. After breakfast, we went to see what was called a subterraneous house, about a mile off. It was upon the side of a rising ground. It was discovered by a fox's having taken up his abode in it, and in chasing

desired to be buried near his wife's relations, in the place where two of her uncles lay. And his son Lord Simon, to show to posterity his great affection for his mother's kindred, the brave Macleods, chooses rather to leave his father's bones with them, than carry them to his own burial-place, near Lovat."

¹ [An instrument somewhat like this (if not the same) is still in general use in Ireland.—Ed.]

him, they dug into it. It was very narrow and low, and seemed about forty feet in length. Near it, we found the foundations of several small huts, built of stone. Mr. M'Queen, who is always for making every thing as ancient as possible, boasted that it was the dwelling of some of the first inhabitants of the island, and observed, what a curiosity it was to find here a specimen of the houses of the *aborigines*, which he believed could be found nowhere else; and it was plain that they lived without fire. Dr. Johnson remarked, that they who made this were not in the rudest state; for that it was more difficult to make it than to build a house; therefore certainly those who made it were in possession of houses, and had this only as a hiding-place. It appeared to me, that the vestiges of houses just by it confirmed Dr. Johnson's opinion.

From an old tower, near this place, is an extensive view of Loch-Braccadale, and, at a distance, of the isles of Barra and South Uist; and, on the landside, the Cullin², a prodigious range of mountains, capped with rocky pinnacles in a strange variety of shapes. They resemble the mountains near Corte, in Corsica, of which there is a very good print. They make part of a great range for deer, which, though entirely devoid of trees, is in these countries called a *forest*.

In the afternoon, *Ulinish* carried us in his boat to an island possessed by him, where we saw an immense cave, much more deserving the title of *antrum immane* than that of the Sibyl described by Virgil, which I likewise have visited. It is one hundred and eighty feet long, about thirty feet broad, and at least thirty feet high. This cave, we were told, had a remarkable echo, but we found none. They said it was owing to the great rains having made it damp. Such are the excuses by which the exaggeration of Highland narratives is palliated. There is a plentiful garden at Ulinish (a great rarity in Sky), and several trees; and near the house is a hill, which has an Erse name, signifying "the hill of strife," where, Mr. M'Queen informed us, justice was of old administered. It is like the *mons placiti* of Scone, or those hills which are called *laws*, such as *Kelly law*, *North-Berwick law*, and several others. It is singular that this spot should happen now to be the sheriff's residence.

We had a very cheerful evening, and Dr

² [These picturesque mountains of Sky take their name from the ancient hero, *Cuchullin*. The name is pronounced Quillen. I wonder that Boswell nowhere mentions *Macleod's Maidens*—two or three immense stacks of rock, like the Needles at the Isle of Wight; and *Macleod's Dining-Tables*—hills which derive their name from their elevated, steep sides, and flat tops.—WALTER SCOTT.]

Johnson talked a good deal on the subject of literature. Speaking of the noble family of Boyle, he said, that all the Lord Orrerys, till the present, had been writers. The first wrote several plays; the second¹ was Bentley's antagonist; the third wrote the *Life of Swift*, and several other things; his son Hamilton wrote some papers in the *Adventurer* and *World*. He told us he was well acquainted with Swift's Lord Orrery. He said he was a feeble-minded man; that, on the publication of Dr. Delany's *Remarks* on his book, he was so much alarmed that he was afraid to read them. Dr. Johnson comforted him, by telling him they were both in the right; that Delany had seen most of the good side of Swift,—Lord Orrery most of the bad. Macleod asked, if it was not wrong in Orrery to expose the defects of a man with whom he lived in intimacy. JOHNSON. "Why no, sir, after the man is dead; for then it is done historically." He added, "If Lord Orrery had been rich, he would have been a very liberal patron². His conversation was like his writings, neat and elegant, but without strength. He grasped at more than his abilities could reach; tried to pass for a better talker, a better writer, and a better thinker than he was³. There was a quarrel between him and his father, in which his father was to blame; because it arose from the son's not allowing his wife to keep company with his father's mistress. The old lord showed his resentment in his will⁴,—leaving his library

¹ [Dr. Johnson is not quite accurate in his enumeration. The first Lord Orrery wrote, as he says, several plays. It was he that Horace Walpole called "a man who never made a bad figure but as an author." Roger, the second, and Lionel, the third earls, are not known as authors. Charles, the fourth, was the antagonist of Bentley, and wrote a comedy; John, the fifth earl, was the friend of Swift and Johnson.—*Ed.*] See *Appendix*.

² [Mr. Tyers, in reference to his opinion that Johnson expected *pecuniary* assistance from Lord Chesterfield, contrasts his patronage with that of Lord Orrery, and seems to believe that Lord Orrery had done Johnson some kindness of this sort, but not as much as *he would have done if he were richer*.—*Ed.*]

³ [See *ante*, p. 172.—*Ed.*]

⁴ [The young lord was married on the 8th May, 1728, and the father's will is dated the 6th Nov. following. "Having," says the testator, "with great expense and trouble, made a large collection of useful books and of mathematical instruments, machines and optical glasses of value, which I would have carefully preserved for the benefit of posterity; and having never observed that my son hath showed much taste or inclination, either for the entertainment or knowledge which study and learning afford, I give and bequeath all my books and mathematical instruments (except my Journals of the House

from his son, and assigning, as his reason, that he could not make use of it."

I mentioned the affectation of Orrery, in ending all his letters on the *Life of Swift* in studied varieties of phrase, and never in the common mode of "I am," &c. an observation which I remember to have been made several years ago by old Mr. Sheridan. This species of affectation in writing, as a foreign lady of distinguished talents once remarked to me, is almost peculiar to the English. I took up a volume of Dryden, containing the *Conquest of Granada*, and several other plays, of which all the dedications had such studied conclusions. Dr. Johnson said, such conclusions were more elegant, and, in addressing persons of high rank (as when Dryden dedicated to the Duke of York), they were likewise more respectful⁵. I agreed that *there* it was much better: it was making his escape from the royal presence with a genteel sudden timidity, in place of having the resolution to stand still, and make a formal bow.

Lord Orrery's unkind treatment of his son in his will led us to talk of the dispositions a man should have when dying. I said, I did not see why a man should act differently with respect to those of whom he thought ill when in health, merely because he was dying. JOHNSON. "I should not scruple to speak against a party, when dying; but should not do it against an individual. It is told of Sixtus Quintus, that on his death-bed, in the intervals of his last pangs, he signed death-warrants." Mr. M^cQueen said, he should not do so; he would have more tenderness of heart. JOHNSON. "I believe I should not either; but Mr. M^cQueen and I are cowards. It would not be from tenderness of heart; for the heart is as tender when a man is in health as when

of Lords, and except those books and instruments which, at the time of my death, shall be in and belonging to my houses at Marston and Britwell) to Christchurch College, in Oxford, &c.: my said son, within two years next after my decease, taking thereout, and which I do hereby give him for his sole use and benefit, such books relating to the English constitution and parliamentary affairs, as he shall think fit to make choice of."

The quarrel, however, was probably made up, as Earl John is represented as being excessively grieved by the death of his father, and he himself, in an affectionate copy of verses on that loss, says,

"I weep a father, but I've lost a friend."

And Theobald published a poetical epistle of condolence to the young lord on that same occasion, in terms which would have been too glaringly ridiculous if he had been on notorious bad terms with his father.—*Ed.*]

⁵ [Johnson himself sometimes used this form without the excuse he mentions.—See letter to Mr. Langton, 17th April, 1777.—*Ed.*]

he is sick, though his resolution may be stronger. Sixtus Quintus was a sovereign as well as a priest; and, if the criminals deserved death, he was doing his duty to the last. You would not think a judge died ill, who should be carried off by an apoplectic fit while pronouncing sentence of death. Consider a class of men whose business it is to distribute death:—soldiers, who die scattering bullets. Nobody thinks they die ill on that account.”

Talking of biography, he said, he did not think that the life of any literary man in England had been well written. Beside the common incidents of life, it should tell us his studies, his mode of living, the means by which he attained to excellence, and his opinion of his own works. He told us he had sent Derrick to Dryden’s relations, to gather materials for his life; and he believed Derrick had got all that he himself should have got; but it was nothing. He added, he had a kindness for Derrick¹, and was sorry he was dead.

His notion as to the poems published by Mr. M’Pherson, as the works of Ossian, was not shaken here. Mr. M’Queen always evaded the point of authenticity, saying only that Mr. M’Pherson’s pieces fell far short of those he knew in Erse, which were said to be Ossian’s. JOHNSON. “I hope they do. I am not disputing that you may have poetry of great merit; but that M’Pherson’s is not a translation from ancient poetry. You do not believe it. I say before you, you do not believe it, though you are very willing that the world should believe it.” Mr. M’Queen made no answer to this. Dr. Johnson proceeded: “I look upon M’Pherson’s Fingal to be as gross an imposition as ever the world was troubled with. Had it been really an ancient work, a true specimen how men thought at that time, it would have been a curiosity of the first rate. As a modern production, it is nothing.” He said he could never get the meaning of an Erse song explained to him. They told him the chorus was generally unmeaning. “I take it (said he), Erse songs are like a song which I remember: it was composed in Queen Elizabeth’s time, on the Earl of Essex; and the burden was

‘Radaratoo, radarate, radara tadara tandore.’”

“But surely (said Mr. M’Queen), there were words to it which had meaning.” JOHNSON. “Why, yes, sir; I recollect a stanza, and you shall have it:

‘O! then bespoke the prentices all,
Living in London, both proper and tall,
For Essex’s sake they would fight all.

Radaratoo, radarate, radara, tadara, tandore!’”

¹ [See *ante*, p. 175.—ED.]

² [This droll quotation, I have since found, was from a song in honour of the Earl of Essex,

When Mr. M’Queen began again to expatiate on the beauty of Ossian’s poetry, Dr. Johnson entered into no further controversy, but, with a pleasant smile, only cried, “Ay, ay; *Radaratoo radarate*.”

Thursday, 23d September.—I took Fingal down to the parlour in the morning, and tried a test proposed by Mr. Roderick Macleod, son to *Ulinish*. Mr. M’Queen had said he had some of the poem in the original. I desired him to mention any passage in the printed book, of which he could repeat the original. He pointed out one in page 50 of the quarto edition, and read the Erse, while Mr. Roderick Macleod and I looked on the English; and Mr. Macleod said that it was pretty like what Mr. M’Queen had recited. But when Mr. M’Queen read a description of Cuchullin’s sword in Erse, together with a translation of it in English verse, by Sir James Foulis, Mr. M’Leod said, that was much more like than Mr. M’Pherson’s translation of the former passage. Mr. M’Queen then repeated in Erse a description of one of the horses in Cuchullin’s car. Mr. M’Leod said, Mr. M’Pherson’s English was nothing like it.

When Dr. Johnson came down, I told him that I had now obtained some evidence concerning Fingal; for that Mr. M’Queen had repeated a passage in the original Erse, which Mr. M’Pherson’s translation was pretty like³; and reminded him that he himself had once said, he did not require Mr. M’Pherson’s Ossian to be more like the original than Pope’s Homer. JOHNSON. “Well, sir, this is just what I always maintained. He has found names, and stories, and phrases, nay, passages in old songs, and with them has blended his own compositions, and so made what he gives to the world as the

called “*Queen Elizabeth’s Champion*,” which is preserved in a collection of Old Ballads, in three volumes, published in London in different years, between 1720 and 1730. The full verse is as follows:

“Oh! then bespoke the prentices all,
Living in London, both proper and tall,
In a kind letter sent straight to the queen,
For Essex’s sake they would fight all.

Raderer too, tandaro te,
Raderer, tandorer, tan do re.”—BOSWELL.

[The old ballad here mentioned also occurs in Mr. Evans’s collection of historical ballads, published as a Supplement to Percy’s Reliques, under the inspection, I believe, of William Julius Mickle, who inserted many modern imitations of the heroick ballads of his own composing.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ [Mr. Boswell seems to have reported but half the evidence to Dr. Johnson. He tells him of the passage which was *something like* M’Pherson’s version; but he does not appear to have noticed the other, which was *nothing like it*.—ED.]

translation of an ancient poem¹." If this was the case, I observed, it was wrong to publish it as a poem in six books. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and to ascribe it to a time too when the Highlanders knew nothing of *books*, and nothing of *six*; or perhaps were got the length of counting six. We have been told, by Condamine, of a nation that could count no more than four. This should be told to Monboddio; it would help him. There is as much charity in helping a man down-hill, as in helping him up-hill." BOSWELL. "I do 'nt think there is as much charity." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir, if his *tendency* be downwards. Till he is at the bottom, he flounders; get him once there, and he is quiet. Swift tells, that Stella had a trick, which she learned from Addison, of encouraging a man in absurdity, instead of endeavouring to extricate him."

Mr. M^cQueen's answers to the inquiries concerning Ossian were so unsatisfactory, that I could not help observing, that, were he examined in a court of justice, he would find himself under a necessity of being more explicit. JOHNSON. "Sir, he has told Blair a little too much, which is published; and he sticks to it. He is so much at the head of things here, that he has never been accustomed to be closely examined; and so he goes on quite smoothly." BOSWELL. "He has never had any body to work him." JOHNSON. "No, sir; and a man is seldom disposed to work himself, though he ought to work himself, to be sure." Mr. M^cQueen made no reply².

Having talked of the strictness with which witnesses are examined in courts of justice, Dr. Johnson told us, that Garrick, though accustomed to face multitudes, when produced as a witness in Westminster-hall, was so disconcerted by a new mode of publick appearance, that he could not understand what was asked. It was a cause where an actor claimed a free benefit, that is to say, a benefit without paying the expense of the house; but the meaning of the term was disputed. Garrick was asked, "Sir, have you a free benefit?" "Yes." "Upon what terms have you it?" "Upon—the terms—of—a free benefit." He was dismissed as one from whom no information could be obtained. Dr. Johnson is often too hard on our friend Mr. Garrick.

¹ [This account of Ossian's Poems, as published by M^cPherson, is that at which most sensible people have arrived, though there may be some difference between the plus and minus of the ancient ingredients employed by the translator.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² I think it but justice to say, that I believe Dr. Johnson meant to ascribe Mr. M^cQueen's conduct to inaccuracy and enthusiasm, and did not mean any severe imputation against him.—BOSWELL.

When I asked him, why he did not mention him in the Preface to his Shakspeare, he said, "Garrick has been liberally paid for any thing he has done for Shakspeare. If I should praise him, I should much more praise the nation who paid him. He has not made Shakspeare better known³; he cannot illustrate Shakspeare: so I have reasons enough against mentioning him, were reasons necessary. There should be reasons *for* it." I spoke of Mrs. Montagu's very high praises of Garrick. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is fit she should say so much, and I should say nothing. Reynolds is fond of her book, and I wonder at it; for neither I, nor Beauclerk, nor Mrs. Thrale, could get through it⁴."

³ It has been triumphantly asked, "Had not the plays of Shakspeare lain dormant for many years before the appearance of Mr. Garrick? Did he not exhibit the most excellent of them frequently for thirty years together, and render them extremely popular by his own inimitable performance?" He undoubtedly did. But Dr. Johnson's assertion has been misunderstood. Knowing as well as the objectors what has been just stated, he must necessarily have meant, that "Mr. Garrick did not, as a critick, make Shakspeare better known; he did not illustrate any one passage in any of his plays by acuteness of disquisition, or sagacity of conjecture:" and what had been done with any degree of excellence in *that* way was the proper and immediate subject of his preface. I may add in support of this explanation the following anecdote, related to me by one of the ablest commentators on Shakspeare, who knew much of Dr. Johnson: "Now I have quitted the theatre," cries Garrick, "I will sit down and read Shakspeare." "'Tis time you should," exclaimed Johnson, "for I much doubt if you ever examined one of his plays from the first scene to the last."—BOSWELL.

⁴ No man has less inclination to controversy than I have, particularly with a lady. But as I have claimed, and am conscious of being entitled to, credit, for the strictest fidelity, my respect for the publick obliges me to take notice of an insinuation which tends to impeach it.

Mrs. Piozzi (late Mrs. Thrale), to her "Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson," added the following postscript:

"Naples, 10th Feb. 1786.

"Since the foregoing went to press, having seen a passage from Mr. Boswell's 'Tour to the Hebrides,' in which it is said, that *I could not get through Mrs. Montagu's 'Essay on Shakspeare,'* I do not delay a moment to declare, that, on the contrary, I have always commended it myself, and heard it commended by every one else; and few things would give me more concern than to be thought incapable of tasting, or unwilling to testify my opinion of its excellence."

It is remarkable, that this postscript is so expressed, as not to point out the person who said that Mrs. Thrale could not get through Mrs. Montagu's book; and, therefore, I think it necessary to re-

Last night Dr. Johnson gave us an account of the whole process of tanning, and of the nature of milk, and the various op-

erations upon it, as making whey, &c. His variety of information is surprising¹; and it gives one much satisfaction to hear such a man bestowing his attention on the useful arts of life. *Ulinish* was much struck with his knowledge; and said, "He is a great orator, sir; it is musick to hear this man speak." A strange thought struck me, to try if he knew any thing of an art, or whatever it should be called, which is no doubt very useful in life, but which lies far out of the way of a philosopher and poet; I mean the trade of a butcher. I enticed him into the subject, by connecting it with the various researches into the manners and customs of uncivilized nations, that have been made by our late navigators into the South Seas. I began with observing, that Mr. (now Sir Joseph) Banks tells us, that the art of slaughtering animals was not known in Otaheite, for, instead of bleeding to death their dogs (a common food with them), they strangle them. This he told me himself; and I supposed that their hogs were killed in the same way. Dr. Johnson said, "This must be owing to their not having knives, though they have sharp stones with which they can cut a carcass in pieces tolerably." By degrees, he showed that he knew something even of butchery. "Different animals," said he, "are killed differently. An ox is knocked down, and a calf stunned; but a sheep has its throat cut, without any thing being done to stupify it. The butchers have no view to the ease of the animals, but only to make them quiet, for their own safety and convenience. A sheep can give them little trouble. Hales is of opinion that every animal should be blooded, without having any blow given to it, because it bleeds better." BOSWELL. "That would be cruel." JOHNSON. "No, sir; there is not much pain, if the jugular vein be properly cut." Pursuing the subject, he said, the kennels of Southwark ran with blood two or three days in the week; that he was afraid there were slaughter-houses in more streets in London than one supposes (speaking with a kind of horror of butchering); and yet, he added, "any of us would kill a cow, rather than not have beef." I said we

mind Mrs. Piozzi, that the assertion concerning her was Dr. Johnson's, and not mine. The second observation that I shall make on this post-script is, that it does not deny the fact asserted, though I must acknowledge, from the praise it bestows on Mrs. Montagu's book, it may have been designed to convey that meaning.

What Mrs. Thrale's opinion is, or was, or what she may or may not have said to Dr. Johnson concerning Mrs. Montagu's book, it is not necessary for me to inquire. It is only incumbent on me to ascertain what Dr. Johnson said to me. I shall therefore confine myself to a very short state of the fact.

The unfavourable opinion of Mrs. Montagu's book, which Dr. Johnson is here reported to have given, is known to have been that which he uniformly expressed, as many of his friends well remember. So much for the authenticity of the paragraph, as far as it relates to his own sentiments. The words containing the assertion, to which Mrs. Piozzi objects, are printed from my manuscript Journal, and were taken down at the time. The Journal was read by Dr. Johnson, who pointed out some inaccuracies, which I corrected, but did not mention any inaccuracy in the paragraph in question: and what is still more material, and very flattering to me, a considerable part of my Journal, containing this paragraph, *was read several years ago by Mrs. Thrale herself*, who had it for some time in her possession, and returned it to me, without intimating that Dr. Johnson had mistaken her sentiments.

When the first edition of my Journal was passing through the press, it occurred to me, that a peculiar delicacy was necessary to be observed in reporting the opinion of one literary lady concerning the performance of another; and I had such scruples on that head, that, in the proof-sheet, I struck out the name of Mrs. Thrale from the above paragraph, and two or three hundred copies of my book were actually printed and published without it; of these Sir Joshua Reynolds's copy happened to be one. But while the sheet was working off, a friend, for whose opinion I have great respect, suggested that I had no right to deprive Mrs. Thrale of the high honour which Dr. Johnson had done her, by stating her opinion along with that of Mr. Beauclerk, as coinciding with, and, as it were, sanctioning his own. The observation appeared to me so weighty and conclusive, that I hastened to the printing-house, and, as a piece of justice, restored Mrs. Thrale to that place from which a too scrupulous delicacy had excluded her.

On this simple state of facts I shall make no observation whatever.—BOSWELL. [The fact of Mrs. Piozzi's having read his Journal, as we know she did, and made no objection, completely justifies Mr. Boswell, and throws some doubt over her own veracity. Yet it is possible that this lively lady may not have read every line of the manuscript, or, thinking it a mere private memorandum never likely to be published, may

not have thought it worth while to contradict such an *obiter dictum* of Dr. Johnson's. Mrs. Montagu's Essay is lively, and not long, and it would have been very strange if Mrs. Piozzi had not been able to read it through. Let it be recollected, that Johnson, who talked in this depreciating way of Mrs. Montagu, talked and wrote to her in a style of almost fulsome adulation. See *ante*, pp. 152, 260, n. See also Miss Reynolds's *Recollections of Dr. Johnson*.—Ed.]

¹ [We have already seen (*ante*, p. 11), that he had an early opportunity of learning the details of the art of tanning.—Ed.]

could not. "Yes," said he, "any one may. The business of a butcher is a trade indeed, that is to say, there is an apprenticeship served to it; but it may be learnt in a month."

I mentioned a club in London, at the Boar's-head in Eastcheap, the very tavern where Falstaff and his joyous companions met; the members of which all assume Shakspeare's characters. One is Falstaff, another Prince Henry, another Bardolph, and so on. JOHNSON. "Do n't be of it, sir. Now that you have a name, you must be careful to avoid many things, not bad in themselves, but which will lessen your character¹. This every man who has a name must observe. A man who is not publicly known may live in London as he pleases, without any notice being taken of him; but it is wonderful how a person of any consequence is watched. There was a member of parliament², who wanted to prepare himself to speak on a question that was to come on in the house; and he and I were to talk it over together. He did not wish it should be known that he talked with me; so he would not let me come to his house, but came to mine. Some time after he had made his speech in the house³, Mrs. Cholmondeley, a very airy lady, told me, 'Well, you could make nothing of him!' naming the gentleman; which was a proof that he was watched. I had once some business⁴ to do for government, and I went to Lord North's. Precaution was taken that it should not be known. It was dark before I went; yet a few days after I was told, 'Well, you have been with Lord North.' That the door of the prime minister should be watched is not strange; but that a member of parliament should be watched, or that my door should be watched, is wonderful."

We set out this morning on our way to Talisker, in *Ulinish's* boat, having taken

¹ I do not see why I might not have been of this club without lessening my character. But Dr. Johnson's caution against supposing one's self concealed in London may be very useful to prevent some people from doing many things, not only foolish, but criminal.—BOSWELL.

² [The Editor suspects that Johnson's friend, Mr. William Fitzherbert, (see *ante*, pp. 29, 158, and *post*, 15th Sept. 1777) was here meant. He sat in parliament from 1761 to his death, in 1772. In 1765 he was made a lord of Trade. No speech of his is preserved—a circumstance very natural, if Mrs. Cholmondeley alluded to an attempt of his.—Ed.]

³ [Mrs. Cholmondeley was a younger sister of the celebrated Margaret Woffington. She married the Hon. and Rev. George Cholmondeley.—Ed.]

⁴ [No doubt about one of his political pamphlets; probably that respecting the Falkland Islands.—Ed.]

leave of him and his family. Mr. Donald M'Queen still favoured us with his company, for which we were much obliged to him. As we sailed along, Dr. Johnson got into one of his fits of railing at the Scots. He owned that they had been a very learned nation for a hundred years, from about 1550 to about 1650; but that they afforded the only instance of a people among whom the arts of civil life did not advance in proportion with learning; that they had hardly any trade, any money, or any elegance, before the Union; that it was strange that, with all the advantages possessed by other nations, they had not any of those conveniencies and embellishments which are the fruit of industry, till they came in contact with a civilized people. "We have taught you," said he, "and we'll do the same in time to all barbarous nations, to the Cherokees, and at last to the Ouran-Outangs," laughing with as much glee as if Monboddo had been present. BOSWELL. "We had wine before the Union." JOHNSON. "No, sir; you had some weak stuff, the refuse of France, which would not make you drunk." BOSWELL. "I assure you, sir, there was a great deal of drunkenness." JOHNSON. "No, sir; there were people who died of dropsies, which they contracted in trying to get drunk."

I must here glean some of his conversation at Ulinish, which I have omitted. He repeated his remark, that a man in a ship was worse than a man in a jail. "The man in a jail," said he, "has more room, better food, and commonly better company, and is in safety." "Ay; but," said Mr. M'Queen, "the man in the ship has the pleasing hope of getting to shore." JOHNSON. "Sir, I am not talking of a man's getting to shore, but of a man while he is in a ship; and then, I say, he is worse than a man while he is in a jail. A man in a jail may have the '*pleasing hope*' of getting out. A man confined for only a limited time actually *has* it⁵." Macleod mentioned his schemes for carrying on fisheries with spirit, and that he would wish to understand the construction of boats. I suggested that he might go to a dock-yard and work, as Peter the Great did. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, he need not work. Peter the Great had not the sense to see that the mere mechanical work may be done by any body, and that there is the same art in constructing a vessel, whether the boards are well or ill wrought. Sir Christopher Wren might as well have served his time to a bricklayer, and first, indeed, to a brickmaker."

There is a beautiful little island in the Loch of Dunvegan, called Isa. Macleod

⁵ [See more on this subject, *post*, 18th March, 1776.—Ed.]

said, he would give it to Dr. Johnson, on condition of his residing on it three months in the year; nay one month. Dr. Johnson was highly amused with the fancy. I have seen him please himself with little things, even with mere ideas like the present. He talked a great deal of this island; how he would build a house there—how he would fortify it—how he would have cannon—how he would plant—how he would sally out, and *take* the Isle of Muck¹; and then he laughed with uncommon glee, and could hardly leave off. I have seen him do so at a small matter that struck him, and was a sport to no one else². Mr. Langton told me, that one night he did so while the company were all grave about him;—only Garrick, in his significant smart manner, darting his eyes around, exclaimed, “*Very* jocose, to be sure!” Macleod encouraged the fancy of Dr. Johnson’s becoming owner of an island; told him, that it was the practice in this country to name every man by his lands; and begged leave to drink to him in that mode; “*Island Isa*, your health!” *Ulinish*, *Talisker*, Mr. M’Queen, and I, all joined in our different manners, while Dr. Johnson bowed to each, with much good humour.

We had good weather, and a fine sail this day. The shore was varied with hills, and rocks, and corn fields, and bushes, which are here dignified with the name of natural wood. We landed near the house of Ferneley, a farm possessed by another gentleman of the name of Macleod, who, expecting our arrival, was waiting on the shore, with a horse for Dr. Johnson. The rest of us walked. At dinner, I expressed to Macleod the joy which I had in seeing him on such cordial terms with his clan. “Government,” said he, “has deprived us of our ancient power; but it cannot deprive us of our domestick satisfactions. I would rather drink punch in one of their houses (meaning the houses of his people), than be enabled, by their hardships, to have claret in my own.” This should be the sentiment of every chieftain. All that he can get by raising his rents is mere luxury in his own house. Is it not better to share the profits of his estate, to a certain degree, with his kinsmen, and thus have both social intercourse and patriarchal influence?

We had a very good ride, for about three miles, to Talisker, where Colonel Macleod introduced us to his lady. We found here Mr. Donald M’Lean, the young Laird of

Col (nephew to *Talisker*), to whom I delivered the letter with which I had been favoured by his uncle, Professor Macleod, at Aberdeen. He was a little lively young man. We found he had been a good deal in England, studying farming, and was resolved to improve the value of his father’s lands, without oppressing his tenants, or losing the ancient Highland fashions.

Talisker is a better place than one commonly finds in Sky. It is situated in a rich bottom. Before it is a wide expanse of sea, on each hand of which are immense rocks; and, at some distance in the sea, there are three columnal rocks rising to sharp points. The billows break with prodigious force and noise on the coast of Talisker. There are here a good many well-grown trees. Talisker is an extensive farm. The possessor of it has, for several generations, been the next heir to *Macleod*, as there has been but one son always in that family. The court before the house is most injudiciously paved with the round bluish-gray pebbles which are found upon the sea-shore; so that you walk as if upon cannon-balls driven into the ground.

After supper, I talked of the assiduity of the Scottish clergy, in visiting and privately instructing their parishioners, and observed how much in this they excelled the English clergy. Dr. Johnson would not let this pass. He tried to turn it off, by saying, “There are different ways of instructing. Our clergy pray and preach.” Macleod and I pressed the subject, upon which he grew warm, and broke forth: “I do not believe your people are better instructed. If they are, it is the blind leading the blind; for your clergy are not instructed themselves.” Thinking he had gone a little too far, he checked himself, and added, “When I talk of the ignorance of your clergy, I talk of them as a body: I do not mean that there are not individuals who are learned (looking at Mr. M’Queen). I suppose there are such among the clergy in Muscovy. The clergy of England have produced the most valuable books in support of religion, both in theory and practice. What have your clergy done, since you sunk into presbyterianism? Can you name one book of any value, on a religious subject, written by them?” We were silent. “I’ll help you. Forbes wrote very well; but I believe he wrote before episcopacy was quite extinguished.” And then pausing a little, he said, “Yes, you have *Wishart* AGAINST Repentance³.” BOSWELL.

¹ [When Buonaparte first surveyed his new sovereignty of Elba, he talked jocularly of *taking* the little island of Pianosa. So natural to mankind seems to be the desire of conquest, that it was the first thought of the speculative moralist, as well as of the dethroned usurper.—ED.]

² [See *ante*, p. 321.—ED.]

³ This was a dexterous mode of description, for the purpose of his argument; for what he alluded to was, a sermon published by the learned Dr. William Wishart, formerly principal of the college at Edinburgh, to warn men *against* confiding in a *deathbed* repentance, of the inefficacy

"But, sir, we are not contending for the superior learning of our clergy, but for their superior assiduity." He bore us down again, with thundering against their ignorance, and said to me, "I see you have not been well taught; for you have not charity." He had been in some measure forced into this warmth, by the exulting air which I assumed; for, when he began, he said, "Since you *will* drive the nail!" He again thought of good Mr. M'Queen, and, taking him by the hand, said, "Sir, I did not mean any disrespect to you."

Here I must observe, that he conquered by deserting his ground, and not meeting the argument as I had put it. The assiduity of the Scottish clergy is certainly greater than that of the English. His taking up the topick of their not having so much learning, was, though ingenious, yet a fallacy in logic. It was as if there should be a dispute whether a man's hair is well dressed, and Dr. Johnson should say, "Sir, his hair cannot be well dressed; for he has a dirty shirt. No man who has not clean linen has his hair well dressed." When some days afterwards he read this passage, he said, "No, sir; I did not say that a man's hair could not be well dressed because he has not clean linen, but because he is bald."

He used one argument against the Scottish clergy being learned, which I doubt was not good. "As we believe a man dead till we know that he is alive; so we believe men ignorant till we know that they are learned." Now our maxim in law is, to presume a man alive, till we know he is dead. However, indeed, it may be answered, that we must first know he has lived; and that we have never known the learning of the Scottish clergy. Mr. M'Queen, though he was of opinion that Dr. Johnson had deserted the point really in dispute, was much pleased with what he said, and owned to me, he thought it very just; and Mrs. Macleod was so much captivated by his eloquence, that she told me, "I was a good advocate for a bad cause."

of which he entertained notions *very different from those of Dr. Johnson.*—BOSWELL. [Mr. Boswell seems here to have been betrayed by the personal or national offence which he took at Dr. Johnson's depreciation of the Scottish clergy, into making an uncharitable and, as it would seem, unfounded charge on his great friend's religious tenets. It does not—that the Editor is aware of—appear that Johnson ever expressed any confidence in a *deathbed repentance*; on the contrary, his whole life was a practical contradiction of his entertaining any such belief. His *Prayers and Meditations* refute such an imputation in every page; and, in his conversations, Boswell himself records, in *numberless* instances, an *absolutely opposite* opinion.—ED.]

Friday, 24th September.—This was a good day. Dr. Johnson told us, at breakfast, that he rode harder at a fox chase than any body¹. "The English," said he, "are the only nation who ride hard a-hunting. A Frenchman goes out upon a managed horse, and capers in the field, and no more thinks of leaping a hedge² than of mounting a breach. Lord Powerscourt³ laid a wager, in France, that he would ride a great many miles in a certain short time. The French academicians set to work, and calculated that, from the resistance of the air, it was impossible. His lordship, however, performed it."

Our money being nearly exhausted, we sent a bill for thirty pounds, drawn on Sir William Forbes and Co., to Lochbraccadale, but our messenger found it very difficult to procure cash for it; at length, however, he got us value from the master of a vessel which was to carry away some emigrants. There is a great scarcity of specie in Sky⁴. Mr. M'Queen said he had the utmost difficulty to pay his servants' wages, or to pay for any little thing which he has to buy. The rents are paid in bills, which the drovers give. The people consume a vast deal of snuff and tobacco, for which they must pay ready money; and pedlars, who come about selling goods, as there is not a shop in the island, carry away the cash. If there were encouragement given to fisheries and manufactures, there might be a circulation of money introduced. I got one-and-twenty shillings in silver at Portree, which was thought a wonderful store.

Talisker, Mr. M'Queen, and I, walked out, and looked at no less than fifteen different waterfalls near the house, in the space of about a quarter of a mile. We also saw Cuchillin's well, said to have been the favourite spring of that ancient hero. I drank of it. The water is admirable. On the shore are many stones full of crystallizations in the heart.

¹ [This seems, again, to support the idea that Johnson, at one period of his life, *hunted habitually.*—See *ante*, p. 221.—ED.]

² [Because, in the greater part of France, there are no hedges; nor do they hunt, in the sense—in which we use that word—of *running down* the animal.—ED.]

³ [Probably Richard Wingfield, third viscount of the last creation, born in 1730, succeeded his brother in 1764, and died in 1788. The editor sees reason to believe that Edward, the second viscount, sometimes called "the *French Lord Powerscourt*," was here meant, and not his nephew Richard.—ED.]

⁴ [This scarcity of cash still exists on the islands, in several of which five-shilling notes are necessarily issued, to have some circulating medium. If you insist on having change, you must purchase something at a shop.—WALTER SCOTT.]

Though our obliging friend, Mr. M'Lean, was but the young laird, he had the title of *Col* constantly given him. After dinner he and I walked to the top of Prieswell, a very high rocky hill, from whence there is a view of Barra—the Long Island¹—Bernera—the Loch of Dunvegan—part of Rum—part of Rasay, and a vast deal of the Isle of Sky. *Col*, though he had come into Sky with an intention to be at Dunvegan, and pass a considerable time in the island, most politely resolved first to conduct us to Mull, and then to return to Sky. This was a very fortunate circumstance; for he planned an expedition for us of more variety than merely going to Mull. He proposed we should see the islands of Egg, Muck, Col, and Tyr-yi. In all these islands he could show us every thing worth seeing; and in Mull he said he should be as if at home, his father having lands there, and he at a farm.

Dr. Johnson did not talk much to-day, but seemed intent in listening to the schemes of future excursion, planned by *Col*. Dr. Birch, however, being mentioned, he said, he had more anecdotes than any man. I said, Percy had a great many; that he flowed with them like one of the brooks here. JOHNSON. "If Percy is like one of the brooks here, Birch was like the river Thames. Birch excelled Percy in that, as much as Percy excels Goldsmith." I mentioned Lord Hailes as a man of anecdote. He was not pleased with him, for publishing only such memorials and letters as were unfavourable for the Stuart family. "If," said he, "a man fairly warns you, 'I am to give all the ill—do you find the good, he may; but if the object which he professes be to give a view of a reign, let him tell all the truth. I would tell truth of the two Georges, or of that scoundrel, King William. Granger's "Biographical History" is full of curious anecdote, but might have been better done. The dog is a whig. I do not like much to see a whig in any dress; but I hate to see a whig in a parson's gown."

Saturday, 25th September.—It was resolved that we should set out, in order to return to Slate, to be in readiness to take boat whenever there should be a fair wind. Dr. Johnson remained in his chamber writing a letter, and it was long before we could get him into motion. He did not come to breakfast, but had it sent to him. When he had finished his letter, it was twelve o'clock, and we should have set out at ten. When I went up to him, he said to me, "Do you remember a song which begins²,

¹ [A series of islands; the two Uists, Benbecula, and some others, are called by the general name of *Long Island*.—Ed.]

² [The song begins

"Welcome, welcome, brother debtor,
To this poor but merry place."

'Every island is a prison

Strongly guarded by the sea;
Kings and princes, for that reason,
Prisoners are, as well as we!"

I suppose he had been thinking of our confined situation. He would fain have got into a boat from hence, instead of riding back to Slate. A scheme for it was proposed. He said, "We'll not be driven tamely from it:" but it proved impracticable.

We took leave of Macleod and *Talisker*, from whom we parted with regret. *Talisker*, having been bred to physick, had a tincture of scholarship in his conversation, which pleased Dr. Johnson, and he had some very good books; and being a colonel in the Dutch service, he and his lady, in consequence of having lived abroad, had introduced the ease and politeness of the continent into this rude region.

Young *Col* was now our leader. Mr. M'Queen was to accompany us half a day more. We stopped at a little hut, where we saw an old woman grinding with the *quern*, the ancient Highland instrument, which it is said was used by the Romans; but which, being very slow in its operation, is almost entirely gone into disuse.

The walls of the cottages in Sky, instead of being one compacted mass of stones, are often formed by two exterior surfaces of stone, filled up with earth in the middle, which makes them very warm. The roof is generally bad. They are thatched, sometimes with straw, sometimes with heath, sometimes with fern. The thatch is secured by ropes of straw, or of heath; and, to fix the ropes, there is a stone tied to the end of each. These stones hang round the bottom of the roof, and make it look like a lady's hair in papers; but I should think that, when there is wind, they would come down, and knock people on the head.

We dined at the inn at Seonser, where I had the pleasure to find a letter from my wife. Here we parted from our learned companion, Mr. Donald M'Queen. Dr. Johnson took leave of him very affectionately, saying, "Dear sir, do not forget me!" We settled, that he should write an account of the Isle of Sky, which Dr. Johnson promised to revise. He said, Mr. M'Queen should tell all that he could; distinguishing what he himself knew, what was traditional, and what conjectural.

We sent our horses round a point of land, that we might shun some very bad road; and resolved to go forward by sea. It was seven o'clock when we got into our boat. We had many showers, and it soon grew pretty dark. Dr. Johnson sat silent and patient. Once he said, as he looked on the black coast of Sky,—black, as being compos-

The stanza quoted by Johnson is the sixth. See *Ritson's Songs*, v. ii. p. 105.—Ed.]

ed of rocks seen in the dusk,—“This is very solemn.” Our boatmen were rude singers, and seemed so like wild Indians, that a very little imagination was necessary to give one an impression of being upon an American river. We landed at Strolimus, from whence we got a guide to walk before us, for two miles, to Corrichatachin. Not being able to procure a horse for our baggage, I took one portmanteau before me, and Joseph another. We had but a single star to light us on our way. It was about eleven when we arrived. We were most hospitably received by the master and mistress, who were just going to bed, but, with unaffected ready kindness, made a good fire, and at twelve o'clock at night had supper on the table.

James Macdonald, of Knockow, *Kingsburgh's* brother, whom we had seen at *Kingsburgh*, was there. He showed me a bond granted by the late Sir James Macdonald, to old *Kingsburgh*, the preamble of which does so much honour to the feelings of that much-lamented gentleman, that I thought it worth transcribing. It was as follows:

“I, Sir James Macdonald, of Macdonald, baronet, now, after arriving at my perfect age, from the friendship I bear to Alexander Macdonald, of *Kingsburgh*, and in return for the long and faithful services done and performed by him to my deceased father, and to myself during my minority, when he was one of my tutors and curators; being resolved, now that the said Alexander Macdonald is advanced in years, to contribute my endeavours for making his old age placid and comfortable;—therefore he grants him an annuity of fifty pounds sterling¹.

Dr. Johnson went to bed soon. When one bowl of punch was finished, I rose, and was near the door, in my way up stairs to bed; but *Corrichatachin* said it was the first time *Col* had been in his house, and he should have his bowl;—and would not I join in drinking it? The heartiness of my honest landlord, and the desire of doing social honour to our very obliging conductor, induced me to sit down again. *Col's* bowl was finished; and by that time we were well warmed. A third bowl was soon made, and that too was finished. We were cordial, and merry to a high degree; but of what passed I have no recollection, with any accuracy. I remember calling *Corrichatachin* by the familiar appellation of *Corri*, which his friends do. A fourth bowl was made, by which time *Col*, and young M'Kinnon, *Corrichatachin's*

son, slipped away to bed. I continued a little with *Corri* and *Knockow*; but at last I left them. It was near five in the morning when I got to bed.

Sunday, 26th September.—I awaked at noon, with a severe headache. I was much vexed that I should have been guilty of such a riot, and afraid of a reproof from Dr. Johnson. I thought it very inconsistent with that conduct which I ought to maintain, while the companion of the *Rambler*. About one he came into my room, and accosted me, “What, drunk yet?” His tone of voice was not that of severe upbraiding; so I was relieved a little. “Sir (said I), they kept me up.” He answered, “No, you kept them up, you drunken dog.” This he said with good-humoured English pleasantry. Soon afterwards, *Corrichatachin*, *Col*, and other friends, assembled round my bed. *Corri* had a brandy-bottle and glass with him, and insisted I should take a dram. “Ay (said Dr. Johnson), fill him drunk again. Do it in the morning, that we may laugh at him all day. It is a poor thing for a fellow to get drunk at night, and sculk to bed, and let his friends have no sport.” Finding him thus jocular, I became quite easy; and when I offered to get up, he very good-naturedly said, “You need be in no such hurry now².” I took my host's advice, and drank some brandy, which I found an effectual cure for my headache. When I rose, I went into Dr. Johnson's room, and taking up Mrs. M'Kinnon's Prayer-book, I opened it at the twentieth Sunday after Trinity, in the epistle for which I read, “And be not drunk with wine, wherein there is excess.” Some would have taken this as a divine interposition.

² My ingenuously relating this occasional instance of intemperance has I find been made the subject both of serious criticism and ludicrous banter. With the banterers I shall not trouble myself, but I wonder that those who pretend to the appellation of serious criticks should not have had sagacity enough to perceive that here, as in every other part of the present work, my principal object was to delineate Dr. Johnson's manners and character. In justice to him I would not omit an anecdote, which, though in some degree to my own disadvantage, exhibits in so strong a light the indulgence and good humour with which he could treat those excesses in his friends, of which he highly disapproved.

In some other instances, the criticks have been equally wrong as to the true motive of my recording particulars, the objections to which I saw as clearly as they. But it would be an endless task for an author to point out upon every occasion the precise object he has in view. Contenting himself with the approbation of readers of discernment and taste, he ought not to complain that some are found who cannot or will not understand him.—BOSWELL.

¹ [The preamble is well enough, but one is inclined to say, “O lame and impotent conclusion!” It surely was a paltry sum for such an occasion, and between such parties.—ED.]

Mrs. M'Kinnon told us at dinner, that old *Kingsburgh*, her father, was examined at Mugstot, by General Campbell¹, as to the particulars of the dress of the person who had come to his house in woman's clothes, along with Miss Flora M'Donald; as the general had received intelligence of that disguise. The particulars were taken down in writing, that it might be seen how far they agreed with the dress of the *Irish girl* who went with Miss Flora from the Long Island. *Kingsburgh*, she said, had but one song, which he always sung when he was merry over a glass. She dictated the words to me, which are foolish enough:

"Green sleeves and pudding pies,
Tell me where my mistress lies,
And I'll be with her before she rise,
Fiddle and aw' together.

"May our affairs abroad succeed,
And may our king come home with speed,
And all pretenders shake for dread,
And let his health go round.

"To all our injured friends in need,
This side and beyond the Tweed!—
Let all pretenders shake for dread,
And let his health go round.
Green sleeves², &c.

While the examination was going on, the present *Talisker*, who was there as one of Macleod's militia³, could not resist the pleasantry of asking *Kingsburgh*, in allusion to his only song, "Had she *green sleeves*?" *Kingsburgh* gave him no answer. Lady Margaret M'Donald⁴ was very angry at *Talisker* for joking on such a serious occasion, as *Kingsburgh* was really in danger of his life. Mrs. M'Kinnon added, that Lady Margaret was quite adored in Sky. That when she travelled through the island, the people ran in crowds before her, and took the stones off the road,

¹ [General Campbell, it seems, was accompanied by Captain Fergusson, of the *Furnace*, part of whose share in this examination we have already seen, *ante*, p. 386.—ED.]

² ["*Green sleeves*," however, is a song, a great deal older than the Revolution. "His disposition and words no more adhere and keep pace together, than the hundredth psalm and the tune of *Green sleeves*," says Mrs. Ford, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*.—ED.]

³ [Macleod and Macdonald, after some hesitation, which the Jacobites called treachery, took part with the Hanoverian monarch, and arrayed their clans on that side. *Talisker*, who commanded a body of Macleod's people, seems to have been the person who actually arrested Flora Macdonald. (*Ascanius*.) But he probably did so, to prevent her falling into ruder hands.—ED.]

⁴ [Lady Margaret was the daughter of the ninth Earl of Eglintoun, and died in March, 1799.—ED.]

lest her horse should stumble and she be hurt⁵. Her husband, Sir Alexander, is also remembered with great regard. We were told that every week a hogshead of claret was drunk at his table.

This was another day of wind and rain; but good cheer and good society helped to beguile the time. I felt myself comfortable enough in the afternoon. I then thought that my last night's riot was no more than such a social excess as may happen without much moral blame; and recollected that some physicians maintained, that a fever produced by it was, upon the whole, good for health: so different are our reflections on the same subject, at different periods; and such the excuses with which we palliate what we know to be wrong.

Monday, 27th September.—Mr. Donald Macleod, our original guide, who had parted from us at Dunvegan, joined us again to-day. The weather was still so bad that we could not travel. I found a closet here, with a good many books, beside those that were lying about. Dr. Johnson told me, he found a library in his room at *Talisker*; and observed, that it was one of the remarkable things of Sky, that there were so many books in it.

Though we had here great abundance of provisions, it is remarkable that *Corrichatachin* has literally no garden: not even a turnip, a carrot, or a cabbage. After dinner, we talked of the crooked spade used in Sky, already described, and they maintained that it was better than the usual garden-spade, and that there was an art in tossing it, by which those who were accustomed to it could work very easily with it. "Nay," said Dr. Johnson, "it may be useful in land where there are many stones to raise; but it certainly is not a good instrument for digging good land. A man may toss it, to be sure; but he will toss a light spade much better: its weight makes it an incumbrance. A man may dig any land with it; but he has no occasion for such a weight in digging good land. You may take a field-piece to shoot sparrows; but all the sparrows you can bring home will not be worth the charge." He was quite social and easy amongst them; and, though he drank no fermented liquor, toasted Highland beauties with great readiness. His conviviality engaged them so much, that they seemed eager to show their attention to him, and vied with each other in crying out, with a strong Celtick pronunciation, "Toctor Shonson, Toctor Shonson, your health!"

This evening one of our married ladies, a

⁵ [Johnson made a compliment on this subject to Lady M. Macdonald, when he afterwards met her, at dinner, in London. See 8th April, 1779.—ED.]

lively, pretty little woman, good-humouredly sat down upon Dr. Johnson's knee, and, being encouraged by some of the company, put her hands round his neck, and kissed him. "Do it again," said he, "and let us see who will tire first." He kept her on his knee some time, while he and she drank tea. He was now like a *buck* indeed. All the company were much entertained to find him so easy and pleasant. To me it was highly comick, to see the grave philosopher—the Rambler—toying with a Highland beauty! But what could he do? He must have been surly, and weak too, had he not behaved as he did. He would have been laughed at, and not more respected, though less loved.

He read to-night to himself, as he sat in company, a great deal of my Journal, and said to me, "The more I read of this, I think the more highly of you¹." The gentlemen sat a long time at their punch, after he and I had retired to our chambers. The manner in which they were attended struck me as singular. The bell being broken, a smart lad lay on a table in the corner of the room, ready to spring up and bring the kettle, whenever it was wanted. They continued drinking, and singing Erse songs, till near five in the morning, when they all came into my room, where some of them had beds. Unluckily for me, they found a bottle of punch in a corner, which they drank; and *Corrichatachin* went for another, which they also drank. They made many apologies for disturbing me. I told them, that, having been kept awake by their mirth, I had once thoughts of getting up and joining them again. Honest *Corrichatachin* said, "To have had you done so, I would have given a cow."

Tuesday, 28th September.—The weather was worse than yesterday. I felt as if imprisoned. Dr. Johnson said, it was irksome to be detained thus: yet he seemed to have less uneasiness, or more patience, than I had. What made our situation worse here was, that we had no rooms that we could command; for the good people had no notion that a man could have any occasion but for a mere sleeping-place; so, during the day, the bed-chambers were common to all the house. Servants eat in Dr. Johnson's, and mine was a kind of general rendezvous of all under the roof, children and dogs not excepted. As the gentlemen occupied the parlour, the ladies had no place to sit in, during the day, but Dr. Johnson's room. I had always some quiet time for writing in it, before he was up; and, by degrees, I accustomed the ladies to let me sit in it after breakfast, at my Journal, without minding me.

¹ [Of you!—Ed.]

Dr. Johnson was this morning for going to see as many islands as we could, not recollecting the uncertainty of the season, which might detain us in one place for many weeks. He said to me, "I have more the spirit of adventure than you." For my part, I was anxious to get to Mull, from whence we might almost any day reach the main land.

Dr. Johnson mentioned, that the few ancient Irish gentlemen yet remaining have the highest pride of family; that Mr. Sandford, a friend of his, whose mother was Irish, told him, that O'Hara (who was true Irish, both by father and mother) and he, and Mr. Ponsonby, son to the Earl of Besborough, the greatest man of the three, but of an English family, went to see one of those ancient Irish, and that he distinguished them thus: "O'Hara, you are welcome! Mr. Sandford, your mother's son is welcome! Mr. Ponsonby, you may sit down!"

He talked both of threshing and thatching. He said it was very difficult to determine how to agree with a thresher. "If you pay him by the day's wages, he will thresh no more than he pleases: though, to be sure, the negligence of a thresher is more easily detected than that of most labourers, because he must always make a sound while he works. If you pay him by the piece, by the quantity of grain which he produces, he will thresh only while the grain comes freely, and, though he leaves a good deal in the ear, it is not worth while to thresh the straw, over again; nor can you fix him to do it sufficiently, because it is so difficult to prove how much less a man threshes than he ought to do. Here then is a dilemma: but, for my part, I would engage him by the day; I would rather trust his idleness than his fraud." He said, a roof thatched with Lincolnshire reeds would last seventy years, as he was informed when in that county; and that he told this in London to a great thatcher, who said, he believed it might be true. Such are the pains that Dr. Johnson takes to get the best information on every subject.

He proceeded: "It is difficult for a farmer in England to find day-labourers, because the lowest manufacturers can always get more than a day-labourer. It is of no consequence how high the wages of manufacturers are; but it would be of very bad consequence to raise the wages of those who procure the immediate necessities of life, for that would raise the price of provisions. Here then is a problem for politicians. It is not reasonable that the most useful body of men should be the worst paid; yet it does not appear how it can be ordered otherwise. It were to be wished, that a mode for its being otherwise were found out. In the mean time, it is better to give tempora-

ry assistance by charitable contributions to poor labourers, at times when provisions are high, than to raise their wages, because, if wages are once raised, they will never get down again."

Happily the weather cleared up between one and two o'clock, and we got ready to depart; but our kind host and hostess would not let us go without taking a *snatch*, as they called it; which was in truth a very good dinner. While the punch went round, Dr. Johnson kept a close whispering conference with Mrs. M'Kinnon, which, however, was loud enough to let us hear that the subject of it was the particulars of Prince Charles's escape¹. The company were entertained and pleased to observe it. Upon that subject, there was something congenial between the soul of Dr. Samuel Johnson, and that of an Isle of Sky farmer's wife. It is curious to see people, how far soever removed from each other in the general system of their lives, come close together on a particular point which is common to each. We were merry with *Corrichatachin*, on Dr. Johnson's whispering with his wife. She, perceiving this, humorously cried, "I am in love with him. What is it to live and not to love?" Upon her saying something, which I did not hear, or cannot recollect, he seized her hand eagerly, and kissed it.

As we were going, the Scottish phrase of "*honest man!*" which is an expression of kindness and regard, was again and again applied by the company to Dr. Johnson. I was also treated with much civility; and I must take some merit from my assiduous attention to him, and from my contriving that he shall be easy wherever he goes, that he shall not be asked twice to eat or drink any thing (which always disgusts him), that he shall be provided with water at his meals, and many such little things, which, if not attended to, would fret him. I also may be allowed to claim some merit in leading the conversation: I do not mean leading, as in an orchestra, by playing the first fiddle; but leading as one does in examining a witness—starting topics, and making him pursue them. He appears to me like a great mill, into which a subject is thrown to be ground. It requires, indeed, fertile minds to furnish materials for this mill. I regret whenever I see it unemployed; but sometimes I feel myself quite barren, and having nothing to

¹ [It must be remembered that Mrs. M'Kinnon was old *Kingsburgh's* daughter, and was in the house when the Pretender was there in woman's clothes. *Ascanius* relates an anecdote of her being alarmed (she was then very young) with the masculine manners and bold strides of the "*muckle woman*" in the hall. Mrs. M'Kinnon was the maternal grandmother of my friend Major-General Macdonald, now Deputy-Adjutant-General.—E.P.]

throw in. I know not if this mill be a good figure; though Pope makes his mind a mill for turning verses.

We set out about four. Young *Corrichatachin* went with us. We had a fine evening, and arrived in good time at Ostig, the residence of Mr. Martin M'Pherson, minister of Slate. It is a pretty good house, built by his father, upon a farm near the church. We were received here with much kindness by Mr. and Mrs. M'Pherson, and his sister, Miss M'Pherson, who pleased Dr. Johnson much by singing Erse songs, and playing on the guitar. He afterwards sent her a present of his "*Rasselas*." In his bed-chamber was a press stored with books, Greek, Latin, French, and English, most of which had belonged to the father of our host, the learned Dr. M'Pherson; who, though his "*Dissertations*" have been mentioned in a former page as unsatisfactory, was a man of distinguished talents. Dr. Johnson looked at a Latin paraphrase of the song of Moses, written by him, and published in the "*Scots Magazine*" for 1747, and said, "It does him honour; he has a great deal of Latin, and good Latin." Dr. M'Pherson published also in the same Magazine, June, 1739, an original Latin ode, which he wrote from the Isle of Barra, where he was minister for some years. It is very poetical, and exhibits a striking proof how much all things depend upon comparison: for Barra, it seems, appeared to him so much worse than Sky, his *natale solum*, that he languished for its "blessed mountains," and thought himself buried alive amongst barbarians where he was. My readers will probably not be displeased to have a specimen of this ode:

"Hei mihi! quantos patior dolores,
Dum procul specto juga ter beata,
Dum feræ Barrae steriles arenas
Solus oberro.

"Ingemo, indignor, crucior, quod inter
Barbaros Thulen lateam colentes;
Torpeo languens, morior sepultus
Carcere cæco."

After wishing for wings to fly over to his dear country, which was in his view, from what he calls Thule, as being the most western isle of Scotland, except St. Kilda; after describing the pleasures of society, and the miseries of solitude, he at last, with becoming propriety, has recourse to the only sure relief of thinking men,—*Sursum corda*,—the hope of a better world, and disposes his mind to resignation:

"Interim, fiat tua, rex, voluntas
Erigor sursum quoties subit spes
Certa migrandi Solyman supernam
Numinis aulam."

He concludes in a noble strain of orthodox piety:

“Vita tum demum vocitanda vita est.
Tum licet gratos socios habere,
Seraphim et sanctos TRIADEM verendam
Concelebrantes.”

[From Ostig he addressed the following letter to Macleod:

“DR. JOHNSON TO MACLEOD¹.

“Ostig, 23th Sept. 1773.

“DEAR SIR,—We are now on the margin of the sea, waiting for a boat and a wind. Boswell grows impatient; but the kind treatment which I find wherever I go, makes me leave, with some heaviness of heart, an island which I am not very likely to see again. Having now gone as far as horses can carry us, we thankfully return them. My steed will, I hope, be received with kindness;—he has borne me, heavy as I am, over ground both rough and steep, with great fidelity; and for the use of him, as for your other favours, I hope you will believe me thankful, and willing, at whatever distance we may be placed, to show my sense of your kindness, by any offices of friendship that may fall within my power.

“Lady Macleod and the young ladies have, by their hospitality and politeness, made an impression on my mind, which will not easily be effaced. Be pleased to tell them, that I remember them with great tenderness, and great respect.—I am, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“P. S.—We passed two days at Talisker very happily, both by the pleasantness of the place and elegance of our reception.”]

Wednesday, 29th September.—After a very good sleep, I rose more refreshed than I had been for some nights. We were now at but a little distance from the shore, and saw the sea from our windows, which made our voyage seem nearer. Mr. M’Pherson’s manners and address pleased us much. He appeared to be a man of such intelligence and taste as to be sensible of the extraordinary powers of his illustrious guest. He said to me, “Dr. Johnson is an honour to mankind, and, if the expression may be used, is an honour to religion.”

Col, who had gone yesterday to pay a visit at Camuscross, joined us this morning at breakfast. Some other gentlemen also came to enjoy the entertainment of Dr. Johnson’s conversation. The day was windy and rainy, so that we had just seized a happy interval for our journey last night. We had good entertainment here, better accommodation than at Corrichatachin, and time enough to ourselves. The hours slipped along imperceptibly. We talked of Shenstone. Dr. Johnson said, he was a

good layer-out of land, but would not allow him to approach excellence as a poet. He said, he believed he had tried to read all his “Love Pastorals,” but did not get through them. I repeated the stanza,

“She gazed as I slowly withdrew;
My path I could hardly discern;
So sweetly she bade me adieu,
I thought that she bade me return.”

He said, “That seems to be pretty.” I observed that Shenstone, from his short maxims in prose, appeared to have some power of thinking; but Dr. Johnson would not allow him that merit. He agreed, however, with Shenstone, that it was wrong in the brother of one of his correspondents to burn his letters; “for,” said he, “Shenstone was a man whose correspondence was an honour.” He was this afternoon full of critical severity, and dealt about his censures on all sides. He said, Hammond’s “Love Elegies” were poor things. He spoke contemptuously of our lively and elegant, though too licentious lyric bard, Hanbury Williams, and said, “he had no fame, but from boys who drank with him.”

While he was in this mood, I was unfortunate enough, simply perhaps, but I could not help thinking, undeservedly, to come within “the whiff and wind of his fell sword.” I asked him, if he had ever been accustomed to wear a night-cap. He said “No.” I asked, if it was best not to wear one. JOHNSON. “Sir, I had this custom by chance, and perhaps no man shall ever know whether it is best to sleep with or without a night-cap.” Soon afterwards he was laughing at some deficiency in the Highlands, and said, “One might as well go without shoes and stockings.” Thinking to have a little hit at his own deficiency, I ventured to add, “or without a night-cap, sir.” But I had better have been silent, for he retorted directly, “I do not see the connexion there (laughing). Nobody before was ever foolish enough to ask whether it was best to wear a night-cap or not. This comes of being a little wrong-headed.” He carried the company along with him: and yet the truth is, that if he had always worn a night-cap, as is the common practice, and found the Highlanders did not wear one, he would have wondered at their barbarity; so that my hit was fair enough.

Thursday, 30th September.—There was as great a storm of wind and rain as I have almost ever seen, which necessarily confined us to the house; but we were fully compensated by Dr. Johnson’s conversation. He said, he did not grudge Burke’s being the first man in the house of commons, for he was the first man every where; but he grumbled that a fellow who makes no figure in company, and has a mind as narrow as the neck of a vinegar cruet, should make a

¹ [For this letter the editor is indebted to the present Macleod.—Ed.]

figure in the house of commons, merely by having the knowledge of a few forms, and being furnished with a little occasional information! He told us, the first time he saw Dr. Young was at the house of Mr. Richardson, the authour of "Clarissa." He was sent for, that the Doctor might read to him his "Conjectures on Original Composition," which he did, and Dr. Johnson made his remarks; and he was surprised to find Young receive as novelties, what he thought very common maxims. He said, he believed Young was not a great scholar, nor had studied regularly the art of writing; that there were very fine things in his "Night Thoughts," though you could not find twenty lines together without some extravagance. He repeated two passages from his "Love of Fame,"—the characters of Brunetta and Stella, which he praised highly. He said Young pressed him much to come to Wellwyn. He always intended it, but never went. He was sorry when Young died. The cause of quarrel between Young and his son, he told us, was, that his son insisted Young should turn away a clergyman's widow, who lived with him, and who, having acquired great influence over the father, was saucy to the son. Dr. Johnson said, she could not conceal her resentment at him, for saying to Young, that "an old man should not resign himself to the management of any body." I asked him if there was any improper connexion between them. "No, sir, no more than between two statues. He was past fourscore, and she a very coarse woman. She read to him, and, I suppose, made his coffee, and frothed his chocolate, and did such things as an old man wishes to have done for him."

Dr. Doddridge² being mentioned, he observed that "he was authour of one of the finest epigrams in the English language. It is in Orton's Life of him. The subject is his family motto, *Dum vivimus, vivamus*, which, in its primary signification, is, to be sure, not very suitable to a Christian divine; but he paraphrased it thus:

‘Live while you live, the *epicure* would say,
And seize the pleasures of the present day.
Live while you live, the sacred *preacher* cries,
And give to God each moment as it flies.
Lord, in my views let both united be;
I live in *pleasure*, when I live to *thee*.’”

¹ He did not mention the name of any particular person; but those who are conversant with the political world will probably recollect more persons than one to whom this observation may be applied.—BOSWELL.

² [Dr. Philip Doddridge, an eminent dissenting divine, born in 1702, died at Lisbon (whither he had gone for the recovery of his health) in 1751. Some of his letters have been recently published, with no great advantage to his fame.—ED.]

I asked if it was not strange that government should permit so many infidel writings to pass without censure. JOHNSON. "Sir, it is mighty foolish. It is for want of knowing their own power. The present family on the throne came to the crown against the will of nine-tenths of the people. Whether those nine-tenths were right or wrong, it is not our business now to inquire. But such being the situation of the royal family, they were glad to encourage all who would be their friends. Now you know every bad man is a whig; every man who has loose notions. The church was all against this family. They were, as I say, glad to encourage any friends; and, therefore, since their accession, there is no instance of any man being kept back on account of his bad principles; and hence this inundation of impiety." I observed that Mr. Hume, some of whose writings were very unfavourable to religion, was, however, a tory. JOHNSON. "Sir, Hume is a tory by chance, as being a Scotchman; but not upon a principle of duty, for he has no principle. If he is any thing, he is a Hobbist."

There was something not quite serene in his humour to-night, after supper; for he spoke of hastening away to London, without stopping much at Edinburgh. I reminded him, that he had general Oughton, and many others, to see. JOHNSON. "Nay, I shall neither go in jest, nor stay in jest. I shall do what is fit." BOSWELL. "Ay, sir, but all I desire is, that you will let me tell you when it is fit." JOHNSON. "Sir, I shall not consult you." BOSWELL. "If you are to run away from us, as soon as you get loose, we will keep you confined in an island." He was, however, on the whole, very good company. Mr. Donald Macleod expressed very well the gradual impression made by Dr. Johnson on those who are so fortunate as to obtain his acquaintance. "When you see him first, you are struck with awful reverence; then you admire him; and then you love him cordially."

I read this evening some part of Voltaire's "History of the War in 1741," and of Lord Kames against "Hereditary Indefeasible Right." This is a very slight circumstance, with which I should not trouble my reader, but for the sake of observing, that every man should keep minutes of whatever he reads. Every circumstance of his studies should be recorded; what books he has consulted; how much of them he has read; at what times; how often the same authours; and what opinions he formed of them, at different periods of his life. Such an account would much illustrate the history of his mind.

Friday, 1st October.—I showed to Dr. Johnson verses in a magazine, on his Dic-

tionary, composed of uncommon words taken from it;

“Little of *Anthropopathy* has he,” &c.

He read a few of them, and said, “I am not answerable for all the words in my Dictionary.” I told him, that Garrick kept a book of all who had either praised or abused him. On the subject of his own reputation, he said, “Now that I see it has been so current a topick, I wish I had done so too; but it could not well be done now, as so many things are scattered in newspapers.” He said he was angry at a boy of Oxford¹, who wrote in his defence against Kenrick; because it was doing him hurt to answer Kenrick. He was told afterwards, the boy was to come to him to ask a favour. He first thought to treat him rudely, on account of his meddling in that business; but then he considered he had meant to do him all the service in his power, and he took another resolution: he told him he would do what he could for him, and did so; and the boy was satisfied. He said, he did not know how his pamphlet was done, as he had read very little of it. The boy made a good figure at Oxford, but died. He remarked, that attacks on authours did them much service. “A man who tells me my play is very bad, is less my enemy than he who lets it die in silence. A man, whose business it is to be talked of, is much helped by being attacked.” Garrick, I observed, had been often so helped. JOHNSON. “Yes, sir; though Garrick had more opportunities than almost any man, to keep the publick in mind of him, by exhibiting himself to such numbers, he would not have had so much reputation, had he not been so much attacked. Every attack produces a defence; and so attention is engaged. There is no sport in mere praise, when people are all of a mind.” BOSWELL. “Then Hume is not the worse for Beattie’s attack?” JOHNSON. “He is, because Beattie has confuted him. I do not say, but that there may be some attacks which will hurt an authour. Though Hume suffered from Beattie, he was the better for other attacks.” (He certainly could not include in that number those of Dr. Adams and Mr. Tytler².) BOSWELL. “Goldsmith is the better for

attacks.” JOHNSON. “Yes, sir; but he does not think so yet. When Goldsmith and I published, each of us something, at the same time, we were given to understand that we might review each other. Goldsmith was for accepting the offer. I said, no; set reviewers at defiance. It was said to old Bentley, upon the attacks against him, ‘Why, they ’ll write you down.’ ‘No, sir,’ he replied; ‘depend upon it, no man was ever written down but by himself.’” He observed to me afterwards, that the advantages authours derived from attacks were chiefly in subjects of taste, where you cannot confute, as so much may be said on either side. He told me he did not know who was the authour of the “Adventures of a Guinea³,” but that the bookseller had sent the first volume to him in manuscript, to have his opinion if it should be printed; and he thought it should.

The weather being now somewhat better, Mr. James M’Donald, factor to Sir Alexander M’Donald, in Slate, insisted that all the company at Ostig should go to the house at Arndale, which Sir Alexander had left, having gone with his lady to Edinburgh, and be his guests, till we had an opportunity of sailing to Mull. We accordingly got there to dinner; and passed our day very cheerfully, being no less than fourteen in number.

Saturday, 2d October.—Dr. Johnson said, that “a chief and his lady should make their house like a court. They should have a certain number of the gentlemen’s daughters to receive their education in the family, to learn pastry and such things from the housekeeper, and manners from my lady. That was the way in the great families in Wales; at Lady Salisbury’s, Mrs. Thrale’s grandmother, and at Lady Philips’s. I distinguish the families by the ladies, as I speak of what was properly their province. There were always six young ladies at Sir John Philips’s; when one was married, her place was filled up. There was a large school-room, where they learnt needlework and other things.” I observed, that, at some courts in Germany, there were academies for the pages, who are the sons of gentlemen, and receive their education without any expense to their parents. Dr. Johnson said, that manners were best

¹ [Mr. Barclay.—See *ante*, p. 223. Johnson’s desire to express his contempt of Kenrick is shown by his perseverance in representing this young gentleman as a *boy*; as if to say, it was too much honour for Kenrick that even a *boy* should answer him.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Boswell adds this parenthesis, probably, because the gentlemen alluded to were friends of his; but if Dr. Johnson “did *not* mean to include *them*,” *whom* did he mean? for *they* were certainly (after Beattie) Hume’s most prominent antagonists.—Ed.]

³ [It is strange that Johnson should not have known that the “Adventures of a Guinea” was written by a namesake of his own, Charles Johnson. Being disqualified for the bar, which was his profession, by a supervening deafness, he went to India and made some fortune, which he enjoyed at home.—WALTER SCOTT. He must not be confounded with another Charles Johnson, also bred to the bar, but who became a very voluminous dramatic writer, and died about 1744.—Ed.]

learnt at those courts. "You are admitted with great facility to the prince's company, and yet must treat him with much respect. At a great court, you are at such a distance that you get no good." I said, "Very true: a man sees the court of Versailles, as if he saw it on a theatre." He said, "The best book that ever was written upon good breeding, 'Il Corteggiano,' by Castiglione, grew up at the little court of Urbino, and you should read it." I am glad always to have his opinion of books. At Mr. Macpherson's, he commended "Whitby's Commentary," and said, he had heard him called rather lax; but he did not perceive it. He had looked at a novel, called "The Man of the World," at Rasay, but thought there was nothing in it¹. He said to-day, while reading my journal, "This will be a great treasure to us some years hence."

Talking of a very penurious gentleman² of our acquaintance, he observed, that he exceeded L'Avare in the play. I concurred with him, and remarked that he would do well, if introduced in one of Foote's farces; that the best way to get it done would be to bring Foote to be entertained at his house for a week, and then it would be *facit indignatio*. JOHNSON. "Sir, I wish he had him. I, who have eaten his bread, will not give him to him; but I should be glad he came honestly by him."

He said, he was angry at Thrale, for sitting at General Oglethorpe's without speaking. He censured a man for degrading himself to a nonentity. I observed, that Goldsmith was on the other extreme; for he spoke at all ventures. JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; Goldsmith, rather than not speak, will talk of what he knows himself to be ignorant, which can only end in exposing him." "I wonder," said I, "if he feels that he exposes himself. If he was with two tailors" — "Or with two founders," said Dr. Johnson, interrupting me, "he would fall a talking on the method of making cannon, though both of them would soon see that he did not know what metal a cannon is made of." We were very social and merry in his room this forenoon. In the evening the company danced as usual. We performed, with much activity, a dance which, I suppose, the emigration from Sky has occasioned. They call it *America*. Each of the couples, after the common *involutions* and *evolutions*, successively whirls round in a circle, till all are in motion; and the dance seems intended to show how emigration catches, till a whole neighbourhood is set afloat. Mrs. M'Kinnon told me, that last

year, when a ship sailed from Portree for America, the people on shore were almost distracted when they saw their relations go off; they lay down on the ground, tumbled, and tore the grass with their teeth. This year there was not a tear shed. The people on shore seemed to think that they would soon follow. This indifference is a mortal sign for the country.

We danced to-night to the musick of the bagpipe, which made us beat the ground with prodigious force. I thought it better to endeavour to conciliate the kindness of the people of Sky, by joining heartily in their amusements, than to play the abstract scholar. I looked on this tour to the Hebrides as a copartnership between Dr. Johnson and me. Each was to do all he could to promote its success; and I have some reason to flatter myself, that my gayer exertions were of service to us. Dr. Johnson's immense fund of knowledge and wit was a wonderful source of admiration and delight to them; but they had it only at times; and they required to have the intervals agreeably filled up, and even little elucidations of his learned text. I was also fortunate enough frequently to draw him forth to talk, when he would otherwise have been silent. The fountain was at times locked up, till I opened the spring. It was curious to hear the Hebridians, when any dispute happened while he was out of the room, saying "Stay till Dr. Johnson comes; say that to *him!*"

Yesterday, Dr. Johnson said, "I cannot but laugh, to think of myself roving among the Hebrides at sixty. I wonder where I shall rove at fourscore!" This evening he disputed the truth of what is said, as to the people of St. Kilda catching cold whenever strangers come³. "How can there," said he, "be a physical effect without a physical cause?" He added, laughing, "the arrival of a ship full of strangers would kill them; for, if one stranger gives them one cold, two strangers must give them two colds; and so in proportion." I wondered to hear him ridicule this, as he had praised M'Aulay for putting it in his book; saying, that it was manly in him to tell a fact, however strange, if he himself believed it. He said, the evidence was not adequate to the improbability of the thing; that if a physician, rather disposed to be incredulous, should go to St. Kilda, and report the fact, then he would begin to look about him. They said, it was annually proved by Macleod's steward, on whose arrival all the inhabitants caught cold. He jocularly remarked, "the steward always comes to demand something from them; and so they fall a coughing. I suppose the people in Sky all

¹ [Though not, perhaps, so popular as the "Man of Feeling," of the same amiable authour, the "Man of the World" is a very pathetic tale.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [No doubt Sir Alexander Macdonald.—ED.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 246, an, at least, ingenious solution of this enigma.—ED.]

take a cold when —— (naming a certain person¹) comes." They said, he came only in summer. JOHNSON. "That is out of tenderness to you. Bad weather and he, at the same time, would be too much."

Sunday, 3d October.—Joseph reported that the wind was still against us. Dr. Johnson said, "A wind, or not a wind? that is the question;" for he can amuse himself at times with a little play of words, or rather sentences. I remember when he turned his cup at Aberbrothick, where we drank tea, he muttered, *Claudite jam rivos, pueri*. I must again and again apologize to fastidious readers, for recording such minute particulars. They prove the scrupulous fidelity of my Journal. Dr. Johnson said it was a very exact picture of a portion of his life.

While we were chatting in the indolent style of men who were to stay here all this day at least, we were suddenly roused at being told that the wind was fair, that a little fleet of herring-busses was passing by for Mull, and that Mr. Simpson's vessel was about to sail. Hugh McDonald, the skipper, came to us, and was impatient that we should get ready, which we soon did. Dr. Johnson, with composure and solemnity, repeated the observation of Epictetus, that, "as man has the voyage of death before him,—whatever may be his employment, he should be ready at the master's call; and an old man should never be far from the shore, lest he should not be able to get himself ready." He rode, and I and the other gentleman walked, about an English mile to the shore, where the vessel lay. Dr. Johnson said he should never forget Sky, and returned thanks for all civilities. We were carried to the vessel in a small boat which she had, and we set sail very briskly about one o'clock. I was much pleased with the motion for many hours. Dr. Johnson grew sick, and retired under cover, as it rained a good deal. I kept above, that I might have fresh air, and finding myself not affected by the motion of the vessel, I exulted in being a stout seaman, while Dr. Johnson was quite in a state of annihilation. But I was soon humbled; for after imagining that I could go with ease to America or the East Indies, I became very sick, but kept above board, though it rained hard.

As we had been detained so long in Sky by bad weather, we gave up the scheme that Col had planned for us of visiting several islands, and contented ourselves with the prospect of seeing Mull, and Icolmkill and Inch Kenneth, which lie near to it.

Mr. Simpson was sanguine in his hopes for a while, the wind being fair for us. He said he would land us at Icolmkill that

night. But when the wind failed, it was resolved we should make for the Sound of Mull, and land in the harbour of Tobermorie. We kept near the five herring vessels for some time; but afterwards four of them got before us, and one little wherry fell behind us. When we got in full view of the point of Ardnamurchan, the wind changed, and was directly against our getting into the Sound. We were then obliged to tack, and get forward in that tedious manner. As we advanced, the storm grew greater, and the sea very rough. Col then began to talk of making for Egg, or Canna, or his own island. Our skipper said, he would get us into the Sound. Having struggled for this a good while in vain, he said, he would push forward till we were near the land of Mull, where we might cast anchor, and lie till the morning; for although, before this, there had been a good moon, and I had pretty distinctly seen not only the land of Mull, but up the sound, and the country of Morven as at one end of it, the night was now grown very dark. Our crew consisted of one McDonald, our skipper, and two sailors, one of whom had but one eye; Mr. Simpson himself, Col, and Hugh McDonald his servant, all helped. Simpson said, he would willingly go for Col, if young Col or his servant would undertake to pilot us to a harbour; but, as the island is low land, it was dangerous to run upon it in the dark. Col and his servant appeared a little dubious. The scheme of running for Canna seemed then to be embraced; but Canna was ten leagues off, all out of our way; and they were afraid to attempt the harbour of Egg. All these different plans were successively in agitation. The old skipper still tried to make for the land of Mull; but then it was considered that there was no place there where we could anchor in safety. Much time was lost in striving against the storm. At last it became so rough, and threatened to be so much worse, that Col and his servant took more courage, and said they would undertake to hit one of the harbours in Col. "Then let us run for it in God's name," said the skipper; and instantly we turned towards it. The little wherry which had fallen behind us had hard work. The master [had] begged that, if we made for Col, we should put out a light to him. Accordingly one of the sailors waved a glowing peat for some time. The various difficulties that were started gave me a good deal of apprehension, from which I was relieved, when I found we were to run for a harbour before the wind. But my relief was of short duration; for I soon heard that our sails were very bad, and were in danger of being torn in peices, in which case we should be driven upon the rocky shore of Col. It was very dark, and there

¹ [Sir Alexander Macdonald.—Ed.]

was a heavy and incessant rain. The sparks of the burning peat flew so much about, that I dreaded the vessel might take fire. Then, as *Col* was a sportsman, and had powder on board, I figured that we might be blown up. Simpson and he appeared a little frightened, which made me more so; and the perpetual talking, or rather shouting, which was carried on in Erse, alarmed me still more. A man is always suspicious of what is saying in an unknown tongue; and, if fear be his passion at the time, he grows more afraid. Our vessel often lay so much on one side, that I trembled lest she should overset, and indeed they told me afterwards, that they had run her sometimes to within an inch of the water, so anxious were they to make what haste they could before the night should be worse. I now saw what I never saw before, a prodigious sea, with immense billows coming upon a vessel, so as that it seemed hardly possible to escape. There was something grandly horrible in the sight. I am glad I have seen it once. Amidst all these terrifying circumstances, I endeavoured to compose my mind. It was not easy to do it; for all the stories that I had heard of the dangerous sailing among the Hebrides, which is proverbial, came full upon my recollection. When I thought of those who were dearest to me, and would suffer severely, should I be lost, I upbraided myself, as not having a sufficient cause for putting myself in such danger. Piety afforded me comfort; yet I was disturbed by the objections that have been made against a particular providence, and by the arguments of those who maintain that it is in vain to hope that the petitions of an individual, or even of congregations, can have any influence with the Deity; objections which have been often made, and which Dr. Hawkesworth¹ has lately revived, in

¹ ["The general disapprobation with which the doctrines unhappily advanced by Hawkesworth in this preface were received deprived him," says the Biographical Dictionary, "of peace of mind and of life itself;" and Mrs. Piozzi says, (*Anecdotes*, p. 143) "Hawkesworth, the pious, the virtuous, and the wise, fell a lamented sacrifice to newspaper abuse;" and Mr. Malone, in a MS. note on that passage, in his copy of Piozzi's *Anecdotes*, (which Mr. Markland has been so good as to communicate to the Editor), states, that "after Hawkesworth had published Cooke's first voyage, he was attacked severely in the newspapers, by a writer who signed himself *A Christian*, for some tenets in that work, which so preyed on his spirits that he put an end to his life by a large dose of opium." There is reason, however, to hope that these accounts—both of the public indignation, and of Dr. Hawkesworth's consequent distress of mind—were exaggerated; for he was, between the publication of his preface

his Preface to the *Voyages to the South Seas*; but Dr. Ogden's excellent doctrine on the efficacy of intercession prevailed.

It was half an hour after eleven before we set ourselves in the course for *Col*. As I saw them all busy doing something, I asked *Col*, with much earnestness, what I could do. He, with a happy readiness, put into my hand a rope, which was fixed to the top of one of the masts, and told me to hold it till he bade me pull. If I had considered the matter, I might have seen that this could not be of the least service; but his object was to keep me out of the way of those who were busy working the vessel, and at the same time to divert my fear, by employing me, and making me think that I was of use. Thus did I stand firm to my post, while the wind and rain beat upon me, always expecting a call to pull my rope.

The man with one eye steered; old McDonald, and *Col* and his servant, lay upon the fore-castle, looking sharp out for the harbour. It was necessary to carry much *cloth*, as they termed it, that is to say, much sail, in order to keep the vessel off the shore of *Col*. This made violent plunging in a rough sea. At last they spied the harbour of Lochiern, and *Col* cried, "Thank God, we are safe!" We ran up till we were opposite to it, and soon afterwards we got into it, and cast anchor.

Dr. Johnson had all this time been quiet and unconcerned. He had lain down on one of the beds, and having got free from sickness, was satisfied. The truth is, he knew nothing of the danger we were in²; but, fearless and unconcerned, might have said, in the words which he has chosen for the motto to his "*Rambler*."

in spring 1773, and his death in the November of the same year, elected a *Director of the East India Company*,—a distinction which, if the accounts beforementioned were true, it is not likely that he should have either solicited or obtained. One is anxious to believe that a life like Hawkesworth's, spent in advocating the interests of morality and religion, was not so miserably clouded at its very close.—ED.]

² [He at least made light of it, in his letters to Mrs. Thrale. "After having been detained by storms many days at Skie, we left it, as we thought, with a fair wind; but a violent gust, which Boswell had a great mind to call a tempest, forced us into *Col*, an obscure island; on which—'nulla campis arbor æstivâ, recreatur aurâ.'"—*Letters*, vol. i. p. 167.—ED.] Their risque, in a sea full of islands, was very considerable. Indeed the whole expedition was highly perilous, considering the season of the year, the precarious chance of getting seaworthy boats, and the ignorance of the Hebrideans, who, notwithstanding the opportunities, I may say the *necessities* of their situation, are very careless and unskilful sailors.—WALTER SCOTT.]

Quo me cunque rapit tempestas, deferor hospes¹.

Once, during the doubtful consultations, he asked whither we were going; and upon being told that it was not certain whether to Mul or Col, he cried, "Col for my money!" I now went down with Col and Mr. Simpson, to visit him. He was lying in philosophick tranquillity, with a greyhound of Col's at his back, keeping him warm. Col is quite the *Juvenis qui gaudet canibus*. He had, when we left Talisker, two greyhounds, two terriers, a pointer, and a large Newfoundland water-dog. He lost one of his terriers by the road, but had still five dogs with him. I was very ill, and very desirous to get to shore. When I was told that we could not land that night, as the storm had now increased, I looked so miserably, as Col afterwards informed me, that what Shakspeare has made the Frenchman say of the English soldiers, when scantily dieted, "Piteous they will look, like drowned mice!" might, I believe, have been well applied to me. There was in the harbour, before us, a Campbell-town vessel, the *Betty*, Kenneth Morison, master, taking in kelp, and bound for Ireland. We sent our boat to beg beds for two gentlemen, and that the master would send his boat, which was larger than ours. He accordingly did so, and Col and I were accommodated in his vessel till the morning.

Monday, 4th October.—About eight o'clock we went in the boat to Mr. Simpson's vessel, and took in Dr. Johnson. He was quite well, though he had tasted nothing but a dish of tea since Saturday night. On our expressing some surprise at this, he said, that "when he lodged in the Temple, and had no regular system of life, he had fasted for two days at a time, during which he had gone about visiting, though not at the hours of dinner or supper; that he had drunk tea, but eaten no bread: that this was no intentional fasting², but happened just in the course of a literary life."

There was a little miserable publick-house close upon the shore, to which we should have gone, had we landed last night: but this morning Col resolved to take us directly to the house of Captain Lauchlan M'Lean, a descendant of his family, who had acquired a fortune in the East Indies, and taken a farm in Col. We had about an English mile to go to it. Col and Joseph, and some others, ran to some little horses, called here *shelties*, that were running wild on a heath, and caught one of them. We had a saddle with us, which was clapped upon it, and a straw halter was put on its head. Dr.

Johnson was then mounted, and Joseph very slowly and gravely led the horse. I said to Dr. Johnson, "I wish, sir, *the Club* saw you in this attitude³."

It was a very heavy rain, and I was wet to the skin. Captain M'Lean had but a poor temporary house, or rather hut; however, it was a very good haven to us. There was a blazing peat fire, and Mrs. M'Lean, daughter of the minister of the parish, got us tea. I felt still the motion of the sea. Dr. Johnson said, it was not in imagination, but a continuation of motion of the fluids, like that of the sea itself after the storm is over.

There were some books on the board which served as a chimney-piece. Dr. Johnson took up "Burnet's History of his own Times." He said, "The first part of it is one of the most entertaining books in the English language; it is quite dramatick: while he went about every where, saw every where, and heard every where. By the first part, I mean so far as it appears that Burnet himself was actually engaged in what he has told; and this may be easily distinguished." Captain M'Lean censured Burnet, for his high praise of Lauderdale in a dedication, when he shows him in his history to have been so bad a man. JOHNSON. "I do not think myself that a man should say in a dedication⁴ what he could not say in a history. However, allowance should be made; for there is a great difference. The known style of a dedication is flattery: it professes to flatter. There is the same difference between what a man says in a dedication, and what he says in a history, as between a lawyer's pleading a cause, and reporting it."

The day passed away pleasantly enough. The wind became fair for Mull in the evening, and Mr. Simpson resolved to sail next morning; but having been thrown into the island of Col, we were unwilling to leave it unexamined, especially as we considered that the Campbell-town vessel would sail for Mull in a day or two, and therefore we determined to stay.

³ This curious exhibition may perhaps remind some of my readers of the ludicrous lines made, during Sir Robert Walpole's administration, on Mr. George (afterwards Lord) Lyttelton, though the figures of the two personages must be allowed to be very different.

"But who is this astride the pony,
So long, so lean, so lank, so bony?
Dat be de great orator, Littletony."—BOSWELL.

[These lines are part of a song printed under a political caricature print, levelled against Sir Robert Walpole, called *The Motion*, which represents a chariot drawn by six spirited horses, in and about which are the chiefs of the opposition of the day, Lords Chesterfield and Carteret, Duke of Argyll, Mr. Sandys, &c.—*Nich. Anec.* vol. iv. p. 465.—ED.]

⁴ [See *ante*, p. 235, n.—ED.]

¹ For as the tempest drives, I shape my way.—FRANCIS.

² [This was probably the same kind of *unintentional fasting*, as that which suggested to him, at an earlier period, the affecting epithet *impransus*, (*ante*, p. 53.)—WALTER SCOTT.]

Tuesday, 5th October.—I rose, and wrote my Journal till about nine, and then went to Dr. Johnson, who sat up in bed and talked and laughed. I said, it was curious to look back ten years, to the time when we first thought of visiting the Hebrides. How distant and improbable the scheme then appeared! Yet here we were actually among them. "Sir," said he, "people may come to do any thing almost, by talking of it. I really believe I could talk myself into building a house upon island Iſa, though I should probably never come back again to see it. I could easily persuade Reynolds to do it; and there would be no great sin in persuading him to do it. Sir, he would reason thus: 'What will it cost me to be there once in two or three summers? Why, perhaps, five hundred pounds; and what is that, in comparison of having a fine retreat, to which a man can go, or to which he can send a friend?' He would never find out that he may have this within twenty miles of London. Then I would tell him, that he may marry one of the Miss Macleods, a lady of great family. Sir, it is surprising how people will go to a distance for what they may have at home. I knew a lady¹ who came up from Lincolnshire to Knightsbridge with one of her daughters, and gave five guineas a week for a lodging and a warm bath; that is, mere warm water. *That*, you know, could not be had in *Lincolnshire*! She said, it was made either too hot or too cold there."

After breakfast, Dr. Johnson and I, and Joseph, mounted horses, and Col and the captain walked with us about a short mile across the island. We paid a visit to the Rev. Mr. Hector McLean. His parish consists of the islands of Col and Tyr-yi. He was about seventy-seven years of age, a decent ecclesiastick, dressed in a full suit of black clothes, and a black wig. He appeared like a Dutch pastor, or one of the "*Assembly of Divines*" at Westminster. Dr. Johnson observed to me afterwards, "that he was a fine old man, and was as well-dressed, and had as much dignity in his appearance, as the dean of a cathedral." We were told that he had a valuable library, though but poor accommodation for it, being obliged to keep his books in large chests. It was curious to see him and Dr. Johnson together. Neither of them heard very distinctly; so each of them talked in his own way, and at the same time. Mr. McLean said, he had a confutation of Bayle, by Leibnitz. JOHNSON. "A confutation of Bayle, sir! What part of Bayle do you mean? The greatest part of his writings is not confutable: it is historical and critical." Mr. McLean said, "the

irreligious part;" and proceeded to talk of Leibnitz's controversy with Clarke, calling Leibnitz a great man. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, Leibnitz persisted in affirming that Newton called space *sensorium numinis*, notwithstanding he was corrected, and desired to observe that Newton's words were *quasi sensorium numinis*. No, sir; Leibnitz was as paltry a fellow as I know. Out of respect to Queen Caroline, who patronised him, Clarke treated him too well."

During the time that Dr. Johnson was thus going on, the old minister was standing with his back to the fire, cresting up erect, pulling down the front of his periwig, and talking what a great man Leibnitz was. To give an idea of the scene would require a page with two columns; but it ought rather to be represented by two good players. The old gentleman said, Clarke was very wicked, for going so much into the Arian system. "I will not say he was wicked," said Dr. Johnson; "he might be mistaken." McLEAN. "He was wicked, to shut his eyes against the Scriptures; and worthy men in England have since confuted him to all intents and purposes." JOHNSON. "I know not *who* has confuted him to *all intents and purposes*." Here again there was a double talking, each continuing to maintain his own argument, without hearing exactly what the other said.

I regretted that Dr. Johnson did not practise the art of accommodating himself to different sorts of people. Had he been softer with this venerable old man, we might have had more conversation; but his forcible spirit, and impetuosity of manner, may be said to spare neither sex nor age². I have seen even Mrs. Thrale stunned; but I have often maintained, that it is better he should retain his own manner. Pliability of address I conceive to be inconsistent with that majestick power of mind which he possesses, and which produces such noble effects. A lofty oak will not bend like a supple willow.

He told me afterwards, he liked firmness in an old man, and was pleased to see Mr. McLean so orthodox. "At his age, it is too late for a man to be asking himself questions as to his belief."

We rode to the northern part of the island, where we saw the ruins of a church or chapel. We then proceeded to a place called Grissipol, or the rough pool.

At Grissipol we found a good farm-house, belonging to the Laird of Col, and possess-

² [If Dr. Johnson had not been in the habit of reading the Journal, we should, instead of this remonstrance aimed indirectly at him, have here had the details of the harshness which Boswell regrets, and which must have been pretty severe to remind Boswell that his violence "spared neither age nor sex."—ED.]

¹ [Mrs. Langton, the mother of his friend.—ED.]

ed by Mr. M'Sweyn. On the beach here there is a singular variety of curious stones. I picked up one very like a small cucumber. By the by, Dr. Johnson told me, that Gay's line in the "Beggars Opera," "As men should serve a cucumber," &c. has no waggish meaning, with reference to men flinging away cucumbers as too *cooling*, which some have thought; for it has been a common saying of physicians in England, that a cucumber should be well sliced, and dressed with pepper and vinegar, and then thrown out, as good for nothing. Mr. M'Sweyn's predecessors had been in Sky from a very remote period, upon the estate belonging to Macleod; probably before Macleod had it. The name is certainly Norwegian, from *Sueno*, King of Norway. The present Mr. M'Sweyn left Sky upon the late Macleod's raising his rents. He then got this farm from *Col*.

He appeared to be near fourscore; but looked as fresh, and was as strong as a man of fifty. His son Hugh looked older; and, as Dr. Johnson observed, had more the manners of an old man than he. I had often heard of such instances, but never saw one before. Mrs. M'Sweyn was a decent old gentlewoman. She was dressed in tartan, and could speak nothing but Erse. She said, she taught Sir James M'Donald Erse, and would teach me soon. I could now sing a verse of the song *Hatyin foam'eri*², made in honour of Al-

¹ [M'Sweyn has an awkward sound, but the name is held to be of high antiquity, both in the Hebrides and the north of Ireland.—WALTER SCOTT. In the county of Donegal, in the north of Ireland, a singular hole in a cliff, communicating with a cave below, through which, in certain circumstances of the sea and wind, the spray is driven up with great force, is called *M'Swine's* (for M'Sweyn's) *gun*. The name, no doubt, was originally Scandinavian, but it was established in England before the Conquest. "In Ferleia (Fernely, Yorkshire) Goduin et *Suen* habuerunt, &c. ubi nunc habet Ilbertus de Lacy"—*Doomsday book*.—ED.]

² [*Hatyin foam*, (see *ante*, p. 377). A very popular air in the Hebrides, written to the praise and glory of Allan of Muidartach, or Allan of Muidart, a chief of the Clanranald family. The following is a translation of it by a fair friend of mine :

I.

Come, here's a pledge to young and old,
We quaff the blood-red wine;
A health to Allan Muidart bold,
The dearest love of mine.

CHORUS.

Along, along, then haste along,
For here no more I'll stay;
I'll braid and bind my tresses long,
And o'er the hills away.

II.

When waves blow gurlly off the strand,
And none the bark may steer,
The grasp of Allan's strong right hand
Compels her home to veer.
Along, along, &c.

lan, the famous captain of Clanranald, who fell at Sherrif-muir; whose servant, who lay on the field watching his master's dead body, being asked next day, who that was, answered, "He was a man yesterday."

We were entertained here with a primitive heartiness. Whisky was served round in a shell, according to the ancient Highland custom. Dr. Johnson would not partake of it; but, being desirous to do honour to the modes "of other times," drank some water out of the shell.

In the forenoon Dr. Johnson said, "it would require great resignation to live in one of these islands." BOSWELL. "I do'nt know, sir; I have felt myself at times in a state of almost mere physical existence, satisfied to eat, drink, and sleep, and walk about, and enjoy my own thoughts; and I can figure a continuation of this." JOHNSON. "Ay, sir; but if you were shut up here, your own thoughts would torment you: you would think of Edinburgh or of London, and that you could not be there."

We set out after dinner for Breacacha, the family seat of the Laird of Col, accompanied by the young laird, who had now got a horse, and by the younger Mr. M'Sweyn, whose wife had gone thither before us, to prepare every thing for our reception, the laird and his family being absent at Aberdeen. It is called Breacacha, or the Spotted Field, because in summer it is enamelled with clover and daisies, as young *Col* told me. We passed by a place where there is a very large stone, I may call it a *rock*; "a vast weight for Ajax." The tradition is, that a giant threw such another stone at his mistress, up to the top of a hill, at a small distance; and that she, in return, threw this mass down to him. It was all in sport.

"Malo me petit lasciva puella."

As we advanced, we came to a large extent of plain ground. I had not seen such a place for a long time. *Col* and I took a gallop upon it by way of race. It was very refreshing to me, after having been so long taking short steps in hilly countries. It was like stretching a man's legs after being cramped in a short bed. We also passed

III.

And when to old Kilphedar* came
Such troops of dainsels gay;
Say, came they there for Allan's fame,
Or came they there to pray?
Along, along, &c.

IV.

And when these dames of beauty rare
Were dancing in the hall,
On some were gems and jewels rare,
And cambric coifs on all.

Along, along, then haste away,
For here no more we'll stay;
I'll braid and bind my tresses long,
And o'er the hills away.

WALTER SCOTT.]

* [St. Peters, a church in Sky.—ED.]

close by a large extent of sand-hills, near two miles square. Dr. Johnson said, "he never had the image before. It was horrible, if barrenness and danger could be so." I heard him, after we were in the house of Breacacha, repeating to himself, as he walked about the room,

"And smother'd in the dusty whirlwind, dies."

Probably he had been thinking of the whole of the simile in Cato, of which that is the concluding line; the sandy desert had struck him so strongly. The sand has of late been blown over a good deal of meadow; and the people of the island say, that their fathers remembered much of the space which is now covered with sand to have been under tillage. Col's hoſte is situated on a bay called Breacacha Bay. We found here a neat new-built gentlemen's house, better than any we had been in since we were at Lord Errol's. Dr. Johnson relished it much at first, but soon remarked to me, that "there was nothing becoming a chief¹ about it: it was a mere tradesman's box." He seemed quite at home, and no longer found any difficulty in using the Highland address; for as soon as we arrived, he said, with a spirited familiarity, "Now, Col, if you could get us a dish of tea." Dr. Johnson and I had each an excellent bed-chamber. We had a dispute which of us had the best curtains. His were rather the best, being of linen; but I insisted that my bed had the best posts, which was undeniable. "Well," said he, "if you *have* the best *posts*, we will have you tied to them and whipped." I mention this slight circumstance, only to show how ready he is, even in mere trifles, to get the better of his antagonist, by placing him in a ludicrous view. I have known him sometimes use the same art, when hard pressed in serious disputation.²

Wednesday, 6th October.—After a sufficiency of sleep, we assembled at breakfast. We were just as if in barracks. Every body was master. We went and viewed the old castle of Col, which is not far from the present house, near the shore, and founded on a rock. It has never been a large feudal residence, and has nothing about it that requires a particular description. Like other old inconvenient buildings of the same age, it exemplified Gray's picturesque lines,

¹ [Col, though a gentleman of landed estate, could hardly be called a *chief*; and it was assuredly a mark of good sense to suit the character of his house to the state and times in which he lived.—Ed.]

² [Here followed Goldsmith's application of a lively saying in one of Cibber's comedies, already told, *ante*, p. 265.—Ed.]

"Huge³ windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing."

It may, however, be worth mentioning, that on the second story we saw a vault, which was, and still is, the family prison. There was a woman put into it by the laird, for theft, within these ten years; and any offender would be confined there yet; for, from the necessity of the thing, as the island is remote from any power established by law, the laird must exercise his jurisdiction to a certain degree.

We were shown, in a corner of this vault, a hole, into which Col said greater criminals used to be put. It was now filled up with rubbish of different kinds. He said, it was of a great depth. "Ay," said Dr. Johnson, smiling, "all such places that *are filled up* were of a great depth." He is very quick in showing that he does not give credit to careless or exaggerated accounts of things. After seeing the castle, we looked at a small hut near it. It is called *Teigh Franchich*, i. e. the Frenchman's House. Col could not tell us the history of it. A poor man with a wife and children now lived in it. We went into it, and Dr. Johnson gave them some charity. There was but one bed for all the family, and the hut was very smoky. When he came out, he said to me, "*Et hoc secundum sententiam philosophorum est esse beatus.*" BOSWELL. "The philosophers, when they placed happiness in a cottage, supposed cleanliness and no smoke." JOHNSON. "Sir, they did not think about either."

We walked a little in the laird's garden, in which endeavours have been used to rear some trees; but, as soon as they got above the surrounding wall they died. Dr. Johnson recommended sowing the seeds of hardy trees, instead of planting.

Col and I rode out this morning, and viewed a part of the island. In the course of our ride, we saw a turnip-field, which he had hoed with his own hands. He first introduced this kind of husbandry into the Western islands. We also looked at an appearance of lead, which seemed very promising. It has been long known; for I found letters to the late laird, from Sir John Areskine and Sir Alexander Murray, respecting it.

After dinner came Mr. McLean, of Corneck, brother to *Isle-of-Muck*, who is a cadet of the family of Col. He possesses the two ends of Col, which belong to the Duke of Argyll. Corneck had lately taken a lease of them at a very advanced rent, rather than let the Campbells get a footing in the island, one of whom had offered nearly as much as he. Dr. Johnson well observed that "landlords err much when they cal-

³ [Rich.—Ed.]

culate merely what their land *may* yield. The rent must be in a proportionate ratio of what the land may yield, and of the power of the tenant to make it yield. A tenant cannot make by his land, but according to the corn and cattle which he has. Suppose you should give him twice as much land as he has, it does him no good, unless he gets also more stock. It is clear then, that the Highland landlords, who let their substantial tenants leave them, are infatuated; for the poor small tenants cannot give them good rents, from the very nature of things. They have not the means of raising more from their farms." *Corneek*, Dr. Johnson said, was the most distinct man that he had met with in these isles; he did not shut his eyes, or put his finger in his ears, which he seemed to think was a good deal the mode with most of the people whom we have seen of late.

Thursday, 7th October.—Captain M'Lean joined us this morning at breakfast. There came on a dreadful storm of wind and rain, which continued all day, and rather increased at night. The wind was directly against our getting to Mull. We were in a strange state of abstraction from the world: we could neither hear from our friends, nor write to them. *Col* had brought *Daille* "on the Fathers," *Lucas* "on Happiness," and *More's* "Dialogues," from the Reverend Mr. M'Lean's, and *Burnet's* "History of his Own Times" from Captain M'Lean's; and he had of his own some books of farming, and *Gregory's* "Geometry." Dr. Johnson read a good deal of *Burnet*, and of *Gregory*, and I observed he made some geometrical notes in the end of his pocket-book. I read a little of *Young's* "Six Weeks' Tour through the Southern Counties," and *Ovid's* "Epistles," which I had bought at Inverness, and which helped to solace many a weary hour.

We were to have gone with Dr. Johnson this morning to see the mine, but were prevented by the storm. While it was raging, he said, "We may be glad we are not *damnati ad metalla*!"

Friday, 8th October.—Dr. Johnson appeared to-day very weary of our present confined situation. He said, "I want to be on the main land, and go on with existence. This is a waste of life."

I shall here insert, without regard to chronology, some of his conversation at different times.

"There was a man some time ago, who was well received for two years, among the gentlemen of Northamptonshire, by calling himself my brother. At last he grew so impudent, as by his influence to get tenants turned out of their farms. All the print-

er², who is of that country, came to me, asking, with much appearance of doubtfulness, if I had a brother; and upon being assured I had none alive, he told me of the imposition, and immediately wrote to the country, and the fellow was dismissed. It pleased me so hear that so much was got by using my name. It is not every name that can carry double; do both for a man's self and his brother (laughing). I should be glad to see the fellow. However, I could have done nothing against him. A man can have no redress for his name being used, or ridiculous stories being told of him in the newspapers, except he can show that he has suffered damage. Some years ago a foolish piece was published, said to be written 'by S. Johnson.' Some of my friends wanted me to be very angry about this. I said, it would be in vain; for the answer would be, 'S. Johnson may be Simon Johnson, or Simeon Johnson, or Solomon Johnson; and even if the full name, Samuel Johnson, had been used, it might be said it is not you; it is a much cleverer fellow³.'

"*Beauclerk*, and I, and *Langton*, and *Lady Sydney Beauclerk*, mother to our friend, were one day driving in a coach by *Cuper's Gardens*⁴, which were then unoccupied. I, in sport, proposed that *Beauclerk*, and *Langton*, and myself should take them; and we amused ourselves with scheming how we should all do our parts. *Lady Sydney* grew angry, and said, 'an old man should not put such things in young people's heads.' She had no notion of a joke, sir; had come late into life, and had a mighty unpliant understanding⁵.

"*Carte's* 'Life of the Duke of Ormond' is considered as a book of authority; but it is ill-written. The matter is diffused in too many words; there is no animation, no

² [Edmund Allen, a worthy and reputable printer in Bolt-court. He was for many years Johnson's neighbour, landlord, and friend (*ante*, p. 208). He was the son of the Rev. Thomas Allen, a pious and learned man, who for forty years was rector of Kettering, in Northamptonshire, and died while reading the evening service there on Sunday, 31st May, 1755, æt. 74.—*Nich. Anec.* vol. iii. p. 799.—*Ed.*]

³ [The eccentric authour of *Hurlo Thumbo* was named *Samuel Johnson*. He was originally a dancing-master, but went on the stage, where his acting was as extravagant as his pieces. He died in this very year, 1773, and was probably one of the persons whose death is alluded to, *post*, 17th April, 1778.—*Ed.*]

⁴ [An inferior place of popular amusement, over the site of which the southern approach to Waterloo-bridge now passes.—*Ed.*]

⁵ [She was *Mary*, daughter of *Thomas Norris*, esq. of *Speke*, in *Lancashire*. She married *Lord Sydney* in 1736.—*Ed.*]

¹ [*Condemned to the mines.*—*Ed.*]

compression, no vigour. Two good volumes in duodecimo might be made out of the two in folio."

Talking of our confinement here, I observed, that our discontent and impatience could not be considered as very unreasonable; for that we were just in the state of which Seneca complains so grievously, while in exile in Corsica. "Yes," said Dr. Johnson; "and he was not farther from home than we are." The truth is, he was much nearer¹.

There was a good deal of rain to-day, and the wind was still contrary. *Corneck* attended me, while I amused myself in examining a collection of papers belonging to the family of *Col*. The first laird was a younger son of the chieftain *McLean*, and got the middle part of *Col* for his patrimony. Dr. Johnson having given a very particular account [which is subjoined²] of

¹ [Corsica is about one hundred and fifty miles from Rome. *Col* is from London upwards of four hundred.—Ed.]

² "Very near the house of *Maclean* stands the castle of *Col*, which was the mansion of the laird, till the house was built. It is built upon a rock, as Mr. Boswell remarked, that it might not be mined. It is very strong, and having been not long uninhabited, is yet in repair. On the wall was, not long ago, a stone with an inscription, importing, that 'if any man of the clan of *Macclonich* shall appear before this castle, though he come at midnight, with a man's head in his hand, he shall there find safety and protection against all but the king.'

"This is an old Highland treaty made upon a very memorable occasion. *Maclean*, the son of *John Gerves* [one of the ancient lairds], who recovered *Col*, and conquered *Barra*, had obtained, it is said, from *James the Second*, a grant of the lands of *Lochiel*, forfeited, I suppose, by some offence against the state.

"Forfeited estates were not in those days quietly resigned; *Maclean*, therefore, went with an armed force to seize his new possessions, and I know not for what reason, took his wife with him. The *Camerons* rose in defence of their chief, and a battle was fought at the head of *Loch Ness*, near the place where *Fort Augustus* now stands, in which *Lochiel* obtained the victory, and *Maclean*, with his followers, was defeated and destroyed.

"The lady fell into the hands of the conquerors, and being found pregnant was placed in the custody of *Maclonich*, one of a tribe or family branched from *Cameron*, with orders, if she brought a boy, to destroy him; if a girl, to spare her.

"*Maclonich's* wife, who was with child likewise, had a girl about the same time at which *Lady Maclean* brought a boy, and *Maclonich*, with more generosity to his captive than fidelity to his trust, contrived that the children should be changed.

"*Maclean* being thus preserved from death, in time recovered his original patrimony; and, in gratitude to his friend, made his castle a place of refuge to any of the clan that should think him-

self in danger; and, as a proof of reciprocal confidence, *Maclean* took upon himself and his posterity the care of educating the heir of *Maclonich*."

—*Journey, Works*, vol. viii. p. 376.

³ [The third earl and first marquis, born in 1612, beheaded at Edinburgh, 21st May, 1650.—Ed.]

"TO THE LAIRD OF COL,
Strone, 11th March, 1737.

"DEAR SIR,—The long-standing tract of firm affectionate friendship 'twixt your worthy predecessors and ours affords us such assurance, as that we may have full reliance on your favour and undoubted friendship, in recommending the bearer, *Ewen Cameron*, our cousin, son to the deceast *Dugall McConnill* of *Innermailie*, sometime in *Glenpean*, to your favour and conduct, who is a man of undoubted honesty and discretion, only that he has the misfortune of being alleged to have been accessory to the killing of one of *McMartin's* family about fourteen years ago, upon which alledgeance the *McMartins* are now so sanguine on revenging, that they are fully resolved for the deprivation of his life; to the preventing of which you are relyed on by us, as the only fit instrument, and a most capable person. Therefore your favour and protection is expected and intreated, during his good behaviour; and failing of which behaviour, you'll please to use him as a most insignificant person deserves.

"Sir, he had, upon the alledgeance foresaid, been transported, at *Lochiel's* desire, to France, to gratify the *McMartins*, and, upon his return home, about five years ago, married. But now he is so much threatened by the *McMartins*, that he is not secure enough to stay where he is, being *Ardmurchan*, which occasions this trouble to you. Wishing prosperity and happiness to attend still yourself, worthy lady, and good family, we are, in the most affectionate manner, dear sir, your most obliged, affectionate, and most humble servants,

"DUGALL CAMERON, of Strone,

"DUGALL CAMERON, of Barr,

"DUGALL CAMERON, of *Inveriskvouilline*,

"DUGALL CAMERON, of *Invinvalie*."

Ewen Cameron was protected, and his son has now a farm from the Laird of *Col*, in *Mull*.

The family of *Col* was very loyal in the time of the great *Montrose*³, from whom I found two letters in his own handwriting. The first is as follows:

self in danger; and, as a proof of reciprocal confidence, *Maclean* took upon himself and his posterity the care of educating the heir of *Maclonich*."

—*Journey, Works*, vol. viii. p. 376.

³ [The third earl and first marquis, born in 1612, beheaded at Edinburgh, 21st May, 1650.—Ed.]

“FOR MY VERY LOVING FRIEND, THE
LAIRD OF COALL.

Strethearne, 20th Jan. 1646.

“SIR,—I must heartily thank you for all your willingness and good affection to his majesty’s service, and particularly the sending alongs of your son, to who, I will heave ane particular respect, hoping also that you will still continue ane goode instrument for the advancing ther of the king’s service, for which, and all your former loyal carriages, be confident you shall find the effects of his ma’s favour, as they can be witnessed you by your very faithful friende,
“MONTROSE.”

The other is,

“FOR THE LAIRD OF COL.

Petty, 17th April, 1646.

“SIR,—Having occasion to write to your fields, I cannot be forgetful of your willingness and good affection to his majesty’s service. I acknowledge to you, and thank you heartily for it, assuring, that in what lies in my power, you shall find the good. Meanwhile, I shall expect that you will continue your loyal endeavours, in wishing those slack people that are about you, to appear more obedient than they do, and loyal in their prince’s service; whereby I assure you, you shall find me ever your faithful friend,
“MONTROSE.”

I found some uncouth lines on the death of the present laird’s father, entitled “Nature’s Elegy upon the Death of Donald Maclean of Col.” They are not worth insertion. I shall only give what is called his epitaph, which Dr. Johnson said “was not so very bad.”

“Nature’s minion, Virtue’s wonder,
Art’s corrective here lyes under.”

I asked, what “Art’s corrective” meant. “Why, sir,” said he, “that the laird was so exquisite, that he set Art right, when she was wrong.”

I found several letters to the late Col, from my father’s old companion at Paris, Sir Hector McLean, one of which was written at the time of settling the colony in Georgia. It dissuades Col from letting people go there, and assures him there will soon be an opportunity of employing them better at home². Hence it appears that emigration from the Highlands, though not in such numbers at a time as of late,

¹ It is observable that men of the first rank spelt very ill in the last century. In the first of these letters I have preserved the original spelling.—ROSWELL.

² [This was obviously written previous to, and in expectation of the rebellion of 1745.—ED.]

has always been practised. Dr. Johnson observed, that “The lairds, instead of improving their country, diminished their people.”

There are several districts of sandy desert in Col. There are forty-eight lochs of fresh water; but many of them are very small—mere pools. About one half of them, however, have trout and eel. There is a great number of horses in the island, mostly of a small size. Being overstocked, they sell some in Tir-yi, and on the main land. Their black cattle, which are chiefly rough-haired, are reckoned remarkably good. The climate being very mild in winter, they never put their beasts in any house. The lakes are never frozen so as to bear a man; and snow never lies above a few hours. They have a good many sheep, which they eat mostly themselves, and sell but a few. They have goats in several places. There are no foxes; no serpents, toads, or frogs, nor any venomous creature. They have otters and mice here; but had no rats till lately that an American vessel brought them. There is a rabbit-warren on the north-east of the island, belonging to the Duke of Argyle. Young Col intends to get some hares, of which there are none at present. There are no black-cock, muir-fowl, nor partridges; but there are snipe, wild-duck, wild-geese, and swans, in winter; wild-pigeons, plover, and great numbers of starlings; of which I shot some, and found them pretty good eating. Woodcocks come hither, though there is not a tree upon the island. There are no rivers in Col; but only some brooks, in which there is a great variety of fish. In the whole isle there are but three hills, and none of them considerable, for a Highland country. The people are very industrious. Every man can tan. They get oak, and birch-bark, and lime, from the main land. Some have pits; but they commonly use tubs. I saw brogues very well tanned; and every man can make them. They all make candles of the tallow of their beasts, both moulded and dipped; and they all make oil of the livers of fish. The little fish called cuddies produce a great deal. They sell some oil out of the island, and they use it much for light in their houses, in little iron lamps, most of which they have from England; but of late their own blacksmith makes them. He is a good workman; but he has no employment in shoeing horses, for they all go unshod here, except some of a better kind belonging to young Col, which were now in Mull. There are two carpenters in Col; but most of the inhabitants can do something as boat-carpenters. They can all dye. Heath is used for yellow; and for red, a moss which grows on stones, They make broad-cloth, and tartan, and

linen, of their own wool and flax, sufficient for their own use; as also stockings. Their bonnets come from the main land. Hardware and several small articles are brought annually from Greenock, and sold in the only shop in the island, which is kept near the house, or rather hut, used for public worship, there being no church in the island. The inhabitants of Col have increased considerably within these thirty years, as appears from the parish registers. There are but three considerable tacksmen on Col's part of the island: the rest is let to small tenants, some of whom pay so low a rent as four, three, or even two guineas. The highest is seven pounds, paid by a farmer, whose son¹ goes yearly on foot to Aberdeen for education, and in summer returns, and acts as a schoolmaster in Col. Dr. Johnson said, "There is something noble in a young man's walking two hundred miles and back again, every year, for the sake of learning."

This day a number of people came to Col, with complaints of each other's trespasses. Corneek, to prevent their being troublesome, told them, that the lawyer from Edinburgh was here, and if they did not agree, he would take them to task. They were alarmed at this; said, they had never been used to go to law, and hoped Col would settle matters himself. In the evening Corneek left us.

Saturday, 9th October. As, in our present confinement, any thing that had even the name of curious was an object of attention, I proposed that Col should show me the great stone, mentioned in a former page, as having been thrown by a giant to the top of a mountain. Dr. Johnson, who did not like to be left alone, said he would accompany us as far as riding was practicable. We ascended a part of the hill on horseback, and Col and I scrambled up the rest. A servant held our horses, and Dr. Johnson placed himself on the ground, with his back against a large fragment of rock. The wind being high, he let down the coaks of his hat, and tied it with his handkerchief under his chin. While we were employed in examining the stone, which did not repay our trouble in getting to it, he amused himself with reading "Gataker on Lots and on the Christian Watch," a very learned

book, of the last age, which had been found in the garret of Col's house, and which he said was a treasure here. When we described him from above, he had a most eremitical appearance; and on our return told us, he had been so much engaged by Gataker, that he had never missed us. His avidity for variety of books, while we were in Col, was frequently expressed; and he often complained that so few were within his reach. Upon which I observed to him, that it was strange he should complain of want of books, when he could at any time make such good ones.

We next proceeded to the lead mine. In our way we came to a strand of some extent, where we were glad to take a gallop, in which my learned friend joined with great alacrity. Dr. Johnson, mounted on a large bay mare without shoes, and followed by a foal, which had some difficulty in keeping up with him, was a singular spectacle.

After examining the mine, we returned through a very uncouth district, full of sand-hills; down which, though apparent precipices, our horses carried us with safety, the sand always gently silding away from their feet. Vestiges of houses were pointed out to us, which Col, and two others who had joined us, asserted had been overwhelmed with sand blown over them. But, on going close to one of them, Dr. Johnson showed the absurdity of the notion, by remarking, that "it was evidently only a house abandoned, the stones of which had been taken away for other purposes; for the large stones, which form the lower part of the walls, were still standing higher than the sand. If they were not blown over, it was clear nothing higher than they could be blown over." This was quite convincing to me; but it made not the least impression on Col and the others, who were not to be argued out of a Highland tradition.

We did not set down to dinner till between six and seven. We lived plentifully here, and had a true welcome. In such a season, good firing was of no small importance. The peats were excellent, and burned cheerfully. Those at Dunvegan, which were damp, Dr. Johnson called "a sullen fuel." Here a Scottish phrase was singularly applied to him. One of the company having remarked that he had gone out on a stormy evening, and brought in a supply of peats from the stack, old Mr. M'Sweyn said, "that was *main honest!*"

Blenheim being occasionally mentioned, he told me he had never seen it: he had not gone formerly; and he would not go now, just as a common spectator, for his money: he would not put it in the power of some man about the Duke of Marlborough to say, "Johnson was here; I knew him, but I took no notice of him." He said, he should be very glad to see it, if properly invited, which

¹ [Dr. Johnson relates this fact with a pomp which created a false opinion that the young Laird of Col was himself this peripatetic. "Col is more enlightened than some other islands, for the deficiency [of instruction] is supplied by a young gentleman, who, for his own improvement, travels every year over the Highlands to the session of Aberdeen, and at his return, during the vacation, teaches to read and write in his native island."—*Journey, Works*, vol. viii. 338. —Ed.]

in all probability would never be the case, as it was not worth his while to seek for it. I observed, that he might be easily introduced there by a common friend of ours¹, nearly related to the duke. He answered, with an uncommon attention to delicacy of feeling, "I doubt whether our friend be on such a footing with the duke as to carry any body there; and I would not give him the uneasiness of seeing that I knew he was not, or even of being himself reminded of it."

Sunday, 10th October.—There was this day the most terrible storm of wind and rain that I ever remember. It made such an awful impression on us all, as to produce, for some time, a kind of dismal quietness in the house. The day was passed without much conversation: only, upon my observing that there must be something bad in a man's mind, who does not like to give leases to his tenants, but wishes to keep them in a perpetual wretched dependence on his will, Dr. Johnson said, "You are right: it is a man's duty to extend comfort and security among as many people as he can. He should not wish to have his tenants mere *ephemera*,—mere beings of an hour." BOSWELL. "But, sir, if they have leases, is there not some danger that they may grow insolent? I remember you yourself once told me, an English tenant was so independent, that, if provoked, he would *throw* his rent at his landlord." JOHNSON. "Depend upon it, sir, it is the landlord's own fault, if it is thrown at him. A man may always keep his tenants in dependence enough, though they have leases. He must be a good tenant indeed, who will not fall behind in his rent, if his landlord will let him; and if he does fall behind, his landlord has him at his mercy. Indeed, the poor man is always much at the mercy of the rich; no matter whether landlord or tenant. If the tenant lets his landlord have a little rent beforehand, or has lent him money, then the landlord is in his power. There cannot be a greater man than a tenant who has lent money to his landlord; for he has under subjection the very man to whom he should be subjected."

Monday, 11th October.—We had some days ago engaged the Campbell-town vessel to carry us to Mull, from the harbour where she lay. The morning was fine, and the wind fair and moderate; so we hoped at length to get away

Mrs. M'Sweyn, who officiated as our landlady here, had never been on the main land. On hearing this, Dr. Johnson said

¹ [Mr. Beauclerk, who had married the duke's sister, but under circumstances which might well justify Johnson's suspicion that he might not be on the most satisfactory terms with his grace.—See *ante*, p. 316, n.—Ed.]

to me, before her, "That is rather being behind-hand with life. I would at least go and see Glenelg." BOSWELL. "You yourself, sir, have never seen, till now, any thing but your native island." JOHNSON. "But, sir, by seeing London, I have seen as much of life as the world can show." BOSWELL. "You have not seen Pekin." JOHNSON. "What is Pekin? Ten thousand Londoners would *drive* all the people of Pekin: they would drive them like deer."

We set out about eleven for the harbour; but, before we reached it, so violent a storm came on, that we were obliged again to take shelter in the house of Captain M'Lean, where we dined, and passed the night.

Tuesday, 12th October.—After breakfast, we made a second attempt to get to the harbour; but another storm soon convinced us that it would be in vain. Captain M'Lean's house being in some confusion, on account of Mrs. M'Lean being expected to lie-in, we resolved to go to Mr. M'Sweyn's, where we arrived very wet, fatigued, and hungry. In this situation, we were somewhat disconcerted by being told that we should have no dinner till late in the evening; but should have tea in the mean time. Dr. Johnson opposed this arrangement; but they persisted, and he took the tea very readily. He said to me afterwards, "You must consider, sir, a dinner here is a matter of great consequence. It is a thing to be first planned, and then executed. I suppose the mutton was brought some miles off, from some place where they knew there was a sheep killed."

Talking of the good people with whom we were, he said, "Life has not got at all forward by a generation in M'Sweyn's family; for the son is exactly forined upon the father. What the father says, the son says; and what the father looks, the son looks."

There being little conversation to-night, I must endeavour to recollect what I may have omitted on former occasions. When I boasted, at Rasay, of my independency of spirit, and that I could not be bribed, he said, "Yes, you may be bribed by flattery." At the Reverend Mr. M'Lean's, Dr. Johnson asked him if the people of Col had any superstitions. He said, "No." The cutting peats at the increase of the moon was mentioned as one; but he would not allow it, saying it was not a superstition, but a whim. Dr. Johnson would not admit the distinction. There were many superstitions, he maintained, not connected with religion; and this was one of them. On Monday we had a dispute at the Captain's, whether sand-hills could be fixed down by art. Dr. Johnson said, "How *the devil* can you do it?"² but instantly corrected himself, "How

² [The question which Johnson asked with such unusual warmth might have been answered

can you do it?" I never before heard him use a phrase of that nature.

He has particularities which it is impossible to explain. He never wears a night-cap, as I have already mentioned; but he puts a handkerchief on his head in the night. The day that we left Talisker, he bade us ride on. He then turned the head of his horse back towards Talisker, stopped for some time; then wheeled round to the same direction with ours, and then came briskly after us. His sets open a window in the coldest day or night, and stands before it. It may do with his constitution; but most people, among whom I am one, would say, with the frogs in the fable, "This may be sport to you; but it is death to us." It is in vain to try to find a meaning in every one of his particularities, which, I suppose, are mere habits, contracted by chance; of which every man has some that are more or less remarkable. He speaking to himself, or rather repeating, is a common habit with studious men accustomed to deep thinking; and, in consequence of their being thus rapt, they will even laugh by themselves, if the subject which they are musing on is a merry one. Dr. Johnson is often uttering pious ejaculations, when he appears to be talking to himself; for sometimes his voice grows stronger, and parts of the Lord's Prayer are heard. I have sat beside him with more than ordinary reverence on such occasions¹.

In our tour, I observed that he was disgusted whenever he met with coarse manners. He said to me, "I know not how it is, but I cannot bear low life; and I find others, who have as good a right as I to be fastidious, bear it better, by having mixed more with different sorts of men. You would think that I have mixed pretty well too."

He read this day a good deal of my journal, written in a small book with which he had supplied me, and was pleased, for he said, "I wish thy books were twice as big." He helped me to fill up blanks which I had left in first writing it, when I was not quite sure of what he had said, and he corrected any mistakes that I had made. "They call me a scholar," said he, "and yet how very little literature is there in my conversation." BOSWELL. "That, sir, must be according to your company. You would not give literature to those who cannot taste it. Stay till we meet Lord Ellibank."

"by sowing the bent, or couch-grass."—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ It is remarkable, that Dr. Johnson should have read this account of some of his own peculiar habits, without saying any thing on the subject, which I hoped he would have done.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p. 214, and *post*, Miss Reynolds's *Recollections*.—ED.]

We had at last a good dinner, or rather supper, and were very well satisfied with our entertainment.

Wednesday, 13th October.—Col called me up, with intelligence that it was a good day for a passage to Mull; and just as we rose, a sailor from the vessel arrived for us. We got all ready with despatch. Dr. Johnson was displeased at my bustling and walking quickly up and down. He said, "It does not hasten us a bit. It is getting on horseback in a ship². All boys do it; and you are longer a boy than others." He himself has no alertness, or whatever it may be called; so he may dislike it, as *Oderunt hilarem tristes*.

Before we reached the harbour, the wind grew high again. However, the small boat was waiting, and took us on board. We remained for some time in uncertainty what to do; at last it was determined, that, as a good part of the day was over, and it was dangerous to be at sea at night, in such a vessel, and such weather, we should not sail till the morning tide, when the wind would probably be more gentle. We resolved not to go ashore again, but lie here in readiness. Dr. Johnson and I had each a bed in the cabin. Col sat at the fire in the forecabin, with the captain, and Joseph, and the rest. I ate some dry oatmeal, of which I found a barrel in the cabin. I had not done this since I was a boy. Dr. Johnson owned that he too was fond of it when a boy; a circumstance which I was highly pleased to hear from him, as it gave me an opportunity of observing that, notwithstanding his joke on the article of OATS, he was himself a proof that this kind of food was not peculiar to the people of Scotland.

Thursday, 14th October.—When Dr. Johnson awaked this morning, he called "Lanky!" having, I suppose, been thinking of Langton, but corrected himself instantly, and cried, "Boszy!" He has a way of contracting the names of his friends. Goldsmith feels himself so important now, as to be displeased at it * * *³.

Between six and seven we hauled our anchor, and set sail with a fair breeze; and, after a pleasant voyage, we got safely and agreeably into the harbour of Tobermorie, before the wind rose, which it always has done, for some days, about noon.

Tobermorie is an excellent harbour. An island lies before it, and it is surrounded by a hilly theatre. The island is too low, otherwise this would be quite a secure port; but, the island not being a sufficient protection, some storms blow very hard here. Not long ago, fifteen vessels were blown

² [Borrowed from the jests of Hierocles.—ED.]

³ [Here followed Davies's anecdote about Goldsmith's displeasure at being called *Goldy*, which will be found *ante*, p. 320.—ED.]

from their moorings. There are sometimes sixty or seventy sail here: to-day there were twelve or fourteen vessels. To see such a fleet was the next thing to seeing a town. The vessels were from different places; Clyde, Campbell-town, Newcastle, &c. One was returning to Lancaster from Hamburgh. After having been shut up so long in Col, the sight of such an assemblage of moving habitations, containing such a variety of people, engaged in different pursuits, gave me much gaiety of spirit. When we had landed, Dr. Johnson said, "Boswell is now all alive. He is like Antæus; he gets new vigour whenever he touches the ground." I went to the top of a hill fronting the harbour, from whence I had a good view of it. We had here a tolerable inn. Dr. Johnson had owned to me this morning, that he was out of humour. Indeed, he showed it a good deal in the ship; for when I was expressing my joy on the prospect of our landing in Mull, he said, he had no joy, when he recollected that it would be five days before he should get to the main land. I was afraid he would now take a sudden resolution to give up seeing Icolmkill. A dish of tea, and some good bread and butter, did him service, and his bad humour went off. I told him, that I was diverted to hear all the people whom we had visited in our tour say, "*Honest man!* he's pleased with every thing; he's always content!" "Little do they know," said I. He laughed, and said, "You rogue!"

We sent to hire horses to carry us across the island of Mull to the shore opposite to Inch-kenneth, the residence of Sir Allan M'Lean, uncle to young Col, and chief of the M'Leans, to whose house we intended to go the next day. Our friend Col went to visit his aunt, the wife of Dr. Alexander M'Lean, a physician, who lives about a mile from Tobermore.

Dr. Johnson and I sat by ourselves at the inn, and talked a good deal. I told him, that I had found, in Leandro Alberti's "Description of Italy," much of what Addison has given us in his "Remarks¹." He said, "The collection of passages from the Classics has been made by another Italian: it is, however, impossible to detect a man as a plagiarist in such a case, because all who set about making such a collection must find the same passages; but, if you find the same applications in another book, then Addison's learning in his 'Remarks' tumbles down. It is a tedious book; and, if it were not attached to Addison's previous reputation, one would not think much of it. Had he written nothing else, his name would not have lived. Addison does not seem to have gone deep in Italian literature:

he shows nothing of it in his subsequent writings. He shows a great deal of French learning. There is, perhaps, more knowledge circulated in the French language than in any other. There is more original knowledge in English." "But the French," said I, "have the art of accommodating literature²." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; we have no such book as Moreri's 'Dictionary.'" BOSWELL. "Their 'Ana' are good." JOHNSON. "A few of them are good; but we have one book of that kind better than any of them, Selden's 'Table-talk.'" As to original literature, the French have a couple of tragick poets who go round the world, Racine and Corneille, and one comick poet, Moliere." BOSWELL. "They have Fenelon." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, Telemachus is pretty well." BOSWELL. "And Voltaire, sir." JOHNSON. "He has not stood his trial yet. And what makes Voltaire chiefly circulate is collection, such as his 'Universal History.'" BOSWELL. "What do you say to the Bishop of Meaux?" JOHNSON. "Sir, nobody reads him³." He would not allow Massillon and Bourdaloue to go round the world. In general, however, he gave the French much praise for their industry.

He asked me whether he had mentioned, in any of the papers of the "Rambler," the description in Virgil of the entrance into Hell, with an application to the press; "for (said he) I do not much remember them." I told him, "No." Upon which he repeated it:

Vestibulum ante ipsum, primisque in faucibus orci,
Luctus et ultrices posuere cubilia Curæ;
Pallentesque habitant Morbi, tristisque Senectus,
Et metus, et malesuada Fames, et turpis Egestas,
Terribiles visu formæ; Lethumque, Laborque⁴.

"Now (said he), almost all these apply exactly to an author; all these are the concomitants of a printing-house." I proposed to him to dictate an essay on it, and offered to write it. He said he would not do it then, but perhaps would write one at some future period.

The Sunday evening that we sat by ourselves at Aberdeen, I asked him several particulars of his life, from his early years, which he readily told me; and I wrote them

² [Mr. Boswell probably meant by "*accommodating literature*," making it more accessible and readier for ordinary use.—ED.]

³ I take leave to enter my strongest protest against this judgment. Bossuet I hold to be one of the first luminaries of religion and literature. If there are who do not read him, it is full time they should begin.—BOSWELL.

⁴ Just in the gate, and in the jaws of hell,
Revengeful cares and sullen sorrows dwell;
And pale diseases, and repining age;
Want, fear, and famine's unresisted rage;
Here toils and death, and death's half-brother, sleep,
Forms terrible to view, their sentry keep.—DRYDEN.

¹ See post, 7th April, 1775.]

down before him. This day I proceeded in my inquiries, also writing them in his presence. I have them on detached sheets * * *¹. I have now a vast treasure of his conversation, at different times, since the year 1762, when I first obtained his acquaintance; and by assiduous inquiry, I can make up for not knowing him sooner.

A Newcastle ship-master, who happened to be in the house, intruded himself upon us. He was much in liquor, and talked nonsense about his being a man for *Wilkes and Liberty*, and against the ministry. Dr. Johnson was angry, that "a fellow should come into *our* company, who was fit for *no* company." He left us soon.

Col returned from his aunt, and told us, she insisted that we should come to her house that night. He introduced to us Mr. Campbell, the Duke of Argyle's factor in Tyr-yi. He was a genteel, agreeable man. He was going to Inverary, and promised to put letters into the post-office for us. I now found that Dr. Johnson's desire to get on the main land arose from his anxiety to have an opportunity of conveying letters to his friends.

After dinner, we proceeded to Dr. M'Lean's, which was about a mile from our inn. He was not at home, but we were received by his lady and daughter, who entertained us so well, that Dr. Johnson seemed quite happy. When we had supped, he asked me to give him some paper to write letters. I begged he would write short ones, and not *expatiare*, as we ought to set off early. He was irritated by this, and said, "What must be done, must be done; the thing is past a joke."—"Nay, sir (said I), write as much as you please; but do not blame me, if we are kept six days before we get to the main land. You were very impatient in the morning: but no sooner do you find yourself in good quarters, than you forget that you are to move." I got him paper enough, and we parted in good humour.

Let me now recollect whatever particulars I have omitted. In the morning I said to him, before we landed at Tobermorie, "We shall see Dr. M'Lean, who has writ-

¹ Here in the original text came the following announcement of the Life of Johnson:—"I shall collect authentick materials for 'The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL. D. ;' and, if I survive him, I shall be one who will most faithfully do honour to his memory." To which this note was appended: "It is no small satisfaction to me to reflect, that *Dr. Johnson read this*, and after being apprized of my intention, communicated to me, at subsequent periods, many particulars of his life, which probably could not otherwise have been preserved."—BOSWELL. [This is a conclusive answer to those who, in the character of friends of Johnson's memory, affected to blame this publication.—ED.]

ten the History of the M'Leans." JOHNSON. "I have no great patience to stay to hear the history of the M'Leans. I would rather hear the History of the Thrales." When on Mull, I said, "Well, sir, this is the fourth of the Hebrides that we have been upon." JOHNSON. "Nay, we cannot boast of the number we have seen. We thought we should see many more. We thought of sailing about easily from island to island; and so we should, had we come at a better season²; but we, being wise men, thought it would be summer all the year where *we* were. However, sir, we have seen enough to give us a pretty good notion of the system of insular life."

Let me not forget, that he sometimes amused himself with very slight reading; from which, however, his conversation showed that he contrived to extract some benefit. At Captain M'Lean's he read a good deal in "The Charmer," a collection of songs.

Friday, 15th October.—We this morning found that we could not proceed, there being a violent storm of wind and rain, and the rivers being impassable. When I expressed my discontent at our confinement, Dr. Johnson said, "Now that I have had an opportunity of writing to the main land, I am in no such haste." I was amused with his being so easily satisfied; for the truth was, that the gentleman who was to convey our letters, as I was now informed, was not to set out for Inverary for some time; so that it was probable we should be there as soon as he: however, I did not deceive my friend, but suffered him to enjoy his fancy.

Dr. Johnson asked, in the evening, to see Dr. M'Lean's books. He took down "Willis de Animâ Brutorum," and pored over it a good deal.

Miss M'Lean produced some Erse poems by John M'Lean, who was a famous bard in Mull, and had died only a few years ago. He could neither read nor write. She read and translated two of them; one a kind of elegy on Sir John M'Lean's being obliged to fly his country in 1715; another, a dialogue between two Roman Catholick young ladies, sisters, whether it was better to be a nun or to marry. I could not perceive much poetical imagery in the translation. Yet all of our company who understood Erse seemed charmed with the original. There may, perhaps, be some choice of expression, and some excellence of arrangement, that cannot be shown in translation.

² [This observation is very just. The time for the Hebrides was too late by a month or six weeks. I have heard those who remembered their tour express surprise they were not drowned.—WALTER SCOTT.]

After we had exhausted the Erse poems, of which Dr. Johnson said nothing, Miss M'Lean gave us several tunes on a spinnet, which, though made so long ago as in 1667, was still very well toned. She sung along with it. Dr. Johnson seemed pleased with the musick, though he owns he neither likes it, nor has hardly any perception of it. At Mr. M'Pherson's, in Slate, he told us, that "he knew a drum from a trumpet, and a bagpipe from a guitar, which was about the extent of his knowledge of musick." To-night he said, that, "if he had learnt musick, he should have been afraid he would have done nothing else but play. It was a method of employing the mind, without the labour of thinking at all, and with some applause from a man's self."

We had the musick of the bagpipe every day, at Armidale, Dunvegan, and Col. Dr. Johnson appeared fond of it, and used often to stand for some time with his ear close to the great drone.

The penurious gentleman¹ of our acquaintance, formerly alluded to, afforded us a topick of conversation to-night. Dr. Johnson said, I ought to write down a collection of the instances of his narrowness, as they almost exceeded belief. Col told us, that O'Kane, the famous Irish harper, was once at that gentleman's house. He could not find in his heart to give him any money, but gave him a key for a harp, which was finely ornamented with gold and silver, and with a precious stone, and was worth eighty or a hundred guineas. He did not know the value of it; and when he came to know it, he would fain have had it back; but O'Kane took care that he should not. JOHNSON. "They exaggerate the value; every body is so desirous that he should be fleeced. I am very willing it should be worth eighty or a hundred guineas; but I do not believe it." BOSWELL. "I do not think O'Kane was obliged to give it back." JOHNSON. "No, sir. If a man with his eyes open, and without any means used to deceive him, gives me a thing, I am not to let him have it again when he grows wiser. I like to see how avarice defeats itself: how, when avoiding to part with money, the miser gives something more valuable." Col said, the gentleman's relations were angry at his giving away the harp key, for it had been long in the family. JOHNSON. "Sir, he values a new guinea more than an old friend."

Col also told us, that the same person having come up with a serjeant and twenty men working on the high road, he entered into discourse with the serjeant, and then gave him sixpence for the men to drink. The serjeant asked, "Who

is this fellow?" Upon being informed, he said, "If I had known who he was, I should have thrown it in his face." JOHNSON. "There is much want of sense in all this. He had no business to speak with the serjeant. He might have been in haste, and trotted on. He has not learnt to be a miser: I believe we must take him apprentice." BOSWELL. "He would grudge giving half a guinea to be taught." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, you must teach him *gratis*. You must give him an opportunity to practise your precepts."

Let me now go back, and glean *Johnsoniana*. The Saturday before we sailed from Slate, I sat awhile in the afternoon with Dr. Johnson in his room, in a quiet serious frame. I observed, that hardly any man was accurately prepared for dying; but almost every one left something undone, something in confusion; that my father, indeed, told me he knew one man (Carlisle of Limekilns), after whose death all his papers were found in exact order; and nothing was omitted in his will. JOHNSON. "Sir, I had an uncle² who died so; but such attention requires great leisure, and great firmness of mind. If one was to think constantly of death, the business of life would stand still. I am no friend to making religion appear too hard. Many good people have done harm, by giving severe notions of it. In the same way as to learning: I never frighten young people with difficulties; on the contrary, I tell them that they may very easily get as much as will do very well. I do not indeed tell them that they will be *Bentleys*."

The night we rode to Col's house, I said, "Lord Elibank is probably wondering what is become of us." JOHNSON. "No, no; he is not thinking of us." BOSWELL. "But recollect the warmth with which he wrote. Are we not to believe a man, when he says he has a great desire to see another? Do not you believe that I was very impatient for your coming to Scotland?" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; I believe you were; and I was impatient to come to you. A young man feels so, but seldom an old man." I however convinced him that Lord Elibank, who has much of the spirit of a young man, might feel so. He asked me if our jaunt had answered expectation. I said it had much exceeded it. I expected much difficulty with him, and had not found it. "And," he added, "wherever we have come, we have been received like princes in their progress."

He said, he would not wish not to be disgusted in the Highlands; for that would be

² [If Miss Seward's story of his having had an uncle hanged had been true, Johnson could not have made such an allusion as this.—Ed.]

¹ [Sir Alexander Macdonald.—Ed.]

to lose the power of distinguishing, and a man might then lie down in the middle of them. He wished only to conceal his disgust.

At Captain M'Lean's, I mentioned Pope's friend, Spence. JOHNSON. "He was a weak conceited man!" BOSWELL. "A good scholar, sir?" JOHNSON. "Why no, sir." BOSWELL. "He was a pretty scholar." JOHNSON. "You have about reached him."

Last night at the inn, when the factor in Tyr-yi spoke of his having heard that a roof was put on some part of the buildings at Icolmkill, I unluckily said, "It will be fortunate if we find a cathedral with a roof on it." I said this from a foolish anxiety to engage Dr. Johnson's curiosity more. He took me short at once. "What, sir? how can you talk so? If we shall find a cathedral roofed! as if we were going to a *terra incognita*: when every thing that is at Icolmkill is so well known. You are like some New England-men who came to the mouth of the Thames. 'Come,' said they, 'let us go up and see what sort of inhabitants there are here.' They talked, sir, as if they had been to go up the Susquehannah, or any other American river."

Saturday, 16th October.—This day there was a new moon, and the weather changed for the better. Dr. Johnson said of Miss M'Lean, "She is the most accomplished lady that I have found in the Highlands. She knows French, musick, and drawing, sews neatly, makes shell-work, and can milk cows; in short, she can do every thing. She talks sensibly, and is the first person whom I have found, that can translate Erse poetry literally." We set out, mounted on little Mull horses. Mull corresponded exactly with the idea which I had always had of it; a hilly country, diversified with heath and grass, and many rivulets. Dr. Johnson was not in very good humour. He said, it was a dreary country, much worse than Sky. I differed from him. "O, sir," said he, "a most dolorous country!"

We had a very hard journey to-day. I had no bridle for my sheltie, but only a halter; and Joseph rode without a saddle. At one place, a loch having swelled over the road, we were obliged to plunge through pretty deep water. Dr. Johnson observed, how helpless a man would be, were he travelling here alone, and should meet with any accident; and said, "he longed to get

¹ Mr. Langton thinks this must have been the hasty expression of a splenetick moment, as he has heard Dr. Johnson speak of Mr. Spence's judgment in criticism with so high a degree of respect, as to show that this was not his settled opinion of him. Let me add that, in the preface to the *Preceptor*, he recommends Spence's Essay on Pope's *Odyssey*, and that his admirable Lives of the English Poets are much enriched by Spence's Anecdotes of Popc.—BOSWELL.

to a country of saddles and bridles." He was more out of humour to-day than he has been in the course of our tour, being fretted to find that his little horse could scarcely support his weight; and having suffered a loss, which, though small in itself, was of some consequence to him, while travelling the rugged steeps of Mull, where he was at times obliged to walk. The loss that I allude to was that of the large oak-stick, which, as I formerly mentioned, he had brought with him from London. It was of great use to him in our wild peregrination; for, ever since his last illness in 1766, he has had a weakness in his knees, and has not been able to walk easily. It had too the properties of a measure; for one nail was driven into it at the length of a foot; another at that of a yard. In return for the services it had done him, he said, this morning, he would make a present of it to some museum; but he little thought he was so soon to lose it. As he preferred riding with a switch, it was intrusted to a fellow to be delivered to our baggage-man, who followed us at some distance; but we never saw it more. I could not persuade him out of a suspicion that it had been stolen. "No, no, my friend," said he; "it is not to be expected that any man in Mull, who has got it, will part with it. Consider, sir, the value of such a *piece of timber* here!"

As we travelled this forenoon, we met Dr. M'Lean, who expressed much regret at his having been so unfortunate as to be absent while we were at his house.

We were in hopes to get to Sir Allan Maclean's, at Inchkenneth, to-night; but the eight miles, of which our road was *said* to consist, were so very long, that we did not reach the opposite coast of Mull till seven at night, though we had set out about eleven in the forenoon; and when we did arrive there, we found the wind strong against us. Col determined that we should pass the night at M'Quarrie's, in the island of Ulva, which lies between Mull and Inchkenneth; and a servant was sent forward to the ferry, to secure the boat for us: but the boat was gone to the Ulva side, and the wind was so high that the people could not hear him call; and the night so dark that they could not see a signal. We should have been in a very bad situation, had there not fortunately been lying in the little sound of Ulva an Irish vessel, the Bonnetta, of Londonderry, Captain M'Lure, master. He himself was at M'Quarrie's; but his men obligingly came with their long-boat, and ferried us over.

M'Quarrie's house was mean, but we were agreeably surprised with the appearance of the master, whom we found to be intelligent, polite, and much a man of the

world¹. Though his clan is not numerous, he is a very ancient chief, and has a burial-place at Icolmkill. He told us, his family had possessed Ulva for nine hundred years; but I was distressed to hear that it was soon to be sold for payment of his debts.

Cap ain M^cLure, whom we found here, was of Scotch extraction, and properly a Macleod, being descended of some of the Macleods who went with Sir Norman of Bernera to the battle of Worcester²; and after the defeat of the royalists, fled to Ireland, and, to conceal themselves, took a different name. He told me, there was a great number of them about Londonderry; some of good property. I said, they should now resume their real name. The Laird of Macleod should go over, and assemble them, and make them all drink the large horn full, and from that time they should be Macleods. The captain informed us, he had named his ship the Bonnetta, out of gratitude to Providence; for once, when he was sailing to America with a good number of passengers, the ship in which he then sailed was becalmed for five weeks, and during all that time, numbers of the fish Bonnetta swam close to her, and were caught for food; he resolved, therefore, that the ship he should next get should be called the Bonnetta.

M^cQuarrie told us a strong instance of the *second-sight*. He had gone to Edinburgh, and taken a man-servant along with him. An old woman, who was in the house, said one day, "M^cQuarrie will be at home to-morrow, and will bring two gentlemen with him;" and she said, she saw his servant return in red and green. He did come home next day. He had two gentlemen with him, and his servant had a new red and green livery, which M^cQuarrie had bought for him at Edinburgh, upon a sudden thought, not having the least intention when he left home to put his servant in livery; so that the old woman could not have heard any previous mention of it. This, he assured us, was a true story.

M^cQuarrie insisted that the *Mercheta Mulierum*, mentioned in our old charters, did really mean the privilege which a lord of a manor or a baron had, to have the first night of all his vassals' wives. Dr. Johnson said, the belief of such a custom having existed was also held in England, where there is a tenure called Borough English, by which the eldest child does not inherit, from a doubt of his being the son of the tenant³. M^cQuarrie told us, that still, on

the marriage of each of his tenants, a sheep is due to him; for which the composition is fixed at five shillings. I suppose, Ulva is the only place where this custom remains⁴.

Talking of the sale of an estate of an ancient family, which was said to have been purchased much under its value by the confidential lawyer of that family, and it being mentioned that the sale would probably be set aside by a suit in equity, Dr. Johnson said, "I am very willing that this sale should be set aside, but I doubt much whether the suit will be successful; for the argument for avoiding the sale is founded on vague and indeterminate principles,—as that the price was too low, and that there was a great degree of confidence placed by the seller in the person who became the purchaser. Now, how low should a price be? or what degree of confidence should there be to make a bargain be set aside? a bargain, which is a wager of skill between man and man. It, indeed, any fraud can be proved, that will do."

When Dr. Johnson and I were by ourselves at night, I observed of our host, "*Aspectum generosum habet*;" "*Et generosum animum*," he added. For fear of being overheard in the small Highland houses, I often talked to him in such Latin as I could speak, and with as much of the English accent as I could assume, so as not to be understood, in case our conversation should be too loud for the space.

We had each an elegant bed in the same room; and here it was that a circumstance occurred, as to which he has been strangely misunderstood. From his description of his chamber, it has erroneously been supposed, that his bed being too short for him, his feet, during the night, were in the mire; whereas he has only said, that when he undressed, he felt his feet in the mire: that is, the clay-floor of the room, which he stood upon before he went into bed, was wet, in consequence of the windows being broken, which let in the rain.

Sunday, 17th October.—Being informed that there was nothing worthy of observation in Ulva, we took boat, and proceeded to Inchkenneth⁵, where we were introduced

custom prevailed in England;" and therefore he is of opinion that it could not have given rise to Borough-English. [2. Com. 83.—Ed.]

⁴ [This custom still continues in Ulva.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁵ [Inch Kenneth is a most beautiful little islet of the most verdant green, while all the neighbouring shore of Greban, as well as the large islands of Colinsay and Ulva, are as black as heath and moss can make them. But Ulva has a good anchorage, and Inch Kenneth is surrounded by shoals. It is now uninhabited. The ruins of the huts, in which Dr. Johnson was received by Sir Allan M^cLean, were still to be seen, and some tatters of

¹ [M^cQuarrie was hospitable to an almost romantic degree. He lived to an extreme old age.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [See *Macleod's Memoirs, Appendix*, p. 264.—Ed.]

³ Sir William Blackstone says in his "Commentaries," that "he cannot find that ever this

by our friend Col to Sir Allan M'Lean, the chief of his clan, and to two young ladies, his daughters. Inchkenneth is a pretty little island, a mile long, and about half a mile broad, all good land.

As we walked up from the shore, Dr. Johnson's heart was cheered by the sight of a road marked with cart-wheels, as on the main land; a thing which we had not seen for a long time. It gave us a pleasure similar to that which a traveller feels, when, whilst wandering on what he fears is a desert island, he perceives the print of human feet.

Military men acquire excellent habits of having all conveniences about them. Sir Allan M'Lean, who had been long in the army, and had now a lease of the island, had formed a commodious habitation, though it consisted but of a few small buildings, only one story high. He had, in his little apartments, more things than I could enumerate in a page or two.

Among other agreeable circumstances, it was not the least, to find here a parcel of the "Caledonian Mercury," published since we left Edinburgh; which I read with that pleasure which every man feels who has been for some time secluded from the animated scenes of the busy world.

Dr. Johnson found books here. He bade me buy Bishop Gastrell's "Christian Institutes," which was lying in the room. He said, "I do not like to read any thing on a Sunday², but what is theological; not that I would scrupulously refuse to look at any thing which a friend should show me in a newspaper; but in general, I would read on-

the paper hangings were to be seen on the walls. Sir George Onesiphorus Paul was at Inchkenneth with the same party of which I was a member. He seemed to me to suspect many of the Highland tales which he heard, but he showed most incredulity on the subject of Johnson's having been entertained in the wretched huts of which we saw the ruins. He took me aside, and conjured me to tell him the truth of the matter. "This Sir Allan," said he, "was he a *regular baronet*, or was his title such a traditional one as you find in Ireland?" I assured my excellent acquaintance that, "For my own part, I would have paid more respect to a knight of Kerry, or knight of Glynn; yet Sir Allan M'Lean was a *regular baronet* by patent;" and, having given him this information, I took the liberty of asking him, in return, whether he would not in conscience prefer the worst cell in the jail at Gloucester (which he had been very active in overlooking while the building was going on) to those exposed hovels where Johnson had been entertained by rank and beauty. He looked round the little islet, and allowed Sir Allan had some advantage in exercising ground; but in other respects he thought the compulsory tenants of Gloucester had greatly the advantage. Such was his opinion of a place, concerning which Johnson has recorded that "it wanted little which palaces could afford."—WALTER SCOTT.

² [See *ante*, p. 255 and 344.—ED.]

ly what is theological. I read just now some of 'Drummond's Travels,' before I perceived what books were here. I then took up 'Derham's Physico-Theology.'

Every particular concerning this island having been so well described by Dr. Johnson, it would be superfluous in me to present the public with the observations that I made upon it, in my journal.

I was quite easy with Sir Allan almost instantaneously. He knew the great intimacy there had been between my father and his predecessor, Sir Hector, and was himself of a very frank disposition. After dinner, Sir Allan said he had got Dr. Campbell about a hundred subscribers to his "Britannia Elucidata" (a work since published under the title of "A Political Survey of Great Britain"), of whom he believed twenty were dead, the publication having been so long delayed. JOHNSON. "Sir, I imagine the delay of publication is owing to this;—that, after publication, there will be no more subscribers, and few will send the additional guinea to get their books: in which they will be wrong; for there will be a great deal of instruction in the work. I think highly of Campbell. In the first place, he has very good parts. In the second place, he has very extensive reading; not, perhaps, what is properly called learning, but history, politicks, and, in short, that popular knowledge which makes a man very useful. In the third place, he has learned much by what is called the *vox viva*. He talks with a great many people."

Speaking of this gentleman, at Rasay, he told us, that he one day called on him, and they talked of "Tull's Husbandry." Dr. Campbell said something. Dr. Johnson began to dispute it. "Come," said Dr. Campbell, "we do not want to get the better of one another; we want to increase each other's ideas." Dr. Johnson took it in good part, and the conversation then went on coolly and instructively. His candour in relating this anecdote does him much credit, and his conduct on that occasion proves how easily he could be persuaded to talk from a better motive than "for victory."

Dr. Johnson here showed so much of the spirit of a Highlander, that he won Sir Allan's heart: indeed, he has shown it during the whole of our tour. One night, in Col, he strutted about the room with a broad sword and target, and made a formidable appearance; and, another night, I took the liberty to put a large blue bonnet on his head. His age, his size, and his bushy gray wig, with this covering on it, presented the image of a venerable *Senachi*: and, however unfavourable to the Lowland Scots, he seemed much pleased to assume the appearance of an ancient Caledonian. We only regretted that he could not be prevail-

ed with to partake of the social glass. One of his arguments against drinking appears to me not convincing. He urged, that, "in proportion as drinking makes a man different from what he is before he has drunk, it is bad; because it has so far affected his reason." But may it not be answered, that a man may be altered by it, *for the better*; that his spirits may be exhilarated, without his reason being affected? On the general subject of drinking, however, I do not mean positively to take the other side. I am *dubius non improbus*.

In the evening, Sir Allan informed us that it was the custom of his house to have prayers every Sunday; and Miss M'Lean read the evening service, in which we all joined. I then read Ogden's second and ninth sermons on prayer, which, with their other distinguished excellence, have the merit of being short. Dr. Johnson said, that it was the most agreeable Sunday he had ever passed; and it made such an impression on his mind, that he afterwards wrote the following ode upon Inchkenneth:

INSULA SANCTI KENNETHI.

Parva quidem regio, sed religione priorum
Nota, Caledonias panditur intra aquas;
Voce ubi Cœmethus populos domuisse feroces.
Dicitur, et vanos dedocuisse deos.
Huc ego delatus placido per cœrula cursu
Scire locum volui quid daret ille novi.
Illic Leniades humili regnabat in aula,
Leniades magnis nobilitatus avis;
Una duas habuit casa cum genitore puellas,
Quas Amor undarum fingeret esse deas:
Non tamen inculti gelidis latere sub antris,
Accola Danubii qualia sævus habet;
Mollia non deerant vacuæ solatia vitæ,
Sive libros poscant otia, sive lyram.
Luxerat illa dies, legis gens docta supernæ
Spes hominum ac curas cum procul esse jubet.
Ponti inter strepitus sacri non munera cultus
Cessarunt; pietas hic quoque cura fuit:
Quid quod sacrifici versavit femina libros,
Legitimas faciunt pectora pura preces.
Quo vagor ulterius? quod ubique requiritur hic est;
Hic securâ quies, hic et honestus amor¹.

¹ [The sentiments of these lines are very beautiful, but many of the expressions are awkward: of this Johnson himself was so well aware, that although he did not send these verses to Boswell till Jan. 1775, he, even after that long pause, was still so little satisfied with them, that he made a great many amendments and additions, as will appear from the following copy of these verses, as printed from his *Works*. The variations are marked in italics.

INSULA KENNETHI, INTER HEBRIDAS.

Parva quidem regio, sed *religione* priorum
Clara Caledonias panditur inter aquas.
Voce ubi Cœmethus populos domuisse feroces
Dicitur, et vanos dedocuisse deos.
Huc ego delatus placido per cœrula cursu,
Scire *locus* volui quid daret *iste* novi.
Illic Leniades humili regnabat in aula,
Leniades, magnis nobilitatus avis.

Monday, 18th October.—We agreed to pass the day with Sir Allan, and he engaged to have every thing in order for our voyage to-morrow.

Being now soon to be separated from our amiable friend young *Col*, his merits were all remembered. At Ulva he had appeared in a new character, having given us a good prescription for a cold. On my mentioning him with warmth, Dr. Johnson said, "*Col* does every thing for us: we will erect a statue to *Col*." "Yes," said I, "and we will have him with his various attributes and characters, like Mercury, or any other of the heathen gods. We will have him as a pilot; we will have him as a fisherman, as a hunter, as a husbandman, as a physician."

I this morning took a spade, and dug a little grave in the floor of a ruined chapel², near Sir Allan M'Lean's house; in which I buried some human bones I found there. Dr. Johnson praised me for what I had done, though he owned he could not have done it. He showed in the chapel at Rascay his horreur at dead men's bones. He showed it again at *Col's* house. In the charter-room there was a remarkably large shin-bone, which was said to have been a

Una duas cepit casa cum genitore puellas,
Quas Amor undarum *crederet* esse deas.
Nec tamen inculti gelidis latere sub antris,
Accola Danubii qualia sævus habet.
Mollia non desunt vacuæ solatia vitæ,
Sive libros poscant otia, sive lyram.
Fulserat illa dies, legis *qua* docta supernæ
Spes hominum *et* curas *gens* procul esse jubet.
Ut precibus justas avertat numinis iras
Et summi accendat pectus amore boni.
Ponti inter strepitus non sacri munera cultus
Cessarunt, pietas hic quoque cura fuit.
Nil opus est æris sacra de turre sonantis
Admonitu, ipsa suas nunciat hora vices.
Quid, quod sacrifici versavit femina libros?
Sint pro legitimis pura labella sacris.
Quo vagor ulterius? quod ubique requiritur hic est,
Hic securâ quies, hic et honestus amor.

The reader will observe that most of these alterations are improvements. The alteration of the third line from the end, "*Legitimas faciunt*," is not happy; but will be explained hereafter (*post*, 2d Feb. 1775). It has been observed as strange, that so nice a critic as Johnson should have within six lines made the first syllable of *libros* both long and short. But Mr. Peel (to whom the observation was repeated) reminded the Editor, with happy readiness, that Horace had done the same:

"Curam redde brevem, si munus Apolline dignum
Vis complere *libris*, et vatibus addere calcar,
Ut studio majore petant *Helicon* virentem.
Multa quidem nobis facinus mala sæpe poetæ,
(Ut vineta egomet cædam mea) cùm tibi *librum*
Sollicito damus, aut fesso."

Epist. lib. 2, ep. i. v. 216.—Ed.]

² [Mr. Boswell does not tell us that he had visited this chapel the evening before; but Johnson says to Mrs. Thrale, "Boswell, who is very pious, went into it at night to perform his devotions, but came back in haste, for fear of spectres."—*Letters*, vol. i. p. 173.—Ed.]

bone of John Garve, one of the lairds. Dr. Johnson would not look at it, but started away.

At breakfast, I asked, "What is the reason that we are angry at a trader's having opulence?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the reason is (though I don't undertake to prove that there is a reason) we see no qualities in trade that should entitle a man to superiority. We are not angry at a soldier's getting riches, because we see that he possesses qualities which we have not. If a man returns from a battle, having lost one hand, and with the other full of gold, we feel that he deserves the gold; but we cannot think that a fellow, by sitting all day at a desk, is entitled to get above us." BOSWELL. "But, sir, may we not suppose a merchant to be a man of an enlarged mind, such as Addison in the Spectator describes Sir Andrew Freeport to have been?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, we may suppose any fictitious character. We may suppose a philosophical day-labourer, who is happy in reflecting that, by his labour, he contributes to the fertility of the earth, and to the support of his fellow-creatures; but we find no such philosophical day-labourer. A merchant may, perhaps, be a man of an enlarged mind; but there is nothing in trade connected with an enlarged mind."

I mentioned that I had heard Dr. Solander say he was a Swedish Laplander. JOHNSON. "Sir, I don't believe he is a Laplander. The Laplanders are not much above four feet high. He is as tall as you; and he has not the copper colour of a Laplander." BOSWELL. "But what motive could he have to make himself a Laplander?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he must either mean the word Laplander in a very extensive sense, or may mean a voluntary degradation of himself. 'For all my being the great man that you see me now, I was originally a barbarian;' as if Burke should say, 'I came over a wild Irishman'—which he might say in his present state of exaltation."

Having expressed a desire to have an island like Inchkeneth, Dr. Johnson set himself to think what would be necessary for a man in such a situation.

"Sir, I should build me a fortification, if I came to live here; for, if you have it not, what should hinder a parcel of ruffians

¹ [Daniel Charles Solander was born in the province of Nordland, in Sweden, in 1736; he came to England in 1760; became F. R. S. 1764. In 1768 he accompanied Sir Joseph Banks in his voyage with Captain Cook. He died one of the librarians of the British Museum, in 1782. The Biographical Dictionary says, that "he was a short fair man, rather fat, with small eyes, and good humoured expression of countenance."—ED.]

to land in the night, and carry off every thing you have in the house, which, in a remote country, would be more valuable than cows and sheep? add to all this the danger of having your throat cut." BOSWELL. "I would have a large dog." JOHNSON. "So you may, sir; but a large dog is of no use but to alarm." He, however, I apprehend, thinks too lightly of the power of that animal. I have heard him say, that he is afraid of no dog. "He would take him up by the hinder legs, which would render him quite helpless; and then knock his head against a stone, and beat out his brains." Topham Beauclerk told me, that at his house in the country, two large ferocious dogs were fighting². Dr. Johnson looked steadily at them for a little while; and then, as one would separate two little boys, who are foolishly hurting each other, he ran up to them, and cuffed their heads till he drove them asunder. But few men have his intrepidity, Herculean strength, or presence of mind. Most thieves or robbers would be afraid to encounter a mastiff.

I observed, that when young Col talked of the lands belonging to his family, he always said, "*my* lands." For this he had a plausible pretence; for he told me, there has been a custom in this family, that the laird resigns the estate to the eldest son when he comes of age, reserving to himself only a certain life-rent. He said, it was a voluntary custom; but I think I found an instance in the charter-room, that there was such an obligation in a contract of marriage. If the custom was voluntary, it was only curious; but if founded on obligation, it might be dangerous; for I have been told, that in Otaheité, whenever a child is born (a son, I think), the father loses his right to the estate and honours, and that this unnatural, or rather absurd custom, occasions the murder of many children.

Young Col told us he could run down a greyhound; "for," said he, "the dog runs himself out of breath, by going too quick, and then I get up with him."³ I accounted for his advantage over the dog, by remarking that Col had the faculty of reason, and knew how to moderate his pace, which the dog had not sense enough to do. Dr. Johnson said, "He is a noble animal. He is as complete an islander as the mind can figure. He is a farmer, a sailor, a hunter, a fisher: he will run you down a

² [See *post*, sub Feb. 1775, where this story is repeated.—ED.]

³ [This is not spoken of hare-coursing, where the game is taken or lost before the dog gets out of wind; but in chasing deer with the great Highland greyhound, Col's exploit is feasible enough.—WALTER SCOTT.]

dog: if any man has a *tail*¹, it is *Col*. He is hospitable; and he has an intrepidity of talk, whether he understands the subject or not. I regret that he is not more intellectual."

Dr. Johnson observed, that there was nothing of which he would not undertake to persuade a Frenchman in a foreign country. "I'll carry a Frenchman to St. Paul's churchyard, and I'll tell him, 'by our law you may walk half round the church; but, if you walk round the whole, you will be punished capitally;' and he will believe me at once. Now, no Englishman would readily swallow such a thing: he would go and inquire of somebody else." The Frenchman's credulity, I observed, must be owing to his being accustomed to implicit submission; whereas every Englishman reasons upon the laws of his country, and instructs his representatives, who compose the legislature.

This day was passed in looking at a small island adjoining Inchkenneth, which afforded nothing worthy of observation; and in such social and gay entertainments as our little society could furnish.

Tuesday, 19th October.—After breakfast we took leave of the young ladies, and of our excellent companion *Col*², to whom we had been so much obliged. He had now put us under the care of his chief; and was to hasten back to Sky. We parted from him with very strong feelings of kindness and gratitude, and we hoped to have had some future opportunity of proving to him the sincerity of what we felt; but in the following year he was unfortunately lost in the Sound between Ulva and Mull;

¹ [In allusion to Lord Monboddo's theory, that a perfect man would have a tail. See *ante*, p. 346.—ED.]

² [Just opposite to M'Quarrie's house the boat was swamped by the intoxication of the sailors, who had partaken too largely of M'Quarrie's wonted hospitality.—WALTER SCOTT. Johnson says in his *Journey*, "Here we had the last embrace of this amiable man, who, while these pages were preparing to attest his virtues, perished in the passage between Ulva and Inchkenneth."—*Works*, vol. viii. p. 391. The account given in the *Journey* of young Donald Maclean, made him a popular character. The *Laird of Col* is a character in O'Keefe's comedy, called *The Highland Reel*. Johnson writes from Lichfield, 13th June, 1775: "There is great lamentation here for poor *Col*;" and a review of the *Journey*, *Gent. Mag.* 1775, p. 86, thus concludes: "But whatever Dr. Johnson saw, whatever he described, will now be perpetuated; and though the buildings of Icolmkill are mouldering into dust, and the young Laird of Col is insensible of praise, readers yet unborn will feel their piety warmed by the ruins of Iona, and their sensibility touched by the untimely fate of the amiable Maclean."—ED.]

and this imperfect memorial, joined to the high honour of being tenderly and respectfully mentioned by Dr. Johnson, is the only return which the uncertainty of human events has permitted us to make to this deserving young man.

Sir Allan, who obligingly undertook to accompany us to Icolmkill, had a strong good boat, with four stout rowers. We coasted along Mull till we reached *Gribon*, where is what is called Mackiunon's cave, compared with which that at Ulinish is inconsiderable. It is in a rock of a great height, close to the sea. Upon the left of its entrance there is a cascade, almost perpendicular from the top to the bottom of the rock. There is a tradition that it was conducted thither artificially, to supply the inhabitants of the cave with water. Dr. Johnson gave no credit to this tradition. As, on the one hand, his faith in the Christian religion is firmly founded upon good grounds; so, on the other, he is incredulous when there is no sufficient reason for belief; being in this respect just the reverse of modern infidels, who, however nice and scrupulous in weighing the evidences of religion, are yet often so ready to believe the most absurd and improbable tales of another nature, that Lord Hailes well observed, a good essay might be written *Sur la Credulité des Incrédulés*.

The height of this cave I cannot tell with any tolerable exactness; but it seemed to be very lofty, and to be a pretty regular arch. We penetrated, by candlelight, a great way; by our measurement, no less than four hundred and eighty-five feet. Tradition says, that a piper and twelve men once advanced into this cave, nobody can tell how far³, and never returned. At the distance to which we proceeded the air was quite pure; for the candle burned freely, without the least appearance of the flame growing globular; but as we had only one, we thought it dangerous to venture farther, lest, should it have been extinguished, we should have had no means of ascertaining whether we could remain without danger. Dr. Johnson said, this was the greatest natural curiosity he had ever seen.

³ [There is little room for supposing that any person ever went farther into M'Kinnon's cave than any man may now go. Johnson's admiration of it seems exaggerated. A great number of the M'Kinnons, escaping from some powerful enemy, hid themselves in this cave till they could get over to the isle of Sky. It concealed themselves and their birlings, or boats, and they show M'Kinnon's harbour, M'Kinnon's dining-table, and other localities. M'Kinnon's candlestick was a fine piece of spar, destroyed by some traveller in the frantic rage for appropriation, with which tourists are sometimes animated.—WALTER SCOTT.]

We saw the island of Staffa, at no very great distance, but could not land upon it, the surge was so high on its rocky coast.

Sir Allan, anxious for the honour of Mull, was still talking of its woods, and pointing them out to Dr. Johnson, as appearing at a distance on the skirts of that island, as we sailed along. JOHNSON. "Sir, I saw at Tobermorie what they called a wood, which I unluckily took for *heath*. If you show me what I shall take for *furze*, it will be something."

In the afternoon we went ashore on the coast of Mull, and partook of a cold repast, which we carried with us. We hoped to have procured some rum or brandy for our boatmen and servants, from a public-house near where we landed; but unfortunately a funeral a few days before had exhausted all their store. Mr. Campbell, however, one of the Duke of Argyle's tacksmen, who lived in the neighbourhood, on receiving a message from Sir Allan, sent us a liberal supply.

We continued to coast along Mull, and passed by Nuns' Island, which, it is said, belonged to the nuns of Icolmkill, and from which, we were told, the stone for the buildings there was taken. As we sailed along by moonlight, in a sea somewhat rough, and often between black and gloomy rocks, Dr. Johnson said, "If this be not *roving among the Hebrides*, nothing is." The repetition of words which he had so often previously used made a strong impression on my imagination; and, by a natural course of thinking, led me to consider how our present adventures would appear to me at a future period.

I have often experienced, that scenes through which a man has passed improve by lying in the memory: they grow mellow. *Acti labores sunt jucundi*. This may be owing to comparing them with present listless ease. Even harsh scenes acquire a softness by length of time¹; and some are like very loud sounds, which do not please, or at least do not please so much, till you are removed to a certain distance. They may be compared to strong coarse pictures, which will not bear to be viewed near. Even pleasing scenes improve by time, and seem more exquisite in recollection, than when they were present; if they have not faded to dimness in the memory. Perhaps, there is so much evil in every human enjoyment, when present,

—so much dross mixed with it, that it requires to be refined by time; and yet I do not see why time should not melt away the good and the evil in equal proportions;—why the shade should decay, and the light remain in preservation.

After a tedious sail, which, by our following various turnings of the coast of Mull, was extended to about forty miles, it gave us no small pleasure to perceive a light in the village at Icolmkill, in which almost all the inhabitants of the island live, close to where the ancient building stood. As we approached the shore, the tower of the cathedral, just discernible in the air, was a picturesque object.

When we had landed upon the sacred place, which, as long as I can remember, I had thought on with veneration, Dr. Johnson and I cordially embraced. We had long talked of visiting Icolmkill; and, from the lateness of the season, were at times very doubtful whether we should be able to effect our purpose. To have seen it, even alone, would have given me great satisfaction; but the venerable scene was rendered much more pleasing by the company of my great and pious friend, who was no less affected by it than I was; and who has described the impressions it should make on the mind, with such strength of thought, and energy of language, that I shall quote his words, as conveying my own sensations much more forcibly than I am capable of doing:

"We were now treading that illustrious island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of *Marathon*, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of *Iona*²!"

Upon hearing that Sir Allan M'Lean was

¹ I have lately observed that this thought has been elegantly expressed by Cowley:

"Things which offend when present, and affright,
In memory, well painted, move delight."—BOSWELL.
[It is odd that Mr. Boswell, who had lately made so apt a quotation from the *Æneid*, should have forgotten the

"Forsan et hæc olim memmisse juvabit."—ED.]

² Had our Tour produced nothing else but this sublime passage, the world must have acknowledged that it was not made in vain. The present respectable President of the Royal Society [Sir Joseph Banks] was so much struck on reading it, that he clasped his hands together, and remained for some time in an attitude of silent admiration.—BOSWELL.

arrived, the inhabitants, who still consider themselves as the people of M'Lean, to whom the island formerly belonged, though the Duke of Argyle has at present possession of it, ran eagerly to him.

We were accommodated this night in a large barn, the island affording no lodging that we should have liked so well. Some good hay was strewed at one end of it, to form a bed for us, upon which we lay with our clothes on; and we were furnished with blankets from the village. Each of us had a portmanteau for a pillow. When I awaked in the morning, and looked round me, I could not help smiling at the idea of the chief of the M'Leans, the great English moralist, and myself, lying thus extended in such a situation.

Wednesday, 20th October.—Early in the morning, we surveyed the remains of antiquity at this place, accompanied by an illiterate fellow, as *cicerone*, who called himself a descendant of a cousin of Saint Columba, the founder of the religious establishment here. As I knew that many persons had already examined them, and as I saw Dr. Johnson inspecting and measuring several of the ruins of which he has since given so full an account, my mind was quiescent; and I resolved to stroll among them at my ease, to take no trouble to investigate minutely, and only receive the general impression of solemn antiquity, and the particular ideas of such objects as should of themselves strike my attention.

We walked from the monastery of nuns to the great church or cathedral, as they call it, along an old broken causeway. They told us that this had been a street, and that there were good houses built on each side. Dr. Johnson doubted if it was any thing more than a paved road for the nuns. The convent of monks, the great church, Oran's chapel, and four other chapels, are still to be discerned. But I must own that Icolmkill did not answer my expectations; for they were high, from what I had read of it, and still more from what I had heard and thought of it, from my earliest years. Dr. Johnson said it came up to his expectations, because he had taken his impression from an account of it subjoined to Saxeveverl's History of the Isle of Man, where it is said, there is not much to be seen here. We were both disappointed when we were shown what are called the monuments of the kings of Scotland, Ireland, and Denmark, and of a king of France. There are only some grave-stones flat on the earth, and we could see no inscriptions. How far short was this of marble monuments, like those in Westminster-Abbey, which I had imagined here! The grave-stones of Sir Allan M'Lean's family, and of that of M'Quarrie, had as good an

appearance as the royal grave-stones, if they were royal; we doubted.

My easiness to give credit to what I heard in the course of our Tour was too great. Dr. Johnson's peculiar accuracy of investigation detected much traditional fiction, and many gross mistakes. It is not to be wondered at that he was provoked by people carelessly telling him, with the utmost readiness and confidence, what he found, on questioning them a little more, was erroneous. Of this there were innumerable instances!

I left him and Sir Allan at breakfast in our barn, and stole back again to the cathedral, to indulge in solitude and devout meditation. While contemplating the venerable ruins, I reflected with much satisfaction, that the solemn scenes of piety never lose their sanctity and influence, though the cares and follies of life may prevent us from visiting them, or may even make us fancy that their effects are only "as yesterday, when it is past," and never again to be perceived. I hoped that, ever after having been in this holy place, I should maintain an exemplary conduct. One has a strange propensity to fix upon some point of time from whence a better course of life may begin.

Being desirous to visit the opposite shore of the island, where Saint Columba is said to have landed, I procured a horse from one M'Ginnis, who ran along as my guide. The M'Ginnises are said to be a branch of the clan of M'Lean. Sir Allan had been told that this man had refused to send him some rum, at which the knight was in great indignation. "You rascal!" said he, "do n't you know that I can hang you, if I please?" Not adverting to the chieftain's power over his clan, I imagined that Sir Allan had known of some capital crime that the fellow had committed, which he could discover, and so get him condemned; and said, "How so?"—"Why," said Sir Allan, "are they not all my people?" Sensible of my inadvertency, and most willing to contribute what I could towards the continuation of feudal authority, "Very true," said I. Sir Allan went on: "Refuse to send rum to me, you rascal! Do n't you know that if I order you to go and cut a man's throat, you are to do it?"—"Yes, an't please your honour! and my own too, and hang myself too." The poor fellow denied that he had refused to send the rum. His making these professions was not merely a pretence in presence of his chief; for after he and I were out of Sir Allan's hearing, he told me, "Had he sent his dog for the rum, I would have given it: I would cut my bones for him." It was very remarkable to find such

¹ [See *post*, 7th Feb. 1775.—ED.]

an attachment to a chief, though he had then no connexion with the island, and had not been there for fourteen years. Sir Allan, by way of upbraiding the fellow, said, "I believe you are a *Campbell*."

The place which I went to see is about two miles from the village. They call it Portawherry, from the wherry in which Columba came; though, when they show the length of his vessel, as marked on the beach by two heaps of stones, they say, "Here is the length of the *Currach*," using the Erse word.

Icolmkill is a fertile island. The inhabitants export some cattle and grain; and I was told they import nothing but iron and salt. They are industrious, and make their own woollen and linen cloth; and they brew a good deal of beer, which we did not find in any of the other islands.

We set sail again about mid-day, and in the evening landed on Mull, near the house of the Reverend Mr. Neal Macleod, who having been informed of our coming, by a message from Sir Allan, came out to meet us. We were this night very agreeably entertained at his house. Dr. Johnson observed to me that he was the cleanest-headed¹ man that he had met with in the Western Islands. He seemed to be well acquainted with Dr. Johnson's writings, and courteously said, "I have been often obliged to you, though I never had the pleasure of seeing you before."

He told us he had lived for some time in St. Kilda, under the tuition of the minister or catechist there, and had there first read Horace and Virgil. The scenes which they describe must have been a strong contrast to the dreary waste around him.

Thursday, 21st October.—This morning the subject of politics was introduced. JOHNSON. "Pulteney was as paltry a fellow as could be. He was a whig who pretended to be honest; and you know it is ridiculous for a whig to pretend to be honest. He cannot hold it out²." He called Mr. Pitt a meteor; Sir Robert Walpole a fixed star. He said, "It is wonderful to think that all the force of government was required to prevent Wilkes from being chosen the chief magistrate of London, though the livery-men knew he would rob their shops,—knew he would debauch their daughters³."

¹ [*Quere clearest?* but it is *cleanest* in all the editions. Dr. Johnson, if he said *cleanest* meant freest from prejudice; but it has an odd sound in juxtaposition with the *head* of a Highlander.—Ed.]

² [See *ante*, p. 299.—Ed.]

³ [I think it incumbent on me to make some observation on this strong satirical sally on my classical companion, Mr. Wilkes. Reporting it lately from memory, in his presence, I expressed it thus:—"They knew he would rob their

BOSWELL. "The History of England is so strange that, if it were not so well vouched as it is, it would hardly be credible." JOHNSON. "Sir, if it were told as shortly, and with as little preparation for introducing the different events, as the History of the Jewish Kings, it would be equally liable to objections of improbability." Mr. Macleod was much pleased with the justice and novelty of the thought. Dr. Johnson illustrated what he had said as follows: "Take, as an instance, Charles the First's concessions to his parliament, which were greater and greater, in proportion as the parliament grew more insolent, and less deserving of trust. Had these concessions been related nakedly, without any detail of the circumstances which generally led to them, they would not have been believed."

Sir Allan Maclean bragged, that Scotland had the advantage of England, by its having more water. JOHNSON. "Sir, we would not have your water, to take the vile bogs which produce it. You have too much! A man who is drowned has more water than either of us;"—and then he laughed. (But this was surely robust sophistry: for the people of taste in England, who have seen Scotland, own that its variety of rivers and lakes makes it naturally more beautiful than England, in that respect.) Pursuing his victory over Sir Allan, he proceeded: "Your country consists of two things, stone and water. There is, indeed, a little earth above the stone in some places, but a very little; and the stone is always appearing. It is like a man in rags—the naked skin is still peeping out."

He took leave of Mr. Macleod, saying, "Sir, I thank you for your entertainment, and your conversation."

shops, if he durst; they knew he would debauch their daughters, if he could;" which, according to the French phrase, may be said *rencherir* on Dr. Johnson; but on looking into my Journal, I found it as above, and would by no means make any addition. Mr. Wilkes received both readings with a good humour that I cannot enough admire. Indeed both he and I (as, with respect to myself, the reader has more than once had occasion to observe in the course of this Journal) are too fond of a *bon mot*, not to relish it, though we should be ourselves the object of it. Let me add, in justice to the gentleman here mentioned, that, at a subsequent period, he was elected chief magistrate of London, and discharged the duties of that high office with great honour to himself, and advantage to the city. Some years before Dr. Johnson died, I was fortunate enough to bring him and Mr. Wilkes together; the consequence of which was, that they were ever afterwards on easy and not unfriendly terms. The particulars I shall have great pleasure in relating hereafter.—BOSWELL. [*Post*, 15th May, 1776, 8th May, 1781, and 21st May, 1783.—Ed.]

Mr. Campbell, who had been so polite yesterday, came this morning on purpose to breakfast with us, and very obligingly furnished us horses to proceed on our journey to Mr. M'Lean's of Lochbuy, where we were to pass the night. We dined at the house of Dr. Alexander M'Lean, another physician in Mull, who was so much struck with the uncommon conversation of Dr. Johnson, that he observed to me, "This man is just a *hogshead* ¹ of sense."

Dr. Johnson said of the "Turkish Spy," which lay in the room, that it told nothing but what every body might have known at that time; and that what was good in it did not pay you for the trouble of reading to find it.

After a very tedious ride, through what appeared to me the most gloomy and desolate country I had ever beheld, we arrived, between seven and eight o'clock, at Moy, the seat of the Laird of Lochbuy. *Buy*, in Erse, signifies yellow, and I at first imagined that the loch or branch of the sea here was thus denominated, in the same manner as the *Red Sea*; but I afterwards learned that it derived its name from a hill above it, which, being of a yellowish hue, has the epithet of *Buy*.

We had heard much of *Lochbuy's* being a great roaring braggadocio, a kind of Sir John Falstaff, both in size and manners; but we found that they had swelled him up to a fictitious size, and clothed him with imaginary qualities. *Col's* idea of him was equally extravagant, though very different: he told us, he was quite a Don Quixote; and said, he would give a great deal to see him and Dr. Johnson together. The truth is, that *Lochbuy* proved to be only a bluff, comely, noisy old gentleman, proud of his hereditary consequence, and a very hearty and hospitable landlord. Lady *Lochbuy* was sister to Sir Allan M'Lean, but much older. He said to me, "They are quite *Antediluvians*." Being told that Dr. Johnson did not hear well, *Lochbuy* bawled out to him, "Are you of the Johnstons of Glencero, or of Ardnamurchan?" Dr. Johnson gave him a significant look, but made no answer; and I told *Lochbuy* that he was not Johnstone, but Johnson, and that he was an Englishman.²

¹ [A metaphor which might rather have been expected from M'Quarrie than the Doctor; but the editor believes that it is a common northern expression to signify great capacity of intellect.—ED.]

² [Boswell totally misapprehended *Lochbuy's* meaning. There are two septes of the powerful clan of M'Donald, who are called Mac-Ian, that is *John'son*; and as Highlanders often translate their names when they go to the Lowlands,—as Gregor-son for Mac-Gregor, Farquhar-son for Farquhar,—*Lochbuy* supposed that Dr. Johnson

Lochbuy some years ago tried to prove himself a weak man, liable to imposition, or, as we term it in Scotland, a *facile* man, in order to set aside a lease which he had granted; but failed in the attempt. On my mentioning this circumstance to Dr. Johnson, he seemed much surprised that such a suit was admitted by the Scottish law, and observed, that "in England no man is allowed to *stultify* himself."³

Sir Allan, *Lochbuy*, and I, had the conversation chiefly to ourselves to-night. Dr. Johnson, being extremely weary, went to bed soon after supper.

Friday, 22d October.—Before Dr. Johnson came to breakfast, Lady *Lochbuy* said, "he was a *duncheon* of wit;" a very common phrase in Scotland to express a profoundness of intellect, though he afterwards told me, that he never had heard it⁴. She proposed that he should have some cold sheep's head for breakfast. Sir Allan seemed displeas'd at his sister's vulgarity, and wonder'd how such a thought should come into her head. From a mischievous love of sport, I took the lady's part; and very gravely said, "I think it is but fair to give him an offer of it. If he does not choose it, he may let it alone." "I think so," said the lady, looking at her brother with an air of victory. Sir Allan, finding the matter desperate, strutted about the room, and took snuff. When Dr. Johnson came in, she called to him, "Do you choose any cold sheep's head, sir?" "No, madam," said he, with a tone of surprise and anger⁵. "It is here, sir," said she, supposing he

might be one of the Mac-Ians of Ardnamurchan, or of Glencero. Boswell's explanation was nothing to the purpose. The *Johnstons* are a clan distinguished in Scottish border history, and as brave as any *Highland* clan that ever wore brogues; but they lay entirely out of *Lochbuy's* knowledge—nor was he thinking of them.—WALTER SCOTT.]

³ This maxim, however, has been controverted. See "Blackstone's Commentaries," vol. ii. p. 292; and the authorities there quoted.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [It is also common in the north of Ireland, and is somewhat more emphatic than the eulogy in a former page, of being a *hogshead* of sense.—ED.]

⁵ [Begg'ing pardon of the Doctor and his conductor, I have often seen and partaken of cold sheep's head at as good breakfast-tables as ever they sat at. This protest is something in the manner of the late Culrossie, who fought a duel for the honour of Aberdeen butter. I have passed over all the Doctor's other reproaches upon Scotland, but the sheep's head I will defend *totis viribus*. Dr. Johnson himself must have forgiven my zeal on this occasion; for if, as he says, *dinner* be the thing of which a man thinks *offenest during the day*, breakfast must be that of which he thinks *first in the morning*.—WALTER SCOTT.]

had refused it to save the trouble of bringing it in. They thus went on at cross purposes, till he confirmed his refusal in a manner not to be misunderstood; while I sat quietly by, and enjoyed my success.

After breakfast, we surveyed the old castle, in the pit or dungeon of which *Lochbuy* had some years before taken upon him to imprison several persons; and though he had been fined in a considerable sum by the Court of Justiciary, he was so little affected by it, that while we were examining the dungeon, he said to me, with a smile, "Your father knows something of this;" (alluding to my father's having sat as one of the judges on his trial). Sir Allan whispered me, that the laird could not be persuaded that he had lost his heritable jurisdiction¹.

We then set out for the ferry, by which we were to cross to the main land of Argyleshire. *Lochbuy* and Sir Allan accompanied us. We were told much of a war-saddle, on which this reputed Don Quixote used to be mounted; but we did not see it, for the young laird had applied it to a less noble purpose, having taken it to Falkirk *far with a drove of black cattle*.

We bade adieu to *Lochbuy*, and to our very kind conductor, Sir Allan M'Lean, on the shore of Mull, and then got into the ferry-boat, the bottom of which was strewed with branches of trees or bushes, upon which we sat. We had a good day and a fine passage, and in the evening landed at Oban, where we found a tolerable inn. After having been so long confined at different times in islands, from which it was always uncertain when we could get away, it was comfortable to be now on the main

¹ [Sir Allan Maelean, like many Highland chiefs, was embarrassed in his private affairs, and exposed to unpleasant solicitations from attorneys, called in Scotland, *writers* (which, indeed, was the chief motive of his retiring to Inchkenneth). Upon one occasion he made a visit to a friend, then residing at Carron lodge, on the banks of the Carron, where the banks of that river are studded with pretty villas; Sir Allan, admiring the landscape, asked his friend, whom that handsome seat belonged to. "M——, the writer to the signet," was the reply. "Umph!" said Sir Allan, but not with an accent of assent, "I mean that other house." "Oh! that belongs to a very honest fellow, Jamie ——, also a writer to the signet." "Umph!" said the Highland chief of M'Lean, with more emphasis than before. "And yon smaller house?" "That belongs to a Stirling man; I forget his name, but I am sure he is a writer, too, for ——." Sir Allan, who had recoiled a quarter of a circle backward at every response, now wheeled the circle entire, and turned his back on the landscape, saying, "My good friend, I must own, you have a pretty situation here; but d—n your neighbourhood."—
WALTER SCOTT.]

land, and to know that, if in health, we might get to any place in Scotland or England in a certain number of days.

Here we discovered from the conjectures which were formed, that the people on the main land were entirely ignorant of our motions; for in a Glasgow newspaper we found a paragraph, which, as it contains a just and well-turned compliment to my illustrious friend, I shall here insert:

"We are well assured that Dr. Johnson is confined by tempestuous weather to the isle of Sky; it being unsafe to venture in a small boat upon such a stormy surge as is very common there at this time of the year. Such a philosopher, detained on an almost barren island, resembles a whale left upon the strand. The latter will be welcome to every body, on account of his oil, his bone, &c., and the other will charm his companions, and the rude inhabitants, with his superior knowledge and wisdom, calm resignation, and unbounded benevolence."

Saturday, 23d October.—After a good night's rest, we breakfasted at our leisure. We talked of Goldsmith's Traveller, of which Dr. Johnson spoke highly; and, while I was helping him on with his great coat, he repeated from it the character of the British nation, which he did with such energy, that the tear started into his eye:

"Stern o'er each bosom reason holds her state,
With daring aims irregularly great,
Pride in their port, defiance in their eye,
I see the lords of humankind pass by,
Intent on high designs, a thoughtful band,
By forms unfashion'd, fresh from nature's hand;
Fierce in their native hardness of soul,
True to imagined right, above control,
While even the peasant boasts these rights to scan,
And learns to venerate himself as man²."

We could get but one bridle here, which, according to the maxim *detur digniori*, was appropriated to Dr. Johnson's sheltie. I and Joseph rode with halters. We crossed in a ferry-boat a pretty wide lake, and on the farther side of it, close by the shore, found a hut for our inn. We were much wet. I changed my clothes in part, and was at pains to get myself well dried. Dr. Johnson resolutely kept on all his clothes, wet as they were, letting them steam before the smoky turf fire. I thought him in the wrong; but his firmness was, perhaps, a species of heroism.

² [Miss Reynolds, in her *Recollections*, says that Johnson *told her* that he had written these lines for Goldsmith; but this is another instance of the inaccuracy of even the most plausible witnesses.—See *ante*, p. 226. Johnson was fond of repeating these beautiful lines, and his having done so to Miss Reynolds, no doubt, led to her mistake: he was incapable of any such deceit.—
Ed.]

I remember but little of our conversation. I mentioned Shenstone's saying of Pope, that he had the art of condensing sense more than any body. Dr. Johnson said, "It is not true, sir. There is more sense in a line of Cowley than in a page (or a sentence, or ten lines—I am not quite certain of the very phrase) of Pope." He maintained that Archibald, Duke of Argyle, was a narrow man. I wondered at this; and observed, that his building so great a house at Inverary was not like a narrow man. "Sir," said he, "when a narrow man has resolved to build a house, he builds it like another man. But Archibald, Duke of Argyle, was narrow in his ordinary expenses, in his quotidian expenses¹."

The distinction is very just. It is in the ordinary expenses of life that a man's liberality or narrowness is to be discovered. I never heard the word *quotidiani* in this sense, and I imagined it to be a word of Dr. Johnson's own fabrication; but I have since found it in Young's Night Thoughts (Night fifth),

"Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey,"

and in my friend's Dictionary, supported by the authorities of Charles I. and Dr. Donne.

It rained very hard as we journeyed on after dinner. The roar of torrents from the mountains, as we passed along in the dusk, and the other circumstances attending our ride this evening, have been mentioned with so much animation by Dr. Johnson, that I shall not attempt to say any thing on the subject.

We got at night to Inverary, where we found an excellent inn. Even here, Dr. Johnson would not change his wet clothes.

The prospect of good accommodation cheered us much. We supped well; and after supper, Dr. Johnson, whom I had not seen taste any fermented liquor during all our travels, called for a gill of whisky. "Come," said he, "let me know what it is that makes a Scotchman happy!" He drank it all but a drop, which I begged leave to pour into my glass, that I might say we had drunk whisky together. I proposed Mrs. Thrale should be our toast. He would not have *her* drunk in whisky, but rather "some insular lady;" so we drank one of the ladies whom we had lately left. He owned to-night, that he got as good a room and bed as at an English inn.

I had here the pleasure of finding a letter from home, which relieved me from the anxiety I had suffered, in consequence of not having received any account of my family

for many weeks. I also found a letter from Mr. Garrick, which was a regale as agreeable as a pine-apple would be in a desert. He had favoured me with his correspondence for many years; and when Dr. Johnson and I were at Inverness, I had written to him as follows:

"MR. BOSWELL TO DAVID GARRICK, ESQ.
LONDON.

"Inverness, Sunday, 29th August, 1775.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Here I am, and Mr. Samuel Johnson actually with me. We were a night at Fores, in coming to which, in the dusk of the evening, we passed over the bleak and blasted heath where Macbeth met the witches. Your old preceptor repeated, with much solemnity, the speech,

'How far is 't called to Fores? What are these, So withered and so wild in their attire,' &c.

This day we visited the ruins of Macbeth's castle at Inverness. I have had great romantick satisfaction in seeing Johnson upon the classical scenes of Shakspeare in Scotland; which I really looked upon as almost as improbable as that 'Birnam wood should come to Dunsinane.' Indeed, as I have always been accustomed to view him as a permanent London object, it would not be much more wonderful to me to see St. Paul's church moving along where we now are. As yet we have travelled in postchaises; but to-morrow we are to mount on horseback, and ascend into the mountains by Fort Augustus, and so on to the ferry, where we are to cross to Sky. We shall see that island fully, and then visit some more of the Hebrides; after which we are to land in Argyleshire, proceed by Glasgow to Auchinleck, repose there a competent time, and then return to Edinburgh, from whence the Rambler will depart for old England again, as soon as he finds it convenient. Hitherto we have had a very prosperous expedition. I flatter myself, *servetur ad imum, qualis ab incepto processerit*. He is in excellent spirits, and I have a rich journal of his conversation. Look back, *Davy*², to Lichfield; run up through the time that has elapsed since you first knew Mr. Johnson, and enjoy with me his present extraordinary tour. I could not resist the impulse of writing to you from this place. The situation of the old castle corresponds exactly to Shakspeare's description. While we were there to-day, it happened oddly, that a raven perched upon one of the chimney-tops, and croaked. Then I in my turn repeated—

¹ [This information Johnson, no doubt, derived through his early friends, the Misses Cotterel, who were acquaintances of the widow of Duke Archibald's predecessor.—See *ante*. p. 104.—ED.]

² I took the liberty of giving this familiar appellation to my celebrated friend, to bring in a more lively manner to his remembrance the period when he was Dr. Johnson's pupil.—BOSWELL.

‘The raven himself is hoarse,
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.’

‘I wish you had been with us. Think what enthusiastick happiness I shall have to see Mr. Samuel Johnson walking among the romantick rocks and woods of my ancestors at Auchinleck! Write to me at Edinburgh. You owe me his verses on great George and tuneful Cibber, and the bad verses which led him to make his fine ones on Philips the musician. Keep your promise, and let me have them. I offer my very best compliments to Mrs. Garrick, and ever am your warm admirer and friend,

“JAMES BOSWELL.”

His answer was as follows.

“MR. GARRICK TO MR. BOSWELL, EDINBURGH.

Hampton, 14th September, 1773.

“DEAR SIR,—You stole away from London, and left us all in the lurch; for we expected you one night at the club, and knew nothing of your departure. Had I paid you what I owed you for the book you bought for me, I should only have grieved for the loss of your company, and slept with a quiet conscience; but, wounded as it is, it must remain so till I see you again, though I am sure our good friend Mr. Johnson will discharge the debt for me, if you will let him. Your account of your journey to Fores, the *raven*, *old castle*, &c. &c. made me half mad. Are you not rather too late in the year for fine weather, which is the life and soul of seeing places? I hope your pleasure will continue *qualis ab incepto*, &c.”

“Your friend ——¹ threatens me much. I only wish that he would put his threats in execution, and, if he prints his play, I will forgive him. I remember he complained to you that his bookseller called for the money for some copies of his [*Lusiad*], which I subscribed for, and that I desired him to call again. The truth is, that my

¹ I have suppressed my friend’s name from an apprehension of wounding his sensibility; but I would not withhold from my readers a passage which shows Mr. Garrick’s mode of writing as the manager of a theatre, and contains a pleasing trait of his domestick life. His judgment of dramattick pieces, so far as concerns their exhibition on the stage, must be allowed to have considerable weight. But from the effect which a perusal of the tragedy here condemned had upon myself, and from the opinions of some eminent critics, I venture to pronounce that it has much poetical merit; and its author has distinguished himself by several performances which show that the epithet *poetaster* was, in the present instance, much misapplied.—BOSWELL. [The author was Mickle: see *ante*, 303.—ED.]

wife was not at home, and that for weeks together I have not ten shillings in my pocket. However, had it been otherwise, it was not so great a crime to draw his poetical vengeance upon me. I despise all that he can do, and am glad that I can so easily get rid of him and his ingratitude. I am hardened both to abuse and ingratitude.

“You, I am sure, will no more recommend your poetasters to my civility and good offices.

“Shall I recommend to you a play of Eschylus (the Prometheus), published and translated by poor old Morell, who is a good scholar, and an acquaintance of mine? It will be but half-a-guinea, and your name shall be put in the list I am making for him. You will be in very good company.

“Now for the epitaphs!

(*This refers to the epitaph on Philips, and the verses on George the Second, and Colley Cibber, as his poet laureat, for which see ante, p. 58.*)

“I have no more paper, or I should have said more to you. My love and respects to Mr. Johnson. Yours ever,

“D. GARRICK.

“I can’t write. I have the gout in my hand.”

Sunday, 24th October.—We passed the forenoon calmly and placidly. I prevailed on Dr. Johnson to read aloud Ogden’s sixth Sermon on Prayer, which he did with a distinct expression, and pleasing solemnity. He praised my favourite preacher, his elegant language, and remarkable acuteness; and said, he fought infidels with their own weapons.

As a specimen of Ogden’s manner, I insert the following passage from the sermon which Dr. Johnson now read. The preacher, after arguing against that vain philosophy which maintains, in conformity with the hard principle of eternal necessity, or unchangeable predetermination, that the only effect of prayer for others, although we are exhorted to pray for them, is to produce good dispositions in ourselves towards them, thus expresses himself:

“A plain man may be apt to ask, But if this then, though enjoined in the Holy Scriptures, is to be my real aim and intention, when I am taught to pray for other persons, why is it that I do not plainly so express it? Why is not the form of the petition brought nearer to the meaning? Give them, say I to our heavenly Father, what is good. But this, I am to understand, will be as it will be, and is not for me to alter. What is it then that I am doing? I am desiring to become charitable myself; and why may I not plainly say so? Is there shame in it, or impiety? The wish is laudable: why should I form designs to hide it?

“Or is it, perhaps, better to be brought about by indirect means, and in this artful manner? Alas! who is it that I would impose on? From whom can it be, in this commerce, that I desire to hide any thing? When, as my Saviour commands me, I have ‘entered into my closet, and shut my door,’ there are but two parties privy to my devotions, God and my own heart: which of the two am I deceiving?”

He wished to have more books, and, upon inquiring if there were any in the house, was told that a waiter had some, which were brought to him; but I recollect none of them, except Hervey’s Meditations. He thought slightly of this admired book. He treated it with ridicule, and would not allow even the scene of the dying husband and father to be pathetick. I am not an impartial judge; for Hervey’s Meditations engaged my affections in my early years. He read a passage concerning the moon, ludicrously, and showed how easily he could, in the same style, make reflections on that planet, the very reverse of Hervey’s, representing her as treacherous to mankind. He did this with much humour; but I have not preserved the particulars. He then indulged a playful fancy, in making a Meditation on a Pudding, of which I hastily wrote down, in his presence, the following note; which, though imperfect, may serve to give my readers some idea of it.

“MEDITATION ON A PUDDING.

“Let us seriously reflect of what a pudding is composed. It is composed of flour that once waved in the golden grain, and drank the dews of the morning; of milk pressed from the swelling udder by the gentle hand of the beauteous milk-maid, whose beauty and innocence might have recommended a worse draught; who, while she stroked the udder, indulged no ambitious thoughts of wandering in palaces, formed no plans for the destruction of her fellow-creatures: milk, which is drawn from the cow, that useful animal, that eats the grass of the field, and supplies us with that which made the greatest part of the food of mankind in the age which the poets have agreed to call golden. It is made with an egg, that miracle of nature, which the theoretical Burnet has compared to creation. An egg contains water within its beautiful smooth surface; and an unformed mass, by the incubation of the parent, becomes a regular animal, furnished with bones and sinews, and covered with feathers. Let us consider: can there be more wanting to complete the meditation on a pudding? If more is wanting, more may be found. It contains salt, which keeps the sea from putrefaction: salt, which is made the image of intellectual excellence, contributes to the formation of a pudding.”

In a Magazine I found a saying of Dr. Johnson’s, something to this purpose; that the happiest part of a man’s life is what he passes lying awake in bed in the morning. I read it to him. He said, “I may, perhaps, have said this; for nobody, at times, talks more laxly than I do.” I ventured to suggest to him, that this was dangerous from one of his authority.

I spoke of living in the country, and upon what footing one should be with neighbours. I observed that some people were afraid of being on too easy a footing with them, from an apprehension that their time would not be their own. He made the obvious remark, that it depended much on what kind of neighbours one has, whether it was desirable to be on an easy footing with them or not. I mentioned a certain baronet, who told me he never was happy in the country, till he was not on speaking terms with his neighbours, which he contrived in different ways to bring about. “Lord ———,” said he, “stuck along; but at last the fellow pounded my pigs, and then I got rid of him.” JOHNSON. “Nay, sir, my lord got rid of Sir John, and showed how little he valued him, by putting his pigs in the pound.”

I told Dr. Johnson I was in some difficulty how to act at Inverary. I had reason to think that the Duchess of Argyle disliked me, on account of my zeal in the Douglas cause¹; but the Duke of Argyle² had always been pleased to treat me with great civility. They were now at the castle, which is a very short walk from our inn; and the question was, whether I should go and pay my respects there. Dr. Johnson, to whom I had stated the case, was clear that I ought; but, in his usual way, he was very shy of discovering a desire to be invited there himself. Though from a conviction of the benefit of subordination to society, he has always shown great respect to persons of high rank, when he happened to be in their company, yet his pride of character has ever made him guard against any appearance of courting the great. Besides, he was impatient to go to Glasgow, where he expected letters.

¹ [Elizabeth Gunning, celebrated (like her sister, Lady Coventry) for her personal charms, had been previously Duchess of Hamilton, and was mother of Douglas, Duke of Hamilton, the competitor for the Douglas property with the late Lord Douglas: she was, of course, prejudiced against Boswell, who had shown all the bustling importance of his character in the Douglas cause, and it was said, I know not on what authority, that he headed the mob which broke the windows of some of the judges, and of Lord Auchinleck, his father, in particular.—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [John, 5th Duke of Argyll, who died in 1806, ætat. 83, the senior officer of the British army.—ED.]

At the same time he was, I believe, secretly not unwilling to have attention paid him by so great a chieftain, and so exalted a nobleman. He insisted that I should not go to the castle this day before dinner, as it would look like seeking an invitation. "But," said I, "if the duke invites us to dine with him to-morrow, shall we accept?" "Yes, sir," I think he said, "to be sure." But he added, "He won't ask us!" I mentioned, that I was afraid my company might be disagreeable to the duchess. He treated this objection with a manly disdain: "*That*, sir, he must settle with his wife." We dined well. I went to the castle just about the time when I supposed the ladies would be retired from dinner. I sent in my name; and, being shown in, found the amiable duke sitting at the head of his table with several gentlemen. I was most politely received, and gave his grace some particulars of the curious journey which I had been making with Dr. Johnson. When we rose from table, the duke said to me, "I hope you and Dr. Johnson will dine with us to-morrow." I thanked his grace; but told him, my friend was in a great hurry to get back to London. The duke, with a kind complacency, said, "He will stay one day; and I will take care he shall see this place to advantage." I said, I should be sure to let him know his grace's invitation. As I was going away, the duke said, "Mr. Boswell, won't you have some tea?" I thought it best to get over the meeting with the duchess this night; so respectfully agreed. I was conducted to the drawing-room by the duke, who announced my name; but the duchess, who was sitting with her daughter, Lady Betty Hamilton¹, and some other ladies, took not the least notice of me. I should have been mortified at being thus coldly received by a lady of whom I, with the rest of the world, have always entertained a very high admiration, had I not been consoled by the obliging attention of the duke.

When I returned to the inn, I informed Dr. Johnson of the Duke of Argyle's invitation, with which he was much pleased, and readily accepted of it. We talked of a violent contest which was then carrying on, with a view to the next general election for Ayrshire; where one of the candidates, in order to undermine the old and established interest, had artfully held himself out as a champion for the independency of the county against aristocratick influence, and had persuaded several gentlemen into a resolution to oppose every candidate who was supported by peers. "Foolish fellows!" said Dr. Johnson, "don't they see that they are as much dependent upon the

peers one way as the other? The peers have but to oppose a candidate, to ensure him success. It is said, the only way to make a pig go forward is to pull him back by the tail. These people must be treated like pigs."

Monday, 25th October.—My acquaintance, the Rev. Mr. John M'Aulay, one of the ministers of Inverary, and brother to our good friend at Calder, came to us this morning, and accompanied us to the castle, where I presented Dr. Johnson to the Duke of Argyle. We were shown through the house; and I never shall forget the impression made upon my fancy by some of the ladies' maids tripping about in neat morning dresses. After seeing for a long time little but rusticity, their lively manner, and gay inviting appearance, pleased me so much, that I thought, for the moment, I could have been a knight-errant for them².

We then got into a low one-horse chair, ordered for us by the duke, in which we drove about the place. Dr. Johnson was much struck by the grandeur and elegance of this princely seat. He thought, however, the castle too low, and wished it had been a story higher. He said, "What I admire here, is the total defiance of expense." I had a particular pride in showing him a great number of fine old trees, to compensate for the nakedness which had made such an impression on him on the eastern coast of Scotland.

When we came in, before dinner, we found the duke and some gentlemen in the hall. Dr. Johnson took much notice of the large collection of arms, which are excellently disposed there. I told what he had said to Sir Alexander M'Donald, of his ancestors not suffering their arms to rust. "Well," said the Doctor, "but let us be glad we live in times when arms *may* rust. We can sit to-day at his grace's table, without any risk of being attacked, and perhaps sitting down again wounded or maimed." The duke placed Dr. Johnson next himself at table. I was in fine spirits; and though sensible that I had the misfortune of not being in favour with the duchess, I was not in the least disconcerted, and offered her grace some of the dish that was before me. It must be owned that I was in the right to be quite unconcerned, if I could. I was the Duke of Argyle's guest; and I had no reason to suppose that he adopted the prejudices and resentments of the Duchess of Hamilton.

I knew it was the rule of modern high life not to drink to any body; but, that I might have the satisfaction for once to look

¹ On reflection, at the distance of several years, I wonder that my venerable fellow-traveller should have read this passage without censuring my levity.—BOSWELL.

¹ [Afterwards Countess of Derby.—Ed.]

the duchess in the face, with a glass in my hand, I with a respectful air addressed her, "My Lady Duchess, I have the honour to drink your grace's good health." I repeated the words audibly, and with a steady countenance. This was, perhaps, rather too much; but some allowance must be made for human feelings.

The duchess was very attentive to Dr. Johnson. I know not how a *middle state* came to be mentioned. Her grace wished to hear him on that point. "Madam," said he, "your own relation, Mr. Archibald Campbell, can tell you better about it than I can. He was a bishop of the nonjuring communion, and wrote a book upon the subject¹." He engaged to get it for her grace. He afterwards gave a full history of Mr. Archibald Campbell, which I am sorry I do not recollect particularly. He said, Mr. Campbell had been bred a violent whig, but afterwards "kept *better company*, and became a tory." He said this with a smile, in pleasant allusion, as I thought, to the opposition between his own political principles and those of the duke's clan. He added that Mr. Campbell, after the revolution², was thrown into gaol on account of his tenets; but, on application by letter to the old Lord Townshend, was released: that he always spoke of his lordship with great gratitude, saying, "Though a *whig*, he had humanity."

Dr. Johnson and I passed some time together, in June, 1784, at Pembroke college, Oxford, with the Rev. Dr. Adams, the master; and I having expressed a regret that my note relative to Mr. Archibald Camp-

bell was imperfect, he was then so good as to write with his own hand, on the blank page of my journal, opposite to that which contains what I have now mentioned, the following paragraph; which, however, is not quite so full as the narrative he gave at Inverary:—

"The Honourable Archibald Campbell was, I believe, the nephew³ of the Marquis of Argyle. He began life by engaging in Monmouth's rebellion, and, to escape the law, lived some time in Surinam. When he returned, he became zealous for episcopacy and monarchy; and at the revolution adhered not only to the nonjurors, but to those who refused to communicate with the church of England, or to be present at any worship where the usurper was mentioned as king. He was, I believe, more than once apprehended in the reign of King William, and once at the accession of George. He was the familiar friend of Hicks and Nelson; a man of letters, but injudicious; and very curious and inquisitive, but credulous. He lived in 1743, or '44, about seventy-five years old."

The subject of luxury having been introduced, Dr. Johnson defended it. "We have now," said he, "a splendid dinner before us; which of all these dishes is unwholesome?" The duke asserted, that he had observed the *grandees* of Spain diminished in their size by luxury. Dr. Johnson politely refrained from opposing directly an observation which the duke himself had made; but said, "Man must be very different from other animals, if he is diminished by good living; for the size of all other animals is increased by it." I made some remark that seemed to imply a belief in *second-sight*. The duchess said, "I fancy you will be a *methodist*." This was the only sentence her grace deigned to utter to me; and I take it for granted, she thought it a good hit on my *credulity* in the Douglas case.

A gentleman in company, after dinner, was desired by the duke to go to another room, for a specimen of curious marble, which his grace wished to show us. He brought a wrong piece, upon which the duke sent him back again. He could not refuse; but, to avoid any appearance of servility, he whistled as he walked out of the room, to show his independency. On my mentioning this afterwards to Dr. Johnson, he said, it was a nice trait of character.

Dr. Johnson talked a great deal, and was so entertaining, that Lady Betty Hamilton, after dinner, went and placed her chair close

¹ As this book has now become very scarce, I shall subjoin the title, which is curious:—"The Doctrines of a Middle State between Death and the Resurrection: Of Prayers for the Dead: And the Necessity of Purification; plainly proved from the holy Scriptures, and the Writings of the Fathers of the Primitive Church: And acknowledged by several learned Fathers and great Divines of the Church of England and others since the Reformation. To which is added, an Appendix concerning the Descent of the Soul of Christ into Hell, while his Body lay in the Grave. Together with the Judgment of the reverend Dr. Hickee concerning this Book, so far as relates to a Middle State, particular Judgment, and Prayers for the Dead as it appeared in the first Edition. And a Manuscript of the right Reverend Bishop Overall upon the Subject of a Middle State, and never before printed. Also, a Preservative against several of the Errors of the Roman Church, in six small Treatises. By the Honourable Archibald Campbell." Folio, 1721.—BOSWELL.

² [There is a slight error here. It was (not after the *revolution* but) after the *accession* of the Hanover family, that *this* transaction occurred. Lord Townshend was not secretary of state till 1720.—ED.]

³ [He was the marquis's grandson, son of his second son, Lord Neil Campbell. He was a bishop of the episcopal church in Scotland, and died in London in 1744.—ED.]

to his, leaned upon the back of it, and listened eagerly. It would have made a fine picture to have drawn the sage and her at this time in their several attitudes. He did not know, all the while, how much he was honoured. I told him afterwards, I never saw him so gentle and complaisant as this day¹.

We went to tea. The duke and I walked up and down the drawing-room, conversing. The duchess still continued to show the same marked coldness for me; for which, though I suffered from it, I made every allowance, considering the very warm part that I had taken for Douglas, in the cause in which she thought her son deeply interested. Had not her grace discovered some displeasure towards me, I should have suspected her of insensibility or dissimulation.

Her grace made Dr. Johnson come and sit by her, and asked him why he made his journey so late in the year. "Why, madam," said he, "you know Mr. Boswell must attend the court of session, and it does not rise till the twelfth of August." She said, with some sharpness, "I know nothing of Mr. Boswell." Poor Lady Lucy Douglas², to whom I mentioned this, observed, "She knew *too much* of Mr. Boswell." I shall make no remark on her grace's speech. I indeed felt it as rather too severe; but when I recollected that my punishment was inflicted by so dignified a beauty, I had that kind of consolation which a man would feel who is strangled by a *silken cord*. Dr. Johnson was all attention to her grace. He used afterwards a droll expression, upon her enjoying the three titles of Hamilton, Brandon, and Argyle. Borrowing an image from the Turkish empire, he called her a *duchess with three tails*.

He was much pleased with our visit at the castle of Inverary. The Duke of Argyle was exceedingly polite to him, and, upon his complaining of the shelties which he had hitherto ridden being too small for him, his grace told him he should be provided with a good horse to carry him next day.

Mr. John M'Aulay passed the evening with us at our inn. When Dr. Johnson spoke of people whose principles were good, but whose practice was faulty, Mr. M'Aulay said, he had no notion of people being in earnest in their good professions, whose practice was not suitable to them. The Doctor grew warm, and said, "Sir, are you so grossly ignorant of human nature, as not to know that a man may be very sincere in

good principles, without having good practice?"

Dr. Johnson was unquestionably in the right; and whoever examines himself candidly will be satisfied of it, though the inconsistency between principles and practice is greater in some men than in others.

I recollect very little of this night's conversation. I am sorry that indolence came upon me towards the conclusion of our journey, so that I did not write down what passed with the same assiduity as during the greatest part of it.

Tuesday, 26th October.—Mr. M'Aulay breakfasted with us, nothing hurt or dismayed by his last night's correction. Being a man of good sense, he had a just admiration of Dr. Johnson.

Either yesterday morning, or this, I communicated to Dr. Johnson, from Mr. M'Aulay's information, the news that Dr. Beattie had got a pension of two hundred pounds a year. He sat up in his bed, clapped his hands, and cried, "O brave we!"—a peculiar exclamation of his when he rejoices³.

As we sat over our tea, Mr. Home's tragedy of Douglas was mentioned. I put Dr. Johnson in mind, that once, in a coffee-house at Oxford, he called to old Mr. Sheridan, "How came you, sir, to give Home a gold medal for writing that foolish play?" and defied Mr. Sheridan to show ten good lines in it. He did not insist they should be together; but that there were not ten good lines in the whole play. He now persisted in this. I endeavoured to defend that pathetick and beautiful tragedy, and repeated the following passage:

—————"Sincerity,
Thou first of virtues! let no mortal leave
Thy onward path, although the earth should gape,
And from the gulf of hell destruction cry,
To take dissimulation's winding way."

JOHNSON. "That will not do, sir. Nothing is good but what is consistent with truth or probability, which this is not. Juvenal, indeed, gives us a noble picture of inflexible virtue:

"Esto bonus miles, tutor bonus, arbiter idem
Integer: ambiguae si quando citabere testis,
Incertaeque rei, Phalaris licet imperet, ut sis
Falsus, et admoto dietet perjuria tauro,
Summum crede nefas animam preferre pudori,
Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas."

³ Having mentioned, more than once, that my Journal was perused by Dr. Johnson, I think it proper to inform my readers that this is the last paragraph which he read.—BOSWELL.

⁴ "An honest guardian, arbitrator just,
Be thou; thy station deem a sacred trust.
With thy good sword maintain thy country's cause;
In every action venerate its laws:
The lie suborn'd if falsely urged to swear,
Though torture wait thee, torture firmly bear;

¹ [Because, perhaps, he had never before seen him in such high company.—Ed.]

² [Lady Lucy Graham, daughter of the second Duke of Montrose, and wife of Mr. Douglas, the successful claimant: she died in 1780, whence Mr. Boswell calls her *poor* Lady Lucy.—Ed.]

He repeated the lines with great force and dignity; then added, "And, after this, comes Johnny Home, with his *earth gaping*, and his *destruction crying*—pooh!"

While we were lamenting the number of ruined religious buildings which we had lately seen, I spoke with peculiar feeling of the miserable neglect of the chapel belonging to the palace of Holyrood-house, in which are deposited the remains of many of the kings of Scotland, and of many of our nobility. I said it was a disgrace to the country that it was not repaired; and particularly complained that my friend Douglas, the representative of a great house, and proprietor of a vast estate, should suffer the sacred spot where his mother lies interred to be unroofed, and exposed to all the inclemencies of the weather. Dr. Johnson, who, I knew not how, had formed an opinion on the Hamilton side², in the Douglas cause, silyly answered, "Sir, sir, don't be too severe upon the gentleman; don't accuse him of want of filial piety! Lady Jane Douglas was not *his* mother." He roused my zeal so much that I took the liberty to tell him he knew nothing of the cause: which I do most seriously believe was the case.

We were now "in a country of bridles and saddles," and set out fully equipped. The Duke of Argyle was obliging enough to mount Dr. Johnson on a stately steed from his grace's stable. My friend was highly pleased, and Joseph said, "He now looks like a bishop."

We dined at the inn at Tarbat, and at night came to Rosedow, the beautiful seat of Sir James Colquhoun, on the banks of Lochlomond, where I, and any friends whom I have introduced, have ever been received with kind and elegant hospitality.

Wednesday, 27th October.—When I went into Dr. Johnson's room this morning, I observed to him how wonderfully courteous he had been at Inverary, and said, "You were quite a fine gentleman when with the duchess." He answered, in good humour, "Sir, I look upon myself as a very polite man:" and he was right, in

To forfeit honour, think the highest shame,
And life too dearly bought by loss of fame;
Ner, to preserve it, with thy virtue give
That for which only man should wish to live."

For this and the other translations to which no signature is affixed, I am indebted to the friend whose observations are mentioned in the notes, *ante*, p. 347, or *post*, p. 465.—BOSWELL. [Probably Dr. Hugh Blair.—ED.]

¹ I am sorry that I was unlucky in my quotation. But notwithstanding the acuteness of Dr. Johnson's criticism, and the power of his ridicule, the tragedy of Douglas still continues to be generally and deservedly admired.—BOSWELL.

² [See *ante*, p. 312 and 329.—ED.]

a proper manly sense of the word³. As an immediate proof of it, let me observe that he would not send back the Duke of Argyle's horse without a letter of thanks, which I copied.

"TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLE.
"Rosedow, 29th Oct. 1773.

"MY LORD,—That kindness which disposed your grace to supply me with the horse, which I have now returned, will make you pleased to hear that he has carried me well.

"By my diligence in the little commission with which I was honoured by the duchess, I will endeavour to show how highly I value the favours which I have received, and how much I desire to be thought, my lord, your grace's most obedient and most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

The duke was so attentive to his respectable guest, that, on the same day, he wrote him an answer, which was received at Auchinleck:

"TO DR. JOHNSON, AUCHINLECK, Ayrshire.
"Inverary, 29th Oct. 1773.

"SIR,—I am glad to hear your journey from this place was not unpleasant, in regard to your horse. I wish I could have supplied you with good weather, which I am afraid you felt the want of.

"The Duchess of Argyle desires her compliments to you, and is much obliged to you for remembering her commission. I am, sir, your most obedient humble servant,
"ARGYLE."

I am happy to insert every memorial of the honour done to my great friend. Indeed, I was at all times desirous to preserve the letters which he received from eminent persons, of which, as of all other papers, he was very negligent; and I once proposed to him that they should be committed to my care, as his *custos rotulorum*. I wish he had complied with my request, as by that means many valuable writings might have been preserved that are now lost⁴.

³ [Not to interrupt the narrative of the *Tour*, some elucidations of Johnson's opinion of his own *politeness* are thrown forward to 30th April, 1778.—ED.]

⁴ As a remarkable instance of his negligence, I remember some years ago to have found lying loose in his study, and without the cover which contained the address, a letter to him from Lord Thurlow, to whom he had made an application as chancellor, in behalf of a poor literary friend. It was expressed in such terms of respect for Dr. Johnson, that, in my zeal for his reputation, I remonstrated warmly with him on his strange in-

After breakfast, Dr. Johnson and I were furnished with a boat, and sailed about upon Lochlomond, and landed on some of the islands which are interspersed. He was much pleased with the scene, which is so well known by the accounts of various travellers, that it is unnecessary for me to attempt any description of it.

I recollect none of his conversation, except that, when talking of dress, he said, "Sir, were I to have any thing fine, it should be very fine. Were I to wear a ring, it should not be a bauble, but a stone of great value. Were I to wear a laced or embroidered waistcoat, it should be very rich. I had once a very rich laced waistcoat, which I wore the first night of my tragedy."

Lady¹ Helen Colquhoun being a very pious woman, the conversation, after dinner, took a religious turn. Her ladyship defended the presbyterian mode of publick worship; upon which Dr. Johnson delivered those excellent arguments for a form of prayer which he has introduced into his "Journey." I am myself fully convinced that a form of prayer for publick worship is in general most decent and edifying. *Solennia verba* have a kind of prescriptive sanctity, and make a deeper impression on the mind than extemporaneous effusions, in which, as we know not what they are to be, we cannot readily acquiesce. Yet I would allow also of a certain portion of extempore address, as occasion may require.

This is the practice of the French protestant churches. And although the office of forming supplications to the throne of Heaven is, in my mind, too great a trust to be indiscriminately committed to the discretion of every minister, I do not mean to deny that sincere devotion may be experienced when joining in prayer with those who use no Liturgy.

We were favoured with Sir James Colquhoun's coach to convey us in the evening to Cameron, the seat of Commissary Smollet². Our satisfaction of finding ourselves

attention, and obtained his permission to take a copy of it; by which probably it has been preserved, as the original I have reason to suppose is lost.—BOSWELL. [See *post*, 24th Oct. 1780.—Ed.]

¹ [The Honourable Helen Sutherland, eldest daughter of Lord Strathnaver, who died before his father, the fifteenth Earl of Sutherland. She died in 1791. If Boswell is right in calling her Lady Helen, and as her sister was called Lady Jane Sinclair, they must have had a grant of precedence as earl's daughters.—Ed.]

² [Commissary Smollet was the consin-german of Dr. Smollet: he died without issue; and the family estate would have descended to the doctor had he been alive, but his sister succeeded to it.—Ed.]

again in a comfortable carriage was very great. We had a pleasing conviction of the commodiousness of civilization, and heartily laughed at the ravings of those absurd visionaries who have attempted to persuade us of the superior advantages of a state of nature.

Mr. Smollet was a man of considerable learning, with abundance of animal spirits; so that he was a very good companion for Dr. Johnson, who said to me, "We have had more solid talk here than at any place where we have been."

I remember Dr. Johnson gave us this evening an able and eloquent discourse on the Origin of Evil, and on the consistency of moral evil with the power and goodness of God. He showed us how it arose from our free agency, an extinction of which would be a still greater evil than any we experience. I know not that he said any thing absolutely new, but he said a great deal wonderfully well: and perceiving us to be delighted and satisfied, he concluded his harangue with an air of benevolent triumph over an objection which has distressed many worthy minds: "This then is the answer to the question, Πῶθεν το Κάκον?" Mrs. Smollet whispered me, that it was the best sermon she had ever heard. Much do I upbraid myself for having neglected to preserve it.

Thursday, 28th October.—Mr. Smollet pleased Dr. Johnson, by producing a collection of newspapers in the time of the usurpation, from which it appeared that all sorts of crimes were very frequent during that horrible anarchy. By the side of the high road to Glasgow, at some distance from his house, he had erected a pillar to the memory of his ingenious kinsman, Dr. Smollet; and he consulted Dr. Johnson as to an inscription for it. Lord Kames, who, though he had a great store of knowledge, with much ingenuity, and uncommon activity of mind, was no profound scholar, had it seems recommended an English inscription. Dr. Johnson treated this with great contempt, saying, "An English inscription would be a disgrace to Dr. Smollet³;" and, in answer to what Lord Kames had urged, as to the advantage of its being in English, because it would be generally understood, I observed, that all to whom Dr. Smollet's merit could be an object of respect and imitation would understand it as well in Latin; and that surely it was not meant for the Highland drovers, or other such people, who pass and repass that way.

³ [Whence is evil?—Ed.]

⁴ [See *ante*, p. 373, what the Editor has ventured to advance in favour of English inscriptions. How should an English inscription disgrace Dr. Smollet, whose fame is exclusively that of an English writer?—Ed.]



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We were then shown a Latin inscription, proposed for this monument. Dr. Johnson sat down with an ardent and liberal earnestness to revise it, and greatly improved it by several additions and variations. I unfortunately did not take a copy of it, as it originally stood; but I have happily preserved every fragment of what Dr. Johnson wrote:

Quisquis ades, viator,
Vel mente felix, vel studiis cultus,
Immorare paululum memoriae
TOBLÆ SMOLLET, M. D.

Viri iis virtutibus
Quas in homine et cive
Et laudes, et imiteris,
* * * * *

Postquam mira * * * * *
Se * * * * *
* * * * *

Tali tantoque viro, suo patrueli,
* * * * *

Hanc columnam,
Amoris eheu! inane monumentum,
In ipsis Levinia ripis,
Quas primis infans vagitibus personuit,
Versiculique jam fere moriturus illustravit,
Ponendam curavit¹
* * * * *

We had this morning a singular proof of Dr. Johnson's quick and retentive memory. Hay's translation of "Martial" was lying in a window; I said, I thought it was pretty

¹ The epitaph which has been inscribed on the pillar erected on the banks of the Leven, in honour of Dr. Smollet, is as follows. The part which was written by Dr. Johnson, it appears, has been altered; whether for the better, the reader will judge. The alterations are distinguished by Italicks.

Siste viator!
Si lepores ingenique venam benignam,
Si morum callidissimum pictorem,
Unquam es miratus,
Immorare paululum memoriae
TOBLÆ SMOLLET, M. D.
Viri virtutibus hisce
Quas in homine et cive
Et laudes et imiteris
Haud mediocriter ornati:
Qui in literis variis versatus,
Postquam felicitate sibi propria
Sese posteris commendaverat,
Morte acerba raptus
Anno ætatis 51.
Eheu! quam procul a patria!
Prope Liburni portum in Italia,
Jacet sepultus.
Tali tantoque viro, patrueli suo,
Cui in decursu lampada
Se potius tradidisse decuit,
Hanc Columnam,
Amoris, eheu! inane monumentum,
In ipsis Levinia ripis,
Quas versiculis sub exitu vitæ illustratus
Primis infans vagitibus personuit,
Ponendam curavit
JACOBUS SMOLLET de Bonhill.
Abi et reminiscere,
Hoc quidem honore,
Non modo defuncti memoriae,
Verum etiam exemplo, prospectum esse;
Aliis enim, si modo digni sint,
Idem erit virtutis præmium!

well done, and showed him a particular epigram, I think, of ten, but am certain of eight lines. He read it, and tossed away the book, saying, "No, it is *not* pretty well." As I persisted in my opinion, he said, "Why, sir, the original is thus," and he repeated it, "and this man's translation is thus," and then he repeated that also, exactly, though he had never seen it before, and read it over only once, and that, too, without any intention of getting it by heart.

Here a post-chaise, which I had ordered from Glasgow, came for us, and we drove on in high spirits. We stopped at Dunbarton, and though the approach to the castle there is very steep, Dr. Johnson ascended it with alacrity, and surveyed all that was to be seen. During the whole of our Tour he showed uncommon spirit, could not bear to be treated like an old or infirm man, and was very unwilling to accept of any assistance, insomuch that, at our landing at Icolmkill, when Sir Allan M'Lean and I submitted to be carried on men's shoulders from the boat to the shore, as it could not be brought quite close to land, he sprang into the sea, and waded vigorously out.

On our arrival at the Saracen's-head inn, at Glasgow, I was made happy by good accounts from home; and Dr. Johnson, who had not received a single letter since we left Aberdeen, found here a great many, the perusal of which entertained him much. He enjoyed in imagination the comforts which we could not now command, and seemed to be in high glee. I remember, he put a leg upon each side of the grate, and said, with a mock solemnity, by way of soliloquy, but loud enough for me to hear it, "Here am I, an *Englishman*, sitting by a coal fire."

Friday, 29th October.—The professors of the university being informed of our arrival, Dr. Stevenson, Dr. Reid, and Mr. Anderson, breakfasted with us. Mr. Anderson accompanied us while Dr. Johnson viewed this beautiful city. He had told me, that one day in London, when Dr. Adam Smith² was boasting of it, he turned

² [Mr. Boswell has chosen to omit, for reasons which will be presently obvious, that Johnson and Adam Smith met at Glasgow; but I have been assured by Professor John Miller that they did so, and that Smith, leaving the party in which he had met Johnson, happened to come to another company where Miller was. Knowing that Smith had been in Johnson's society, they were anxious to know what had passed, and the more so as Dr. Smith's temper seemed much ruffled. At first Smith would only answer, "He's a brute—he's a brute;" but on closer examination, it appeared that Johnson no sooner saw Smith than he attacked him for some point of his famous letter on the death of Hume (*ante*, p. 329, n). Smith vindicated the truth of his statement.

to him and said, "Pray, sir, have you ever seen Brentford?" This was surely a strong instance of his impatience, and spirit of contradiction. I put him in mind of it to-day, while he expressed his admiration of the elegant buildings, and whispered him, "Don't you feel some remorse?"

We were received in the college by a number of the professors, who showed all due respect to Dr. Johnson; and then we paid a visit to the principal, Dr. Leechman¹, at his own house, where Dr. Johnson had the satisfaction of being told that his name had been gratefully celebrated in one of the parochial congregations in the Highlands, as the person to whose influence it was chiefly owing, that the New Testament was allowed to be translated into the Erse language. It seems some political members of the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge had opposed this pious undertaking, as tending to preserve the distinction between the Highlanders and Lowlanders. Dr. Johnson wrote a long letter upon the subject to a friend [Mr. Drummond], which being shown to them, made them ashamed, and afraid of being publicly exposed; so they were forced to a compliance. It is now in my possession, and is, perhaps, one of the best productions of his masterly pen².

Professors Reid and Anderson, and the two Messieurs Foulis, the Elzevirs of Glasgow, dined and drank tea with us at our inn, after which the professors went away; and I, having a letter to write, left my fellow-traveller with Messieurs Foulis. Though good and ingenious men, they had that unsettled speculative mode of conversation which is offensive to a man regularly taught at an English school and university. I found that, instead of listening to the dictates of the sage, they had teased him with questions and doubtful disputations. He came in a flutter to me, and desired I might come back again, for he could not bear these men. "O ho! sir," said I, "you are flying to me for refuge!" He never, in any situation, was at a loss for a ready repartee. He answered, with quick vivacity, "It is of two evils choosing the least." I was delighted with this flash bursting from the cloud which hung upon his mind, closed my letter directly, and joined the company.

We supped at professor Anderson's.

"What did Johnson say?" was the universal inquiry. "Why, he said," replied Smith, with the deepest impression of resentment, "he said, *you lie!*" "And what did you reply?" "I said, you are a son of a —!" On such terms did these two great moralists meet and part, and such was the classical dialogue between two great teachers of philosophy.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [See *ante*, p. 344.—Ed.]

² [Printed *ante*, p. 235.—Ed.]

The general impression upon my memory is, that we had not much conversation at Glasgow, where the professors, like their brethren at Aberdeen, did not venture to expose themselves much to the battery of cannon which they knew might play upon them³. Dr. Johnson, who was fully conscious of his own superior powers, afterwards praised Principal Robertson, for his caution in this respect. He said to me, "Robertson, sir, was in the right. Robertson is a man of eminence, and the head of a college at Edinburgh. He had a character to maintain, and did well not to risk its being lessened."

Saturday, 30th October.—We set out towards Ayrshire. I sent Joseph on to Loudoun, with a message, that, if the earl was at home, Dr. Johnson and I would have the honour to dine with him. Joseph met us on the road, and reported that the earl "*jumped for joy,*" and said, "I shall be very happy to see them." We were received with a most pleasing courtesy by his lordship, and by the countess his mother⁴, who, in her ninety-fifth year, had all her faculties quite unimpaired. This was a very cheering sight to Dr. Johnson, who had an extraordinary desire for long life. Her ladyship was sensible and well informed, and had seen a great deal of the world. Her lord had held several high offices, and she was sister to the great Earl of Stair.

I cannot here refrain from paying a just tribute to the character of John, Earl of Loudoun⁵, who did more service to the

³ [Boswell himself was callous to the *contacts* of Dr. Johnson; and when telling them, always reminds one of a jockey receiving a kick from the horse which he is showing off to a customer, and is grinning with pain while he is trying to cry out, "Pretty rogue—no vice—all fun." To him Johnson's rudeness was only "*pretty Fanny's way.*" Dr. Robertson had a sense of good-breeding which inclined him rather to forego the benefit of Johnson's conversation than awaken his rudeness.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁴ [Lady Margaret Dalrymple, only daughter of John, Earl of Stair, married, in 1700, to Hugh, third Earl of Loudoun. She died in 1777, aged *one hundred*. Of this venerable lady, and of the Countess of Eglington, whom Johnson visited next day, he thus speaks in his *Journey*: "Length of life is distributed impartially to very different modes of life in very different climates; and the mountains have no greater examples of age and health than the Lowlands, where I was introduced to two ladies of high quality, one of whom (Lady Loudoun), in her ninety-fourth year, presided at her table with the full exercise of all her powers; and the other (Lady Eglington) had attained her eighty-fourth year, without any diminution of her vivacity, and little reason to accuse time of deprivations on her beauty."—*Works*, vol. viii. p. 313.—Ed.]

⁵ [Fourth Earl, born in 1705, died in 1782. He had considerable military commands, and was

county of Ayr in general, as well as to individuals in it, than any man we have ever had. It is painful to think that he met with much ingratitude from persons both in high and low rank: but such was his temper, such his knowledge of "base mankind¹," that, as if he had expected no other return, his mind was never soured, and he retained his good humour and benevolence to the last. The tenderness of his heart was proved in 1745-6, when he had an important command in the Highlands, and behaved with a generous humanity to the unfortunate. I cannot figure a more honest politician; for though his interest in our county was great, and generally successful, he not only did not deceive by fallacious promises, but was anxious that people should not deceive themselves by too sanguine expectations. His kind and dutiful attention to his mother was unremitting. At his house was true hospitality; a plain but a plentiful table; and every guest being left at perfect freedom, felt himself quite easy and happy. While I live, I shall honour the memory of this amiable man.

At night, we advanced a few miles farther, to the house of Mr. Campbell, of Treesbank, who was married to one of my wife's sisters, and were entertained very agreeably by a worthy couple.

Sunday, 31st October.—We reposed here in tranquillity. Dr. Johnson was pleased to find a numerous and excellent collection of books, which had mostly belonged to the Rev. Mr. John Campbell, brother of our host. I was desirous to have procured for my fellow-traveller, to-day, the company of Sir John Cuninghame, of Caprington, whose castle was but two miles from us. He was a very distinguished scholar, was long abroad, and during part of the time lived much with the learned Cuninghame, the opponent of Bentley as a critic upon Horace. He wrote Latin with great elegance, and, what is very remarkable, read Homer and Ariosto through every year. I wrote to him to request he would come to us; but unfortunately he was prevented by indisposition.

Monday, 1st November.—Though Dr. Johnson was lazy, and averse to move, I insisted that he should go with me, and pay a visit to the Countess of Eglintoune², mo-

the person who brought Johnson's friend, Lord Charles Hay, to a court-martial, as we shall see hereafter.—Ed.]

¹ The unwilling gratitude of base mankind.—*Pope.*—BOSWELL.

² [Susanna, daughter of Sir Alexander Kennedy, of Culzean, third wife of the ninth Earl of Eglintoune. She was a clever woman, and a patroness of the *Belles Lettres*. Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd* was dedicated to her in a very fulsome style of panegyric. She died in Ayrshire,

ther of the late and present earl. I assured him he would find himself amply recompensed for the trouble; and he yielded to my solicitations, though with some unwillingness. We were well mounted, and had not many miles to ride. He talked of the attention that is necessary in order to distribute our charity judiciously. "If thoughtlessly done, we may neglect the most deserving objects; and, as every man has but a certain proportion to give, if it is lavished upon those who first present themselves, there may be nothing left for such as have a better claim. A man should first relieve those who are nearly connected with him, by whatever tie; and then, if he has any thing to spare, may extend his bounty to a wider circle."³

As we passed very near the castle of Dundonald, which was one of the many residences of the kings of Scotland, and in which Robert the Second lived and died, Dr. Johnson wished to survey it particularly. It stands on a beautiful rising ground, which is seen at a great distance on several quarters, and from whence there is an extensive prospect of the rich district of Cuninghame, the western sea, the isle of Arran, and a part of the northern coast of Ireland. It has long been unroofed; and, though of considerable size, we could not, by any power of imagination, figure it as having been a suitable habitation for majesty. Dr. Johnson, to irritate my old Scottish enthusiasm, was very jocular on the homely accommodation of "King Bob," and roared and laughed till the ruins echoed.

Lady Eglintoune, though she was now in her eighty-fifth year, and had lived in the retirement of the country for almost half a century, was still a very agreeable woman. She was of the noble house of Kennedy, and had all the elevation which the consciousness of such birth inspires. Her figure was majestic, her manners high-bred, her reading extensive, and her conversation elegant. She had been the admiration of the gay circles of life, and the patroness of poets. Dr. Johnson was delighted with his reception here. Her principles in church and state were congenial with his. She knew all his merit, and had heard much of him from her son, Earl Alexander³, who loved to cultivate the acquaintance of men of talents in every department.

All who knew his lordship will allow that his understanding and accomplishments

in 1780, aged ninety-one. (See *ante*, 30th Oct. *n.*) The eighth Earl of Eglintoune, the father of her lord, had married, as his second wife, Catherine St. Quentin, the widow of three husbands, and aged above ninety at the time of her last marriage; being, it is presumed, the oldest bride on record.—Ed.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 252.—Ed.]

were of no ordinary rate. From the gay habits which he had early acquired, he spent too much of his time with men, and in pursuits far beneath such a mind as his. He afterwards became sensible of it, and turned his thoughts to objects of importance; but was cut off in the prime of his life. I cannot speak but with emotions of the most affectionate regret of one, in whose company many of my early days were passed, and to whose kindness I was much indebted.

Often must I have occasion to upbraid myself that, soon after our return to the main land, I allowed indolence to prevail over me so much as to shrink from the labour of continuing my journal with the same minuteness as before; sheltering myself in the thought that we had done with the Hebrews; and not considering that Dr. Johnson's *memorabilia* were likely to be more valuable when we were restored to a more polished society. Much has thus been irrecoverably lost.

In the course of our conversation this day it came out that Lady Eglintoune was married the year before Dr. Johnson was born; upon which she graciously said to him that she might have been his mother, and that she now adopted him; and when we were going away, she embraced him, saying, "My dear son, farewell!" My friend was much pleased with this day's entertainment, and owned that I had done well to force him out.

Tuesday, 2d November.—We were now in a country not only "of saddles and bridles," but of post-chaises; and having ordered one from Kilmarnock, we got to Auchinleck before dinner.

My father was not quite a year and a half older than Dr. Johnson; but his conscientious discharge of his laborious duty as a judge in Scotland, where the law proceedings are almost all in writing,—a severe complaint which ended in his death,—and the loss of my mother¹, a woman of almost unexampled piety and goodness,—had before this time in some degree affected his spirits, and rendered him less disposed to exert his faculties: for he had originally a very strong mind, and cheerful temper. He assured me he never had felt one moment of what is called low spirits, or uneasiness, without a real cause. He had a great many good stories, which he told uncommonly well, and he was remarkable for "humour, *incolumi gravitate*," as Lord Monboddo used to characterise it. His age, his office, and his character, had long given him an acknowledged claim to great attention in whatever company he was;

and he could ill brook any diminution of it. He was as sanguine a whig and presbyterian as Dr. Johnson was a tory and church-of-England man: and as he had not much leisure to be informed of Dr. Johnson's great merits by reading his works, he had a partial and unfavourable notion of him, founded on his supposed political tenets; which were so discordant to his own, that, instead of speaking of him with that respect to which he was entitled, he used to call him "a *jacobite fellow*." Knowing all this, I should not have ventured to bring them together, had not my father, out of kindness to me, desired me to invite Dr. Johnson to his house.

I was very anxious that all should be well; and begged of my friend to avoid three topics, as to which they differed very widely; whiggism, presbyterianism, and—Sir John Pringle. He said courteously, "I shall certainly not talk on subjects which I am told are disagreeable to a gentleman under whose roof I am; especially, I shall not do so to *your father*."

Our first day went off very smoothly. It rained, and we could not get out; but my father showed Dr. Johnson his library, which, in curious editions of the Greek and Roman classicks, is, I suppose, not excelled by any private collection in Great Britain. My father had studied at Leyden, and been very intimate with the Gronovii, and other learned men there. He was a sound scholar, and, in particular, had collated manuscripts and different editions of Anacreon, and others of the Greek lyric poets, with great care; so that my friend and he had much matter for conversation, without touching on the fatal topics of difference.

Dr. Johnson found here Baxter's "Anacreon," which he told me he had long inquired for in vain, and began to suspect there was no such book. Baxter was the keen antagonist of Barnes. His life is in the "Biographia Britannica." My father has written many notes on this book, and Dr. Johnson and I talked of having it reprinted.

Wednesday, 3d November.—It rained all day, and gave Dr. Johnson an impression of that incommodiousness of climate in the west, of which he has taken notice in his "Journey;" but, being well accommodated, and furnished with a variety of books, he was not dissatisfied.

Some gentlemen of the neighbourhood came to visit my father; but there was little conversation. One of them asked Dr. Johnson how he liked the Highlands. The question seemed to irritate him, for he answered, "How, sir, can you ask me what obliges me to speak unfavourably of a country where I have been hospitably en-

¹ [Euphemia Erskine, of the family of the Earl of Buchan.—ED.]

tertaind? Who *can* like the Highlands? I like the inhabitants very well." The gentleman asked no more questions.

Let me now make up for the present neglect, by again gleaning from the past. At Lord Monboddos, after the conversation upon the decrease of learning in England, his lordship mentioned Hermes by Mr. Harris of Salisbury, as the work of a living author, for whom he had a great respect. Dr. Johnson said nothing at the time; but when we were in our post-chaise, told me, he thought Harris "a coxcomb." This he said of him, not as a man, but as an author; and I give his opinions of men and books, faithfully, whether they agree with my own, or not. I do admit, that there always appeared to me something of affectation in Mr. Harris's manner of writing; something of a habit of clothing plain thoughts in analytick and categorical formality. But all his writings are imbued with learning; and all breathe that philanthropy and amiable disposition, which distinguished him as a man¹.

At another time, during our Tour, he drew the character of a rapacious Highland chief² with the strength of Theophrastus or La Bruyere; concluding with these words: "Sir, he has no more the soul of a chief, than an attorney who has twenty houses in a street, and considers how much he can make by them."

He this day, when we were by ourselves, observed, how common it was for people to talk from books; to retail the sentiments of others, and not their own; in short, to converse without any originality of thinking. He was pleased to say, "You and I do not talk from books."

Thursday, 4th November.—I was glad to have at length a very fine day, on which I could show Dr. Johnson the place of

¹ This gentleman, though devoted to the study of grammar and dialecticks, was not so absorbed in it as to be without a sense of pleasantry, or to be offended at his favourite topicks being treated lightly. I one day met him in the street, as I was hastening to the house of lords, and told him, I was sorry I could not stop, being rather too late to attend an appeal of the Duke of Hamilton against Douglas. "I thought," said he, "their contest had been over long ago." I answered, "The contest concerning Douglas's filiation was over long ago; but the contest now is, who shall have the estate." Then assuming the air of "an ancient sage philosopher," I proceeded thus: "Were I to *predicate* concerning him, I should say, the contest formerly was, *What is he?* The contest now is, *What has he?*" "Right," replied Mr. Harris, smiling, "you have done with *quality*, and have got into *quantity*."—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, as to Mr. Harris's learning, p. 310.—Ed.]

² [No doubt Sir Alexander Macdonald.—Ed.]

my family, which he has honoured with so much attention in his "Journey." He is, however, mistaken in thinking that the Celtick name, Auchinleck, has no relation to the natural appearance of it. I believe every Celtick name of a place will be found very descriptive. Auchinleck does not signify a *stony field*, as he has said, but a *field of flag-stones*; and this place has a number of rocks, which abound in strata of that kind. The "sullen dignity of the old castle," as he has forcibly expressed it³, delighted him exceedingly. On one side of the rock on which its ruins stand, runs the river Lugar, which is here of considerable breadth, and is bordered by other high rocks, shaded with wood. On the other side runs a brook, skirted in the same manner, but on a smaller scale. I cannot figure a more romantick scene.

I felt myself elated here, and expatiated to my illustrious Mentor on the antiquity and honourable alliances of my family, and on the merits of its founder, Thomas Boswell, who was highly favoured by his sovereign, James IV. of Scotland, and fell with him at the battle of Flodden-field; and in the glow of what, I am sensible, will, in a commercial age, be considered as genealogical enthusiasm, did not omit to mention what I was sure my friend would not think lightly of, my relation to the royal personage, whose liberality, on his accession to the throne, had given him comfort and independence. I have, in a former page, acknowledged my pride of ancient blood, in which I was encouraged by Dr. Johnson: my readers therefore will not be surprised at my having indulged it on this occasion.

Not far from the old castle is a spot of consecrated earth, on which may be traced the foundations of an ancient chapel, dedicated to St. Vincent, and where in old times "was the place of graves" for the family. It grieves me to think that the remains of sanctity here, which were considerable, were dragged away, and employed in building a part of the house of Auchinleck, of the middle age; which was the family residence, till my father erected that "elegant modern mansion," of which Dr. Johnson speaks so handsomely. Perhaps this chapel may one day be restored.

³ ["I was less delighted with the elegance of the modern mansion than with the sullen dignity of the old castle: I clambered with Mr. Boswell among the ruins, which afforded striking images of ancient life. Here, in the ages of tumult and rapine, the laird was surprised and killed by the neighbouring chief, who perhaps might have extinguished the family, had he not, in a few days, been seized and hanged, together with his sons, by Douglas, who came with his forces to the relief of Auchinleck."—*Johnson's Works*, vol. viii. p. 413.—Ed.]

Dr. Johnson was pleased when I showed him some venerable old trees, under the shade of which my ancestors had walked. He exhorted me to plant assiduously, as my father had done to a great extent.

As I wandered with my reverend friend in the groves of Auchinleck, I told him, that, if I survived him, it was my intention to erect a monument to him here, among scenes which, in my mind, were all classical; for, in my youth, I had appropriated to them many of the descriptions of the Roman poets. He could not bear to have death presented to him in any shape; for his constitutional melancholy made the king of terrors more frightful. He turned off the subject, saying, "Sir, I hope to see your grandchildren."

This forenoon he observed some cattle without horns, of which he has taken notice in his "Journey," and seems undecided whether they be of a particular race. His doubts appear to have had no foundation; for my respectable neighbour, Mr. Fairlie, who, with all his attention to agriculture, finds time both for the classics and his friends, assures me they are a distinct species, and that, when any of their calves have horns, a mixture of breed can be traced. In confirmation of his opinion, he pointed out to me the following passage in Tacitus, "*Ne armentis quidem suus honor, aut gloria frontis;*" (De Mor. Germ. § 5.) which he wondered had escaped Dr. Johnson.

On the front of the house of Auchinleck is this inscription:

— "Quod petis, hic est;
Est Ulubris; animus si te non deficit æquus."

It is characteristick of the founder; but the *animus æquus* is, alas! not inheritable, nor the subject of devise. He always talked to me as if it were in a man's own power to attain it; but Dr. Johnson told me that he owned to him, when they were alone, his persuasion that it was in a great measure constitutional, or the effect of causes which do not depend on ourselves, and that Horace boasts too much, when he says, *æquum mi animum ipse parabo*.

Friday, 5th November.—The Reverend Mr. Dun, our parish minister, who had dined with us yesterday, with some other company, insisted that Dr. Johnson and I should dine with him to-day. This gave me an opportunity to show my friend the road to the church, made by my father at a great expense, for above three miles, on his own estate, through a range of well enclosed farms, with a row of trees on each side of it. He called it the *via sacra*, and was very fond of it. Dr. Johnson, though he held notions far distant from those of the presbyterian clergy, yet could associate on good terms with them. He indeed oc-

asionally attacked them. One of them discovered a narrowness of information concerning the dignitaries of the church of England, among whom may be found men of the greatest learning, virtue, and piety, and of a truly apostolic character. He talked before Dr. Johnson of fat bishops and drowsy deans; and, in short, seemed to believe the illiberal and profane scoffings of professed satirists, or vulgar railers. Dr. Johnson was so highly offended, that he said to him, "Sir, you know no more of our church than a Hottentot." I was sorry that he brought this upon himself.

Saturday, 6th November.—I cannot be certain whether it was on this day, or a former, that Dr. Johnson and my father came in collision. If I recollect right, the contest began while my father was showing him his collection of medals; and Oliver Cromwell's coin unfortunately introduced Charles the First and toryism. They became exceedingly warm and violent, and I was very much distressed by being present at such an altercation between two men, both of whom I revered; yet I durst not interfere. It would certainly be very unbecoming in me to exhibit my honoured father and my respected friend, as intellectual gladiators, for the entertainment of the publick; and therefore I suppress what would, I dare say, make an interesting scene in this dramattick sketch, this account of the transit of Johnson over the Caledonian hemisphere¹.

¹ [Old Lord Auchinleck was an able lawyer, a good scholar, after the manner of Scotland, and highly valued his own advantages as a man of good estate and ancient family; and, moreover, he was a strict presbyterian and whig of the old Scottish cast. This did not prevent his being a terribly proud aristocrat; and great was the contempt he entertained and expressed for his son James, for the nature of his friendships and the character of the personages of whom he was *engoué* one after another. "There's nae hope for Jamie, mon," he said to a friend. "Jamie is gaen clean gyte.—What do you think, mon? He's done wi' Paoli—he's off wi' the land-louping scoundrel of a Corsican; and whose tail do you think he has pinned himself to now, mon?" Here the old judge summoned up a sneer of most sovereign contempt. "A dominie, mon—an auld dominie; he kept a schule, and caud't it an acadamy." Probably if this had been reported to Johnson, he would have felt it more galling, for he never much liked to think of that period of his life: it would have aggravated his dislike of Lord Auchinleck's whiggery and presbyterianism. These the old lord carried to such an unusual height, that once when a countryman came in to state some justice business, and being required to make his oath, declined to do so before his lordship, because he was not a *covenanted* magistrate.—"Is that a' your objection, mon?" said the judge; "come your ways in here, and we'll baith of us tak the solemn league and covenant

Yet I think I may, without impropriety, mention one circumstance, as an instance of my father's address. Dr. Johnson challenged him, as he did us all at Talisker, to point out any theological works of merit written by presbyterian ministers in Scotland. My father, whose studies did not lie much in that way, owned to me afterwards, that he was somewhat at a loss how to answer, but that luckily he recollected having read in catalogues the title of Durham on the Galatians; upon which he boldly said, "Pray, sir, have you read Mr. Durham's excellent commentary on the Galatians?" "No, sir," said Dr. Johnson. By this lucky thought my father kept him at bay, and for some time enjoyed his triumph¹, but his antagonist soon made a retort, which I forbear to mention.

In the course of their altercation, whiggism and presbyterianism, toryism and episcopacy, were terribly buffeted. My worthy hereditary friend, Sir John Pringle, never having been mentioned, happily escaped without a bruise.

My father's opinion of Dr. Johnson may be conjectured from the name he afterwards gave him, which was URSA MAJOR. But it is not true, as has been reported, that it was in consequence of my saying that he was a *constellation* of genius and literature. It was a sly abrupt expression to one of his

together." The oath was accordingly agreed and sworn to by both, and I dare say it was the last time it ever received such homage. It may be surmised how far Lord Auchinleck, such as he is here described, was likely to suit a high tory and episcopalian like Johnson. As they approached Auchinleck, Boswell conjured Johnson by all the ties of regard, and in requital of the services he had rendered him upon his tour, that he would spare two subjects in tenderness to his father's prejudices; the first related to Sir John Pringle, president of the royal society, about whom there was then some dispute current; the second concerned the general question of whig and tory. Sir John Pringle, as Boswell says, escaped, but the controversy between tory and covenanter raged with great fury, and ended in Johnson's pressing upon the old judge the question, what good Cromwell, of whom he had said something derogatory, had ever done to his country; when, after being much tortured, Lord Auchinleck at last spoke out, "God, doctor! he gart kings ken that they had a *lith* in their neck." He taught kings they had a *joint* in their necks. Jamie then set to mediating between his father and the philosopher, and availing himself of the judge's sense of hospitality, which was punctilious, reduced the debate to more order.—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [All parties seem to have here been in a happy state of ignorance; for Mr. Chalmers informs me, that there is no such book as Durham "on the Galatians," though there is "on the Revelations."—ED.]

brethren on the bench of the court of session, in which Dr. Johnson was then standing; but it was not said in his hearing.

Sunday, 7th November.—My father and I went to publick worship in our parish church, in which I regretted that Dr. Johnson would not join us; for, though we have there no form of prayer, nor magnificent solemnity, yet, as God is worshipped in spirit and in truth, and the same doctrines preached as in the church of England, my friend would certainly have shown more liberality, had he attended. I doubt not however, but he employed his time in private to very good purpose. His uniform and fervent piety was manifested on many occasions during our tour, which I have not mentioned. His reason for not joining in presbyterian worship has been recorded in a former page².

Monday, 8th November.—Notwithstanding the altercation that had passed, my father, who had the dignified courtesy of an old baron, was very civil to Dr. Johnson, and politely attended him to the post-chaise which was to convey us to Edinburgh.

Thus they parted. They are now in another, and a higher state of existence: and as they were both worthy christian men, I trust they have met in happiness. But I must observe, in justice to my friend's political principles, and my own, that they have met in a place where there is no room for *whiggism*.

We came at night to a good inn at Hamilton. I recollect no more.

Tuesday, 9th November.—I wished to have shown Dr. Johnson the Duke of Hamilton's house, commonly called the *palace* of Hamilton, which is close by the town. It is an object which, having been pointed out to me as a splendid edifice, from my earliest years, in travelling between Auchinleck and Edinburgh, has still great grandeur in my imagination. My friend consented to stop, and view the outside of it, but could not be persuaded to go into it.

We arrived this night at Edinburgh, after an absence of eighty-three days. For five weeks together, of the tempestuous season, there had been no account received of us. I cannot express how happy I was on finding myself again at home.

Wednesday, 10th November.—Old Mr. Drummond, the bookseller, came to breakfast. Dr. Johnson and he had not met for ten years. There was respect on his side and kindness on Dr. Johnson's. Soon afterwards Lord Elbank came in, and was much pleased at seeing Dr. Johnson in Scotland. His lordship said, "hardly any thing seemed to him more improbable." Dr. Johnson had a very high opinion of

² See *ante*, p. 362.—BOSWELL.

him. Speaking of him to me, he characterised him thus: "Lord Elibank has read a great deal. It is true, I can find in books all that he has read; but he has a great deal of what is in books, proved by the test of real life." Indeed, there have been few men whose conversation discovered more knowledge enlivened by fancy¹. He published several small pieces of distinguished merit; and has left some in manuscript, in particular an account of the expedition against Carthage, in which he served as an officer in the army. His writings deserve to be collected. He was the early patron of Dr. Robertson, the historian, and Mr. Home, the tragick poet; who, when they were ministers of country parishes, lived near his seat. He told me, "I saw these lads had talents, and they were much with me." I hope they will pay a grateful tribute to his memory.

The morning was chiefly taken up by Dr. Johnson's giving him an account of our Tour. The subject of difference in political principles was introduced. JOHNSON. "It is much increased by opposition. There was a violent whig, with whom I used to contend with great eagerness. After his death I felt my toriyism much abated." I suppose he meant Mr. Walmsley of Lichfield, whose character he has drawn so well in his life of Edmund Smith.

Mr. Nairne came in, and he and I accompanied Dr. Johnson to Edinburgh castle, which he owned was "a great place." But I must mention, as a striking instance of that spirit of contradiction to which he had a strong propensity, when Lord Elibank was some days after talking of it with the natural elation of a Scotchman, or of any man who is proud of a stately fortress in his own country, Dr. Johnson affected to despise it, observing, that "it would make a good prison in ENGLAND."

Lest it should be supposed that I have suppressed one of his sallies against my country, it may not be improper here to correct a mistaken account that has been circulated, as to his conversation this day. It has been said, that being desired to attend to the noble prospect from the Castle-hill, he replied, "Sir, the noblest prospect that a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that leads him to London." This lively sarcasm was thrown out at a tavern in London, in my presence, many years before.

¹ [Lord Elibank made a happy retort on Dr. Johnson's definition of oats, as the food of horses in England and of men in Scotland. "Yes," said he; "and where else will you see *such horses* and *such men*?"—WALTER SCOTT.]

² [See *ante*, p. 195, where reasons are given why it is unlikely that this was Mr. Walmsley.—ED.]

We had with us to-day at dinner, at my house, the Lady Dowager Colville³, and Lady Anne Erskine⁴, sisters of the Earl of Kelly; the Honourable Archibald Erskine, who has now succeeded to that title⁵; Lord Elibank, the Reverend Dr. Blair, Mr. Tytler, the acute vindicator of Mary, Queen of Scots, and [his son, the advocate⁶.]

Fingal being talked of, Dr. Johnson, who used to boast that he had, from the first, resisted both Ossian and the giants of Patagonia, averred his positive disbelief of its authenticity. Lord Elibank said, "I am sure it is not M'Pherson's. Mr. Johnson, I keep company a great deal with you; it is known I do. I may borrow from you better things than I can say myself, and give them as my own; but if I should, every body will know whose they are." The Doctor was not softened by this compliment. He denied merit to Fingal, supposing it to be the production of a man who has had the advantages that the present age affords; and said, "Nothing is more easy than to write enough in that style, if once you begin⁷." [Young Mr. Tytler briskly stepped forward, and said, 1st Ed. "Fingal is certainly genuine, for I have heard a great part of it repeated in the original." Dr. Johnson indignantly asked him, "Sir, do you understand the original?" TYTLER. "No, sir." JOHNSON. "Why, then, we see to what *this* testimony comes: thus it is⁸." He after-

³ [Lady Elizabeth Erskine, daughter of the fifth Earl of Kellie, widow of Mr. Walter Macfarlane, and wife, by a second marriage, of the fourth Lord Colville: she died in 1794, in her sixtieth year.—ED.]

⁴ [Lady Anne, born in 1735; died in 1802, unmarried.—ED.]

⁵ [As seventh earl; born in 1736; he died in 1797, unmarried.—ED.]

⁶ [These are the words of the first edition, in lieu of which, for a reason that will appear presently, Mr. Boswell afterwards substituted the words "some other friends." Young Mr. Tytler, the advocate, became afterwards a lord of session, under the title of Lord Wodhouselelie.—ED.]

⁷ I desire not to be understood as agreeing *entirely* with the opinions of Dr. Johnson, which I relate without any remark. The many imitations, however, of Fingal, that have been published, confirm this observation in a considerable degree.—BOSWELL.

⁸ [In place of this passage of the first edition, Mr. Boswell afterwards substituted the following: "One gentleman in company expressing his opinion 'that Fingal was certainly genuine, for that he had heard a great part of it repeated in the original,'—Dr. Johnson indignantly asked him, whether he understood the original; to which an answer being given in the negative, 'Why, then,' said Dr. Johnson, 'we see to what *this* testimony comes: thus it is.'"—ED.]

wards said to me, "Did you observe the wonderful confidence with which young Tytler advanced with his front ready *brazed*?"]

I mentioned this as a remarkable proof how liable the mind of man is to credulity, when not guarded by such strict examination as that which Dr. Johnson habitually practised. The talents and integrity of the gentleman who made the remark are unquestionable; yet, had not Dr. Johnson made him advert to the consideration, that he who does not understand a language cannot know that something which is recited to him is in that language, he might have believed, and reported to this hour, that he had "heard a great part of Fingal repeated in the original."

For the satisfaction of those on the north of the Tweed, who may think Dr. Johnson's account of Caledonian credulity and inaccuracy too strong, it is but fair to add, that he admitted the same kind of ready belief might be found in his own country. "He would undertake," he said, "to write an epick poem on the story of Robin Hood, and half England, to whom the names and places he should mention in it are familiar, would believe and declare they had heard it from their earliest years."

One of his objections to the authenticity of Fingal, during the conversation at Ulinish, is omitted in my Journal, but I perfectly recollect it. "Why is not the original deposited in some publick library, instead of exhibiting attestations of its existence? Suppose there were a question in a court of justice, whether a man be dead or alive. You aver he is alive, and you bring fifty witnesses to swear it. I answer, 'Why do you not produce the man?'" This is an argument founded on one of the first principles of the law of evidence, which Gilbert¹ would have held to be irrefragable.

I do not think it incumbent on me to give any precise decided opinion upon this question, as to which I believe more than some, and less than others. The subject appears to have now become very uninteresting to the publick. That Fingal is not from beginning to end a translation from the Gaelick, but that *some* passages have been supplied by the editor to connect the whole, I have heard admitted by very warm advocates for its authenticity. If this be the case, why are not these distinctly ascertained? Antiquaries and admirers of the work may complain, that they are in a situation similar to that of the unhappy gentleman whose wife informed him, on her deathbed, that one of their reputed children was not his; and, when he eagerly begged her to declare which of them it was, she

answered, "*That* you shall never know;" and expired, leaving him in irremediable doubt as to them all.

I beg leave now to say something upon second-sight, of which I have related two instances, as they impressed my mind at the time². I own, I returned from the Hebrides with a considerable degree of faith in the many stories of that kind which I heard with a too easy acquiescence, without any close examination of the evidence: but, since that time, my belief in those stories has been much weakened, by reflecting on the careless inaccuracy of narrative in common matters, from which we may certainly conclude that there may be the same in what is more extraordinary. It is but just, however, to add, that the belief in second-sight is not peculiar to the Highlands and Isles.

Some years after our Tour, a cause was tried in the court of session, where the principal fact to be ascertained was, whether a ship-master, who used to frequent the Western Highlands and Isles, was drowned in one particular year, or in the year after. A great number of witnesses from those parts were examined on each side, and swore directly contrary to each other upon this simple question. One of them, a very respectable chieftain, who told me a story of second-sight, which I have not mentioned, but which I too implicitly believed, had in this case, previous to this publick examination, not only said, but attested under his hand, that he had seen the ship-master in the year subsequent to that in which the court was finally satisfied he was drowned. When interrogated with the strictness of judicial inquiry, and under the awe of an oath, he recollected himself better, and retracted what he had formerly asserted, apologising for his inaccuracy, by telling the judges, "A man will *say* what he will not *swear*." By many he was much censured, and it was maintained that every gentleman would be as attentive to truth without the sanction of an oath as with it. Dr. Johnson, though he himself was distinguished at all times by a scrupulous adherence to truth, controverted this proposition; and as a proof that this was not, though it ought to be, the case, urged the very different decisions of elections under Mr. Grenville's Act, from those formerly made. "Gentlemen will not pronounce upon oath, what they would have said, and voted in the house, without that sanction."

However difficult it may be for men who believe in preternatural communications, in modern times, to satisfy those who are of a different opinion, they may easily refute the doctrine of their opponents, who impute a belief in second-sight to superstition. To

¹ [Chief Baron Gilbert wrote a treatise on *Evidence*.—Ed.]

² [See Macleod's Memoirs.—Ed.]

entertain a visionary notion that one sees a distant or future event may be called superstition; but the correspondence of the fact or event with such an impression on the fancy, though certainly very wonderful, if proved, has no more connexion with superstition than magnetism or electricity.

After dinner various topics were discussed; but I recollect only one particular. Dr. Johnson compared the different talents of Garrick and Foote, as companions, and gave Garrick greatly the preference for elegance, though he allowed Foote extraordinary powers of entertainment. He said, "Garrick is restrained by some principle; but Foote has the advantage of an unlimited range. Garrick has some delicacy of feeling; it is possible to put him out; you may get the better of him; but Foote is the most incompressible fellow that I ever knew: when you have driven him into a corner, and think you are sure of him, he runs through between your legs, or jumps over your head, and makes his escape."

Dr. Erskine and Mr. Robert Walker, two very respectable ministers of Edinburgh, supped with us, as did the Reverend Dr. Webster. The conversation turned on the Moravian missions, and on the methodists. Dr. Johnson observed in general, that missionaries were too sanguine in their accounts of their success among savages, and that much of what they tell is not to be believed. He owned that the methodists had done good; had spread religious impressions among the vulgar part of mankind; but, he said, they had great bitterness against other Christians, and that he never could get a methodist to explain in what he excelled others; that it always ended in the indispensable necessity of hearing one of their preachers.

Thursday, 11th November.—Principal Robertson came to us as we sat at breakfast: he advanced to Dr. Johnson, repeating a line of Virgil, which I forget. I suppose, either

Post varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum¹,
or

—multum ille et terris jactatus, et alto².

Every body had accosted us with some studied compliment on our return. Dr. Johnson said, "I am really ashamed of the congratulations which we receive. We are addressed as if we had made a voyage to Nova Zembla, and suffered five persecutions in Japan." And he afterwards remarked, that "to see a man come up with a formal air, and a Latin line, when we had

no fatigue and no danger, was provoking." I told him, he was not sensible of the danger, having lain under cover in the boat during the storm: he was like the chicken, that hides its head under its wing, and then thinks itself safe.

Lord Elibank came to us, as did Sir William Forbes. The rash attempt in 1745 being mentioned, I observed, that it would make a fine piece of history³. Dr. Johnson said it would. Lord Elibank doubted whether any man of this age could give it impartially. JOHNSON. "A man, by talking with those of different sides, who were actors in it, and putting down all that he hears, may in time collect the materials of a good narrative. You are to consider, all history was at first oral. I suppose Voltaire was fifty years in collecting his 'Louis XIV.' which he did in the way that I am proposing." ROBERTSON. "He did so. He lived much with all the great people who were concerned in that reign, and heard them talk of every thing; and then either took Mr. Boswell's way of writing down what he heard, or, which is as good, preserved it in his memory; for he has a wonderful memory." With the leave, however, of this elegant historian, no man's memory can preserve facts or sayings with such fidelity as may be done by writing them down when they are recent. Dr. Robertson said, "It was now full time to make such a collection as Dr. Johnson suggested; for many of the people who were then in arms were dropping off; and both whigs and jacobites were now come to talk with moderation." Lord Elibank said to him, "Mr. Robertson, the first thing that gave me a high opinion of you was your saying in the Select Society⁴, while parties ran high, soon after the year 1745, that you did not think worse of a man's moral character for his having been in rebellion. This was venturing to utter a liberal sentiment, while both sides had a detestation of each other."

Dr. Johnson observed, that being in re-

³ [It were to be wished that the master hand of Sir Walter Scott, which has created a European interest in the details of the Scotch character and manners, should give us a history of the young Pretender's proceedings. Mr. Boswell's notes, the work called "Ascanius," the journals in the Lockhart papers, and the periodical publications of the day, contain a great deal of the prince's personal history; and the archives of the public offices and the Stuart papers would probably be open to his inquiries. There is perhaps little new to tell, but it might be collected into one view, and the interest heightened by his admirable powers of narration.—Ed.]

⁴ A society for debate in Edinburgh, consisting of the most eminent men.—BOSWELL.

¹ Through various hazards and events we move.—Dryden.—BOSWELL.

² Long labours both by sea and land he bore.—Dryden.—BOSWELL.

billion from a notion of another's right was not connected with depravity; and that we had this proof of it, that all mankind applauded the pardoning of rebels; which they would not do in the case of robbers and murderers. He said, with a smile, that "he wondered that the phrase of *unnatural* rebellion should be so much used, for that all rebellion was natural to man."

As I kept no Journal of any thing that passed after this morning, I shall, from memory, group together this and the other days till that on which Dr. Johnson departed for London. They were in all nine days; on which he dined at Lady Colvill's, Lord Hailes's, Sir Adolphus Oughton's, Sir Alexander Dick's, Principal Robertson's, Mr. M'Laurin's, and thrice at Lord Elibank's seat in the country, where we also passed two nights. He supped at the Honourable Alexander Gordon's, now one of our judges, by the title of Lord Rockville; at Mr. Nairne's, now also one of our judges, by the title of Lord Dunsinan; at Dr. Blair's, and Mr. Tytler's; and at my house thrice, one evening with a numerous company, chiefly gentlemen of the law; another with Mr. Menzies of Culldares, and Lord Monbodo, who disengaged himself on purpose to meet him; and the evening on which we returned from Lord Elibank's, he supped with my wife and me by ourselves.

He breakfasted at Dr. Webster's, at old Mr. Drummond's, and at Dr. Blacklock's; and spent one forenoon at my uncle Dr. Boswell's, who showed him his curious museum; and, as he was an elegant scholar, and a physician bred in the school of Boerhaave, Dr. Johnson was pleased with his company.

On the mornings when he breakfasted at my house, he had, from ten o'clock till one or two, a constant levee of various persons, of very different characters and descriptions. I could not attend him, being obliged to be in the court of session; but my wife was so good as to devote the greater part of the morning to the endless task of pouring out tea for my friend and his visitors.

Such was the disposition of his time at Edinburgh. He said one evening to me, in a fit of languor, "Sir, we have been harassed by invitations." I acquiesced. "Ay, sir," he replied; "but how much worse would it have been if we had been neglected?"

From what has been recorded in this Journal, it may well be supposed that a variety of admirable conversation has been lost, by my neglect to preserve it. I shall endeavour to recollect some of it as well as I can.

At Lady Colvill's, to whom I am proud to introduce any stranger of eminence, that

he may see what dignity and grace is to be found in Scotland, an officer observed that he had heard Lord Mansfield was not a great English lawyer. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, supposing Lord Mansfield not to have the splendid talents which he possesses, he must be a great English lawyer, from having been so long at the bar, and having passed through so many of the great offices of the law. Sir, you may as well maintain that a carrier, who has driven a packhorse between Edinburgh and Berwick for thirty years, does not know the road, as that Lord Mansfield does not know the law of England."

At Mr. Nairne's he drew the character of Richardson, the authour of *Clarissa*, with a strong yet delicate pencil. I lament much that I have not preserved it; I only remember that he expressed a high opinion of his talents and virtues; but observed that "his perpetual study was to ward off petty inconveniencies, and procure petty pleasures; that his love of continual superiority was such that he took care to be always surrounded by women, who listened to him implicitly, and did not venture to controvert his opinions¹; and that his desire of distinction was so great, that he used to give large veils to the Speaker Onslow's servants, that they might treat him with respect."

On the same evening, he would not allow that the private life of a judge, in England, was required to be so strictly decorous as I supposed. "Why then, sir (said I), according to your account, an English judge may just live like a gentleman." JOHNSON. "Yes, sir,—if he *can*."²

At Mr. Tytler's, I happened to tell that one evening, a great many years ago, when Dr. Hugh Blair and I were sitting together in the pit of Drury-lane play-house, in a wild freak of youthful extravagance, I entertained the audience *prodigiously*, by imitating the lowing of a cow. A little while after I had told this story, I differed from Dr. Johnson, I suppose too confidently, upon some point, which I now forget. He did not spare me. "Nay, sir (said he), if you cannot talk better as a man, I'd have you bellow like a cow."³

¹ [See *ante*, p. 96.—Ed.]

² [And yet see (*ante*, p. 359) his censure of Lord Monbodo for wearing a round hat in the country.—Ed.]

³ As I have been scrupulously exact in relating anecdotes concerning other persons, I shall not withhold any part of this story, however ludicrous. I was so successful in this boyish frolick, that the universal cry of the galleries was, "Encore the cow! Encore the cow!" In the pride of my heart I attempted imitations of some other animal, but with very inferior effect. My reverend friend, anxious for my *fame*, with an air of

At Dr. Webster's, he said, that he believed hardly any man died without affectation. This remark appears to me to be well founded, and will account for many of the celebrated deathbed sayings which are recorded.

On one of the evenings at my house, when he told that Lord Lovat boasted to an English nobleman, that, though he had not his wealth, he had two thousand men whom he could at any time call into the field, the Honourable Alexander Gordon observed, that those two thousand men brought him to the block. "True, sir (said Dr. Johnson): but you may just as well argue concerning a man who has fallen over a precipice to which he has walked too near,—'His two legs brought him to that,'—is he not the better for having two legs?"

At Dr. Blair's I left him, in order to attend a consultation, during which he and his amiable host were by themselves. I returned to supper, at which were Principal Robertson, Mr. Nairne, and some other gentlemen. Dr. Robertson and Dr. Blair, I remember, talked well upon subordination and government; and, as my friend and I were walking home, he said to me, "Sir, these two doctors are good men, and wise men." I begged of Dr. Blair to recollect what he could of the long conversation that passed between Dr. Johnson and him alone, this evening, and he obligingly wrote to me as follows:—

3d March, 1785.

"DEAR SIR,—As so many years have intervened since I chanced to have that conversation with Dr. Johnson in my house to which you refer, I have forgotten most of what then passed; but remember that I was both instructed and entertained by it. Among other subjects, the discourse happening to turn on modern Latin poets, the Doctor expressed a very favourable opinion of Buchanan, and instantly repeated from beginning to end, an ode of his, entitled *Calendæ Maiæ* (the eleventh in his *Miscellaneorum Liber*, beginning with these words, '*Salvete sacris deliciis sacre,*' with which I had formerly been unacquainted; but upon perusing it, the praise which he bestowed upon it, as one of the happiest of Buchanan's poetical compositions, appeared to me very just. He also repeated to me a Latin ode he had composed in one of the western islands, from which he had lately

the utmost gravity and earnestness, addressed me thus: "My dear sir, I would *confine* myself to the *cow*!"—BOSWELL. [Blair's advice was expressed more emphatically, and with a peculiar burr—"Stick to the cow, mon!"—WALTER SCOTT.]

returned. We had much discourse concerning his excursion to those islands, with which he expressed himself as having been highly pleased; talked in a favourable manner of the hospitality of the inhabitants; and particularly spoke much of his happiness in having you for his companion; and said that the longer he knew you, he loved and esteemed you the more. This conversation passed in the interval between tea and supper, when we were by ourselves. You, and the rest of the company who were with us at supper, have often taken notice that he was uncommonly bland and gay that evening, and gave much pleasure to all who were present. This is all that I can recollect distinctly of that long conversation. Yours sincerely,

"HUGH BLAIR."

At Lord Hailes's we spent a most agreeable day; but again I must lament that I was so indolent as to let almost all that passed evaporate into oblivion. Dr. Johnson observed there, that "it is wonderful how ignorant many officers of the army are, considering how much leisure they have for study, and the acquisition of knowledge." I hope he was mistaken; for he maintained that many of them were ignorant of things belonging immediately to their own profession; "for instance, many cannot tell how far a musket will carry a bullet;" in proof of which, I suppose, he mentioned some particular person; for Lord Hailes, from whom I solicited what he could recollect of that day, writes to me as follows:

"As to Dr. Johnson's observation about the ignorance of officers, in the length that a musket will carry, my brother, Colonel Dalrymple, was present, and he thought that the Doctor was either mistaken, by putting the question wrong, or that he had conversed on the subject with some person out of service.

"Was it upon that occasion that he expressed no curiosity to see the room at Dumfermline where Charles I. was born? 'I know that he was born (said he); no matter where.' Did he envy us the birth-place of the king?"

Near the end of his "Journey," Dr. Johnson has given liberal praise to Mr. Braidwood's academy for the deaf and dumb. When he visited it, a circumstance occurred which was truly characteristic of our great lexicographer. "Pray," said he, "can they pronounce any *long* words?" Mr. Braidwood informed him they could. Upon which Dr. Johnson wrote one of his *sequepialia verba*, which was pronounced by the scholars, and he was satisfied. My readers may perhaps wish to know what the word was; but I cannot gratify their

curiosity. Mr. Braidwood told me it remained long in his school, but had been lost before I made my inquiry¹.

Dr. Johnson one day visited the court of session. He thought the mode of pleading there too vehement, and too much addressed to the passions of the judges. "This," said he, "is not the Areopagus."

At old Mr. Drummond's, Sir John Dalrymple quaintly said, the two noblest animals in the world were a Scotch Highlander and an English sailor. "Why, sir," said Dr. Johnson, "I shall say nothing as to the Scotch Highlander; but as to the English sailor, I cannot agree with you." Sir John said he was generous in giving away his money. JOHNSON. "Sir, he throws away his money, without thought, and without merit. I do not call a tree generous, that sheds its fruit at every breeze." Sir John having affected to complain of the attacks made upon his "Memoirs," Dr. Johnson said, "Nay, sir, do not complain. It is advantageous to an author, that his book should be attacked as well as praised. Fame is a shuttlecock. If it be struck only at one end of the room, it will soon fall to the ground. To keep it up, it must be struck at both ends." Often have I reflected on this since; and, instead of being angry at many of those who have written against me, have smiled to think that they were unintentionally subservient to my fame, by using a battledoor to make me *virum volitare per ora*.

At Sir Alexander Dick's, from that absence of mind to which every man is at times subject, I told, in a blundering manner, Lady Eglintoune's complimentary adoption of Dr. Johnson as her son; for I unfortunately stated that her ladyship adopted him as her son, in consequence of her having been married the year *after* he was born. Dr. Johnson instantly corrected me. "Sir, don't you perceive that you are defaming the countess? For, supposing me to be her son, and that she was not married till the year after my birth, I must have been her *natural* son." A

¹ One of the best critics of our age "does not wish to prevent the admirers of the incorrect and nerveless style, which generally prevailed for a century before Dr. Johnson's energetic writings were known, from enjoying the laugh that this story may produce, in which he is very ready to join them." He, however, requests me to observe, that "my friend very properly chose a *long* word on this occasion, not, it is believed, from any predilection for polysyllables (though he certainly had a due respect for them), but in order to put Mr. Braidwood's skill to the strictest test, and to try the efficacy of his instruction by the most difficult exertion of the organs of his pupils."—

BOSWELL. [The critic was probably Dr. Blair.—WALTER SCOTT.]

young lady² of quality, who was present, very handsomely said, "Might not the son have justified the fault?" My friend was much flattered by this compliment, which he never forgot. When in more than ordinary spirits, and talking of his journey in Scotland, he has called to me, "Boswell, what was it that the young lady of quality said of me at Sir Alexander Dick's?" Nobody will doubt that I was happy in repeating it.

My illustrious friend, being now desirous to be again in the great theatre of life and animated exertion, took a place in the coach, which was to set out for London on Monday the 22d of November. Sir John Dalrymple pressed him to come on the Saturday before, to his house at Cranston, which being twelve miles from Edinburgh, upon the middle road to Newcastle (Dr. Johnson had come to Edinburgh by Berwick, and along the naked coast), it would make his journey easier, as the coach would take him up at a more seasonable hour than that at which it sets out. Sir John, I perceived, was ambitious of having such a guest; but as I was well assured, that at this very time he had joined with some of his prejudiced countrymen in railing at Dr. Johnson, and had said, he wondered how any gentleman of Scotland could keep company with him, I thought he did not deserve the honour; yet, as it might be a convenience to Dr. Johnson, I contrived that he should accept the invitation, and engaged to conduct him. I resolved that, on our way to Sir John's, we should make a little circuit by Roslin Castle and Hawthornden, and wished to set out soon after breakfast; but young Mr. Tytler came to show Dr. Johnson some essays which he had written; and my great friend, who was exceedingly obliging when thus consulted, was detained so long that it was, I believe, one o'clock before we got into our post-chaise. I found that we should be too late for dinner at Sir John Dalrymple's, to which we were engaged; but I would by no means lose the pleasure of seeing my friend at Hawthornden,—of seeing *Sam Johnson* at the very spot where *Ben Jonson* visited the learned and poetical Drummond.

We surveyed Roslin Castle, the romantic scene around it, and the beautiful Gothic chapel, and dined and drank tea at the inn; after which we proceeded to Hawthornden, and viewed the caves; and I all the while had *Rare Ben* in my mind, and was pleased to think that this place was now visited by another celebrated wit of England.

By this time "the waning night was growing old," and we were yet several miles from Sir John Dalrymple's. Dr.

² [Probably one of the Ladies Lindsay, daughters of the Earl of Balcarres.—WALTER SCOTT.]

Johnson did not seem much troubled at our having treated the baronet with so little attention to politeness; but when I talked of the grievous disappointment it must have been to him that we did not come to the *feast* that he had prepared for us (for he told us he had killed a seven-year-old sheep on purpose), my friend got into a merry mood, and jocularly said, "I dare say, sir, he has been very sadly distressed; nay, we do not know but the consequence may have been fatal. Let me try to describe his situation in his own historical style. I have as good a right to make him think and talk, as he has to tell us how people thought and talked a hundred years ago, of which he has no evidence. All history, so far as it is not supported by contemporary evidence, is romance.—Stay now—let us consider!" He then (heartily laughing all the while) proceeded in his imitation, I am sure to the following effect, though now, at the distance of almost twelve years, I cannot pretend to recollect all the precise words.

"Dinner being ready, he wondered that his guests were not yet come. His wonder was soon succeeded by impatience. He walked about the room in anxious agitation; sometimes he looked at his watch, sometimes he looked out at the window with an eager gaze of expectation, and revolved in his mind the various accidents of human life. His family beheld him with mute concern. 'Surely,' said he, with a sigh, 'they will not fail me.' The mind of man can bear a certain pressure; but there is a point when it can bear no more. A rope was in his view, and he died a Roman death¹."

It was very late before we reached the seat of Sir John Dalrymple², who, certainly with some reason, was not in very good humour. Our conversation was not brilliant. We supped, and went to bed in ancient rooms, which would have better suited the climate of Italy in summer, than that of Scotland in the month of November.

I recollect no conversation of the next day worth preserving, except one saying of Dr. Johnson, which will be a valuable text for many decent old dowagers, and other good company, in various circles to descant

upon. He said, "I am sorry I have not learnt to play at cards. It is very useful in life: it generates kindness, and consolidates society³." He certainly could not mean deep play.

My friend and I thought we should be more comfortable at the inn at Blackshields, two miles farther on. We therefore went thither in the evening, and he was very entertaining; but I have preserved nothing but the pleasing remembrance, and his verses on George the Second and Cibber, and his epitaph on Parnell, which he was then so good as to dictate to me. We breakfasted together next morning, and then the coach came, and took him up. He had, as one of his companions in it, as far as Newcastle, the worthy and ingenious Dr. Hope, botanical professor at Edinburgh. Both Dr. Johnson and he used to speak of their good fortune in thus accidentally meeting; for they had much instructive conversation, which is always a most valuable enjoyment, and, when found where it is not expected, is peculiarly relished.

I have now completed my account of our Tour to the Hebrides. I have brought Dr. Johnson down to Scotland, and seen him into the coach which in a few hours carried him back into England. He said to me often, that the time he spent in this Tour was the pleasantest part of his life, and asked me if I would lose the recollection of it for five hundred pounds. I answered I would not; and he applauded my setting such a value on an accession of new images in my mind.

Had it not been for me, I am persuaded Dr. Johnson never would have undertaken such a journey; and I must be allowed to assume some merit from having been the cause that our language has been enriched with such a book as that which he published on his return; a book which I never read but with the utmost admiration, as I had such opportunities of knowing from what very meagre materials it was composed.

But my praise may be supposed partial; and therefore I shall insert two testimonies, not liable to that objection, both written by gentlemen of Scotland, to whose opinions I am confident the highest respect will be paid, Lord Hailes and Mr. Dempster.

"LORD HAILES TO MR. BOSWELL.

"Newhailes, 6th Feb. 1775.

"SIR,—I have received much pleasure

³ [The late excellent Doctor Baillie advised a gentleman whose official duties were of a very constant and engrossing nature, and whose health seemed to suffer from over-work, to play at cards in the evening, which would tend, he said, to quiet the mind, and to allay the anxiety created by the business of the day.—ED.]

¹ "Essex was at that time confined to the same chamber of the Tower from which his father Lord Capel had been led to death, and in which his wife's grandfather had inflicted a voluntary death upon himself. When he saw his friend carried to what he reckoned certain fate, their common enemies enjoying the spectacle, and reflected that it was he who had forced Lord Howard upon the confidence of Russell, he retired, and, by a *Roman death*, put an end to his misery."—*Dalrymple's Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. i. p. 36.

² [They seem to have behaved to Sir John Dalrymple with wanton incivility.—ED.]

and much instruction from perusing the 'Journey to the Hebrides.'

"I admire the elegance and variety of description, and the lively picture of men and manners. I always approve of the moral, often of the political, reflections. I love the benevolence of the authour.

"They who search for faults may possibly find them in this, as well as in every other work of literature.

"For example, the friends of the old family say that the *era of planting* is placed too late, at the union of the two kingdoms. I am known to be no friend of the old family; yet I would place the era of planting at the restoration; after the murder of Charles I. had been expiated in the anarchy which succeeded it.

"Before the restoration, few trees were planted, unless by the monastick drones: their successors (and worthy patriots they were), the barons, first cut down the trees, and then sold the estates. The gentleman at St. Andrews, who said that there were but two trees in Fife, ought to have added, that the elms of Balmerino were sold within these twenty years, to make pumps for the fire-engines.

"In J. Major *de Gestis Scotorum*, l. i. c. 2, last edition, there is a singular passage:

"*Davidi Cranstoneo conterraneo, dum de prima theologiæ licentia foret, duo ei consocii et familiares, et mei cum eo in artibus auditores, scilicet Jacobus Almain Senonensis, et Petrus Bruxcellensis, Prædicatoris ordinis, in Sorbonæ curia die Sorbonico commilitonibus suis publice objecerunt, quod pane avenaceo plebei Scoti, sicut a quodam religioso intellexerant, vescerantur, ut virum, quem cholericum noverant, honestis salibus tentarent, qui hoc inficiari tanquam patriæ dedecus nisus est.*"

"Pray introduce our countryman, Mr. Licentiate David Cranston, to the acquaintance of Mr. Johnson.

"The syllogism seems to have been this:

They who feed on oatmeal are barbarians;

But the Scots feed on oatmeal:

Ergo—

The licentiate denied the *minor*. I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

"DAV. DALRYMPLE,"

"MR. DEMPSTER TO MR. BOSWELL, EDINBURGH.

"Dunnichen, 16th February, 1775.

"MY DEAR BOSWELL,—I cannot omit a moment to return you my best thanks for the entertainment you have furnished me, my family, and guests, by the perusal of Dr. Johnson's 'Journey to the Western Islands;' and now for my sentiments of it. I was well entertained. His descriptions are accurate and vivid. He carried me on the tour along with him. I am pleased with

the justice he has done to your humour and vivacity. 'The noise of the wind being all its own,' is a *bon-mot*, that it would have been a pity to have omitted, and a robbery not to have ascribed to its author¹.

"There is nothing in the book, from beginning to end, that a Scotchman need to take amiss. What he says of the country is true, and his observations on the people are what must naturally occur to a sensible, observing, and reflecting inhabitant of a *convenient* metropolis, where a man on thirty pounds a year may be better accommodated with all the little wants of life than Col or Sir Allan. He reasons candidly about the second-sight; but I wish he had inquired more, before he ventured to say he even doubted of the possibility of such an unusual and useless deviation from all the known laws of nature. The notion of the second-sight I consider as a remnant of superstitious ignorance and credulity, which a philosopher will set down as such, till the contrary is clearly proved, and then it will be classed among the other certain, though unaccountable parts of our nature, like dreams, and—I do not know what.

"In regard to the language, it has the merit of being all his own. Many words of foreign extraction are used, where, I believe, common ones would do as well, especially on familiar occasions. Yet I believe he could not express himself so forcibly in any other style. I am charmed with his researches concerning the Erse language, and the antiquity of their manuscripts. I am quite convinced; and I shall rank Ossian, and his Fingals and Oscars, amongst the nursery tales, not the true history of our country, in all time to come.

"Upon the whole the book cannot displease, for it has no pretensions. The authour neither says he is a geographer, nor an antiquarian, nor very learned in the History of Scotland, nor a naturalist, nor a fossilist. The manners of the people, and the face of the country, are all he attempts to describe, or seems to have thought of. Much were it to be wished that they who have travelled into more remote, and of course more curious, regions, had all possessed his good sense. Of the state of learning, his observations on Glasgow university show he has formed a very sound judgment. He understands our climate too, and he has accurately observed the changes, however slow and imperceptible to us, which Scotland has undergone, in consequence of the blessings of liberty and internal peace. I could have drawn my

¹ ["I know not that I ever heard the wind so loud in any other place [as in Col]; and Mr. Boswell observed, that its noise *was all its own*, for there were no trees to increase it."—*Johnson's Journey—Works*, vol. viii. p. 365.—Ed.]

pen through the story of the old woman at St. Andrews, being the only silly thing in the book. He has taken the opportunity of ingrafting into the work several good observations, which I dare say he had made upon men and things before he set foot on Scotch ground, by which it is considerably enriched¹. A long journey, like a tall may-pole, though not very beautiful itself, yet is pretty enough when ornamented with flowers and garlands: it furnishes a sort of cloak-pins for hanging the furniture of your mind upon; and whoever sets out upon a journey, without furnishing his mind previously with much study and useful knowledge, erects a may-pole in December, and puts up very useless cloak-pins.

"I hope the book will induce many of his countrymen to make the same jaunt, and help to intermix the more liberal part of them still more with us, and perhaps abate somewhat of that virulent antipathy which many of them entertain against the Scotch; who certainly would never have formed those *combinations* which he takes notice of, more than their ancestors, had they not been necessary for their mutual safety, at least for their success, in a country where they are treated as foreigners. They would find us not deficient, at least in point of hospitality, and they would be ashamed ever after to abuse us in the mass.

"So much for the Tour. I have now, for the first time in my life, passed a winter in the country; and never did three months roll on with more swiftness and satisfaction. I used not only to wonder at, but pity, those whose lot condemned them to winter any where but in either of the capitals. But every place has its charms to a cheerful mind. I am busy planting and taking measures for opening the summer campaign in farming; and I find I have an excellent resource, when revolutions in politicks perhaps, and revolutions of the sun for certain, will make it decent for me to retreat behind the ranks of the more forward in life.

"I am glad to hear the last was a very busy week with you. I see you as counsel in some causes which must have opened a charming field for your humourous vein. As it is more uncommon, so I verily believe it is more useful than the more serious exercise of reason; and, to a man who is to appear in publick, more eclat is to be gained, sometimes more money too, by a *bon-mot*, than a learned speech. It is the fund of natural humour which Lord North pos-

¹ Mr. Orme, one of the ablest historians of this age, is of the same opinion. He said to me, "There are in that book thoughts which, by long revolution in the great mind of Johnson, have been formed and polished—like pebbles rolled in the ocean!"—BOSWELL.

sesses, that makes him so much the favourite of the house, and so able, because so amiable, a leader of a party.

"I have now finished *my Tour of Seven Pages*. In what remains, I beg leave to offer my compliments, and those of *ma très chere femme*, to you and Mrs. Boswell. Pray unbend the busy brow, and frolick a little in a letter to, my dear Boswell, your affectionate friend,

"GEORGE DEMPSTER?"

I shall also present the publick with a correspondence with the laird of Rasay, concerning a passage in the "Journey to the Western Islands," which shows Dr. Johnson in a very amiable light.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ,
Rasay, 10th April, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—I take this occasion of returning you my most hearty thanks for the civilities shown to my daughter by you and Mrs. Boswell. Yet, though she has informed me that I am under this obligation, I should very probably have deferred troubling you with making my acknowledgments at present, if I had not seen Dr. Johnson's 'Journey to the Western Isles,' in which he has been pleased to make a very friendly mention of my family, for which I am surely obliged to him, as being more than an equivalent for the reception you and he met with. Yet there is one paragraph I should have been glad he had omitted, which I am sure was owing to misinformation; that is, that I had acknowledged Macleod to be my chief, though my ancestors disputed the pre-eminence for a long tract of time.

"I never had occasion to enter seriously on this argument with the present laird or his grandfather, nor could I have any temptation to such a renunciation from either of them. I acknowledge the benefit of being chief of a clan is in our days of very little significance, and to trace out the progress of this honour to the founder of a family, of any standing, would perhaps be a matter of some difficulty.

"The true state of the present case is this: the M'Leod family consists of two different branches; the M'Leods of Lewis, of which I am descended, and the M'Leods of Harris. And though the former have lost a very extensive estate by forfeiture in

² Every reader will, I am sure, join with me in warm admiration of the truly patriotick writer of this letter. I know not which most to applaud,—that good sense and liberality of mind which could see and admit the defects of his native country, to which no man is a more zealous friend; or that candour which induced him to give just praise to the minister whom he honestly and strenuously opposed.—BOSWELL.

King James the Sixth's time, there are still several respectable families of it existing, who would justly blame me for such an unmeaning cession, when they all acknowledge me head of that family; which, though in fact it be but an ideal point of honour, is not hitherto so far disregarded in our country, but it would determine some of my friends to look on me as a much smaller man than either they or myself judge me at present to be. I will, therefore, ask it as a favour of you to acquaint the Doctor with the difficulty he has brought me to. In travelling among rival clans, such a silly tale as this might easily be whispered into the ear of a passing stranger; but as it has no foundation in fact, I hope the Doctor will be so good as to take his own way in undeceiving the publick—I principally mean my friends and connexions, who will be first angry at me, and next sorry to find such an instance of my littleness recorded in a book which has a very fair chance of being much read. I expect you will let me know what he will write you in return, and we here beg to make offer to you and Mrs. Boswell of our most respectful compliments.—I am, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

“JOHN M'LEOD.”

“TO THE LAIRD OF RASAY.

“London, 8th May, 1775.

“DEAR SIR,—The day before yesterday I had the honour to receive your letter, and I immediately communicated it to Dr. Johnson. He said he loved your spirit, and was exceedingly sorry that he had been the cause of the smallest uneasiness to you. There is not a more candid man in the world than he is, when properly addressed, as you will see from his letter to you, which I now inclose. He has allowed me to take a copy of it, and he says you may read it to your clan, or publish it, if you please. Be assured, sir, that I shall take care of what he has intrusted to me, which is to have an acknowledgment of his error inserted in the Edinburgh newspapers. You will, I dare say, be fully satisfied with Dr. Johnson's behaviour. He is desirous to know that you are; and therefore when you have read his acknowledgment in the papers, I beg you may write to me; and if you choose it, I am persuaded a letter from you to the Doctor also will be taken kind. I shall be at Edinburgh the week after next.

“Any civilities which my wife and I had in our power to show to your daughter, Miss M'Leod, were due to her own merit, and were well repaid by her agreeable company. But I am sure I should be a very unworthy man if I did not wish to show a grateful sense of the hospitable and genteel manner in which you were pleased to treat me. Be assured, my dear sir, that I shall

never forget your goodness, and the happy hours which I spent in Rasay.

“You and Dr. M'Leod were both so obliging as to promise me an account in writing of all the particulars which each of you remember, concerning the transactions of 1745–6. Pray do not forget this, and be as minute and full as you can; put down every thing: I have a great curiosity to know as much as I can, authentically.

“I beg that you may present my best respects to Lady Rasay, my compliments to your young family, and to Dr. M'Leod, and my hearty good wishes to Malcolm, with whom I hope again to shake hands cordially.—I have the honour to be, dear sir, your obliged and faithful humble servant,

“JAMES BOSWELL.”

ADVERTISEMENT

WRITTEN BY DR. JOHNSON,

And inserted by his desire in the Edinburgh newspapers (referred to in the foregoing letter¹).

“The authour of the ‘Journey to the Western Islands,’ having related that the M'Leods of Rasay acknowledge the chieftainship or superiority of the M'Leods of Sky, finds that he has been misinformed or mistaken. He means in a future edition to correct his error, and wishes to be told of more, if more have been discovered.”

Dr. Johnson's letter was as follows:

“TO THE LAIRD OF RASAY.

“London, 6th May, 1775.

“DEAR SIR,—Mr. Boswell has this day shown me a letter, in which you complain of a passage in the ‘Journey to the Hebrides.’ My meaning is mistaken. I did not intend to say that you had personally made any cession of the rights of your house, or any acknowledgment of the superiority of M'Leod of Dunvegan. I only designed to express what I thought generally admitted—that the house of Rasay allowed the superiority of the house of Dunvegan. Even this I now find to be erroneous, and will therefore omit or retract it in the next edition.

“Though what I had said had been true, if it had been disagreeable to you, I should have wished it unsaid; for it is not my business to adjust precedence. As it is mistaken, I find myself disposed to correct, both by my respect for you, and my reverence for truth.

“As I know not when the book will be reprinted, I have desired Mr. Boswell to anticipate the correction in the Edinburgh papers. This is all that can be done.

“I hope I may now venture to desire

¹ The original MS. is now in my possession.—BOSWELL.

that my compliments may be made, and my gratitude expressed, to Lady Rasay, Mr. Malcolm M'Leod, Mr. Donald M'Queen, and all the gentlemen and all the ladies whom I saw in the island of Rasay; a place which I remember with too much pleasure and too much kindness, not to be sorry that my ignorance, or hasty persuasion, should, for a single moment, have violated its tranquillity.

"I beg you all to forgive an undesigned and involuntary injury, and to consider me as, sir, your most obliged and most humble servant,
"SAM JOHNSON 1."

It would be improper for me to boast of my own labours; but I cannot refrain from publishing such praise as I received from such a man as Sir William Forbes, of Pitsligo, after the perusal of the original manuscript of my Journal.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
"Edinburgh, 7th March, 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I ought to have thanked you sooner for your very obliging letter, and for the singular confidence you are pleased to place in me, when you trust me with such a curious and valuable deposit as the papers you have sent me². Be assured I have a due sense of this favour, and shall faithfully and carefully return them to you. You may rely that I shall neither copy any part, nor permit the papers to be seen.

"They contain a curious picture of society, and form a journal on the most instructive plan that can possibly be thought of; for I am not sure that an ordinary observer would become so well acquainted either with Dr. Johnson, or with the manners of the Hebrides, by a personal intercourse, as by a perusal of your Journal.

"I am very truly, dear sir, your most obedient and affectionate humble servant,
"WILLIAM FORBES."

When I consider how many of the persons mentioned in this Tour are now gone to "that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns," I feel an impression at once awful and tender.—*Requiescant in pace!*

It may be objected by some persons, as it has been by one of my friends, that he who has the power of thus exhibiting an exact transcript of conversations is not a desirable member of society. I repeat the answer which I made to that friend: "Few, very few, need be afraid that their sayings will be recorded. Can it be imagined that I would take the trouble to gather what grows on every hedge, because I have collected such fruits as the *Nonpareil* and the *BON CHRETIEN*?"

On the other hand, how useful is such a faculty, if well exercised. To it we owe all those interesting apophthegms and *memorabilia* of the ancients, which Plutarch, Xenophon, and Valerius Maximus, have transmitted to us. To it we owe all those instructive and entertaining collections which the French have made under the title of "Ana," affixed to some celebrated name. To it we owe the "Table-Talk" of Selden, the "Conversation" between Ben Jonson and Drummond of Hawthornden, Spence's "Anecdotes of Pope," and other valuable remains in our own language. How delighted should we have been, if thus introduced into the company of Shakspeare and of Dryden, of whom we know scarcely any thing but their admirable writings! What pleasure would it have given us, to have known their petty habits, their characteristic manners, their modes of composition, and their genuine opinion of preceding writers and of their contemporaries! All these are now irrecoverably lost. Considering how many of the strongest and most brilliant effusions of exalted intellect must have perished, how much is it to be regretted that all men of distinguished wisdom and wit have not been attended by friends, of taste enough to relish, and abilities enough to register their conversation;

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnoua
Multi, sed omnes illacrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro.

They whose inferior exertions are recorded, as serving to explain or illustrate the sayings of such men, may be proud of being thus associated, and of their names being transmitted to posterity, by being appended to an illustrious character.

Before I conclude, I think it proper to say, that I have suppressed³ every thing

³ Having found on a revision of the first edition of this work, that, notwithstanding my best care, a few observations had escaped me, which arose from the instant impression, the publication of which might perhaps be considered as passing the bounds of a strict decorum, I immediately ordered that they should be omitted in the subsequent editions. I was pleased to find that they did not

¹ Rasay was highly gratified, and afterwards visited and dined with Dr. Johnson, at his house in London.—BOSWELL.

² In justice both to Sir William Forbes and myself, it is proper to mention, that the papers which were submitted to his perusal contained only an account of our Tour from the time that Dr. Johnson and I set out from Edinburgh (p. 46), and consequently did not contain the eulogium on Sir William Forbes, (p. 16), which he never saw till this book appeared in print; nor did he even know, when he wrote the above letter, that this Journal was to be published.—BOSWELL.

which I thought could really hurt any one now living. Vanity and self-conceit indeed may sometimes suffer. With respect to what is related, I considered it my duty to "extenuate nothing, nor set down aught in malice;" and with those lighter strokes of Dr. Johnson's satire, proceeding from a warmth and quickness of imagination, not from any malevolence of heart, and which, on account of their excellence, could not be omitted, I trust that they who are the

subjects of them have good sense and good temper enough not to be displeased.

I have only to add, that I shall ever reflect with great pleasure on a 'Tour, which has been the means of preserving so much of the enlightened and instructive conversation of one whose virtues will, I hope, ever be an object of imitation, and whose powers of mind were so extraordinary, that ages may revolve before such a man shall again appear.

His stay in Scotland was from the 18th of August, on which day he arrived, till the 22d of November, when he set out on his return to London; and I believe ninety-four days were never passed by any man in a more vigorous exertion. * * * * *

amount in the whole to a page. If any of the same kind are yet left, it is owing to inadvertence alone, no man being more unwilling to give pain to others than I am.

A contemptible scribbler, of whom I have learned no more than that, after having disgraced and deserted the clerical character, he picks up in London a scanty livelihood by scurrilous lampoons under a feigned name, has impudently and falsely asserted that the passages omitted were *defamatory*, and that the omission was not voluntary, but compulsory. The last insinuation I took the trouble publicly to disprove; yet, like one of Pope's dunces, he persevered in "the lie o'erthrown." As to the charge of defamation, there is an obvious and certain mode of refuting it. Any person who thinks it worth while to compare one edition with the other will find that the passages omitted were not in the least degree of that nature, but exactly such as I have represented them in the former part of this note, the hasty effusion of momentary feelings, which the delicacy of politeness should have suppressed.—

BOSWELL. [The only passages of this kind that the editor has observed are those relating to Sir Alexander Macdonald, *ante*, p. 372, and to Mr. Tytler, *ante*, p. 460.—Ed. I believe the scribbler alluded to was William Thompson, author of the "Man in the Moon," and other satirical novels, half clever, half crazy kinds of works. He was once a member of the kirk of Scotland, but being deposed by the presbytery of Auchterarder, became an author of all works in London, could seldom finish a work, on whatever subject, without giving a slap by the way to that same presbytery with the unpronounceable name. Boswell's denial of having retracted *upon compulsion* refutes what was said by Peter Pindar and others about "McDonald's rage."—WALTER SCOTT.]

¹ [Here followed in the original text: "He came by the way of Berwick-upon-Tweed to Edinburgh, where he remained a few days, and then went by St. Andrews, Aberdeen, Inverness, and Fort Augustus, to the Hebrides, to visit which was the principal object he had in view. He

He saw the four universities of Scotland, its three principal cities, and as much of the Highland and insular life as was sufficient for his philosophical contemplation.

He was respectfully entertained by the great, the learned, and the elegant, wherever he went; nor was he less delighted with the hospitality which he experienced in humbler life².

His various adventures, and the force and vivacity of his mind, as exercised during this peregrination, upon innumerable topics, have been faithfully, and to the best of my abilities, displayed in [the foregoing]

visited the isles of Sky, Rasay, Col, Mull, Inch Kenneth, and Icolmkill. He travelled through Argyleshire by Inverary, and from thence by Lochlomond and Dunbarton to Glasgow, then by London to Auchinleck in Ayrshire, the seat of my family, and then by Hamilton, back to Edinburgh, where he again spent some time. I had the pleasure of accompanying him during the whole of his journey." These sentences, and another subsequent paragraph, are removed from the text, as rendered superfluous by the insertion of the *Tour*, but are preserved in the notes, that the *whole* of Mr. Boswell's original work may be preserved in this edition.—Ed.]

The authour was not a small gainer by this extraordinary Journey; for Dr. Johnson thus writes to Mrs. Thrale, 3d Nov. 1773: "Boswell will praise my resolution and perseverance, and I shall in return celebrate his good humour and perpetual cheerfulness. He has better faculties than I had imagined; more justness of discernment, and more fecundity of images. It is very convenient to travel with him; for there is no house where he is not received with kindness and respect."—*Let. 90, to Mrs. Thrale.*—MALONE. [The editor asked Lord Stowell in what estimation he found Boswell amongst his countrymen. "Generally liked as a good-natured jolly fellow," replied his lordship. "But was he *respected*?" "Why, I think he had about the proportion of *respect* that you might guess would be shown to a *jolly fellow*." His lordship evidently thought that there was more *regard* than *respect*.—Ed.]

² [He was long remembered amongst the lower orders of Hebrideans by the title of the *Sassenach More*, the *big Englishman*.—WALTER SCOTT.]

“Journal of our Tour,” * * * * *¹ which exhibits as striking a view of his powers in conversation, as his works do of his excellence in writing. Nor can I deny to myself the very flattering gratification of inserting here the character which my friend Mr. Courtenay has been pleased to give of that work:

“With Reynolds’ pencil, vivid, bold, and true,
So fervent Boswell gives him to our view:
In every trait we see his mind expand;
The master rises by the pupil’s hand:
We love the writer, praise his happy vein,
Graced with the naïveté of the sage Montaigne;
Hence not alone are brighter parts display’d,
But e’en the specks of character pourtray’d:
We see the Rambler with fastidious smile
Mark the lone tree, and note the heath-clad isle;
But when th’ heroic tale of ‘Flora’² charms,
Deck’d in a kilt, he wields a chieftain’s arms:
The tuneful piper sounds a martial strain,
And Samuel sings, ‘The king shall have his *ain*.’”

During his stay at Edinburgh, after his return from the Hebrides, he was at great pains to obtain information concerning Scotland; and it will appear from his subsequent letters, that he was not less solicitous for intelligence on this subject after his return to London.

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“27th Nov. 1773.

“DEAR SIR,—I came home last night, without any incommodity, danger, or weariness, and am ready to begin a new journey. I shall go to Oxford on Monday. I know Mrs. Boswell wished me well to go³; her wishes have not been disappointed.

¹ [Here followed in the original text, “to the Hebrides, to which, as the public has been pleased to honour it by a very extensive circulation, I beg leave to refer, as to a separate and remarkable portion of his life, which may be there seen in detail, and——”—ED.]

² “The celebrated Flora Macdonald.”—COURTENAY.

³ In this he showed a very acute penetration. My wife paid him the most assiduous and respectful attention while he was our guest; so that I wonder how he discovered her wishing for his departure. The truth is, that his irregular hours and uncouth habits, such as turning the candles with their heads downwards, when they did not burn bright enough, and letting the wax drop upon the carpet, could not but be disagreeable to a lady. Besides, she had not that high admiration of him which was felt by most of those who knew him; and what was very natural to a female mind, she thought he had too much influence over her husband. She once, in a little warmth, made, with more point than justice, this remark upon that subject: “I have seen many a bear led by a man; but I never before saw a man led by a bear.”—BOSWELL. [The reader will, however, hereafter see that the repetition of this observation as to Mrs. Boswell’s feelings towards him was made so frequently and pertinaciously, as is hard-

Mrs. Williams has received Sir A.’s⁴ letter.

“Make my compliments to all those to whom my compliments may be welcome.

“Let the box⁵ be sent as soon as it can, and let me know when to expect it.

“Inquire, if you can, the order of the clans: Macdonald is first⁶, Maclean second; further I cannot go. Quicken Dr. Webster⁷. I am, sir, yours affectionately,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

“Edinburgh, 2d Dec. 1773.

* * * * *

“You shall have what information I can procure as to the order of the clans. A gentleman of the name of Grant tells me that there is no settled order among them; and he says that the Macdonalds were not placed upon the right of the army at Culloden; the Stuarts were. I shall, however, examine witnesses of every name that I can find here. Dr. Webster shall be quickened too. I like your little memorandums; they are symptoms of your being in earnest with your book of northern travels.

“Your box shall be sent next week by sea. You will find in it some pieces of the broom-bush which you saw growing on the old castle of Auchinleck. The wood has a curious appearance when sawn across. You may either have a little writing-standish made of it, or get it formed into boards for a treatise on witchcraft, by way of a suitable binding.”

* * * * *

ly reconcileable with good taste and good manners.—ED.]

⁴ Sir Alexander Gordon, one of the professors at Aberdeen.—BOSWELL.

⁵ This was a box containing a number of curious things which he had picked up in Scotland, particularly some horn-spoons.—BOSWELL.

⁶ [The Macdonalds always laid claim to be placed on the right of the whole clans, and those of that tribe assign the breach of this order at Culloden as one cause of the loss of the day. The Macdonalds, placed on the left wing, refused to charge, and positively left the field unassailed and unbroken. Lord George Murray in vain endeavoured to urge them on by saying that their behaviour would make the left the right, and that he himself would take the name of Macdonald. On this subject there are some curious notices, in a very interesting journal written by one of the seven men of Moidart, as they were called—Macdonalds of the Clanronald sept, who were the first who declared for the prince at his landing in their chief’s country. It is in the Lockhart papers, vol. ii. p. 510.—WALTER SCOTT.]

⁷ The Reverend Dr. Alexander Webster, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, a man of distinguished abilities, who had promised him information concerning the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p. 337.—ED.]

“MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

“Edinburgh, 18th Dec. 1773.

* * * * *

“You promised me an inscription for a print to be taken from an historical picture of Mary Queen of Scots, being forced to resign her crown, which Mr. Hamilton at Rome has painted for me. The two following have been sent to me:

“*Maria Scotorum Regina meliori seculo digna, jus regium civibus seditiosis invita resignat.*”

“*Cives seditiosi Mariam Scotorum Reginam sese muneri abdicare invitam cogunt.*”

“Be so good as to read the passage in Robertson, and see if you cannot give me a better inscription. I must have it both in Latin and English; so if you should not give me another Latin one, you will at least choose the best of these two, and send a translation of it.”

* * * * *

His humane forgiving disposition was put to a pretty strong test on his return to London by a liberty which Mr. Thomas Davies had taken with him in his absence, which was, to publish two volumes entitled “Miscellaneous and Fugitive Pieces,” which he advertised in the newspapers, “By the Author of the Rambler.” In this collection, several of Dr. Johnson’s acknowledged writings, several of his anonymous performances, and some which he had written for others, were inserted; but there were also some in which he had no concern whatever. He was at first very angry, as he had good reason to be. But, upon consideration of his poor friend’s narrow circumstances, and that he had only a little profit in view, and meant no harm, he soon relented, and continued his kindness to him as formerly.

[When Mrs. Thrale on this occasion said to him, “How would Pope have raved, had he been served so? ‘We should never,’ replied he, ‘have heard the last on’t, to be sure; but then Pope was a narrow man. I will, however,’ added he, ‘storm and bluster *myself* a little this time;’—so went to London in all the wrath he could muster up. At his return, Mrs. Thrale asked how the affair ended: ‘Why,’ said he, ‘I was a fierce fellow, and pretended to be very angry, and Thomas was a good-natured fellow, and pretended to be very sorry; so *there* the matter ended. I believe the dog loves me dearly.’ Mr. Thrale, turning round to him, ‘What shall you and I do that is good for Tom Davies? We will do something for him, to be sure.’”]

In the course of his self-examination with retrospect to this year, he seems to

have been much dejected; for he says, 1st January, 1774:

“This year has passed with so little improvement, that I doubt whether I have not rather impaired than increased my learning.”

And yet we have seen how he *read*, and we know how he *talked* during that period.

[“DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. MONTAGU.

“11th Jan. 1774.

“MADAM,—Having committed one fault by inadvertency, I will not commit another by sullenness. When I had the honour of your card, I could not comply with your invitation, and must now suffer the shame of confessing that the necessity of an answer did not come into my mind.

“This omission, madam, you may easily excuse, as the consciousness of your own character must secure you from suspecting that the favour of your notice can ever miss a suitable return, but from ignorance or thoughtlessness, and to be ignorant of your eminence is not easy, but to him who lives out of the reach of the publick voice. —I am, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”]

He was now seriously engaged in writing an account of our travels in the Hebrides, in consequence of which I had the pleasure of a more frequent correspondence with him.

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“29th Jan. 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—My operations have been hindered by a cough; at least I flatter myself, that if my cough had not come, I should have been further advanced. But I have had no intelligence from Dr. Webster, nor from the excise-office, nor from you. No account of the little borough¹. Nothing of the Erse language. I have yet heard nothing of my box.

“You must make haste and gather me all you can, and do it quickly, or I will and shall do without it.

“Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and tell her that I do not love her the less for wishing me away. I gave her trouble enough, and shall be glad, in recompense, to give her any pleasure.

“I would send some porter into the Hebrides, if I knew which way it could be got to my kind friends there. Inquire, and let me know.

“Make my compliments to all the doctors of Edinburgh, and to all my friends, from one end of Scotland to the other.

¹ The ancient burgh of Prestick, in Ayrshire.—BOSWELL.

“Write to me, and send me what intelligence you can; and if any thing is too bulky for the post, let me have it by the carrier. I do not like trusting winds and waves.—I am, dear sir, your most, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“London, 7th Feb. 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—In a day or two after I had written the last discontented letter, I received my box, which was very welcome. But still I must entreat you to hasten Dr. Webster, and continue to pick up what you can that may be useful.

“Mr. Oglethorpe was with me this morning; you know his errand. He was not unwelcome.

“Tell Mrs. Boswell that my good intentions towards her still continue. I should be glad to do any thing that would either benefit or please her.

“Chambers is not yet gone, but so hurried, or so negligent, or so proud, that I rarely see him. I have indeed, for some weeks past, been very ill of a cold and cough, and have been at Mrs. Thrale’s, that I might be taken care of. I am much better: *novæ redeunt in prælia vires*; but I am yet tender, and easily disordered. How happy it was that neither of us were ill in the Hebrides.

“The question of literary property¹ is

¹ [The question was not decided till the 22d Feb.; the following summary of this matter is extracted from the “Annual Register” for 1774, pp. 95–6:

“This day came on, in the house of lords, the final determination on the cause of literary property, which rested principally on these three points:

“I. Whether the authour of a book, or literary composition, has a common law right to the sole and exclusive publication of such book or literary composition?

“II. Whether an action for a violation of common law right will lie against those persons who publish the book or literary composition of an authour without his consent?

“III. How far the statute of the 8th Queen Anne affects the supposition of a common law right?

“The judges having previously delivered their opinions on these points, Lord Camden rose and spoke very learnedly for near two hours against the literary claimants, and in defence of the statute of Queen Anne, which he said took away any right at common law for an authour’s exclusively multiplying copies, if any such right existed. The Lord Chancellor spoke for three quarters of an hour to the same effect. The young Lord Lyttelton next rose, and made a short but florid harangue in favour of literary property. The Bishop of Carlisle and Lord Howard of Effingham spoke against it; and the question being put by the Lord Chancellor, whether it was their lordships’ plea-

this day before the lords. Murphy drew up the appellants’ case, that is, the plea against the perpetual right. I have not seen it, nor heard the decision. I would not have the right perpetual.

“I will write to you as any thing occurs, and do you send me something about my Scottish friends. I have very great kindness for them. Let me know likewise how fees come in, and when we are to see you.—I am, sir, yours affectionately,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

He at this time wrote the following letters to Mr. Steevens, his able associate in editing Shakspeare:

“TO GEORGE STEEVENS, ESQ. HAMPSTEAD.
“7th February, 1774.

“SIR,—If I am asked when I have seen Mr. Steevens, you know what answer I must give; if I am asked when I shall see him, I wish you could tell me what to say.

“If you have ‘Lesley’s History of Scotland,’ or any other book about Scotland, except Boetius and Buchanan, it will be a kindness if you send them to, sir, your humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO GEORGE STEEVENS, ESQ.

“21st Feb. 1774.

“SIR,—We are thinking to augment our club, and I am desirous of nominating you, if you care to stand the ballot, and can attend on Friday nights at least twice in five weeks: less than this is too little, and rather more will be expected. Be pleased to let me know before Friday. I am, sir, your most, &c.
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO GEORGE STEEVENS, ESQ.

“5th March, 1774.

“SIR,—Last night you became a member of the club; if you call on me on Friday,

sure that the decree should be reversed, it was agreed without a division, with costs.

“By the above decision of the important question respecting copyright in books, near 200,000*l.* worth of what was honestly purchased at public sales, and which was yesterday thought property, is now reduced to nothing. The booksellers of London and Westminster, many of whom sold estates and houses to purchase copyright, are in a manner ruined; and those who, after many years’ industry, thought they had acquired a competency to provide for their families, now find themselves without a shilling to devise to their successor.

“The English booksellers have now no other security in future, for any literary purchase they may make, but the statute of the 8th of Queen Anne, which secures to the authour’s assignee an exclusive property for fourteen years, to revert again to the authour, and vest in him for fourteen years more.”—ED.]

I will introduce you. A gentleman proposed after you, was rejected.

"I thank you for Neander¹, but wish he were not so fine. I will take care of him. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"5th March, 1774.

"DEAR SIR,—Dr. Webster's informations were much less exact, and much less determinate than I expected: they are, indeed, much less positive than, if he can trust his own book² which he laid before me, he is able to give. But I believe it will always be found, that he who calls much for information will advance his work but slowly.

"I am, however, obliged to you, dear sir, for your endeavours to help me, and hope, that between us something will some time be done, if not on this on some occasion.

"Chambers is either married, or almost married, to Miss Wilton³, a girl of sixteen, exquisitely beautiful, whom he has, with his lawyer's tongue, persuaded to take her chance with him in the East.

"We have added to the club, Charles Fox⁴, Sir Charles Bunbury, Dr. Fordyce, and Mr. Steevens⁵.

"Return my thanks to Dr. Webster. Tell Dr. Robertson I have not much to reply to his censure of my negligence: and tell Dr. Blair, that since he has written hither⁶ what I said to him, we must now

consider ourselves as even, forgive one another, and begin again. I care not how soon, for he is a very pleasing man. Pay my compliments to all my friends, and remind Lord Elibank of his promise to give me all his works.

"I hope Mrs. Boswell and little Miss are well.—When shall I see them again? She is a sweet lady, only she was so glad to see me go, that I have almost a mind to come again, that she may again have the same pleasure.

"Inquire if it be practicable to send a small present of a cask of porter to Dunvegan, Rasay, and Col. I would not wish to be thought forgetful of civilities. I am, sir, your humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On the 5th of March I wrote to him, requesting his counsel whether I should this spring come to London. I stated to him on the one hand some pecuniary embarrassments, which, together with my wife's situation at that time, made me hesitate; and on the other, the pleasure and improvement which my annual visit to the metropolis always afforded me; and particularly mentioned a peculiar satisfaction which I experienced in celebrating the festival of Easter in St. Paul's cathedral; that, to my fancy, it appeared like going up to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover; and that the strong devotion which I felt on that occasion diffused its influence on my mind through the rest of the year.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

Not dated, but written about the 15th of March.

"DEAR SIR,—I am ashamed to think that since I received your letter I have passed so many days without answering it.

"I think there is no great difficulty in resolving your doubts. The reasons for which you are inclined to visit London are, I think, not of sufficient strength to answer the objections. That you should delight to come once a year to the fountain of intelligence and pleasure is very natural; but both information and pleasure must be regulated by propriety. Pleasure, which cannot be obtained but by unseasonable or unsuitable expense, must always end in pain; and pleasure, which must be enjoyed at the expense of another's pain, can never be such as a worthy mind can fully delight in.

"What improvement you might gain by coming to London, you may easily supply or easily compensate, by enjoining yourself some particular study at home, or opening some new avenue to information. Edinburgh is not yet exhausted; and I am sure

chose to consider as equivalent to the original offence; but it turned out that Blair had *not* told the story.—Ed.]

¹ See the Catalogue of Mr. Steevens's Library, No. 265:—"Neandri (Mich.) Opus aureum, Gr. et Lat. 2 tom. 4to. *corio turcico, foliis deauratis*. Lipsiæ, 1577." This was doubtless the book which appears to have been lent by Mr. Steevens to Dr. Johnson.—MALONE.

² A manuscript account drawn by Dr. Webster of all the parishes in Scotland, ascertaining their length, breadth, number of inhabitants, and distinguishing Protestants and Roman Catholics. This book has been transmitted to government, and Dr. Johnson saw a copy of it in Dr. Webster's possession.—BOSWELL.

³ [Daughter of Mr. Wilton, the sculptor. After Sir Robert Chambers's death she returned to England, and is now (1830) living at Putney. Miss Chambers, her daughter, married, as the Editor is informed, Colonel Macdonald, the son of Flora. See *ante*, p. 386.—ED.]

⁴ [Mr. Fox was brought in by Mr. Burke, and this meeting at the Club was the only link of acquaintance between Mr. Fox and Johnson.—MACKINTOSH.]

⁵ [It is odd that he does not mention Mr. Gibbon, whose admission seems, by Mr. Hatchett's list, to have been contemporary with Steevens's.—ED.]

⁶ [This applies to one of Johnson's rude speeches, the mere repetition of which by Dr. Blair, Johnson, with more ingenuity than justice,

you will find no pleasure here which can deserve either that you should anticipate any part of your future fortune, or that you should condemn yourself and your lady to penurious frugality for the rest of the year.

"I need not tell you what regard you owe to Mrs. Boswell's entreaties; or how much you ought to study the happiness of her who studies yours with so much diligence, and of whose kindness you enjoy such good effects. Life cannot subsist in society but by reciprocal concessions. She permitted you to ramble last year, you must permit her now to keep you at home.

"Your last reason is so serious, that I am unwilling to oppose it. Yet you must remember, that your image of worshipping once a year in a certain place, in imitation of the Jews, is but a comparison; and *simile non est idem*; if the annual resort to Jerusalem was a duty to the Jews, it was a duty because it was commanded; and you have no such command, therefore no such duty. It may be dangerous to receive too readily, and indulge too fondly, opinions, from which, perhaps, no pious mind is wholly disengaged, of local sanctity and local devotion. You know what strange effects¹ they have produced over a great part of the Christian world. I am now writing, and you, when you read this, are reading under the Eye of Omnipresence.

"To what degree fancy is to be admitted into religious offices, it would require much deliberation to determine. I am far from intending totally to exclude it. Fancy is a faculty bestowed by our Creator, and it is reasonable that all his gifts should be used to his glory, that all our faculties should cooperate in his worship; but they are to cooperate according to the will of him that gave them, according to the order which his wisdom has established. As ceremonies, prudential or convenient, are less obligatory than positive ordinances, as bodily worship is only the token to others or ourselves of mental adoration, so fancy is always to act in subordination to reason. We may take fancy for a companion, but must follow reason as our guide. We may allow fancy to suggest certain ideas in certain places; but reason must always be heard, when she tells us, that those ideas and those places have no natural or necessary relation. When we enter a church we habitually recall to mind the duty of adoration, but we must not omit adoration for want of a temple: because we know, and ought to remember, that the Universal Lord is every where present; and that, therefore, to come to Jona, or to Jerusalem, though it may be useful, cannot be necessary.

"Thus I have answered your letter, and have not answered it negligently. I love you too well to be careless when you are serious.

"I think I shall be very diligent next week about our travels, which I have too long neglected. I am, dear sir, your most, &c.

"SAM. JOHNSON.

"Compliments to madam and miss."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"10th May, 1774

"DEAR SIR,—The lady who delivers this has a lawsuit, in which she desires to make use of your skill and eloquence, and she seems to think that she shall have something more of both for a recommendation from me; which, though I know how little you want any external incitement to your duty, I could not refuse her, because I know that at least it will not hurt her to tell you that I wish her well. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 12th May, 1774.

"Lord Hailes has begged of me to offer you his best respects, and to transmit to you specimens of 'Annals of Scotland, from the Accession of Malcolm Kenmore to the Death of James V.' in drawing up which his lordship has been engaged for some time. His lordship writes to me thus: 'If I could procure Dr. Johnson's criticisms, they would be of great use to me in the prosecution of my work, as they would be judicious and true. I have no right to ask that favour of him. If you could, it would highly oblige me.'

"Dr. Blair requests you may be assured that he did not write to London what you said to him, and that neither by word nor letter has he made the least complaint of you²; but on the contrary has a high respect for you, and loves you much more since he saw you in Scotland. It would both divert and please you to see his eagerness about this matter."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"Streatham, 12th June, 1774.

"DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I put the first sheets of the 'Journey to the Hebrides' to the press. I have endeavoured to do you some justice in the first paragraph. It will be one volume in octavo, not thick.

"It will be proper to make some presents in Scotland. You shall tell me to whom I shall give; and I have stipulated twenty-five for you to give in your own name. Some will take the present better from me, others better from you. In this, you who are to live in the place ought to direct.

¹ [Alluding probably to the Crusades.—Ed.]

² [See *ante*, p. 475.—Ed.]

Consider it. Whatever you can get for my purpose send me; and make my compliments to your lady and both the young ones. I am, sir, your, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

Edinburgh, 24th June, 1774.

“You do not acknowledge the receipt of the various packets which I have sent to you. Neither can I prevail with you to answer my letters, though you honour me with returns. You have said nothing to me about poor Goldsmith¹, nothing about Langton.

“I have received for you from the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge in Scotland, the following Erse books:—‘The New Testament,’ ‘Baxter’s Call,’ ‘The Confession of Faith of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster,’ ‘The Mother’s Catechism,’ ‘A Gaelick and English Vocabulary².’”

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

4th July, 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—I wish you could have looked over my book before the printer, but it could not easily be. I suspect some mistakes; but as I deal, perhaps, more in notions than in facts, the matter is not great, and the second edition will be mended, if any such there be. The press will go on slowly for a time, because I am going into Wales to-morrow.

“I should be very sorry if I appeared to treat such a character as Lord Hailes otherwise than with high respect. I return the sheets³, to which I have done what mischief I could; and finding it so little, thought not much of sending them. The narrative is clear, lively, and short.

“I have done worse to Lord Hailes than by neglecting his sheets: I have run him in debt. Dr. Horne, the president of Magdalen College in Oxford, wrote to me about three months ago, that he purposed to reprint Walton’s Lives, and desired me to contribute to the work: my answer was, that Lord Hailes intended the same publication; and Dr. Horne has resigned it to him. His lordship must now think seriously about it.

“Of poor dear Dr. Goldsmith there is little to be told, more than the papers have

made publick. He died of a fever, I am afraid, more violent by uneasiness of mind. His debts began to be heavy, and all his resources were exhausted. Sir Joshua is of opinion that he owed not less than two thousand pounds. Was ever poet so trusted before?

“You may, if you please, put the inscription thus:

“*‘Maria Scotorum Regina nata 15—, a suis in exilium acta 15—, ab hospitiâ neci data 15—.’* You must find the years.

“Of your second daughter you certainly gave the account yourself, though you have forgotten it. While Mrs. Boswell is well, never doubt of a boy. Mrs. Thrale brought, I think, five girls running, but while I was with you she had a boy.

“I am obliged to you for all your pamphlets, and of the last I hope to make some use. I made some of the former. I am, dear sir, your most affectionate servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“My compliments to all the three ladies.”

“TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ. AT LANGTON.

5th July, 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—You have reason to reproach me that I have left your last letter so long unanswered, but I had nothing particular to say. Chambers, you find, is gone far, and poor Goldsmith is gone much further. He died of a fever, exasperated, as I believe, by the fear of distress. He had raised money and squandered it, by every artifice of acquisition and folly of expense. But let not his frailties be remembered; he was a very great man.

“I have just begun to print my Journey to the Hebrides, and am leaving the press to take another journey into Wales, whither Mr. Thrale is going, to take possession of, at least, five hundred a year, fallen to his lady. All at Streatham, that are alive, are well.

“I have never recovered from the last dreadful illness⁴, but flatter myself that I grow gradually better; much, however, yet remains to mend. Κύριε ἐλέησον⁵.

“If you have the Latin version of ‘Busy, curious, thirsty fly,’ be so kind as to transcribe and send it; but you need not be in haste, for I shall be I know not where, for

¹ Dr. Goldsmith died April 4, this year.—BOSWELL.

² These books Dr. Johnson presented to the Bodleian Library.—BOSWELL.

³ On the cover enclosing them Dr. Johnson wrote, “If my delay has given any reason for supposing that I have not a very deep sense of the honour done me by asking my judgment, I am very sorry.”—BOSWELL.

⁴ [Although his Letters and his Prayers and Meditations speak of his late illness as merely “a cold and cough, which he went to Mrs. Thrale to get taken care of,” it would seem by this use of the word “dreadful,” that it had, at some time, taken a more serious character. We have no trace of any illness since that of 1766, which could be called *dreadful*.—ED.]

⁵ [The Greek for “Lord have mercy upon us” in the Litany.—ED.]

at least five weeks I wrote the following tetrastick on poor Goldsmith:

“Τον παρον ειστρας τον Ολιβαρισιο, κονιν
Αφροσι μη σεμνη, Ξενε, ποδεσοσι πατε.
Οσι μερικλε φυσισ, μετρεων χαρισ, εργα Παλαιων,
Κλαιετε ποιητην, ιστροικον, φυσικον.

“Please to make my most respectful compliments to all the ladies, and remember me to young George and his sisters. I reckon George begins to show a pair of heels.

“Do not be sullen now, but let me find a letter when I come back. I am, dear sir, your affectionate, humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

This tour to Wales, which was made in company with Mr., Mrs., [and Miss] Thrale,

though it no doubt contributed to his health and amusement, did not give an occasion to such a discursive exercise of his mind as our tour to the Hebrides** 1. All that I heard him say of it was, that “instead of bleak and barren mountains, there were green and fertile ones; and that one of the castles in Wales would contain all the castles that he had seen in Scotland.”

[He, however, kept a kind of diary,² of this journey, which was afterwards published³ in a separate form by Mr. Ed. Duppa, and is now, by his liberal permission, incorporated into this work, for the purpose of “filling up (to use Mr. Duppa’s own words) that chasm in the Life of Dr. Johnson which Mr. Boswell was unable to supply.”]

Tour to Wales. *Tuesday, 5th July.*—We left Streatham 11 A. M.—Price of four horses two shillings a mile.

Wednesday, 6th July.—Barnet 1. 40'. P. M.—On the road I read Tully’s Epistles

¹ [Mr. Boswell had here added, “I do not find that he kept any journal or notes of what he saw there.”—ED.]

² [This diary fell into the possession of Barber, who disposed of it to the Rev. Mr. White; but how it escaped Mr. Boswell’s researches, who seems to have had access to all Barber’s papers, does not appear.—ED.]

³ [“A Diary of a Journey into North Wales, in the Year 1774; by Samuel Johnson, LL. D. Edited, with illustrative Notes, by R. Duppa, LL. B., Barrister at Law. London, for Jennings in the Poultry, 1816, 12mo.” Of this work, Mr. Duppa says, in his Dedication to Mr. Edward Swinburne: “This fragment, as a literary curiosity, I hope will not disappoint you; for although it may not contain any striking and important facts, or luminous passages of fine writing, it cannot be uninteresting to know how the mind of such a man as Johnson received new impressions, or contemplated, for the first time, scenes and occupations unknown to him before.” And, in his Preface, he observes, “This Journal of Dr. Johnson exhibits his mind when he was alone, when no one was looking on, and when no one was expected to adopt his thoughts, or to be influenced by them: in this respect, it differs from the conversations and anecdotes already published; it has also another value, highly interesting; it shows how his mind was influenced by the impression of external things, and in what way he recorded those facts, which he laid up for future reflection.

“His ‘Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland’ was probably composed from a diary not more ample: for of that work he says, ‘I deal more in notions than in facts;’ and this is the general character of his mind; though when Boswell expressed a fear, lest his journal should be encumbered with too many minute particulars, he said, ‘There is nothing, sir, too little for so little

—At night at Dunstable—To Lichfield, eighty-three miles—To the Swan⁴.

Thursday, 7th July.—To the cathedral—To Mrs. Porter’s—To Mrs. Aston’s—To Mr. Green’s⁵—Mr. Green’s museum

a creature as man. It is by studying little things that we attain the great art of having as little misery and as much happiness as possible.”

“For its authenticity I will pledge myself: but if there should be any who are desirous to gratify their curiosity, or to satisfy their judgment, the original MS., in the handwriting of Dr. Johnson, is in the possession of the publisher, where it may at any time be seen. The Editor acknowledges his obligation to Mrs. Piozzi, for her kind assistance in explaining many facts in this diary, which could not otherwise have been understood.”

Mr. Duppa, having applied to Mrs. Piozzi for information on some topics of this diary, received several explanatory letters from that lady, some of which, however, came too late for Mr. Duppa’s use. He, however, with continued courtesy, has, by communicating these letters to the Editor, enabled him to explain some obscure points, not only of the Welsh tour, but of other portions of Dr. Johnson’s history. The notes, extracted from these letters (which are all dated between the 31st July and 17th December, 1816,) will be distinguished—*Piozzi MS.*—ED.]

⁴ [When at this place, Mrs. Thrale gives an anecdote of Johnson, to show his minute attention to things which might reasonably have been supposed out of the range of his observation. “When I came down to breakfast at the inn, my dress did not please him, and he made me alter it entirely before he would stir a step with us about the town, saying most satirical things concerning the appearance I made in a riding-habit; and adding, ‘T is very strange that such eyes as yours cannot discern propriety of dress: if I had a sight only half as good, I think I should see to the centre.’”—DUPPA.]

⁵ [Mr. Richard Green was an apothecary, and related to Dr. Johnson. He had a considerable collection of antiquities, natural curiosities, and

was much admired, and Mr. Newton's china¹.

Friday, 8th July.—To Mr. Newton's—To Mrs. Cobb's².—Dr. Darwin's³—I went again to Mrs. Aston's—She was very sorry to part.

Saturday, 9th July.—Breakfasted at Mr. Garrick's⁴—Visited Miss Vyse⁵—Miss Seward⁶—Went to Dr. Taylor's [at Ashbourn]—I read a little on the road in Tully's Epistles and Martial—Mart. 8th, 44, *lino pro limo*⁷.

Sunday, 10th July.—Morning at church—Company at dinner.

Monday, 11th July.—At Ilam⁸—At Oakover⁹—I was less pleased with Ilam than when I saw it first, but my friends were much delighted.

Tuesday, 12th July.—At Chatsworth—

ingenious works of art. He had all the articles accurately arranged, with their names upon labels, and on the staircase leading to it was a board, with the names of contributors marked in gold letters. A printed catalogue of the collection was to be had at a bookseller's.—DUPPA.]

¹ [Mr. Newton was a gentleman, long resident in Lichfield, who had acquired a large fortune in the East Indies.—DUPPA.]

² [Mrs. Cobb was a widow lady who lived at a place called the Friary, close to Lichfield.—DUPPA.]

³ [Dr. Erasmus Darwin: at this time he lived at Lichfield, where he had practised as a physician from the year 1756, and did not settle at Derby till after his second marriage with Mrs. Pool, in the year 1781. Miss Seward says, that although Dr. Johnson visited Lichfield while Dr. Darwin lived there, they had only one or two interviews, and never afterwards sought each other. Mutual and strong dislike subsisted between them. Dr. Darwin died April 18th, 1802, in the sixty-ninth year of his age.—DUPPA.]

⁴ ["Peter Garrick, the elder brother of David, strongly resembling him in countenance and voice, but of more sedate and placid manners." See *post*, 21st March, 1775.—Ed. "I think Peter Garrick was an attorney, but he seemed to lead an independent life, and talked all about fishing. Dr. Johnson recommended him to read *Walton's Angler*, repeating some verses from it."—*Piozzi MS.*]

⁵ A daughter of the Rev. Archdeacon Vyse, of the diocese of Lichfield and Coventry.—DUPPA. Afterwards wife of Dr. Spencer Madan, Bishop of Peterborough.—HARWOOD.]

⁶ ["Dr. Johnson would not suffer me to speak to Miss Seward."—*Piozzi MS.*—So early was the coolness between them.—Ed.]

⁷ [In the edition of Martial, which he was reading, the last word of the line

"Defluat, et lento splendescat turbida limo,"

was, no doubt, misprinted *lino*.—Ed.]

⁸ [See observations on Ilam, *post*, 24th July, 1774, and 22d September, 1777.—Ed.]

⁹ [Oakover is the seat of a very ancient family of the same name, a few miles from Ilam.—Ed.]

The water willow¹⁰—The cascade, shot out from many spouts—The fountains—The water tree—The smooth floors in the highest rooms¹¹—*Atlas*, fifteen hands inch and half¹²—River running through the park—The porticoes on the sides support two galleries for the first floor—My friends were not struck with the house—It fell below my ideas of the furniture—The staircase is in the corner of the house—The hall in the corner¹³, the grandest room, though only a room of passage—On the ground-floor, only the chapel and the breakfast-room, and a small library; the rest, servants' rooms and offices¹⁴—A bad inn.

Wednesday, 13th July.—At Matlock.

Thursday, 14th July.—At dinner at Oakover; too deaf to hear, or much converse—Mrs. Gell—The chapel at Oakover¹⁵—The wood of the pews grossly painted—I could not read the epitaph—Would learn the old hands.

Friday, 15th July.—At Ashbourn—Mrs. Dyott¹⁶ and her daughters came in the morning—Mrs. Dyott dined with us—We visited Mr. Flint.

¹⁰ ["There was a water-work at Chatsworth with a concealed spring, which, upon touching, spouted out streams from every bough of a willow-tree. I remember Lady Keith (Miss Thrale), then ten years old, was the most amused by it of any of the party."—*Piozzi MS.*]

¹¹ ["Old oak floors polished by rubbing. Johnson, I suppose, wondered that they should take such pains with the garrets."—*Piozzi MS.*]

¹² [This was a race-horse, which was very handsome and very gentle, and attracted so much of Dr. Johnson's attention, that he said, "of all the duke's possessions, I like *Atlas* best."—DUPPA.]

¹³ [Quere, whether these words are not an erroneous repetition of the same words in the preceding line.—Ed.]

¹⁴ [This was the second time Johnson had visited Chatsworth. See *ante*, 26th November, 1772; and his letter to Mrs. Thrale. The *friend*, mentioned in that extract, was, it appears, from Mrs. Piozzi's MS., Dr. Percy, and the allusion was sarcastic. Mrs. Piozzi writes, "Bishop Percy's lady lived much with us at Brixton-helmstone, and used (foolishly enough perhaps) to show us her husband's letters: in one of these he said, 'I am enjoying the fall of a murmuring stream, but to you who reside close to the roaring ocean, such scenery would be insipid.' At this Dr. Johnson laughed as a ridiculous affectation, and never forgot it."—*Piozzi MS.*—Ed.]

¹⁵ [There is no chapel at Oakover, but a small parish-church close to the house, which, however, has no pulpit, and thence perhaps Dr. Johnson calls it a chapel.—Ed.]

¹⁶ [The Dyotts were a respectable and wealthy Staffordshire family. The person who shot Lord Brook, when assailing St. Chad's cathedral in Lichfield, on St. Chad's day, in 1643, is said to have been a Mr. Dyott.—Ed.]

“Το πρῶτον Μῦθος, το δε δευτερον εἶπεν Ερασμος,
Το τρίτον κς Μισσην στεμμα Μικυλλος ἐχει¹.”

Saturday, 16th July.—At Dovedale, with Mr. Langley² and Mr. Flint. It is a place that deserves a visit; but did not answer my expectation. The river is small, the rocks are grand. Reynard's Hall is a cave very high in the rock; it goes backward several yards, perhaps eight. To the left is a small opening, through which I crept, and found another cavern, perhaps four yards square; at the back was a breach yet smaller, which I could not easily have entered, and, wanting light, did not inspect. I was in a cave yet higher, called Reynard's Kitchen. There is a rock called the Church, in which I saw no resemblance that could justify the name³. Dovedale is about two miles long. We walked towards the head of the Dove, which is said to rise about five miles above two caves called the Dogholes, at the foot of Dovedale. In one place, where the rocks approached, I proposed to build an arch from rock to rock over the stream, with a summer-house upon it. The water murmured pleasantly among the stones.

I thought that the heat and exercise mended my hearing. I bore the fatigue of the walk, which was very laborious, without inconvenience.

There were with us Gilpin⁴ and Parker⁵. Having heard of this place before, I had formed some imperfect idea, to which it did not answer. Brown⁶ says he was disappointed. I certainly expected a large river

¹ [“More bore away the first crown of the Muses, Erasmus the second, and Micyllus has the third.”—ED.]

[Jacobus Micyllus, whose real name was Melchor, died 1558, aged 55. In the MS. Johnson has introduced *γεν* by the side of *ειλεν*, as if he were doubtful whether that tense ought not to have been adopted.—DUPPA. It does not appear whether these verses are Johnson's. Micyllus's real name was *Moltzer*; see his article in *Bayle*. His best work was “*De Re Metricâ*,”—ED.]

² [The Rev. Mr. Langley was master of the grammar school at Ashbourn;—a near neighbour of Dr. Taylor's, but not always on friendly terms with him, which used sometimes to perplex their mutual friend Johnson.—ED.]

³ [This rock is supposed rudely to resemble a tower; hence, it has been called the Church.—DUPPA. It rather, according to the Editor's recollection, resembles a gothic spire or steeple.—ED.]

⁴ [“Mr. Gilpin was an accomplished youth, at this time an under-graduate at Oxford. His father was an old silversmith near Lincoln's-inn-fields.”—Piozzi MS.]

⁵ [John Parker, of Brownsholme, in Lancashire, Esq.—DUPPA.]

⁶ [Mrs. Piozzi “rather thought” that this was

where I found only a clear quick brook. I believe I had imaged a valley enclosed by rocks, and terminated by a broad expanse of water. He that has seen Dovedale has no need to visit the Highlands⁷.

In the afternoon we visited old Mrs. Dale⁸.

Sunday, 17th July.—Sunday morning, at church—καθ⁹—Afternoon, at Mr. Dyott's.

Monday, 18th July.—Dined at Mr. Gell's¹⁰.

Tuesday, 19th July.—We went to Kedleston¹¹ to see Lord Scardale's new house, which is very costly, but ill contrived—The hall is very stately, lighted by three skylights; it has two rows of marble pillars, dug, as I hear from Langley, in a quarry of Northamptonshire; the pillars are very large and massy, and take up too much room; they were better away. Behind the hall is a circular saloon, useless, and therefore ill contrived—The corridors that join the wings to the body are mere passages through segments of circles—The state bed-chamber was very richly furnished—The dining parlour was more splendid with gilt plate than any that I have seen—There were many pictures—The grandeur was all below—The bedchambers were small, low, dark, and fitter for a prison than a house of splendour—The kitchen has an opening into the gallery, by which its heat and its fumes are dispersed over the house—There seemed in the whole more cost than judgment.

We went then to the silk mill at Derby, where I remarked a particular manner of propagating motion from a horizontal to a vertical wheel—We were desired to leave the men only two shillings—Mr. Thrale's bill at the inn for dinner was eighteen shillings and tenpence.

At night I went to Mr. Langley's, Mrs. Wood's, Captain Astle's, &c.

Capability Browne, whose opinion on a point of landscape, probably gathered from Gilpin or Parker, Johnson thought worth recording.—ED.]

⁷ [“Dovedale and the Highlands are surely as dissimilar as any places can be.”—Piozzi MS.]

⁸ [Mrs. Dale was at this time ninety-three years of age.—DUPPA.]

⁹ [Καθ⁹—Throughout this Diary, when Johnson is obliged to turn his thoughts to the state of his health, he always puts his private memoranda in the learned languages—as if to throw a slight veil over those ills which he would willingly have hid from himself.—DUPPA.]

¹⁰ [Mr. Gell, of Hopton Hall, a short distance from Carsington, in Derbyshire, the father of Sir William Gell, well known for his topography of Troy, and other literary works, who was born 1775. “July 12, 1775, Mr. Gell is now rejoicing, at fifty-seven, for the birth of an heir-male.”—Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale.—DUPPA.]

¹¹ [See post, 15th Sept. 1777.—ED.]

Wednesday, 20th July.—We left Ashbourn¹ and went to Buxton—Thence to Pool's Hole, which is narrow at first, but then rises into a high arch; but is so obstructed with crags, that it is difficult to walk in it—There are two ways to the end, which is, they say, six hundred and fifty yards from the mouth—They take passengers up the higher way, and bring them back the lower—The higher way was so difficult and dangerous, that, having tried it, I desisted—I found no level part.

At night we came to Macclesfield, a very large town in Cheshire, little known—It has a silk mill: it has a handsome church, which, however, is but a chapel, for the town belongs to some parish of another name², as Stourbridge lately did to Old Swinford—Macclesfield has a town-hall, and is, I suppose, a corporate town.

Thursday, 21st July.—We came to Congleton, where there is likewise a silk mill—Then to Middlewich, a mean old town, without any manufacture, but, I think, a corporation—Thence we proceeded to Namptwich, an old town: from the inn, I saw scarcely any but black timber houses—I tasted the brine water, which contains much more salt than the sea water—By slow evaporation, they make large crystals of salt; by quick boiling, small granulations—It seemed to have no other preparation. At evening we came to Combermere,³ so called from a wide lake.

Friday, 22d July.—We went up the mere—I pulled a bulrush of about ten feet⁴—I saw no convenient boats upon the mere.

Saturday, 23d July.—We visited Lord Kilmorey's house—It is large and convenient, with many rooms, none of which are magnificently spacious⁵—The furniture

¹ [It would seem, that from the 9th to the 20th, the head-quarters of the party were at Ashbourn, whence they had made the several excursions noted.—Ed.]

² [The parish of Prestbury.—DUPPA.]

³ [At this time the seat of Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, now of Lord Combermere, his grandson, from which place he takes his title. It stands on the site of an old abbey of Benedictine monks, which was founded 1133; and, about the year 1540, at the dissolution of the monasteries, was granted, with a great part of the estates of the abbey, to George Cotton, Esq., an ancestor of Lord Combermere. The library, which is forty feet by twenty-seven, is supposed to have been the refectory. The lake, or mere, is about three quarters of a mile long, but of no great width; it is skirted with woods, and from some situations it has the appearance of a river. It is situated in Cheshire, twenty-two miles from Shrewsbury.—DUPPA.]

⁴ [Great Cat's-tail, or Reed-mace. The *Typhalatifolia* of Linnæus.—DUPPA.]

⁵ [This house, which is called Shavington Hall, is in Shropshire, twenty-one miles from

was not splendid—The bed-curtains were guarded⁶—Lord Kilmorey⁷ showed the place with too much exultation—He has no park, and little water.

Sunday, 24th July.—We went to a chapel⁸, built by Sir Lynch Cotton for his tenants—It is consecrated, and therefore, I suppose, endowed—It is neat and plain—The communion plate is handsome—It has iron pales and gates of great elegance, brought from Llewenny, “for Robert has laid all open⁹.”

*Monday, 25th July*¹⁰.—We saw Hawkestone, the seat of Sir Rowland Hill,¹¹ and were conducted by Miss Hill over a large tract of rocks and woods; a region abounding with striking scenes and terrific grandeur. We were always on the brink of a precipice, or at the foot of a lofty rock; but the steeps were seldom naked: in many places, oaks of uncommon magnitude shot up from the crannies of stone; and where there were no trees, there were underwoods and bushes. Round the rocks is a narrow path cut upon the stone, which is very frequently hewn into steps; but art has proceeded no further than to make the succession of wonders safely accessible. The whole circuit is somewhat laborious; it is terminated by a grotto cut in the rock to a great extent, with many windings, and supported by pillars, not hewn into regularity, but such as imitate the sports of nature, by asperities and protuberances. The place is without any dampness, and would afford an

Shrewsbury, and, like Wrottesley Hall, in the adjoining county, is said to have as many windows, doors, and chimneys, as correspond in number to the days, weeks, and months in a year.—DUPPA.]

⁶ [Probably guarded from wear or accident by being covered with some inferior material.—Ed.]

⁷ [Thomas Needham, eighth Viscount Kilmorey.—Ed.]

⁸ [At Burleydam, close to Combermere, built by Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, Mrs. Thrale's uncle.—DUPPA.]

⁹ [This remark has reference to family conversation. Robert was the eldest son of Sir Lynch Salusbury Cotton, and lived at Llewenny at this time.—DUPPA. All the seats in England were, a hundred years ago, enclosed with walls, through which there were generally “iron pales and gates.” Mr. Cotton had, no doubt, “laid all open” by prostrating the walls; and the pales and gates had thus become useless. The same process has taken place at almost every seat in England.—Ed.]

¹⁰ [This date is evidently here wanted; a day is otherwise unaccounted for; and it is not likely that Johnson would have gone sight-seeing on a Sunday.—Ed.]

¹¹ [Now belonging to Sir John Hill, bart., father of Lord Hill. It is twelve miles from Shrewsbury.—DUPPA.]

habitation not uncomfortable. There were from space to space seats cut out in the rock. Though it wants water, it excels Dovedale by the extent of its prospects, the awfulness of its shades, the horrors of its precipices, the verdure of its hollows, and the loftiness of its rocks: the ideas which it¹ forces upon the mind are the sublime, the dreadful, and the vast. Above is inaccessible altitude, below is horrible profundity; but it excels the garden of Ilam only in extent. Ilam has grandeur, tempered with softness; the walker congratulates his own arrival at the place, and is grieved to think he must ever leave it. As he looks up to the rocks, his thoughts are elevated; as he turns his eyes on the valleys, he is composed and soothed. He that mounts the precipices at Hawkestone wonders how he came thither, and doubts how he shall return—His walk is an adventure, and his departure an escape—He has not the tranquillity, but the horrors, of solitude; a kind of turbulent pleasure, between fright and admiration. Ilam is the fit abode of pastoral virtue, and might properly diffuse its shades over nymphs and swains. Hawkestone can have no fitter inhabitants than giants of mighty bone and bold emprise; ¹ men of lawless courage and heroic violence. Hawkestone should be described by Milton, and Ilam by Parnel².

Miss Hill showed the whole succession of wonders with great civility—The house was magnificent, compared with the rank of the owner.

Tuesday, 26th July.—We left Combermere, where we have been treated with great civility—The house is spacious, but not magnificent; built at different times, with different materials; part is of timber, part of stone or brick, plastered and painted to look like timber—It is the best house that I ever saw of that kind—The mere, or lake, is large, with a small island, on which there is a summer-house, shaded with great trees; some were hollow, and have seats in their trunks.

In the afternoon we came to West-Chester; (my father went to the fair when I had the small-pox). We walked round the walls³, which are complete, and contain one

mile three quarters, and one hundred and one yards; within them are many gardens: they are very high, and two may walk very commodiously side by side—On the inside is a rail—There are towers from space to space, not very frequent, and I think not all complete.

Wednesday, 27th July.—We staid at Chester and saw the cathedral, which is not of the first rank—The castle—In one of the rooms the assizes are held, and the refectory of the old abbey, of which part is a grammar school—The master seemed glad to see me—The cloister is very solemn; over it are chambers in which the singing men live—In one part of the street was a subterranean arch, very strongly built; in another, what they called, I believe rightly, a Roman hypocaust⁴—Chester has many curiosities.

Thursday, 28th July.—We entered Wales, dined at Mold⁵, and came to Llewenny⁶.

going to bed to walk on the wall, where, from the want of light, I apprehended some accident to her—perhaps to him.”—*Piozzi MS.—ED.*]

⁴ [“The hypocaust is of a triangular figure, supported by thirty-two pillars, two feet ten inches and a half high, and about eighteen inches distant from each other. Upon each is a tile eighteen inches square, as if designed for a capital; and over them a perforated tile, two feet square. Such are continued over all the pillars. Above these are two layers; one of coarse mortar, mixed with small red gravel, about three inches thick; and the other of finer materials, between four and five inches thick; these seem to have been the floor of the room above. The pillars stand on a mortar-floor, spread over the rock. On the south side, between the middle pillars, is the vent for the smoke, about six inches square, which is at present open to the height of sixteen inches. Here is also an antechamber, exactly of the same extent with the hypocaust, with an opening in the middle into it. This is sunk nearly two feet below the level of the former, and is of the same rectangular figure; so that both together are an exact square. This was the room allotted for the slaves who attended to heat the place; the other was the receptacle of the fuel designed to heat the room above, the *concamerata sudatio*, or sweating chamber; where people were seated, either in niches, or on benches, placed one above the other, during the time of the operation. Such was the object of this hypocaust; for there were others of different forms, for the purpose of heating the water destined for the use of the bathers.”—*DUPPA.*]

⁵ [Mold is a small market town, consisting principally of one long and wide street.—*DUPPA.*]

⁶ [Llewenny-hall, as I have already observed, was the residence of Robert Cotton, Esq., Mrs. Thrale's cousin-german. Here Mr. and Mrs. Thrale and Dr. Johnson staid three weeks, making visits and short excursions in the neighbourhood and surrounding country. Pennant

¹ [Paradise Lost, book xi. v. 642.—*DUPPA.*]

² [The whole of this passage, is so inflated and pompous, that it looks more like a burlesque of Johnson's style than his own travelling notes.—*ED.*]

³ [It would seem that a quarrel between Johnson and Mrs. Thrale took place at Chester, for she writes to Mr. Duppa—“Of those ill-fated walls Dr. Johnson might have learned the extent from any one. He has since put me fairly out of countenance by saying, ‘I have known my mistress fifteen years, and never saw her fairly out of humour but on Chester wall;’ it was because he would keep Miss Thrale beyond her hour of

Friday, 29th July.—We were at Llewenny—In the lawn at Llewenny is a spring of fine water, which rises above the surface into a stone basin, from which it runs to waste, in a continual stream, through a pipe—There are very large trees—The hall at Llewenny is forty feet long, and twenty-eight broad—The gallery one hundred and twenty feet long (all paved)—The library forty-two feet long, and twenty-eight broad—The dining-parlours thirty-six feet long, and twenty-six broad—It is partly sashed, and partly has casements.

Saturday, 30th July.—We went to Bâch y Graig¹, where we found an old house, built 1567, in an uncommon and inconvenient form—My mistress chattered about cleaning², but I prevailed on her to go to the top—The floors have been stolen: the windows are stopped—The house was less than I seemed to expect—The river Clwyd is a brook with a bridge of one arch, about one-third of a mile³—The woods have many trees, generally young; but some which seem to decay—They have been lopped—The house never had a garden—The addition of another story would

gives this description of its situation—“Llewenny lies on a flat, has most pleasing views of the mountains on each side of the vale, and the town and castle of Denbigh form most capital objects at the distance of two miles.” It now belongs to Mr. Hughes of Kinnel, who lately purchased it, with the estate, for 150,000*l.*—DUPPA.]—[of Lord Kirkwall, who had bought it of Sir Robert Cotton for 96,000*l.*—Piozzi MS.]

¹ Bâch y Graig had been the residence of Mrs. Thrale's ancestors for several generations; Pennant thus describes it. “Not far from Dymechion lies half buried in woods the singular house of Bâch y Graig. It consists of a mansion of three sides, enclosing a square court. The first consists of a vast hall and parlour: the rest of it rises into six wonderful stories, including the cupola; and forms from the second floor the figure of a pyramid: the rooms are small and inconvenient. The bricks are admirable, and appear to have been made in Holland; and the model of the house was probably brought from Flanders, where this kind of building is not unfrequent. It was built by Sir Richard Clough, an eminent merchant, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The initials of his name are in iron on the front, with the date 1567, and on the gateway 1569.”—DUPPA. This was the mansion-house of the estate which had fallen to Mrs. Thrale, and was the cause of this visit to Wales. Incredible as it may appear, it is certain that this lady imported from Italy a nephew of Piozzi's, and, making him assume her maiden name of *Salisbury*, bequeathed to this foreigner (if she did not give it in her lifetime) this ancient patrimonial estate, to the exclusion of her own children.—ED.]

² [Quere, *climbing?*—ED.]

³ [Meaning perhaps that the bridge is one-third of a mile from the house.—ED.]

make an useful house, but it cannot be great—Some buildings which Clough, the founder, intended for warehouses, would make store-chambers and servants' rooms—The ground seems to be good—I wish it well.

Sunday, 31st July.—We went to church at St. Asaph—The cathedral, though not large, has something of dignity and grandeur—The cross aisle is very short—It has scarcely any monuments—The quire has, I think, thirty-two stalls of antique workmanship—On the backs were Canonicus, Prebend, Cancellarius, Thesaurarius, Præcentor—The constitution I do not know, but it has all the usual titles and dignities—The service was sung only in the Psalms and Hymns—The bishop was very civil⁴—We went to his palace, which is but mean—They have a library, and design a room—There lived Lloyd and Dodwell⁵.

Monday, 1st August.—We visited Denbigh, and the remains of its castle—The town consists of one main street, and some that cross it, which I have not seen—The chief street ascends with a quick rise for a great length; the houses are built some with rough stone, some with brick, and a few with timber—The castle, with its whole enclosure, has been a prodigious pile; it is now so ruined that the form of the inhabited part cannot easily be traced—There are, as in all old buildings, said to be extensive vaults, which the ruins of the upper works cover and conceal, but into which boys sometimes find a way—To clear all passages, and trace the whole of what remains, would require much labour and expense—We saw a church, which was once the chapel of the castle, but is used by the town: it is dedicated to St. Hilary, and has an income of about ———.

⁴ [The bishop at this time was Dr. Shipley. Upon another occasion, when Johnson dined in company with Dr. Shipley, he said he was *knowing and conversible*. Their difference in politicks would hardly admit of more praise from Johnson.—DUPPA.]

⁵ [Lloyd was raised to the see of St. Asaph in 1680. He was one of the seven bishops who were sent to the Tower in 1688, for refusing to permit the publication of the royal declaration for liberty of conscience, and was a zealous promoter of the revolution. He died Bishop of Worcester, August 30, 1717, at ninety-one years of age.

Dodwell was a man of extensive learning, and an intimate friend of Lloyd, and, like him, a great friend to the revolution. He also entertained religious opinions which were, for the greater part of his life, inconvenient to him: but when he became an old man, his reason prevailed over those scruples, to which his skill in controversy, in the vigour of his life, had given more importance than they deserved.—DUPPA.]

At a small distance is the ruin of a church said to have been begun by the great Earl of Leicester¹, and left unfinished at his death—One side, and I think the east end, are yet standing—There was a stone in the wall over the doorway, which it was said would fall and crush the best scholar in the diocese²—One Price would not pass under it—They have taken it down—We then saw the chapel of Llewency, founded by one of the Salusburies: it is very complete: the monumental stones lie in the ground—A chimney has been added to it, but it is otherwise not much injured, and might be easily repaired³.

We went to the parish church of Denbigh, which, being near a mile from the town, is only used when the parish officers are chosen—In the chapel, on Sundays, the service is read thrice, the second time only in English, the first and third in Welsh—The bishop came to survey the castle, and visited likewise St. Hilary's chapel, which is that which the town uses—The hay-barn, built with brick pillars from space to space, and covered with a roof—A more elegant and lofty hotel—The rivers here are mere torrents, which are suddenly swelled by the rain to great breadth and great violence, but have very little constant stream; such are the Clwyd and the Elwy—There are yet no mountains—The ground is beautifully embellished with woods, and diversified with inequalities—In the parish church of Denbigh is a bas-relief of Lloyd the antiquary, who was before Camden—He is kneeling at his prayers⁴.

Tuesday, 2d August.—We rode to a summer-house of Mr. Cotton, which has a very extensive prospect; it is meanly built, and unskillfully disposed⁵—We went to Dymerechion church⁶, where the old clerk acknowledged his mistress—It is the parish church of Bâch y Graig⁷—A mean fabric;

Mr. Salusbury⁸ was buried in it: Bâch y Graig has fourteen seats in it. As we rode by, I looked at the house⁹ again—We saw Llannerch, a house not mean, with a small park very well watered—There was an avenue of oaks, which, in a foolish compliance with the present mode, has been cut down—A few are yet standing: the owner's name is Davies¹⁰—The way lay through pleasant lanes, and overlooked a region beautifully diversified with trees and grass. At Dymerechion church there is English service only once a month—this is about twenty miles from the English border—The old clerk had great appearance of joy at the sight of his mistress, and foolishly said, that he was now willing to die—He had only¹¹ a crown given him by my mistress—At Dymerechion church the texts on the walls are in Welsh.

Wednesday, 3d August.—We went in the coach to Holywell—Talk with *mistress* about flattery¹²—Holywell is a market town, neither very small nor mean—The spring called Winifred's Well is very clear, and so copious, that it yields one hundred

townships of the parish of Dymerechion.—DUPPA.]

¹ [Mrs. Thrale's father.—DUPPA.]

² [Of Bâch y Graig.—Piozzi MS.]

³ [Robert Davies, Esq. At his house there was an extensive library.—DUPPA.]

⁴ [In the MS. in Dr. Johnson's handwriting, he has first entered in his diary, "The old clerk had great appearance of joy at seeing his mistress, and foolishly said that he was now willing to die." He afterwards wrote in a separate column, on the same leaf, under the head of *notes and omissions*, "He had a crown;" and then he appears to have read over his diary at a future time, and interlined the paragraph with the words "only"—"given him by my mistress," which is written in ink of a different colour. This shows that he read his diary over after he wrote it, and that where his feelings were not accurately expressed, he amended them.—DUPPA.]

⁵ ["He said that I flattered the people to whose houses we went: I was saucy, and said I was obliged to be civil for *two*—meaning himself and me. He replied, nobody would thank me for compliments they did not understand. At Gwaynynog (Mr. Myddleton's), however, *he* was flattered, and was happy of course."—Piozzi MS. Johnson had no dislike to those commendations which are commonly imputed to flattery. Upon one occasion, he said to Mrs. Thrale, "What signifies protesting so against flattery! when a person speaks well of one, it must be either true or false, you know: if true, let us rejoice in his good opinion; if he lies, it is a proof at least that he loves more to please me, than to sit silent when he need say nothing."—"The difference between praise and flattery is the same as between that hospitality that sets wine enough before the guest, and that which forces him to drink."—Piozzi's *Anec.* p. 141.—DUPPA.]

¹ [By Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, in 1579. He died Sept. 4, 1588.—DUPPA.]

² [See a similar story of a building in Edinburgh, *ante*, p. 334.—ED.]

³ [The late Sir Robert Salusbury Cotton had no taste for antiquity of any kind; and this chapel was not regarded by him as being in any respect better than a barn, or fit for any other purpose; and the present proprietor applies it to that use.—DUPPA.]

⁴ [Humphry Lloyd was a native of Denbigh, and practised there as a physician, and also represented the town in parliament. He died 1568, aged forty-one.—DUPPA.]

⁵ [This summer-house is in the grounds belonging to Llewency, and their ride to it was to see the prospect: the situation commands a very beautiful view.—DUPPA.]

⁶ [Dymerechion is three miles from St. Asaph.—DUPPA.]

⁷ [Bâch y Graig is the name of one of three

tuns of water in a minute—It is all at once a very great stream, which, within perhaps thirty yards of its irruption, turns a mill, and in a course of two miles, eighteen mills more—In descent, it is very quick—It then falls into the sea—The well is covered by a lofty circular arch, supported by pillars; and over this arch is an old chapel, now a school—The chancel is separated by a wall—The bath is completely and indecently open—A woman bathed while we all looked on—In the church, which makes a good appearance, and is surrounded by galleries to receive a numerous congregation, we were present while a child was christened in Welsh—We went down by the stream to see a prospect, in which I had no part—We then saw a brass work, where the lapis calaminaris is gathered, broken, washed from the earth and the lead, though how the lead was separated I did not see; then calcined, afterwards ground fine, and then mixed by fire with copper—We saw several strong fires with melting pots, but the construction of the fireplaces I did not learn—At a copper-work, which receives its pigs of copper, I think, from Warrington, we saw a plate of copper put hot between steel rollers, and spread thin: I know not whether the upper roller was set to a certain distance, as I suppose, or acted only by its weight—At an iron-work I saw round bars formed by a notched hammer and anvil—There I saw a bar of about half an inch or more square, cut with shears worked by water, and then beaten hot into a thinner bar—The hammers all worked, as they were, by water, acting upon small bodies, moved very quick, as quick as by the hand—I then saw wire drawn, and gave a shilling—I have enlarged my notions, though not been able to see the movements; and having not time to peep closely, I knew less than I might—I was less weary, and had better breath, as I walked farther.

Thursday, 4th August.—Rhudlan¹ Castle is still a very noble ruin; all the walls still remain, so that a complete platform, and elevations, not very imperfect, may be taken²—It encloses a square of about thirty yards—The middle space was always open—The wall is, I believe, about thirty feet high, very thick, flanked with six round towers, each about eighteen feet, or less, in diameter—Only one tower had a chimney, so that there was³ commodity of living—It was only a place of strength—

¹ [In the first edition this name was by mistake printed Ruthin.—Ed.]

² [Meaning, probably, could be drawn on paper.—Ed.]

³ [“No,” or “little,” is probably here omitted.—Ed.]

The garrison had, perhaps, tents in the area.

Stapylton's house is pretty⁴; there are pleasing shades about it, with a constant spring that supplies a cold bath—We then went to see a cascade—I trudged unwillingly, and was not sorry to find it dry⁵—The water was, however, turned on, and produced a very striking cataract—They are paid a hundred pounds a year for permission to divert the stream to the mines—The river, for such it may be termed, rises from a single spring, which, like that of Winifred's, is covered with a building.

We called then at another house belonging to Mr. Lloyd, which made a handsome appearance—This country seems full of very splendid houses.

Mrs. Thrale lost her purse—She expressed so much uneasiness, that I concluded the sum to be very great; but when I heard of only seven guineas, I was glad to find that she had so much sensibility of money.

I could not drink this day either coffee or tea after dinner—I know not when I missed before.

Friday, 5th August. Last night my sleep was remarkably quiet—I know not whether by fatigue in walking, or by forbearance of tea. I gave [up] the ipecacuanha—*Vin. emet.* had failed; so had *tartar emet.* I dined at Mr. Myddleton's, of Gwaynynog—The house was a gentleman's house, below the second rate, perhaps below the third, built of stone roughly cut—The rooms were low, and the passage above stairs gloomy, but the furniture was good—The table was well supplied, except that the fruit was bad—It was truly the dinner of a country gentleman⁶—Two

⁴ [The name of this house is Bodryddan [pronounced, writes Mrs. Piozzi, *Potrothan*]; formerly the residence of the Stapyltons, the parents of five co-heiresses, of whom Mrs. Cotton, afterwards Lady Salusbury Cotton, was one. In the year 1774, it was the residence of Mr. Shipley, dean of St. Asaph, who still lives there.—DUPPA.]

⁵ [“He teased Mrs. Cotton so about the dry cascade at Dysert rock, that I remember she was ready to cry: the waterfall being near her maiden residence made her, I suppose, partial to the place; for she sent us thither to be entertained, and expected much praise at our return.”—Piozzi MS.]

⁶ [Johnson affected to be a man of very nice discernment in the art of cookery (DUPPA); but if we may trust Mrs. Piozzi's enumeration of his favourite dainties, with very little justice. See *ante*, p. 208. And observing in one of her letters to Mr. Dappa on *this* passage, she says, “Dr. Johnson loved a *fine* dinner, but would eat perhaps more heartily of a *coarse* one—boiled beef or veal pie; fish he seldom passed over,

tables were filled with company, not inellegant—After dinner, the talk was of preserving the Welsh language—I offered them a scheme—Poor Evan Evans was mentioned, as incorrigibly addicted to strong drink—Washington was commended¹—Myddleton is the only man who, in Wales, has talked to me of literature—I wish he were truly zealous—I recommended the republication of David ap Rhees's Welsh grammar—Two sheets of Hebrides came to me for correction to-day, F. G.²

Saturday, 6th August.—Σαδ. ³ δρ.—I corrected the two sheets—My sleep last night was disturbed—Washing at Chester and here, 5s. 1d.—I did not read—I saw to-day more of the outhouses at Llewenny—It is, in the whole, a very spacious house.

Sunday, 7th August.—I was at church at Bodfari. There was a service used for a sick woman, not canonically, but such as I have heard, I think, formerly at Lichfield, taken out of the visitation.—Καθ. μετρίως. The church is mean, but has a square tower for the bells, rather too stately for the church.

Observations.—*Dixit injustus*, Ps. 36, has no relation to the English⁴.

*Preserve us, Lord*⁵, has the name of

though he said that he only valued the sauce, and that every body eat the first as a vehicle for the second. When he poured *oyster sauce* over *plum pudding*, and the *melted butter* flowing from the toast into his *chocolate*, one might surely say that he was nothing less than delicate."—*Piozzi MS.*—Ed.]

¹ [The editor suspects that "*Washington*" is printed by mistake for "*Worthington*." *General Washington* was yet hardly known, and *Dr. Worthington*, a literary friend of Dr. Johnson's, was resident in a Welsh living not distant, and which the party afterwards visited. See *post*, 8th Sept.—Ed.]

² [F. G. are the printer's signatures, by which it appears that at this time five sheets had already been printed. The MS. was sent to press 11th June.—DUPPA.]

³ [Sic, no doubt an error for Καθ.—Καθ' ἑαυτοῦ δρ.—See *ante*, 17th July.—Ed.]

⁴ [Dr. Johnson meant, that the words of the *Latin* version, "*dixit injustus*," prefixed to the 36th Psalm (one of those appointed for the day), had no relation to the English version in the *Liturgy*: "My heart showeth me the wickedness of the ungodly." The *biblical* version, however, has some accordance with the Latin, "The transgression of the *wicked saith* within my heart;" and Bishop Lowth renders it "The *wicked man*, according to the wickedness of his heart, *saith*." The *biblical* version of the Psalms was made by the translators of the whole Bible, under James I., from the original *Hebrew*, and is closer than the version used in the *Liturgy*, which was made in the reign of Henry VIII. from the *Greek*.—Ed.]

⁵ [This alludes to "a Prayer by R. W." (evidently Robert Wisedome), which Mr. Ellis, of

Robert Wisedome, 1618. *Barker's Bible*.

Battologiam ab *iteratione*, recte distinguunt Erasmus. *Mod. Orandi Deum*, p. 56, 144⁶.

Southwell's Thoughts of his own Death⁷. Badius on Erasmus⁸.

Monday, 8th August.—The bishop and much company dined at Llewenny⁹—Talk of Greek and the army—The Duke of Marlborough's officers useless¹⁰—Read Pho-

the British Museum, has found among the Hymns which follow the old version of the singing psalms, at the end of Barker's Bible of 1639. It begins,

"Preserve us, Lord, by thy dear word,
From Turk and Pope, defend us, Lord!
Which both would thrust out of his throne
Our Lord Jesus Christ, thy deare son."—Ed.]

⁶ [In allusion to our Saviour's censure of vain repetition in prayer (*battologia*—Matt. c. vi. v. 7). Erasmus, in the passage cited, defends the words "*My God! my God!*" as an expression of justifiable earnestness.—Ed.]

⁷ [This alludes to Southwell's stanzas "Upon the Image of Death," in his *Mœonia*, a collection of spiritual poems.

"Before my face the picture hangs,
That daily should put me in mind
Of those cold names and bitter pangs
That shortly I am like to find;
But, yet, alas! full little I
Do think thereon that I must die," &c.

Robert Southwell was an English jesuit, who was imprisoned, tortured, and finally, in Feb. 1598, tried in the King's Bench, convicted, and next day executed, for teaching the Roman Catholic tenets in England.—Ed.]

⁸ [This work, which Johnson was now reading, was, most probably, a little book, entitled *Baudi Epistolæ*, as, in his Life of Milton, he has made a quotation from it. Speaking of Milton's religious opinions, when he is supposed to have vacillated between Calvinism and Arminianism, he observes, "What Badius says of Erasmus seems applicable to him, *magis habuit quod fugeret quam quod sequeretur*."—DUPPA.]

⁹ [During Johnson's stay at this place, Mrs. Thrale gives this trait of his character: "When we went into Wales together, and spent some time at Mr. Cotton's at Llewenny, one day at dinner, I meant to please Mr. Johnson particularly with a dish of very young peas. 'Are not they charming?' said I to him, while he was eating them. 'Perhaps they would be so—to a pig.' This is given only as an instance of the peculiarity of his manner, and which had in it no intention to offend.—DUPPA. This last observation was suggested by Mrs. Piozzi to Mr. Duppa, and was by her intended as a kind of apology against Boswell's complaint, that she told this kind of stories with the malevolent intention of depreciating Johnson.—Ed.]

¹⁰ [Dr. Shipley had been a chaplain with the Duke of Cumberland, and probably now entertained Dr. Johnson with some anecdotes collected from his military acquaintance, by which Johnson was led to conclude that the "Duke of Marlborough's officers were useless;" that is, that the duke saw and did everything *himself*; a fact

cyllidis¹, distinguished the paragraphs—I looked in Leland: an unpleasant book of mere hints²—Lichfield school ten pounds, and five pounds from the hospital³.

Wednesday, 10th August.—At Lloyd's, of Maesmynnan; a good house, and a very large walled garden—I read Windus's Account of his Journey to Mequinez, and of Stewart's Embassy⁴—I had read in the morning Wasse's Greek Trochaics to Bentley; they appear inelegant, and made with difficulty—The Latin elegy contains only common-place, hastily expressed, so far as I have read, for it is long—They seem to be the verses of a scholar, who has no practice of writing—The Greek I did not always fully understand—I am in doubt about the sixth and last paragraphs; perhaps they are not printed right, for *ευτοκων* perhaps *ευστοχων*. *q?*—The following days [11th, 12th, and 13th], I read here and there—The *Bibliotheca Literaria* was so little supplied with papers that could interest curiosity, that it could not hope for long continuance⁵—Wasse, the chief contributor, was an unpolished scholar, who, with much literature, had no art or elegance of diction, at least in English.

Sunday, 14th August.—At Bodfari I heard the second lesson read, and the sermon preached in Welsh. The text was pronounced both in Welsh and English—The sound of the Welsh, in a continued discourse, is not unpleasant—*Βουσις ἰλιγη—καθ' α. ρ. 6*—The letter of Chrysostom, against transubstantiation—Erasmus to the Nuns full of mystic notions and allegories.

Monday, 15th August.—*καθ'.*—Imbecillitas genuum non sine aliquantulo doloris inter ambulandum, quem a prandio magis sensi⁷.

Tuesday, 16th August.—[On this day he wrote to Mr. Levett.]

which, it is presumed, may be told of all great captains.—Ed.]

¹ [The title of the poem is *Πόημα νεθεταικων*.—DUPPA.]

² [Leland's Itinerary, published by Thoma. Hearne, in nine very thin octavo volumes, 1710.—DUPPA.]

³ [An extract from Leland.—Ed.]

⁴ [This book is entitled "A Journey to Mequinez, the Residence of the present Emperor of Fez and Morocco, on the Occasion of Commodore Stewart's Embassy thither, for the Redemption of the British Captives, in the year 1721." 8vo.—DUPPA.]

⁵ [The *Bibliotheca Literaria* was published in London, 1722-4, in quarto numbers, but only extended to ten numbers.—DUPPA.]

⁶ [*Sic*, probably for *καθ'αριστις αφελης*. See *ante*, 17th July, and 6th August.—Ed.]

⁷ ["A weakness of the knees, not without some pain in walking, which I feel increased after I have dined."—DUPPA.]

"TO MR. ROBERT LEVETT.

"Lleweney, in Denbighshire, 16th Aug. 1774.

"DEAR SIR,—Mr. Thrale's affairs have kept him here a great while, nor do I know exactly when we shall come hence. I have sent you a bill upon Mr. Strahan.

"I have made nothing of the ipecacuanha, but have taken abundance of pills, and hope that they have done me good.

"Wales, so far as I have yet seen of it, is a very beautiful and rich country, all enclosed and planted. Denbigh is not a mean town. Make my compliments to all my friends, and tell Frank I hope he remembers my advice. When his money is out, let him have more. I am, sir, your humble servant,
"SAM. JOHNSON."

[*Thursday, 18th August.*—We left Lleweney⁸, and went forwards on our journey—We came to Abergeley, a mean town, in which little but Welsh is spoken, and divine service is seldom performed in English—Our way then lay to the seaside, at the foot of a mountain, called Penmaen Rhôs—Here the way was so steep, that we walked on the lower edge of the hill, to meet the coach, that went upon a road higher on the hill—Our walk was not long, nor unpleasant: the longer I walk, the less I feel its inconvenience—As I grow warm, my breath mends, and I think my limbs grow pliable.

We then came to Conway Ferry, and passed in small boats, with some passengers from the stage coach, among whom were an Irish gentlewoman, with two maids, and three little children, of which the youngest was only a few months old. The tide did not serve the large ferry-boat, and therefore our coach could not very soon follow us—We were, therefore, to stay at the inn. It is now the day of the race at Conway, and the town was so full of company, that no money could purchase lodgings. We were not very readily supplied with cold dinner. We would have staid at Conway if we could have found entertainment, for we were afraid of passing Penmaen Mawr, over which lay our way to Bangor, but by bright daylight, and the delay of our coach made our departure necessarily late. There was, however, no stay on any other terms, than of sitting up all night. The poor Irish lady was still more distressed—Her children wanted rest—She would have been contented with one bed, but for a time, none could be had—Mrs. Thrale gave her what help she could—At last two gentlemen were persuaded to yield up their room, with two beds, for which she gave half a guinea.

⁸ [In Mr. Duppa's edition, the departure from Lleweney is erroneously (as appears from what follows) dated the 16th.—Ed.]

Our coach was at last brought, and we set out with some anxiety, but we came to Penmaen Mawr by daylight; and found a way, lately made, very easy, and very safe!—It was cut smooth, and enclosed between parallel walls; the outer of which secures the passenger from the precipice, which is deep and dreadful—This wall is here and there broken by mischievous wantonness—The inner wall preserves the road from the loose stones, which the shattered steep above it would pour down—That side of the mountain seems to have a surface of loose stones, which every accident may crumble—The old road was higher, and must have been very formidable—The sea beats at the bottom of the way.

At evening the moon shone eminently bright; and our thoughts of danger being now past, the rest of our journey was very pleasant. At an hour somewhat late, we came to Bangor, where we found a very mean inn, and had some difficulty to obtain lodging—I lay in a room, where the other bed had two men.

Friday, 19th August.—We obtained boats to convey us to Anglesey, and saw Lord Bulkeley's house, and Beaumaris Castle.

I was accosted by Mr. Lloyd, the schoolmaster of Beaumaris, who had seen me at University College; and he, with Mr. Roberts, the register of Bangor, whose boat we borrowed, accompanied us. Lord Bulkeley's house is very mean, but his garden is spacious and shady, with large trees and smaller interspersed—The walks are straight, and cross each other, with no variety of plan; but they have a pleasing coolness and solemn gloom, and extend to a great length². The castle is a mighty pile; the outward wall has fifteen round towers, besides square towers at the angles—There is then a void space between the wall and the castle, which has an area enclosed with a wall, which again has towers, larger than those of the outer wall—The towers of the inner castle are, I think, eight—

¹ [Penmaen Mawr is a huge rocky promontory, rising nearly 1550 feet perpendicular above the sea. Along a shelf of this precipice is formed an excellent road, well guarded, toward the sea, by a strong wall, supported in many parts by arches turned underneath it. Before this wall was built, travellers sometimes fell down the precipices.—DUPPA.]

² [Baron Hill is the name of Lord Bulkeley's house, which is situated just above the town of Beaumaris, at the distance of three quarters of a mile, commanding so fine a view of the sea, and the coast of Caernarvon, that it has been sometimes compared to Mount Edgecombe, in Devonshire. Lord Lyttelton, speaking of the house and gardens, says, "The house is a bad one, but the gardens are made in a very fine taste."—DUPPA.]

There is likewise a chapel entire, built upon an arch, as I suppose, and beautifully arched with a stone roof, which is yet unbroken—The entrance into the chapel is about eight or nine feet high, and was, I suppose, higher, when there was no rubbish in the area—This castle corresponds with all the representations of romancing narratives—Here is not wanting the private passage, the dark cavity, the deep dungeon, or the lofty tower—We did not discover the well—This is the most complete view that I have yet had of an old castle—It had a moat—The towers—We went to Bangor.

Saturday, 20th August.—We went by water from Bangor to Caernarvon, where we met Paoli and Sir Thomas Wynne³. Meeting by chance with one Troughton⁴, an intelligent and loquacious wanderer, Mr. Thrale invited him to dinner—He attended us to the castle, an edifice of stupendous magnitude and strength; it has in it all that we observed at Beaumaris, and much greater dimensions: many of the smaller rooms floored with stone are entire; of the larger rooms, the beams and planks are all left: this is the state of all buildings left to time—We mounted the eagle tower by one hundred and sixty-nine steps, each of ten inches—We did not find the well; nor did I trace the moat; but moats there were, I believe, to all castles on the plain, which not only hindered access, but prevented mines—We saw but a very small part of this mighty ruin, and in all these old buildings, the subterraneous works are concealed by the rubbish—To survey this place would take much time: I did not think there had been such buildings; it surpassed my ideas.

Sunday, 21st August.—[at Caernarvon].—We were at church; the service in the town is always English; at the parish-church at a small distance, always Welsh—The town has by degrees, I suppose, been brought nearer to the sea-side—We received an invitation to Dr. Worthington—We then went to dinner at Sir Thomas Wynne's,—the dinner mean, Sir Thomas civil, his lady nothing⁵—Paoli civil—We

³ [Sir Thomas Wynne, created Lord Newborough, July 14th, 1776. Died October 12th, 1807.—DUPPA.]

⁴ ["Lieutenant Troughton I do recollect, loquacious and intelligent he was. He wore a uniform, and belonged, I think, to a man of war."—Piozzi MS. He was made a lieutenant in 1762, and died in 1786, in that rank; he was on half-pay, and did not belong to any ship when he met Dr. Johnson in 1774. It seems then that, even so late as this, half-pay officers wore their uniforms in the ordinary course of life.—ED.]

⁵ [Lady Catharine Perceval, daughter of the second Earl of Egmont: this was, it appears, the

supped with Colonel Wynne's lady, who lives in one of the towers of the castle—I have not been very well.

Monday, 22d August.—We went to visit Bodville¹, the place where Mrs. Thrale was born, and the churches called Tydweilliog and Llangwinodyl, which she holds by impropriation—We had an invitation to the house of Mr. Griffiths of Bryn o dol, where we found a small neat new-built house, with square rooms: the walls are of unhewn stone, and therefore thick; for the stones not fitting with exactness, are not strong without great thickness—He had planted a great deal of young wood in walks—Fruit trees do not thrive; but having grown a few years, reach some barren stratum and wither—We found Mr. Griffiths not at home; but the provisions were good.

[*Tuesday, 23d August.*]—Mr. Griffiths came home the next day—He married a lady who has a house and estate at [Llanver²,] over against Anglesea, and near Caernarvon, where she is more delighted, as it seems, to reside than at Bryn o dol—I read Lloyd's account of Mona, which he proves to be Anglesea—In our way to Bryn o dol, we saw at Llanerk a church built crosswise, very spacious and magnificent for this country—We could not see the parson, and could get no intelligence about it.

Wednesday, 24th August.—We went to see Bodville—Mrs. Thrale remembered the rooms, and wandered over them with recollection of her childhood—This species of pleasure is always melancholy—The walk was cut down, and the pond was dry—Nothing was better. We surveyed the churches, which are mean, and neglected to a degree scarcely imaginable—They have no pavement, and the earth is full of holes—The seats are rude benches; the altars

lady of whom Mrs. Piozzi relates, that “for a lady of quality, since dead, who received us at her husband's seat in Wales with less attention than he had long been accustomed to, he had a rougher denunciation: ‘That woman,’ cried Johnson, ‘is like sour small beer, the beverage of her table, and produce of the wretched country she lives in: like that, she could never have been a good thing, and even that bad thing is spoiled.’” And it is probably of her too that another anecdote is told: “We had been visiting at a lady's house, whom, as we returned, some of the company ridiculed for her ignorance: ‘She is not ignorant,’ said he, ‘I believe, of any thing she has been taught, or of any thing she is desirous to know; and I suppose if one wanted a little *run tea*, she might be a proper person enough to apply to.’” Mrs. Piozzi says, in her MS. Letters, “that Lady Catherine comes off well in the *diary*. He said many severe things of her, which he did not commit to paper.” She died in 1782.—*ED.*

¹ [“Situating among the mountains of Caernarvonshire.”—*Piozzi MS.*]

² [*Piozzi MS.*]

have no rails—One of them has a breach in the roof—On the desk, I think, of each lay a folio Welsh Bible of the black letter, which the curate cannot easily read—Mr. Thrale purposes to beautify the churches, and if he prospers, will probably restore the tithes—The two parishes are, Llangwinodyl and Tydweilliog³—The methodists are here very prevalent—A better church will impress the people with more reverence of public worship—Mrs. Thrale visited a house where she had been used to drink milk, which was left, with an estate of two hundred pounds a year, by one Lloyd⁴, to a married woman who lived with him—We went to Pwllheli, a mean old town, at the extremity of the country—Here we bought something, to remember the place.

Thursday, 25th August.—We returned to Caernarvon, where we ate with Mrs. Wynne.

Friday, 26th August.—We visited, with Mrs.⁵ Wynne, Llyn Badarn and Llyn Beris, two lakes, joined by a narrow strait—They are formed by the waters which fall from Snowdon, and the opposite mountains—On the side of Snowdon are the remains of a large fort⁶, to which we climbed with great labour—I was breathless and harassed—The lakes have no great breadth, so that the boat is always near one bank or the other.—*Note.* *Queeny's* goats, one hundred and forty-nine, I think⁷.

³ [These two parishes are perpetual curacies, endowed with the small tithes, which, in 1809, amounted to six pounds sixteen shillings and sixpence in each parish; but these sums are increased by Queen Anne's bounty; and, in 1809, the whole income for Llangwinodyl, including surplice fees, amounted to forty-six pounds two shillings and twopence, and for Tydweilliog, forty-three pounds nineteen shillings and tenpence; so that it does not appear that Mr. Thrale carried into effect his good intention.—*DUPPA.*]

⁴ [Mr. Lloyd was a very good-natured man; and when Mrs. Thrale was a little child, he was used to treat her with sweetmeats and milk; but what was now remarkable was, that she should recollect the house, which she had not seen since she was five years old.—*DUPPA.*]

⁵ [“Miss Thrale was amused with our rowing on Lake Llyn Beris, and Mrs. Glyn Wynne, wife of Lord Newburgh's brother, who accompanied us and acted as our guide, sang Welsh songs to the harp.”—*Piozzi MS.*]

⁶ [“Dolbadarne was the name of the fort.”—*Piozzi MS.*]

⁷ [Mr. Thrale was near-sighted, and could not see the goats browsing on Snowdon, and he promised his daughter, who was a child of ten years old, a penny for every goat she would show him, and Dr. Johnson kept the account; so that it appears her father was in debt to her one hundred and forty-nine pence. *Queeny* was an epithet, which had its origin in the nursery, by which [in allusion to Queen Esther], Miss Thrale (whose name was Esther) was always distinguished by Johnson.—*DUPPA.*]

Saturday, 27th August.—We returned to Bangor, where Mr. Thrale was lodged at Mr. Roberts's, the register.

Sunday, 28th August.—We went to worship at the cathedral—The quire is mean; the service was not well read.

Monday, 29th August.—We came to Mr. Myddelton's, of Gwynnynog, to the first place, as my *Mistress* observed, where we have been welcome¹.

(*Note.*—On the day when we visited Bodville [*Monday, 22d August*], we turned to the house of Mr. Griffiths, of Kefnamwyellh, a gentleman of large fortune, remarkable for having made great and sudden improvements in his seat and estate—He has enclosed a large garden with a brick wall—He is considered as a man of great accomplishments—He was educated in literature at the university, and served some time in the army, then quitted his commission, and retired to his lands. He is accounted a good man, and endeavours to bring the people to church.)

In our way from Bangor to Conway, we passed again the new road upon the edge of Penmaen Mawr, which would be very tremendous, but that the wall shuts out the idea of danger—In the wall are several breaches, made, as Mr. Thrale very reasonably conjectures, by fragments of rocks which roll down the mountain, broken perhaps by frost, or worn through by rain. We then viewed Conway—To spare the horrors at Penmaen Rhôs between Conway and St. Asaph, we sent the coach over the road across the mountain with Mrs. Thrale, who had been tired with a walk some time before; and I, with Mr. Thrale and Miss, walked along the edge, where the path is very narrow, and much encumbered by little loose stones, which had fallen down, as we thought, upon the way since we passed it before. At Conway we took a short survey of the castle, which afforded us nothing new—It is larger than that of Beaumaris, and less than that of Caernarvon—It is built upon a rock so high and steep, that it is even now very difficult of access—We found a round pit, which was called the Well; it is now almost filled, and therefore dry—We found the Well in no other castle—There are some remains of leaden pipes at Caernarvon, which, I suppose, only conveyed water from one part of the building to another—Had the garrison had no other supply, the Welsh, who must know where the pipes were laid, could easily have cut them.

¹ [“It is very likely I did say so. My relations were not quite as forward as I thought they might have been to welcome a long distant kinswoman. The Myddeltons were more cordial. The old colonel had been a fellow collegian with Mr. Thrale and Lord Sandys, of Ombersley.”—*Piozzi MS.*]

We came to the house of Mr. Myddelton (on Monday), where we staid to September 6, and were very kindly entertained—How we spent our time, I am not very able to tell²—We saw the wood, which is diversified and romantic.

Sunday, 4th September.—We dined with Mr. Myddelton³, the clergyman, at Denbigh, where I saw the harvest men very decently dressed, after the afternoon service, standing to be hired—On other days, they stand at about four in the morning—They are hired from day to day.

Monday, 5th September.—We lay at Wrexham; a busy, extensive, and well built town—It has a very large and magnificent church. It has a famous fair⁴.

² [However this may have been, he was both happy and amused, during his stay at Gwynnynog, and Mr. Myddelton was flattered by the honour of his visit. To perpetuate the recollection of it, he (to use Mr. Boswell's words) erected an urn on the banks of a rivulet, in the park, where Johnson delighted to stand and recite verses; on which is this inscription:

This spot was often dignified by the presence of
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.
Whose Moral Writings, exactly conformable to the
Precepts of Christianity,
Gave ardour to Virtue, and confidence to Truth.

In 1777, it would appear from a letter by Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, that he was informed that Mr. Myddelton meditated this honour, which seemed to be but little to his taste: “Mr. Myddelton's erection of an urn looks like an intention to bury me alive: I would as willingly see my friend, however benevolent and hospitable, quietly inurned. Let him think, for the present, of some more acceptable memorial.”—*DUPPA.*]

³ [“Rector of Denbigh, was second brother to the owner of Gwynnynog. He had, I suppose, been in the army, for we used to call him *colonel*.”—*Piozzi MS.*]

⁴ [It was probably on the 6th Sept. in the way from Wrexham to Chirk, that they passed through Ruabon, where the following occurrence took place: “A Welsh parson of mean abilities, though a good heart, struck with reverence at the sight of Dr. Johnson, whom he had heard of as the greatest man living, could not find any words to answer his inquiries concerning a motto round somebody's arms which adorned a tombstone in Ruabon churchyard. If I remember right, the words were,

Heb Dw, Heb Dym,
Dw o' diggon*.

And though of no very difficult construction, the gentleman seemed wholly confounded, and unable to explain them; till Mr. Johnson, having picked out the meaning by little and little, said to the man, ‘*Heb* is a preposition, I believe, sir, is it not?’ My countryman recovering some spirits upon the sudden question, cried out, ‘So I humbly presume, sir,’ very comically.”—*Anecdotes.*—*Ed.*]

* [It is the Myddelton motto, and means, Without God—without all! God is all-sufficient!—*Piozzi MS.* p. 184.]

Wednesday, 7th September.—We came to Chirk Castle.

Thursday, 8th September.—We came to the house of Dr. Worthington¹, at Llanrhaidr²—Our entertainment was poor, though the house was not bad. The situation is very pleasant, by the side of a small river, of which the bank rises high on the other side, shaded by gradual rows of trees—The gloom, the stream, and the silence, generate thoughtfulness. The town is old, and very mean, but has, I think, a market—In this town, the Welsh translation of the Old Testament was made—The Welsh singing psalms were written by Archdeacon Price—They are not considered as elegant, but as very literal, and accurate—We came to Llanrhaidr through Oswestry; a town not very little, nor very mean—The church, which I saw only at a distance, seems to be an edifice much too good for the present state of the place.

Friday, 9th September.—We visited the waterfall, which is very high, and in rainy weather very copious—There is a reservoir made to supply it—In its fall, it has perforated a rock—There is a room built for entertainment—There was some difficulty in climbing to a near view—Lord Lyttelton³ came near it, and turned back—When we came back, we took some cold meat, and notwithstanding Doctor [Worthington's] importunities, went that day to Shrewsbury.

Saturday, 10th September.—I sent for Gwynn⁴, and he showed us the town—The walls are broken, and narrower than those

of Chester—The town is large, and has many gentlemen's houses, but the streets are narrow—I saw Taylor's library—We walked in the Quarry; a very pleasant walk by the river—Our inn was not bad.

Sunday, 11th September.—We were at St. Chads, a very large and luminous church—We were on the Castle Hill.

Monday, 12th September.—We called on Dr. Adams⁵, and travelled towards Worcester, through Wenlock; a very mean place, though a borough—At noon, we came to Bridgenorth, and walked about the town, of which one part stands on a high rock, and part very low, by the river—There is an old tower, which, being crooked, leans so much, that it is frightful to pass by it—In the afternoon we came through Kinver⁶, a town in Staffordshire, neat and closely built—I believe it has only one street—The road was so steep and miry, that we were forced to stop at Hartlebury, where we had a very neat inn, though it made a very poor appearance.

Tuesday, 13th September.—We came to lord Sandys's, at Ombersley, where we were treated with great civility⁷—The house is large—The hall is a very noble room.

Thursday, 15th September.—We went to Worcester, a very splendid city—The cathedral is very noble, with many remarkable monuments—The library is in the chapter-house—On the table lay the Nuremberg Chronicle, I think, of the first edition⁸. We went to the china warehouse—The cathedral has a cloister—The long aisle is, in my opinion, neither so wide nor so high as that of Lichfield.

Friday, 16th September.—We went to Hagley, where we were disappointed of the respect and kindness that we expected⁹.

¹ [Dr. William Worthington, a man of distinguished learning, and an author of many works on religious subjects. He enjoyed considerable preferment in the church, and lived at Llanrhaidr; of which parish he was the rector. He died October 6, 1778, aged seventy-five.—DUPPA. Dr. Johnson thus notices his death in a letter to Mrs. Thrale: "My clerical friend Worthington is dead. I have known him long—and to die is dreadful. I believe he was a very good man."—*Letters*, v. i. p. 26.—ED.]

² [Llanrhaidr, being translated into English, is *The Village of the Fountain*, and takes its name from a spring, about a quarter of a mile from the church.—DUPPA. Mr. Duppa was misinformed. *Rhaidr* signifies a *waterfall*, and not a *spring*; and a waterfall was, as we shall see presently, the chief feature of the vicinity.—ED.]

³ [Thomas, the second Lord Lyttelton.—DUPPA.]

⁴ [Mr. Gwynn was an architect of considerable celebrity. He was a native of Shrewsbury, and was at this time completing a bridge across the Severn, called the English Bridge. Besides this bridge, he built one at Atcham, over the Severn, near to Shrewsbury; and the bridges at Worcester, Oxford, and Henley, are all built by him.—DUPPA. See *ante*, p. 234, and *post*, 19th March, 1776.—ED.]

⁵ [The master of Pembroke College, Oxford; who was also rector of St. Chads, in Shrewsbury.—DUPPA.]

⁶ [There must have been some unexplained reason why they left the straight high-road from Bridgenorth to Hartlebury, through Kidderminster, to call at the little village of Kinver.—ED.]

⁷ [It was here that Johnson had as much wall-fruit as he wished, and, as he told Mrs. Thrale, for the only time in his life.—DUPPA. See *ante*, p. 209. It seems they spent here Wednesday, the 14th Sept.—ED.]

⁸ [The first edition was printed July 12, 1493. The author, or rather compiler of this chronicle, was one Hartman Schedel, of Nuremberg, a physician.—DUPPA.]

⁹ [This visit was not to Lord Lyttelton, but to his uncle [called Billy Lyttelton, afterwards, by successive creations, Lord Westcote, and Lord Lyttelton], the father of the present lord, who lived at a house called Little Hagley.—DUPPA. This gentleman was an intimate friend of Mr. Thrale, and had some years before invited Johnson (through Mrs. Thrale) to visit him at Hagley, *ante*, p. 277.—ED.]

Saturday, 17th September.—We saw the house and park, which equalled my expectation—The house is one square mass—The offices are below—The rooms of elegance on the first floor, with two stories of bedchambers, very well disposed above it—The bedchambers have low windows, which abates the dignity of the house—The park has an artificial ruin, and wants water; there is, however, one temporary cascade¹—From the farthest hill there is a very wide prospect.

Sunday, 18th September.—I went to church—The church is, externally, very mean, and is therefore diligently hidden by a plantation—There are in it several modern monuments of the Lytteltons.

There dined with us Lord Dudley, and Sir Edward Lyttelton, of Staffordshire, and his lady—They were all persons of agreeable conversation.

I found time to reflect on my birthday, and offered a prayer, which I hope was heard.

Monday, 19th September.—We made haste away from a place where all were offended²—In the way we visited the Leasowes—It was rain, yet we visited all the waterfalls—There are, in one place, fourteen falls in a short line—It is the next place to Ilam gardens—Poor Shenstone never tasted his pension—It is not very well proved that any pension was obtained for him—I am afraid that he died of misery.

We came to Birmingham, and I sent for Wheeler³, whom I found well.

Tuesday, 20th September.—We breakfasted with Wheeler, and visited the manufacture of *Papier maché*—The paper which they use is smooth whitened brown; the varnish is polished with rotten stone—Wheeler gave me a teaboard—We then went to Boulton's⁴, who, with great civility, led us

¹ [“He was enraged at artificial ruins and temporary cascades, so that I wonder at his leaving his opinion of them dubious; besides, he hated the Lytteltons, and would rejoice in an opportunity of insulting them.”—*Piozzi MS.*—See *post*, sub 1781, *the Life of Lyttelton.*—ED.]

² [“Mrs. Lyttelton, *ci-devant* Caroline Bristol, forced me to play at whist against my liking, and her husband took away Johnson's candle that he wanted to read by at the other end of the room. Those, I trust, were the offences.”—*Piozzi MS.*]

³ [Dr. Benjamin Wheeler; he was a native of Oxford, and originally on the foundation of Trinity College; afterwards he became a Fellow of Magdalen College, Canon of Christ Church, and Regius Professor of Divinity. He took his degree of A. M. Nov. 14, 1758, and D. D. July 6, 1770; and was a man of extensive learning. Dr. Johnson, in his letters to Mrs. Thrale, styles him “My learned friend, the man with whom I most delight to converse.”—*Lett.*—DUPPA.]

⁴ [See *post*, 22d March, 1776.—ED.]

through his shops—I could not distinctly see his enginery—Twelve dozen of buttons for three shillings—Spoons struck at once.

Wednesday, 21st September.—Wheeler came to us again—We came easily to Woodstock.

Thursday, 22d September.—We saw Blenheim and Woodstock park—The park contains two thousand five hundred acres; about four square miles. It has red deer—Mr. Bryant showed me the library with great civility—Durandi *Rationale*, 1459⁵—Lascaris' *Grammar* of the first edition, well printed, but much less than later editions⁶—The first *Batrachomyomachia*⁷—The duke sent Mr. Thrale partridges and fruit—At night we came to Oxford.

Friday, 23d September.—We visited Mr. Coulson—The ladies wandered about the university.

Saturday, 24th September.—καθ.—We dine ⁸

⁵ [This is a work written by William Durand, Bishop of Mende, and printed on vellum, in folio, by Fust and Schoeffer, in Mentz, 1459. It is the third book that is known to be printed with a date, and is considered as a curious and extraordinary specimen of early printing. An imperfect copy was sold at Dr. Askew's sale, Feb. 22, 1775, for sixty-one pounds, to Mr. Elmsly, the bookseller. DUPPA.]

⁶ [Dr. Johnson, in another column of his *Diary*, has put down, in a note, “First printed book in Greek, Lascaris's *Grammar*, 4to. Mediolani, 1476.” The imprint of this book is, *Mediolani Impressum per Magistrum Dionysium Paravisinum. M.CCCC.LXXVI. Die xxx Januarii.* This edition is very rare, and it is probable that Dr. Johnson saw it now for the first time. A copy was purchased for the king's library at Dr. Askew's sale, 1775, for twenty-one pounds ten shillings.

⁷ [This was the first book that was ever printed in the Greek character. The first book printed in the English language was the *Historyes of Troye*, printed in 1471; an imperfect copy of which was put up to public sale in 1812, when there was a competition amongst men eminent for learning, rank, and fortune; and, according to their estimation of its value, it was sold for the sum of 1060*l.* 10*s.*—DUPPA.]

⁸ [The *Battle of the Frogs and Mice.* The first edition was printed by Laonicus Cretensis, 1486. This book consists of forty-one pages, small quarto, and the verses are printed with red and black ink alternately. A copy was sold at Dr. Askew's sale, 1775, for fourteen guineas.—DUPPA.]

⁸ [“Of the dinner at University College I remember nothing, unless it was there that Mr. Vausittart, a flourishing sort of character, showed off his graceful form by fencing with Mr. Seward, who joined us at Oxford. We had a grand dinner at *Queen's College*, and Dr. Johnson made Miss Thrale and me observe the ceremony of the grace cup; but I have but a faint remembrance of it, and can in no wise tell who invited us, or how we came by our academical honour of hearing

with Mr. Coulson¹—Vansittart² told me his distemper.—Afterwards we were at Burke's [at Beaconsfield], where we heard of the dissolution of the parliament³—We went home.

Anec.
P. 186. ["Dr. Johnson had always a very great personal regard and particular affection for Mr. Burke; and when at this time the general election broke up the delightful society in which we had spent some time at Beaconsfield, Dr. Johnson shook the hospitable master of the house kindly by the hand, and said, 'Farewell, my dear sir, and remember that I wish you all the success which ought to be wished you, which can possibly be wished you, indeed, by an honest man.'"]

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 30th August, 1774.

"You have given me an inscription for a portrait of Mary, Queen of Scots, in which you, in a short and striking manner, point

our healths drank in form, and I half believe in Latin."—*Piozzi MS.* The Editor suspects that Mrs. Piozzi, writing after a lapse of forty years, mentioned *Queen's* by mistake for *University College*.—*ED.*

¹ [Mr. Coulson was a senior Fellow of University College; in habit and appearance somewhat resembling Johnson himself, and was considered in his time as an Oxford character. He took his degree of A. M. April 12, 1746. After this visit, Dr. Johnson told Mrs. Thrale that he was the man designated in the Rambler, under the name of Gelidus the philosopher.—*DUPPA.* It was Mrs. Piozzi's confusion of names, as she herself admits in her MS. letters to Mr. Duppa, which gave rise to the unfounded idea that Gelidus was meant for Professor Colson, of Cambridge (See *ante*, p. 38 and 88); Mrs. Piozzi meant Mr. Coulson, Fellow of *University*; but even as to this Mr. Coulson, of Oxford, Mrs. Piozzi must have been in some degree of error. Coulson was a humourist, and Johnson may have caught some hints from him; but the greater number of the points of the character of Gelidus *could* have no resemblance to him. Lord Stowell informs the editor that he was very eccentric. He would on a fine day hang out of the college windows his various pieces of apparel to air, which used to be universally answered by the young men hanging out from all the other windows quilts, carpets, rags, and every kind of trash, and this was called an *illumination*. His notions of the eminence and importance of his academic situation were so peculiar, that, when he afterwards accepted a college living, he expressed to Lord Stowell his doubts whether, after living so long in the *great world*, he might not grow weary of the comparative retirement of a country parish.—*ED.*]

² [See *ante*, p. 298 and 299, n. The *distemper* was no doubt a tendency to depression of spirits, which Dr. Johnson alludes to in the last cited passage.—*ED.*]

out her hard fate. But you will be pleased to keep in mind, that my picture is a representation of a particular scene in her history—her being forced to resign her crown, while she was imprisoned in the castle of Lochlevin. I must, therefore, beg that you will be kind enough to give me an inscription suited to that particular scene; or determine which of the two formerly transmitted to you is the best; and at any rate, favour me with an English translation. It will be doubly kind if you comply with my request speedily.

"Your critical notes on the specimen of Lord Hailes's 'Annals of Scotland' are excellent. I agreed with you on every one of them. He himself objected only to the alteration of *free* to *brave*, in the passage where he says that Edward 'departed with the glory due to the conqueror of a free people.' He says, to call the Scots brave would only add to the glory of their conqueror. You will make allowance for the national zeal of our annalist. I now send a few more leaves of the Annals, which I hope you will peruse, and return with observations, as you did upon the former occasion. Lord Hailes writes to me thus: 'Mr. Boswell will be pleased to express the grateful sense which Sir David Dalrymple has of Dr. Johnson's attention to his little specimen. The further specimen will show, that

'Even in an *Edward* he can see desert.'

"It gives me much pleasure to hear that a republication of Isaac Walton's Lives is intended. You have been in a mistake in thinking that Lord Hailes had it in view. I remember one morning, while he sat with you in my house, he said, that there should be a new edition of Walton's Lives; and you said that 'they should be benoted a little.' This was all that passed on that subject. You must, therefore, inform Dr. Horne, that he may resume his plan. I enclose a note concerning it; and if Dr. Horne will write to me, all the attention that I can give shall be cheerfully bestowed upon what I think a pious work, the preservation and elucidation of Walton, by whose writings I have been most pleasingly edified."

* * * * *

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 16th Sept. 1774.

"Wales has probably detained you longer than I supposed. You will have become

³ [Dissolved the 30th September, 1774.—*ED.*]

quite a mountaineer, by visiting Scotland one year and Wales another. You must next go to Switzerland. Cambria will complain, if you do not honour her also with some remarks. And I find *concessere columnæ*, the booksellers expect another book. I am impatient to see your 'Tour to Scotland and the Hebrides.' Might you not send me a copy by the post as soon as it is printed off?"

* * * * *

“ TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

London, 1st Oct. 1774.

“ DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I returned from my Welsh journey. I was sorry to leave my book suspended so long; but having an opportunity of seeing, with so much convenience, a new part of the island, I could not reject it. I have been in five of the six counties of North Wales; and have seen St. Asaph and Bangor, the two seats of their bishops; have been upon Penmaenmaur and Snowdon, and passed over into Anglesea. But Wales is so little different from England, that it offers nothing to the speculation of the traveller.

“ When I came home, I found several of your papers, with some pages of Lord Hailes's *Annals*, which I will consider. I am in haste to give you some account of myself, lest you should suspect me of negligence in the pressing business which I find recommended to my care, and which I knew nothing of till now, when all care is vain¹.

“ In the distribution of my books, I purpose to follow your advice, adding such as shall occur to me. I am not pleased with your notes of remembrance added to your names, for I hope I shall not easily forget them.

“ I have received four Erse books, without any direction, and suspect that they are intended for the Oxford library. If that is the intention, I think it will be proper to add the metrical psalms, and whatever else is printed in Erse, that the present may be complete. The donor's name should be told.

“ I wish you could have read the book before it was printed, but our distance does not easily permit it.

“ I am sorry Lord Hailes does not intend to publish *Walton*; I am afraid it will not be done so well, if it be done at all.

“ I purpose now to drive the book forward. Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and let me hear often from you. I am, dear sir, your affectionate humble servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

¹ I had written to him, to request his interposition in behalf of a convict, who I thought was very unjustly condemned.—BOSWELL.

Parliament having been dissolved, and his friend Mr. Thrale, who was a steady supporter of government, having again to encounter the storm of a contested election, he wrote a short political pamphlet, entitled “*The Patriot*,” addressed to the electors of Great Britain; a title which, to factious men who consider a patriot only as an opposer of the measures of government, will appear strangely misapplied. It was, however, written with energetick vivacity; and, except those passages in which it endeavours to vindicate the glaring outrage of the house of commons in the case of the Middlesex election, and to justify the attempt to reduce our fellow-subjects in America to unconditional submission, it contained an admirable display of the properties of a real patriot, in the original and genuine sense;—a sincere, steady, rational, and unbiassed friend to the interests and prosperity of his king and country. It must be acknowledged, however, that both in this and his two former pamphlets, there was, amidst many powerful arguments, not only a considerable portion of sophistry, but a contemptuous ridicule of his opponents, which was very provoking.

“ TO MR. PERKINS².

25th October, 1774.

SIR,—You may do me a very great favour. Mrs. Williams, a gentlewoman whom you may have seen at Mr. Thrale's, is a petitioner for Mr. Hetherington's charity; petitions are this day issued at Christ's hospital.

“ I am a bad manager of business in a crowd; and if I should send a mean man, he may be put away without his errand. I must, therefore, entreat that you will go, and ask for a petition for Anna Williams, whose paper of inquiries was delivered with answers at the counting-house of the hospital on Thursday the 20th. My servant will attend you thither, and bring the petition home when you have it.

“ The petition which they are to give us, is a form which they deliver to every peti-

² Mr. Perkins was for a number of years the worthy superintendent of Mr. Thrale's great brewery, and after his death became one of the proprietors of it; and now resides in Mr. Thrale's house in Southwark, which was the scene of so many literary meetings, and in which he continues the liberal hospitality for which it was eminent. Dr. Johnson esteemed him much. He hung up in the counting-house a fine proof of the admirable mezzotinto of Dr. Johnson, by Doughty; and when Mrs. Thrale asked him somewhat flippantly, “Why do you put him up in the counting-house?” He answered, “Because, madam, I wish to have one wise man there.” “Sir (said Johnson), I thank you. It is a very handsome compliment, and I believe you speak sincerely.”—BOSWELL.

tioner, and which the petitioner is afterwards to fill up, and return to them again. This we must have, or we cannot proceed according to their directions. You need, I believe, only ask for a petition; if they inquire for whom you ask, you can tell them.

“I beg pardon for giving you this trouble; but it is a matter of great importance. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“London, 27th Oct. 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—There has appeared lately in the papers an account of the boat over-set between Mull and Ulva, in which many passengers were lost, and among them Maclean of Col. We, you know, were once drowned¹; I hope, therefore, that the story is either wantonly or erroneously told. Pray satisfy me by the next post.

“I have printed two hundred and forty pages. I am able to do nothing much worth doing to dear Lord Hailes’s book. I will, however, send back the sheets; and hope, by degrees, to answer all your reasonable expectations.

“Mr. Thrale has happily surmounted a very violent and acrimonious opposition; but all joys have their abatement: Mrs. Thrale has fallen from her horse, and hurt herself very much. The rest of our friends, I believe, are well. My compliments to Mrs. Boswell.—I am, sir, your most affectionate servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

This letter, which shows his tender concern for an amiable young gentleman to whom he had been very much obliged in the Hebrides, I have inserted according to its date, though before receiving it I had informed him of the melancholy event that the young Laird of Col was unfortunately drowned.

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“26th Nov. 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—Last night I corrected the last page of our ‘Journey to the Hebrides.’ The printer has detained it all this time, for I had, before I went into Wales, written all except two sheets. ‘The Patriot’ was called for by my political friends on Friday, was written on Saturday, and I have heard little of it. So vague are conjectures at a distance². As soon as I can, I will take care that copies be sent to you, for I would

wish that they might be given before they are bought; but I am afraid that Mr. Strahan will send to you and to the booksellers at the same time. Trade is as diligent as courtesy. I have mentioned all that you recommended. Pray make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell and the younglings. The club has, I think, not yet met.

“Tell me, and tell me honestly, what you think and what others say of our travels. Shall we touch the continent³?—I am, dear sir, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

In his manuscript diary of this year, there is the following entry:

“Nov. 27. Advent Sunday. I considered that this day, being the beginning of the ecclesiastical year, was a proper time for a new course of life. I began to read the Greek Testament regularly at one hundred and sixty verses every Sunday. This day I began the Acts.

“In this week I read Virgil’s Pastorals. I learned to repeat the *Pollio* and *Gallus*. I read carelessly the first *Georgick*.”

Such evidences of his unceasing ardour, both for “divine and human lore,” when advanced into his sixty-fifth year, and notwithstanding his many disturbances from disease, must make us at once honour his spirit, and lament that it should be so grievously clogged by its material tegument. It is remarkable that he was very fond of the precision which calculation produces. Thus we find in one of his manuscript diaries, “12 pages in 4to. Gr. Test. and 30 pages in Beza’s folio, comprise the whole in 40 days.”

“DR. JOHNSON TO JOHN HOOLE, ESQ.⁴

“19th December, 1774.

“DEAR SIR,—I have returned your play⁵, which you will find underscored with red, where there was a word which I did not like. The red will be washed off with a little water.

“The plot is so well framed, the intricacy so artful, and the disentanglement so easy, the suspense so affecting, and the passionate parts so properly interposed, that I have no doubt of its success.—I am, sir, your most humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

³ We had projected a voyage together up the Baltick, and talked of visiting some of the more northern regions.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [John Hoole, who from this time forward will be found much in Johnson’s society, was the son of a watchmaker, born about 1726. He was a clerk in the India House, but devoted his leisure to literature. He published translations of Tasso’s *Jerusalem* and Ariosto’s *Orlando*. He died in 1803.—ED.]

⁵ *Cleonicæ*.—BOSWELL.

¹ In the newspapers.—BOSWELL.

² Alluding to a passage in a letter of mine, where, speaking of his “Journey to the Hebrides,” I say, “But has not ‘The Patriot’ been an interruption, by the time taken to write it, and the time luxuriously spent in listening to its applauds?”—BOSWELL.

The first effort of his pen in 1775, was "Proposals for publishing the Works of Mrs. Charlotte Lennox¹ †," in three volumes quarto. In his diary, January 2, I find this entry: "Wrote Charlotte's Proposals." But, indeed, the internal evidence would have been quite sufficient. Her claim to the favour of the publick was thus enforced:

"Most of the pieces, as they appeared singly, have 'been read with approbation, perhaps above their merits, but of no great advantage to the writer. She hopes, therefore, that she shall not be considered as too indulgent to vanity, or too studious of interest, if from that labour which has hitherto been chiefly gainful to others, she endeavours to obtain at last some profit to herself and her children. She cannot decently enforce her claim by the praise of her own performances; nor can she suppose, that, by the most artful and labour'd address, any additional notice could be procured to a publication, of which her majesty has condescended to be the patroness."

He this year also wrote the Preface to Baretti's "Easy Lessons in Italian and English †."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"14th January, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—You never did ask for a book by the post till now, and I did not think on it. You see now it is done. I sent one to the king, and I hear he likes it.

"I shall send a parcel into Scotland for presents, and intend to give to many of my friends. In your catalogue you left out Lord Auchinleck.

"Let me know, as fast as you read it, how you like it; and let me know if any mistake is committed, or any thing important left out. I wish you could have seen the sheets. My compliments to Mrs. Boswell, and to Veronica, and to all my friends. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 19th Jan. 1775.

"Be pleased to accept of my best thanks for your 'Journey to the Hebrides,' which came to me by last night's post. I did really ask the favour twice; but you have been even with me by granting it so speedily. *Bis dat qui cito dat.* Though ill of a bad cold, you kept me up the greatest part of last night; for I did not stop till I had read every word of your book. I looked back to our first talking of a visit to the Hebrides, which was many years ago, when sitting by ourselves in the Mitre tavern in London, I think about *witching time*

o' night; and then exulted in contemplating our scheme fulfilled, and a *monumentum perenne* of it erected by your superior abilities. I shall only say, that your book has afforded me a high gratification. I shall afterwards give you my thoughts on particular passages. In the mean time, I hasten to tell you of your having mistaken two names, which you will correct in London, as I shall do here, that the gentlemen who deserve the valuable compliments which you have paid them, may enjoy their honours. In page 106, for *Gordon* read *Murchison*; and in page 357, for *Maclean* read *Macleod*².

* * * *

"But I am now to apply to you for immediate aid in my profession, which you have never refused to grant when I requested it. I enclose you a petition for Dr. Memis, a physician at Aberdeen, in which Sir John Dalrymple has exerted his talents, and which I am to answer as counsel for the managers of the royal infirmary in that city. Mr. Jopp, the provost, who delivered to you your freedom, is one of my clients, and, as a citizen of Aberdeen, you will support him.

"The fact is shortly this. In a translation of the charter of the infirmary from Latin into English, made under the authority of the managers, the same phrase in the original is in one place rendered *physician*, but when applied to Dr. Memis is rendered *doctor of medicine*. Dr. Memis complained of this before the translation was printed, but was not indulged with having it altered; and he has brought an action for damages, on account of a supposed injury, as if the designation given to him was an inferior one, tending to make it be supposed he is *not a physician*, and consequently to hurt his practice. My father has dismissed the action as groundless, and now he has appealed to the whole court³."

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

"1st January, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—I long to hear how you like the book; it is, I think, much liked here. But Macpherson is very furious; can you give me any more intelligence about

² [It is strange that these errors have never been corrected: they will be found in vol. viii. pp. 265 and 401, of Murphy's edition, and vol. ix. pp. 44 and 150, of the Oxford edition.—ED.]

³ In the court of session of Scotland an action is first tried by one of the judges, who is called the lord ordinary; and if either party is dissatisfied, he may appeal to the whole court, consisting of fifteen, the lord president and fourteen other judges, who have both in and out of court the title of lords from the name of their estates; as, Lord Auchinleck, Lord Momboddo, &c.—BOSWELL.

¹ [See *ante*, p. 95.—ED.]

him, or his Fingal? Do what you can, and do it quickly. Is Lord Hailes on our side?

"Pray let me know what I owed you when I left you, that I may send it to you.

"I am going to write about the Americans. If you have picked up any hints among your lawyers, who are great masters of the law of nations, or if your own mind suggests any thing, let me know. But mum, it is a secret.

"I will send your parcel of books as soon as I can; but I cannot do as I wish. However, you find every thing mentioned in the book which you recommended.

"Langton is here; we are all that ever we were. He is a worthy fellow, without malice, though not without resentment¹.

"Poor Beauclerk is so ill that his life is thought to be in danger. Lady Di nurses him with very great assiduity.

"Reynolds has taken too much to strong liquor², and seems to delight in his new character.

"This is all the news that I have; but as you love verses, I will send you a few which I made upon Inchkenneth³; but remember the condition, you shall not show them, except to Lord Hailes, whom I love better than any man whom I know so little. If he asks you to transcribe them for him, you may do it; but I think he must promise not to let them be copied again, nor to show them as mine.

"I have at last sent back Lord Hailes's sheets. I never think about returning them, because I alter nothing. You will see that I might as well have kept them. However, I am ashamed of my delay; and if I have the honour of receiving any more, promise punctually to return them by the next post. Make my compliments to dear Mrs. Boswell, and to Miss Veronica. I am, dear sir, yours most faithfully,

"SAM. JOHNSON⁴."

¹ [This refers to the coolness alluded to, *ante*, p. 321, n. and 351.—ED.]

² It should be recollected that this fanciful description of his friend was given by Johnson after he himself had become a water-drinker.—BOSWELL. [This good-natured intimation of Mr. Boswell's cannot be admitted as an explanation of this expression. Johnson had been a water-drinker ever since 1766 (see *ante*, p. 227), and, therefore, that could not be his motive for making, *nine years after*, an observation on Sir Joshua's "*new character*." Sir Joshua was *always* convivial, and this expression was either an allusion to some little anecdote now forgotten, or arose out of that odd fancy which Johnson (perhaps from his own morbid feelings) entertained, that every one who drank wine, in any quantity whatsoever, was more or less drunk.—ED.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 437.—ED.]

⁴ He now sent me a Latin inscription for my

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

"Edinburgh, 27th Jan. 1775.

* * * * *

"You rate our lawyers here too high, when you call them great masters of the law of nations.

* * * * *

"As for myself, I am ashamed to say I have read little and thought little on the subject of America. I will be much obliged to you, if you will direct me where I shall find the best information of what is to be said on both sides. It is a subject vast in its present extent and future consequences. The imperfect hints which now float in my mind tend rather to the formation of an opinion that our government has been precipitant and severe in the resolutions taken against the Bostonians. Well do you know that I have no kindness for that race. But nations, or bodies of men, should, as well as individuals, have a fair trial, and not be condemned on character alone. Have we not express contracts with our colonies, which afford a more certain foundation of judgment, than general political speculations on the mutual rights of states and their provinces or colonies? Pray let me know immediately what to read, and I shall diligently endeavour to gather for

historical picture, Mary, Queen of Scots, and afterwards favoured me with an English translation. Mr. Alderman Boydell, that eminent patron of the arts, has subjoined them to the engraving from my picture.

"*Maria Scotorum Regina,
Hominum scditiosorum
Contumelias lassata,
Minis territa, clamoribus victa,
Libello, per quem
Regno cedit,
Lacrimans trepidansque
Nomen apponit.*"

"*Mary, Queen of Scots,
Harassed, terrified, and overpowered
By the insults, menaces,
And clamours
Of her rebellious subjects,
Sets her hand,
With tears and confusion,
To a resignation of the kingdom.*"—BOSWELL.

[It may be doubted whether "*regno cedit*," in the sense here intended, is quite correct. No one is ignorant that "*foro cedit, vitâ cedit*," and similar expressions, are classical; and that if Mary had been quitting the kingdom, instead of resigning the crown, *regno cedit* would be correct and elegant; but if *regnum* means *regal rights*, the accusative case would seem the more consonant with the analogies of grammar. Tacitus seems to make this distinction; he says of troops abandoning a *position*, "*loco cedunt*" (*German*. 6); but when they resign the *spoils* of the conquered, he says, "*bona intersectorum cedunt*" (*Hist.* 4, 64). So also Virgil, "*cedat fama loco*" (*Æn.* 332), for *giving way*; but "*cedat jus proprium regi*" (*11 Æn.* 359), for the *resignation of a right*.—ED.]

you any thing that I can find. Is Burke's speech on American taxation published by himself? Is it authentick? I remember to have heard you say, that you had never considered East Indian affairs; though, surely, they are of much importance to Great Britain. Under the recollection of this, I shelter myself from the reproach of ignorance about the Americans. If you write upon the subject, I shall certainly understand it. But, since you seem to expect that I should know something of it, without your instruction, and that my own mind should suggest something, I trust you will put me in the way.

* * * * *

“What does Becket mean by the *Originals* of Fingal and other poems of Ossian, which he advertises to have lain in his shop?”

* * * * *

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.
23th Jan. 1775.

“DEAR SIR,—You sent me a case to consider, in which I have no facts but what are against us, nor any principles on which to reason. It is vain to try to write thus without materials. The fact seems to be against you; at least I cannot know nor say any thing to the contrary. I am glad that you like the book so well. I hear no more of Macpherson. I shall long to know what Lord Hailes says of it. Lend it him privately. I shall send the parcel as soon as I can. Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell. I am, sir, &c.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

“MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.
Edinburgh, 2d Feb. 1775.

* * * * *

“As to Macpherson, I am anxious to have from yourself a full and pointed account of what has passed between you and him. It is confidently told here, that before your book came out he sent to you, to let you know that he understood you meant to deny the authenticity of Ossian's poems; that the originals were in his possession; that you might have inspection of them, and might take the evidence of people skilled in the Erse language; and that he hoped, after this fair offer, you would not be so uncandid as to assert that he had refused reasonable proof. That you paid no regard to his message, but published your strong attack upon him; and then he wrote a letter to you, in such terms as he thought suited to one who had not acted as a man of veracity. You may believe it gives me pain to hear your conduct represented as unfavourable, while I can only deny what is said, on the ground that your character refutes it, without having any information to oppose. Let me, I beg it of

you, be furnished with a sufficient answer to any calumny upon this occasion.

“Lord Hailes writes to me (for we correspond more than we talk together), ‘As to Fingal, I see a controversy arising, and purpose to keep out of its way. There is no doubt that I might mention some circumstances; but I do not choose to commit them to paper.’ What his opinion is I do not know. He says, ‘I am singularly obliged to Dr. Johnson for his accurate and useful criticisms. Had he given some strictures on the general plan of the work, it would have added much to his favours.’ He is charmed with your verses on Inch-kenneth, says they are very elegant, but bids me tell you, he doubts whether

‘Legitimas faciunt pectora pura preces,’

be according to the rubrick²: but that

¹ His lordship, notwithstanding his resolution, did commit his sentiments to paper, and in one of his notes affixed to his Collection of Old Scottish Poetry, he says, “to doubt the authenticity of those poems is a refinement in scepticism indeed.”—J. BOSWELL.

² [Meaning, perhaps, that this line would, if taken as a *general principle*, exclude the expediency of any *form* of prayer, or the necessity of a priesthood, and consequently impugn our liturgy and church establishment; but Dr. Johnson's verses referred to a case not of *public* but of *domestic* prayer; and the Church of England, though its liturgy affords admirable helps to *private devotion*, does not affect to regulate it by any form or rubrick; it was, however, perhaps, this criticism which induced Johnson to substitute for this elegant line the obscure and awkward one,

“*Sint pro legitimis pura labella sacris.*”

See *ante*, p. 437, n.—ED.] In the Appendix to the English copy, we have, in addition to this note, what follows.

[While this volume (vol. iii. of the English edition) was passing through the press, but after pp. 21 and 171 (*ante*, p. 437, and p. 498, of this edition) had been printed, Mr. Langton favoured the Editor with several interesting papers (which had belonged to his grandfather, Mr. Bennet Langton), and, amongst them, a copy of the *Verses on Inch-Kenneth*, in Dr. Johnson's own hand-writing, dated 2d Dec. 1773, by which it appears that the line which the Editor ventured to consider as inferior to the rest,

“*Sint pro legitimis pura labella sacris,*”

was manufactured by Mr. Langton from two variations which Dr. Johnson had, it seems, successively rejected;

Sint pro legitimis pectora pura sacris,
and

Legitimas faciunt pura labella preces;
so that we may safely restore the reading which Johnson appears finally to have approved,

“*Legitimas faciunt pectora pura preces.*”

Mr. Langton's copy agrees with that *ante*, p. 437, except only that “*duas cepit casa*” is “*duas tenuit casa*”—and “*procul esse jubet*” is “*pro-*

is your concern; for, you know, he is a Presbyterian.”

* * * * *

“ TO DR. LAWRENCE ¹.

“ 7th Feb. 1775.

“ SIR,—One of the Scotch physicians is now prosecuting a corporation that in some publick instrument have styled him *doctor of medicine* instead of *physician*. Boswell desires, being advocate for the corporation, to know whether *doctor of medicine* is not a legitimate title, and whether it may be considered as a disadvantageous distinction. I am to write to-night; he pleased to tell me. I am, sir, your most, &c.

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

“ TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“ 7th Feb. 1775.

“ MY DEAR BOSWELL,—I am surprised that, knowing as you do the disposition of your countrymen to tell lies in favour of each other ², you can be at all affected by any reports that circulate among them. Macpherson never in his life offered me a sight of any original or of any evidence of any kind; but thought only of intimidating me by noise and threats, till my last answer—that I would not be deterred from detecting what I thought a cheat by the menaces of a ruffian—put an end to our correspondence.

“ The state of the question is this. He, and Dr. Blair, whom I consider as deceived, say, that he copied the poem from old manuscripts. His copies, if he had them, and I believe him to have none, are nothing. Where are the manuscripts? They can be shown if they exist, but they were never shown. *De non existentibus et non apparentibus*, says our law, *eadem est ratio*. No man has a claim to credit upon his own

cul esse velit.” How it happened that the copy sent by Johnson to Boswell in 1775 should be so mutilated and curtailed from a copy written so early as Dec. 1773, is not to be explained.—ED.]

¹ The learned and worthy Dr. Lawrence, whom Dr. Johnson respected and loved as his physician and friend.—BOSWELL.

² My friend has, in this letter, relied upon my testimony, with a confidence, of which the ground has escaped my recollection.—BOSWELL. [This, and a subsequent phrase in this letter, must have left poor Mr. Boswell sorely perplexed between his desire to stand well with his countrymen, and his inability to deny Johnson’s assertion. His evasion is awkward enough, for there are several passages in his Journal of the Tour which seem, if not to justify, at least to excuse Johnson’s appeal to him; for instance, Mr. Boswell’s observation, *ante*, 20th October, on “the *confident carelessness* of the statements with which he and Dr. Johnson were so constantly *deceived and provoked.*”—ED.]

word, when better evidence, if he had it, may be easily produced. But so far as we can find, the Erse language was never written till very lately for the purposes of religion. A nation that cannot write, or a language that was never written, has no manuscripts.

“ But whatever he has he never offered to show. If old manuscripts should now be mentioned, I should, unless there were more evidence than can be easily had, suppose them another proof of Scotch conspiracy in national falsehood.

“ Do not censure the expression; you know it to be true.

“ Dr. Memis’s question is so narrow as to allow no speculation; and I have no facts before me but those which his advocate has produced against you.

“ I consulted this morning the president of the London College of Physicians, who says, that with us, *doctor of physick* (we do not say *doctor of medicine*) is the highest title that a practiser of physick can have; that *doctor* implies not only *physician*, but teacher of physick; that every *doctor* is legally a *physician*; but no man, not a *doctor*, can *practise physick* but by *license* particularly granted. The doctorate is a license of itself. It seems to us a very slender cause of prosecution.

* * * * *

“ I am now engaged, but in a little time I hope to do all you would have. My compliments to madam and Veronica. I am, sir, your most humble servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

What words were used by Mr. Macpherson in his letter to the venerable sage, I have never heard; but they are generally said to have been of a nature very different from the language of literary contest. Dr. Johnson’s answer appeared in the newspapers of the day, and has since been frequently republished; but not with perfect accuracy. I give it as dictated to me by himself, written down in his presence, and authenticated by a note in his own handwriting, “*This, I think, is a true copy*.”

“ MR. JAMES MACPHERSON,—I received your foolish and impudent letter. Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me. I hope I never shall be deterred from detecting what I think a cheat, by the menaces of a ruffian.

“ What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still. For this opinion I have given my reasons to the publick, which I

³ I have deposited it in the British Museum.—BOSWELL.

here dare you to refute. Your rage I defy. Your abilities, since your Homer, are not so formidable; and what I hear of your morals inclines me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you shall prove. You may print this if you will.

“SAM. JOHNSON.”

Mr. Macpherson little knew the character of Dr. Johnson, if he supposed that he could be easily intimidated; for no man was ever more remarkable for personal courage. He had, indeed, an awful dread of death, or rather, “of something after death:” and what rational man, who seriously thinks of quitting all that he has ever known, and going into a new and unknown state of being, can be without that dread? But his fear was from reflection; his courage natural. His fear, in that one instance, was the result of philosophical and religious consideration. He feared death, but he feared nothing else, not even what might occasion death.

[Fear was indeed a sensation to Piozzi, which Dr. Johnson was an utter p. 214. stranger, excepting when some sudden apprehensions seized him that he was going to die; and even then, he kept all his wits about him, to express the most humble and pathetic petitions to the Almighty: and when the first paralytic stroke took his speech from him, he instantly set about composing a prayer in Latin, at once to deprecate God’s mercy, to satisfy himself that his mental powers remained unimpaired, and to keep them in exercise, that they might not perish by permitted stagnation.]

When one day he had at Streatham taken tincture of antimony instead of emetic wine, for a vomit, he was himself the person to direct what should be done for him, and managed with as much coolness and deliberation as if he had been prescribing for an indifferent person.]

Many instances of his resolution may be mentioned. One day, at Mr. Beauchamp’s house in the country, when two large dogs were fighting¹, he went up to them, and beat them till they separated; and at another time, when told of the danger there was that a gun might burst if charged with many balls, he put in six or seven, and fired it off against a wall. Mr. Langton told me, that when they were swimming together, near Oxford, he cautioned Dr. Johnson against a pool, which was reckoned particularly dangerous; upon which Johnson di-

¹ [“When we inquired,” says Mrs. Piozzi, “into the truth of this story, he answered, the dogs have been somewhat magnified, I believe. They were, as I remember, two stout young pointers; but the story has gained but little.” Piozzi, p. 88. This story was told *ante*, p. 438.—Ed.]

rectly swam into it. He told me himself that one night he was attacked in the street by four men, to whom he would not yield, but kept them all at bay, till the watch came up, and carried both him and them to the round-house. In the playhouse at Lichfield, as Mr. Garrick informed me, Johnson having for a moment quitted a chair which was placed for him between the side-scenes, a gentleman took possession of it, and, when Johnson on his return civilly demanded his seat, rudely refused to give it up; upon which Johnson laid hold of it, and tossed him and the chair into the pit². Foote, who so successfully revived the old comedy, by exhibiting living characters, had resolved to imitate Johnson on the stage, expecting great profits from his ridicule of so celebrated a man. Johnson being informed of his intention, and being at dinner at Mr. Thomas Davies’s, the bookseller, from whom I had the story, he asked Mr. Davies, “what was the common price of an oak stick?” and being answered sixpence, “Why then, sir,” said he, “give me leave to send your servant to purchase me a shilling one. I’ll have a double quantity; for I am told Foote means to take me off, as he calls it, and I am determined the fellow shall not do it with impunity.” Davies took care to acquaint Foote of this, which effectually checked the wantonness of the mimic. Mr. Macpherson’s menaces made Johnson provide himself with the same implement of defence; and had he been attacked, I have no doubt that, old as he was, he would have made his corporal prowess be felt as much as his intellectual.

His “Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*” is a most valuable performance. It abounds in extensive philosophical views of society, and in ingenious sentiment and lively description. A considerable part of it, indeed, consists of speculations, which, many years before he saw the wild regions which we visited together, probably had employed his attention, though the actual sight of those scenes undoubtedly quickened and augmented them. Mr. Orme, the very able historian, agreed with me in this opinion, which he thus strongly expressed: “There are in that book thoughts, which, by long revolution in the great mind of Johnson, have been formed and polished like pebbles rolled in the ocean!”

That he was to some degree of excess a true born Englishman, so as to have entertained an undue prejudice against both the country and the people of Scotland, must be allowed. But it was a prejudice of the

² [If Mrs. Piozzi had reported any statement so obviously exaggerated as this, Mr. Boswell would have been very indignant.—Ed.]

head, and not of the heart¹. He had no ill-will to the Scotch; for, if he had been conscious of that, he never would have thrown himself into the bosom of their country; and trusted to the protection of its remote inhabitants with a fearless confidence. His remark upon the nakedness of the country, from its being denuded of trees, was made after having travelled two hundred miles along the eastern coast, where certainly trees are not to be found near the road; and he said it was “a map of the road” which he gave. His disbelief of the authenticity of the poems ascribed to Ossian, a Highland bard, was confirmed in the course of his journey, by a very strict examination of the evidence offered for it; and although their authenticity was made too much a national point by the Scotch, there were many respectable persons in that country, who did not concur in this: so that his judgment upon the question ought not to be decried, even by those who differ from him. As to myself, I can only say, upon a subject now become very uninteresting, that when the fragments of Highland poetry first came out, I was much pleased with their wild peculiarity, and was one of those who subscribed to enable their editor, Mr. Macpherson, then a young man, to make a search in the Highlands and Hebrides for a long poem in the Erse language, which was reported to be preserved somewhere in those regions. But when there came forth an Epick poem in six books, with all the common circumstances of former compositions of that nature; and when, upon an attentive examination of it, there was found a perpetual recurrence of the same images which appear in the fragments; and when no ancient manuscript, to authenticate the work, was deposited in any publick library, though that was insisted on as a reasonable proof, *who* could forbear to doubt?

Johnson's grateful acknowledgments of kindness received in the course of this tour completely refute the brutal reflections which have been thrown out against him, as if he had made an ungrateful return; and his delicacy in sparing in his book those, who, we find, from his letters to Mrs. Thrale, were just objects of censure², is much to be ad-

¹ [This is a distinction which the Editor is not sure that he understands. Did Mr. Boswell think that he improved the case by representing Johnson's dislike of Scotland as the result not of *feeling* but of *reason*? In truth, in the printed Journal of his Tour, there is nothing that a fair and liberal Scotchman can or does complain of; but his conversation is full of the harshest and often most unjust sarcasms against the Scotch, nationally and individually.—Ed.]

² [The only person censured in these letters is Sir A. Macdonald, to whom Boswell no doubt

mired. [We have seen his kind ac-^{En-} knowledge of Macleod's hospitality³, and the loss of poor Col is recorded in his journal in affectionate and pathetic terms.] His candour and amiable disposition is conspicuous from his conduct, when informed by Mr. Macleod, of Rasay, that he had committed a mistake, which gave that gentleman some uneasiness. He wrote him [as we have seen] a courteous and kind letter, and inserted in the newspapers an advertisement, correcting the mistake⁴.

The observations of my friend Mr. Dempster⁵ in a letter written to me, soon after he had read Dr. Johnson's book, are so just and liberal, that they cannot be too often repeated.

* * * * *

“There is nothing in the book, from beginning to end, that a Scotchman need to take amiss. What he says of the country is true; and his observations on the people are what must naturally occur to a sensible, observing, and reflecting inhabitant of a convenient metropolis, where a man on thirty pounds a year may be better accommodated with all the little wants of life, than Col or Sir Allan.

“I am charmed with his researches concerning the Erse language, and the antiquity of their manuscripts. I am quite convinced; and I shall rank Ossian and his Fingals and Oscars amongst the nursery tales, not the true history of our country, in all time to come.

“Upon the whole, the book cannot displease, for it has no pretensions. The author neither says he is a geographer, nor an antiquarian, nor very learned in the history of Scotland, nor a naturalist, nor a fossilist. The manners of the people, and the face of the country, are all he attempts to describe, or seems to have thought of. Much were it to be wished, that they who have travelled into more remote, and of course more curious regions, had all possessed his good sense. Of the state of learning, his observations on Glasgow university show he has formed a very sound judgment. He understands our climate too; and he has accurately observed the changes, however slow and imperceptible to us, which Scotland has undergone, in consequence of the blessings of liberty and internal peace.”

* * * * *

Mr. Knox, another native of Scotland,

alludes, but whom *his* delicacy did not spare. See *ante*, p. 372.—Ed.]

³ [See *ante*, p. 415.—Ed.]

⁴ See *ante*, p. 469.—BOSWELL.

⁵ [Boswell was so vehemently attacked by his countrymen, as if he were *particeps criminis* with Dr. Johnson, that he thought it expedient to produce these *testimonia Scotorum* in his own defence.—Ed.]

who has since made the same tour, and published an account of it, is equally liberal.

"I have read," says he, "his book again and again, travelled with him from Berwick to Glenelg, through countries with which I am well acquainted; sailed with him from Glenelg to Rasay, Sky, Rum, Col, Mull, and Icolmkill, but have not been able to correct him in any matter of consequence. I have often admired the accuracy, the precision, and the justness of what he advances, respecting both the country and the people.

"The Doctor has every where delivered his sentiments with freedom, and in many instances with a seeming regard for the benefit of the inhabitants, and the ornament of the country. His remarks on the want of trees and hedges for shade, as well as for shelter to the cattle, are well founded, and merit the thanks, not the illiberal censure of the natives. He also felt for the distresses of the Highlanders, and explodes with great propriety the bad management of the grounds, and the neglect of timber in the Hebrides."

Having quoted Johnson's just compliments on the Rasay family, he says,

"On the other hand, I found this family equally lavish in their encomiums upon the Doctor's conversation, and his subsequent civilities to a young gentleman of that country, who, upon waiting upon him at London, was well received, and experienced all the attention and regard that a warm friend could bestow. Mr. Macleod having also been in London, waited upon the Doctor, who provided a magnificent and expensive entertainment in honour of his old Hebridean acquaintance."

And, talking of the military road by Fort Augustus, he says,

"By this road, though one of the most rugged in Great Britain, the celebrated Dr. Johnson passed from Inverness to the Hebride Isles. His observations on the country and people are extremely correct, judicious, and instructive¹."

Mr. Tytler, the acute and able vindicator of Mary, Queen of Scots, in one of his letters to Mr. James Elphinstone, published in that gentleman's "Forty Years' Correspondence," says,

"I read Dr. Johnson's 'Tour' with very great pleasure. Some few errors he has fallen into, but of no great importance, and those are lost in the numberless beauties of his work.

"If I had leisure, I could perhaps point out the most exceptionable places; but at present I am in the country, and have not his book at hand. It is plain he meant to speak well of Scotland; and he has in my apprehension done us great honour in the

most capital article, the character of the inhabitants."

His private letters to Mrs. Thrale, written during the course of his journey, which therefore may be supposed to convey his genuine feelings at the time, abound in such benignant sentiment towards the people who showed him civilities, that no man whose temper is not very harsh and sour can retain a doubt of the goodness of his heart.

It is painful to recollect with what rancour he was assailed by numbers of shallow irritable North Britons, on account of his supposed injurious treatment of their country and countrymen, in his "Journey." Had there been any just ground for such a charge, would the virtuous and candid Dempster have given his opinion of the book, in the terms in which I have quoted? Would the patriotic Knox² have spoken of it as he has done? Would Mr. Tytler, surely

"— a Scot, if ever Scot there were,"

have expressed himself thus? And let me add, that, citizen of the world as I hold myself to be, I have that degree of predilection for my *natale so'um*, nay, I have that just sense of the merit of an ancient nation, which has been ever renowned for its valour, which in former times maintained its independence against a powerful neighbour, and in modern times has been equally distinguished for its ingenuity and industry in civilized life, that I should have felt a generous indignation at any injustice done to it. Johnson treated Scotland no worse than he did even his best friends, whose characters he used to give as they appeared to him, both in light and shade. Some people, who had not exercised their minds sufficiently, condemned him for censuring his friends. But sir Joshua Reynolds, whose philosophical penetration and justness of thinking were not less known to those who lived with him, than his genius in his art admired by the world, explained his conduct thus:

"He was fond of discrimination, which he could not show without pointing out the bad as well as the good in every character; and as his friends were those whose characters he knew best, they afforded him the best opportunity for showing the acuteness of his judgment."

He expressed to his friend, Mr. Windham of Norfolk³, his wonder at the extreme

² I observed with much regret, while the first edition was passing through the press (August, 1790), that this ingenious gentleman is dead.—BOSWELL.

³ [The Right Honourable William Windham of Felbrigg, born 1750, died 1810. He cultivated Johnson's acquaintance for the last few years of

jealousy¹ of the Scotch, and their resentment at having their country described by him as it really was; when to say that it was a country as good as England would have been a gross falsehood. "None of us," said he, "would be offended if a foreigner who has travelled here should say, that vines and olives don't grow in England." And as to his prejudice against the Scotch, which I always ascribed to that nationality which he observed in *them*, he said to the same gentleman, "When I find a Scotchman, to whom an Englishman is as a Scotchman, that Scotchman shall be as an Englishman to me." His intimacy with many gentlemen of Scotland, and his employing so many natives of that country as his amanuenses, prove that his prejudice was not virulent; and I have deposited in the British Museum, amongst other pieces of his writing, the following note in answer to one from me, asking if he would meet me at dinner at the Mitre, though a friend of mine, a Scotchman, was to be there:

"Mr. Johnson does not see why Mr. Boswell should suppose a Scotchman less acceptable than any other man. He will be at the Mitre."

My much-valued friend Dr. Barnard, now Bishop of Killaloe, having once expressed to him an apprehension that if he should visit Ireland he might treat the people of that country more unfavourably than he had done the Scotch, he answered, with strong pointed double-edged wit, "Sir, you have no reason to be afraid of me. The Irish are not in a conspiracy to cheat the world by false representations of the merits of their countrymen. No, sir: the Irish are a *fair people*;—they never speak well of one another." [Mr. Murphy relates

Murph. Essay, p. 105. that Johnson one day asked him, "Have you observed the difference between your own country impudence and Scotch impudence?" Murphy answering in the negative; "Then I will tell you," said Johnson: "the impudence of an Irishman is the impudence of a fly that buzzes about you, and you put it away, but it returns again, and still flutters and teases. The impudence of a Scotchman is the impudence of a leech that fixes and sucks your blood."

Johnson told me of an instance of Scottish nationality, which made a very unfavourable

his life with great assiduity, as will be seen in the last volume of this work.—ED.]

¹ [We may be allowed to express our wonder at the *extreme* prejudice of Johnson against Scotland and the Scotch; which is the more surprising, because he was himself a *jacobite*, and many of his earliest acquaintances and some of his nearest friends were Scotch (*ante*, p. 169). The Editor has a strong suspicion that there was some *personal* cause for this unreasonable, and, as it appears, *unaccountable* antipathy.—ED.]

impression upon his mind. A Scotchman of some consideration in London solicited him to recommend by the weight of his learned authority, to be master of an English school, a person of whom he who recommended him confessed he knew no more but that he was his countryman. Johnson was shocked at this unconscientious conduct.

All the miserable cavillings against his "Journey," in newspapers, magazines, and other fugitive publications, I can speak from certain knowledge, only furnished him with sport. At last there came out a scurrilous volume², larger than Johnson's own, filled with malignant abuse, under a name, real or fictitious, of some low man in an obscure corner of Scotland, though supposed to be the work of another Scotchman, who has found means to make himself well known both in Scotland and England. The effect which it had upon Johnson was, to produce this pleasant observation to Mr. Seward, to whom he lent the book: "This fellow must be a blockhead. They do n't know how to go about their abuse. Who will read a five shilling book against me? No, sir, if they had wit, they should have kept pelting me with pamphlets."

"MR. BOSWELL TO DR. JOHNSON.

Edinburgh, 18th Feb. 1775.

"You would have been very well pleased if you had dined with me to-day. I had for my guest, Macquharrie, young Maclean of Col, the successor of our friend, a very amiable man, though not marked with such active qualities as his brother; Mr. Maclean of Torloisk in Mull³, a gentleman of Sir Allan's family; and two of the clan Grant; so that the Highland and Hebridean genius reigned. We had a great deal of conversation about you, and drank your health in a bumper. The toast was not proposed by me, which is a circumstance to be remarked, for I am now so connected with you, that any thing that I can say or do to your honour has not the value of an additional compliment. It is only giving you a guinea out of that

² [This was, no doubt, Dr. Mc'Nicol's book, which has been more than once referred to. It is styled "Remarks on Dr. Samuel Johnson's Journey to the Hebrides, &c., by the Rev. Donald Mc'Nicol, A. M., Minister of Lisnore, in Argyllshire." It had, by way of motto, a citation from *Ray's Proverbs*: "*Old men and travellers LIE by authority.*" It was not printed till 1779. The second Scotchman, whom Mr. Boswell supposes to have helped in this work, Sir James Mackintosh very reasonably surmises to have been Macpherson.—ED.]

³ [Maclean of Torloisk was grandfather to the present Marchioness of Northampton.—WALTER SCOTT.]

treasure of admiration which already belongs to you, and which is no hidden treasure; for I suppose my admiration of you is co-existent with the knowledge of my character.

“I find that the Highlanders and Hebrideans in general are much fonder of your ‘Journey,’ than the low-country or *hither* Scots. One of the Grants said to-day, that he was sure you were a man of a good heart, and a candid man, and seemed to hope he should be able to convince you of the antiquity of a good proportion of the poems of Ossian. After all that has passed, I think the matter is capable of being proved to a certain degree. I am told that Macpherson got one old Erse MS. from Clanranald, for the restitution of which he executed a formal obligation; and it is affirmed, that the Gaelick (call it Erse or call it Irish) has been written in the Highlands and Hebrides for many centuries. It is reasonable to suppose, that such of the inhabitants as acquired any learning, possessed the art of writing as well as their Irish neighbours and Celtick cousins; and the question is, can sufficient evidence be shown of this?

“Those who are skilled in ancient writings can determine the age of MSS., or at least can ascertain the century in which they were written; and if men of veracity, who are so skilled, shall tell us that MSS. in the possession of families in the Highlands and isles are the works of a remote age, I think we should be convinced by their testimony.

“There is now come to this city, Ranald Macdonald from the Isle of Egg, who has several MSS. of Erse poetry, which he wishes to publish by subscription. I have engaged to take three copies of the book, the price of which is to be six shillings, as I would subscribe for all the Erse that can be printed, be it old or new, that the language may be preserved. This man says, that some of his manuscripts are ancient; and, to be sure, one of them which was shown to me does appear to have the duskiness of antiquity.

* * * * *

“The inquiry is not yet quite hopeless, and I should think that the exact truth may be discovered, if proper means be used. I am, &c. “JAMES BOSWELL.”

“TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

“25th Feb. 1775.

“DEAR SIR,—I am sorry that I could get no books for my friends in Scotland. Mr. Strahan has at last promised to send two dozen to you. If they come, put the name of my friends into them; you may cut them out¹, and paste them with a little starch in the book.

“You then are going wild about Ossian. Why do you think any part can be proved? The dusky manuscript of Egg is probably not fifty years old: if it be an hundred, it proves nothing. The tale of Clanranald is no proof. Has Clanranald told it? Can he prove it? There are, I believe, no Erse manuscripts. None of the old families had a single letter in Erse that we heard of. You say it is likely that they could write. The learned, if any learned there were, could; but knowing by that learning some written language, in that language they wrote, as letters had never been applied to their own. If there are manuscripts, let them be shown, with some proof that they are not forged for the occasion. You say many can remember parts of Ossian. I believe all those parts are versions of the English; at least there is no proof of their antiquity.

“Macpherson is said to have made some translations himself; and having taught a boy to write it, ordered him to say that he had learnt it of his grandmother. The boy, when he grew up, told the story. This Mrs. Williams heard at Mr. Strahan’s table. Do not be credulous; you know how little a Highlander can be trusted. Macpherson is, so far as I know, very quiet. Is not that proof enough? Every thing is against him. No visible manuscript: no inscription in the language: no correspondence among friends: no transaction of business, of which a single scrap remains in the ancient families. Macpherson’s pretence is that the character was Saxon. If he had not talked unskillfully of *manuscripts*, he might have fought with oral tradition much longer. As to Mr. Grant’s information, I suppose he knows much less of the matter than ourselves.

“In the mean time, the bookseller says that the sale² is sufficiently quick. They printed four thousand. Correct your copy wherever it is wrong, and bring it up. Your friends will all be glad to see you. I think of going myself into the country about May.

“I am sorry that I have not managed to send the book sooner. I have left four for you, and do not restrict you absolutely to follow my directions in the distribution. You must use your own discretion.

“Make my compliments to Mrs. Boswell: I suppose she is now beginning to forgive me. I am, dear sir, your humble servant,
“SAM. JOHNSON.”

[He about this time again visited Ed. Oxford, chiefly it would seem with the friendly design of having Mr. Carter estab-

¹ From a list in his handwriting.—BOSWELL.

² Of his “Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland.”—BOSWELL.

lished as riding-master there, under the Duchess of Queensberry's donation¹.

“DR. JOHNSON TO MRS. THRALE.

“University College, 3d March, 1775.

Lett. v. i. p. 212. “The fate of my proposal for our friend Mr. Carter will be decided on Monday. Those whom I have spoken to are all friends. I have not abated any part of the entrance or payment, for it has not been thought too much, and I hope he will have scholars.

“I am very deaf; and yet cannot well help being much in company, though it is often very uncomfortable. But when I have done this thing, which I hope is a good thing, or find that I cannot do it, I wish to live a while under your care and protection.”]

On Tuesday, 21st March, I arrived in London; and on repairing to Dr. Johnson's before dinner, found him in his study, sitting with Mr. Peter Garrick, the elder brother of David, strongly resembling him in countenance and voice, but of more sedate and placid manners². Johnson informed me, that though Mr. Beauclerk was in great pain, it was hoped he was not in danger, and that he now wished to consult Dr. Heberden, to try the effect of a “*new understanding*.” Both at this interview, and in the evening at Mr. Thrale's, where he and Mr. Peter Garrick and I met again, he was vehement on the subject of the Ossian controversy; observing, “We do not know that there are any ancient Erse manuscripts; and we have no other reason to disbelieve that there are men with three heads, but that we do not know that there are any such men.” He also was outrageous upon his supposition that my countrymen “loved Scotland better than truth,” saying, “All of them,—nay, not all,—but *droves* of them, would come up, and attest any thing for the honour of Scotland.” He also persevered in his wild allegation, that he questioned if there was a tree between Edinburgh and the English border older than himself. I assured him he was mistaken, and suggested that the proper punishment would be that he should receive a stripe at every tree above a hundred years old, that was found within that space. He laughed, and said, “I believe I might submit to it for a *baubee*.”

The doubts which, in my correspondence with him, I had ventured to state as to the justice and wisdom of the conduct of Great Britain towards the American colonies,

while I at the same time requested that he would enable me to inform myself upon that momentous subject, he had altogether disregarded; and had recently published a pamphlet, entitled “Taxation no Tyranny; an Answer to the Resolutions and Address of the American Congress.”*

He had long before indulged most unfavourable sentiments of our fellow-subjects in America. For, as early as 1769, I was told by Dr. John Campbell, that he had said of them, “Sir, they are a race of convicts, and ought to be thankful for any thing we allow them short of hanging.”

Of this performance I avoided to talk with him; for I had now formed a clear and settled opinion, that the people of America were well warranted to resist a claim that their fellow-subjects in the mother-country should have the entire command of their fortunes, by taxing them without their own consent; and the extreme violence which it breathed appeared to me so unsuitable to the mildness of a christian philosopher, and so directly opposite to the principles of peace which he had so beautifully recommended in his pamphlet respecting Falkland's Islands, that I was sorry to see him appear in so unfavourable a light. Besides, I could not perceive in it that ability of argument, or that felicity of expression, for which he was, upon other occasions, so eminent. Positive assertion, sarcastical severity, and extravagant ridicule, which he himself reprobated as a test of truth, were united in this rhapsody.

That this pamphlet was written at the desire of those who were then in power, I have no doubt³; and, indeed, he owned to me, that it had been revised and curtailed by some of them. He told me that they had struck out one passage, which was to this effect: “That the colonists could with no solidity argue from their not having been taxed while in their infancy, that they should not now be taxed. We do not put a calf into the plough; we wait till he is an ox.” He said, “They struck it out either critically as too ludicrous, or politically as too exasperating. I care not which. It was their business. If an architect says I will build five stories, and the man who employs him says I will have only three, the employer is to decide.” “Yes, sir (said I), in ordinary cases. But should it be so when the architect gives his skill and labour *gratis*?”

Unfavourable as I am constrained to say my opinion of this pamphlet was, yet since it was congenial with the sentiments of numbers at that time, and as every thing relating to the writings of Dr. Johnson is

¹ [For a further explanation of this matter, see *post*, sub 12th March, 1776.—Ed.]

² [See *ante*, p. 479, n. and *post*, 23d March, 1776.—Ed.]

³ [Yet see *ante*, p. 161 and n.—Ed.]

of importance in literary history, I shall therefore insert some passages which were struck out, it does not appear why, either by himself or those who revised it. They appear printed in a few proof leaves of it in my possession, marked with corrections in his own handwriting. I shall distinguish them by *italicks*.

In the paragraph where he says, the Americans were incited to resistance by European intelligence from "men whom they thought their friends, but who were friends only to themselves," there followed—*"and made by their selfishness, the enemies of their country."*

And the next paragraph ran thus:

"On the original contrivers of mischief, rather than on those whom they have deluded, let an insulted nation pour out its vengeance."

The paragraph which came next was in these words:

"Unhappy is that country in which men can hope for advancement by favouring its enemies. The tranquillity of stable government is not always easily preserved against the machinations of single innovators; but what can be the hope of quiet, when factions hostile to the legislature can be openly formed and openly avowed?"

After the paragraph which now concludes the pamphlet, there follows this, in which he certainly means the great Earl of Chatham, and glances at a certain popular lord chancellor¹.

"If, by the fortune of war, they drive us utterly away, what they will do next can only be conjectured. If a new monarchy is erected, they will want a king. He who first takes into his hand the sceptre of America should have a name of good omen. WILLIAM has been known both a conqueror and deliverer; and perhaps England, however contemned, might yet supply them with another WILLIAM. Whigs, indeed, are not willing to be governed; and it is possible that King WILLIAM may be strongly inclined to guide their measures: but whigs have been cheated like other mortals, and suffered their leader to become their tyrant, under the name of their protector. What more they will receive from England, no man can tell. In their rudiments of empire they may want a chancellor."

Then came this paragraph:

"Their numbers are, at present, not quite sufficient for the greatness which, in some form of government or other, is to rival the ancient monarchies; but by Dr. Franklin's rule of progression, they will, in a century and a quarter, be more than equal to the inhabitants of Europe. When the whigs of America are thus multiplied,

let the princes of the earth tremble in their palaces. If they should continue to double, and to double, their own hemisphere would not contain them. But let not our boldest oppugners of authority look forward with delight to this futurity of whiggism."

How it ended I know not, as it is cut off abruptly at the foot of the last of these proof pages.

His pamphlets in support of the measures of administration were published on his own account, and he afterwards collected them into a volume, with the title of "Political Tracts, by the Authour of the Rambler," with this motto:

*"Fallitur egregio quisquis sub principe credit
Servitium; nunquam libertas gratior extat
Quam sub rege pio."—Claudianus.*

These pamphlets drew upon him numerous attacks. Against the common weapons of literary warfare he was hardened; but there were two instances of animadversion which I communicated to him, and from what I could judge, both from his silence and his looks, appeared to me to impress him much².

One was, "A Letter to Dr. Samuel Johnson, occasioned by his late political Publications." It appeared previous to his "Taxation no Tyranny," and was written by Dr. Joseph Towers. In that performance, Dr. Johnson was treated with the respect due to so eminent a man, while his conduct as a political writer was boldly and pointedly arraigned, as inconsistent with the character of one who, if he did employ his pen upon politics, "it might reasonably be expected should distinguish himself, not by party violence and rancour, but by moderation and by wisdom."

It concluded thus:

"I would, however, wish you to remember, should you again address the publick under the character of a political writer, that luxuriance of imagination or energy of language will ill compensate for the want of candour, of justice, and of truth. And I shall only add, that should I hereafter be disposed to read, as I heretofore have done, the most excellent of all your performances, 'The Rambler,' the pleasure which I have been accustomed to find in it will be much diminished by the reflection that the writer of so moral, so elegant, and

² [Mr. Boswell, by a very natural prejudice, construes Johnson's *silence and looks* into something like a concurrence in his own sentiments; but it does not appear that Johnson ever abated one jot of the firmness and decision of his opinion on these questions. See his conversation *passim*, and his letter to Mr. Wesley, *post*, 6th Feb. 1776.—Ed.]

¹ [Lord Camden.—Ed.]

so valuable a work, was capable of prostituting his talents in such productions as 'The False Alarm,' the 'Thoughts on the Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands,' and 'The Patriot.'"

I am willing to do justice to the merit of Dr. Towers, of whom I will say, that although I abhor¹ his whiggish democratical notions and propensities (for I will not call them principles), I esteem him as an ingenious, knowing, and very convivial man.

The other instance was a paragraph of a letter to me, from my old and most intimate friend the Rev. Mr. Temple, who wrote the character of Gray, which has had the honour to be adopted both by Mr. Mason and Dr. Johnson in their accounts of that poet. The words were,

"How can your great, I will not say your *pious*, but your *moral* friend, support the barbarous measures of administration, which they have not the face to ask even their infidel pensioner Hume to defend?"

However confident of the rectitude of his own mind, Johnson may have felt sincere uneasiness that his conduct should be erroneously imputed to unworthy motives by good men; and that the influence of his valuable writings should on that account be in any degree obstructed or lessened.

He complained to a right honourable friend² of distinguished talents and very

¹ [Mr. Boswell is here very inconsistent; for *abhorring* Dr. Towers's *whiggish democratical* notions and *propensities*, how can he allow any weight to his opinions in a case which called these propensities into full effect; and above all, how could he suppose that Dr. Johnson, with his known feelings and opinions, could be influenced by a person professing such doctrines?—Ed.]

² [Mr. Gerard Hamilton. This anecdote is wholly at variance with Mr. Boswell's own assertion, *ante*, p. 161; and—without going the whole length of that assertion, "that Johnson's pension had no influence whatsoever on his political publications"—Mr. Hamilton's anecdote may be doubted, not only from a consideration of Johnson's own character and principles, but from the evidence of all his other friends—persons who knew him more intimately than Mr. Hamilton—Mrs. Thrale, Mr. Murphy, Sir J. Hawkins, Mr. Tyers—who all declare that his political pamphlets expressed the opinions which in private conversation he always maintained. Mr. Boswell, we have seen, was of the same opinion as to Johnson's sincerity, till he took up the adverse side of the political question. Then, indeed, he admits, not only without contradiction, but with a species of confirmation, Mr. Hamilton's anecdote. It must, moreover, be observed, that the anecdote itself is not very consistent; for it states that Johnson consulted Mr. Hamilton on the *contradictory* objects of *resigning* his pension altogether, and of endeavouring to have it *secured* to him for life. It must be recollected, in weighing Mr. Hamilton's testimony on this point, that we have it on-

elegant manners, with whom he maintained a long intimacy, and whose generosity towards him will afterwards appear, that his pension having been given to him as a literary character, he had been applied to by administration to write political pamphlets; and he was even so much irritated, that he declared his resolution to resign his pension. His friend showed him the impropriety of such a measure, and he afterwards expressed his gratitude, and said he had received good advice. To that friend he once signified a wish to have his pension secured to him for his life; but he neither asked nor received from government any reward whatsoever for his political labours.

On Friday, March 24, I met him at the LITERARY CLUB, where were Mr. Beauclerk, Mr. Langton, Mr. Colman, Dr. Percy, Mr. Vesey, Sir Charles Bunbury, Dr. George Fordyce, Mr. Steevens, and Mr. Charles Fox. Before he came in, we talked of his "Journey to the Western Islands," and of his coming away, "willing to believe the second sight³," which seemed to excite some ridicule. I was then so impressed with the truth of many of the stories of which I had been told, that I avowed my conviction, saying, "He is only *willing* to believe: I *do* believe. The evidence is enough for me, though not for his great mind. What will not fill a quart-bottle will fill a pint-bottle. I am filled with belief." "Are you?" said Colman; "then cork it up."

I found his "Journey" the common topic of conversation in London at this time, wherever I happened to be. At one of Lord Mansfield's formal Sunday evening conversations, strangely called *Levéés*, his lordship addressed me, "We have all been reading your travels, Mr. Boswell." I answered, "I was but the humble attendant of Dr. Johnson." The chief-justice replied, with that air and manner which none, who ever saw and heard him, can forget, "He speaks ill of nobody but Ossian⁴."

Johnson was in high spirits this evening at the club, and talked with great animation and success. He attacked Swift, as he used to do upon all occasions. "The 'Tale of

ly at second hand, and that there is reason to believe that he had been connected in some mysterious political engagement with Dr. Johnson, which might tend to discolour his view of this matter.—Ed.]

³ Johnson's "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland."—*Works*, vol. viii. p. 347.—BOSWELL.

⁴ [It is not easy to guess how the *air and manner*, even of Lord Mansfield, could have set off such an unmeaning expression as this. Johnson denied the authenticity of the poems attributed to Ossian, but that was not *speaking ill of Ossian*, in the sense which Mr. Boswell evidently gives to the phrase.—Ed.]

a Tub' is so much superior to his other writings, that one can hardly believe he was the authour of it: there is in it such a vigour of mind, such a swarm of thoughts, so much of nature, and art, and life." I wondered to hear him say of "Gulliver's Travels," "When once you have thought of big men and little men, it is very easy to do all the rest." I endeavoured to make a stand for Swift, and tried to rouse those who were much more able to defend him; but in vain. Johnson at last, of his own accord, allowed very great merit to the inventory of articles found in the pocket of "the Man Mountain," particularly the description of his watch; which it was conjectured was his God, as he consulted it upon all occasions. He observed, that Swift put his name to but two things (after he had a name to put), "The Plan for the Improvement of the English Language," and the last "Drapiers Letter."

From Swift, there was an easy transition to Mr. Thomas Sheridan. JOHNSON. "Sheridan is a wonderful admirer of the tragedy of Douglas, and presented its authour with a gold medal. Some years ago, at a coffee-house in Oxford, I called to him, 'Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Sheridan, how came you to give a gold medal to Home, for writing that foolish play?' This, you see, was wanton and insolent; but I meant to be wanton and insolent. A medal has no

value but as a stamp of merit. And was Sheridan to assume to himself the right of giving that stamp? If Sheridan was magnificent enough to bestow a gold medal as a honorary reward of dramatick excellence, he should have requested one of the Universities to choose the person on whom it should be conferred. Sheridan had no right to give a stamp of merit: it was counterfeiting Apollo's coin²."

On Monday, March 27, I breakfasted with him at Mr. Strahan's. He told us, that he was engaged to go that evening to Mrs. Abingdon's benefit. "She was visiting some ladies whom I was visiting, and begged that I would come to her benefit. I told her I could not hear: but she insisted so much on my coming, that it would have been brutal to have refused her." This was a speech quite characteristical. He loved to bring forward his having been in the gay circles of life; and he was, perhaps, a little vain of the solicitations of this elegant and fashionable actress. He told us, the play was to be "The Hypocrite," altered from Cibber's "Nonjuror," so as to satirize the methodists. "I do not think," said he, "the character of the Hypocrite justly applicable to the methodists, but it was very applicable to the Nonjurors. I once said to Dr. Madan³, a clergyman of Ireland, who was a great whig, that perhaps a Nonjuror would have been less criminal in taking the oaths imposed by the ruling power, than

¹ This doubt has been much agitated on both sides, I think without good reason. See Addison's "Freeholder," May 4th, 1714; "An Apology for the Tale of a Tub;" Dr. Hawkesworth's "Preface to Swift's Works," and Swift's "Letter to Tooke the Printer," and Tooke's "Answer" in that collection; Sheridan's "Life of Swift;" Mr. Courtenay's note on p. 3 of his "Poetical Review of the Literary and Moral Character of Dr. Johnson;" and Mr. Cooksey's "Essay on the Life and Character of John, Lord Somers, Baron of Evesham."

Dr. Johnson here speaks only to the *internal evidence*. I take leave to differ from him, having a very high estimation of the powers of Dr. Swift. His "Sentiments of a Church-of-Englandman;" his "Sermon on the Trinity," and other serious pieces, prove his learning as well as his acuteness in logick and metaphysics; and his various compositions of a different cast exhibit not only wit, humour, and ridicule; but a knowledge "of nature, and art, and life;" a combination, therefore, of those powers, when (as the "Apology" says) "the authour was young, his invention at the height, and his reading fresh in his head," might surely produce "The Tale of a Tub."—BOSWELL. [See *ante*, p. 202. After the letter to Benjamin Tooke the Printer, there was no longer any room for controversy. The most zealous friend of Swift would only have to add, that he who wished to detract from his merit was obliged to deny (contrary to all evidence) that he was the authour of his own works.—ED.]

² [The medal was presented in 1757, and as it does not appear that Johnson and Sheridan ever met after the affair of the pension, (*ante*, 1762), this fact occurred probably in Johnson's visit to Oxford, in 1759. It seems, therefore, that Johnson had begun to be "*wanton and insolent*" towards Sheridan before the pension had caused the cup of gall to overflow. Mr. Whyte, the friend of Sheridan, gives the history of the medal thus: "When Sheridan undertook to play *Douglas* in Dublin, he had liberally written to Home, promising him the profits of the third night. It happened, however, that these profits fell very short, and Sheridan was rather perplexed what to do. At first, he thought of offering the authour a piece of plate, but, on the suggestion of Mr. Whyte, the idea of a medal was adopted. The medal (Mr. Whyte adds) had the additional grace of being conveyed to Mr. Home through the hands of Lord Macartney and Lord Bute, but had a narrow escape of being intercepted by the way, for, as Mr. Whyte was bringing it to London, he was stopped by a highwayman and robbed of his purse, but contrived to secrete and preserve the medal."—*Whyte's True Account of the Gold Medal*, Dublin, 1794. When Johnson called *Douglas* "a foolish play," he was not only "*wanton and insolent*," as he admits, but showed very bad taste, and very violent prejudice.—ED.]

³ [No doubt a mistake for Dr. Madden, already mentioned. See *ante*, p. 137.—ED.]

refusing them; because refusing them necessarily laid him under almost an irresistible temptation to be more criminal; for a man *must* live, and if he precludes himself from the support furnished by the establishment will probably be reduced to very wicked shifts to maintain himself¹.” BOSWELL. “I should think, sir, that a man who took the oaths contrary to his principles was a determined wicked man, because he was sure he was committing perjury; whereas a Nonjuror might be insensibly led to do what was wrong, without being so directly conscious of it.” JOHNSON. “Why, sir, a man who goes to bed to his patron’s wife is pretty sure that he is committing wickedness.” BOSWELL. “Did the nonjuring clergyman do so, sir?” “I am afraid many of them did².”

I was startled at this argument³, and could by no means think it convincing. Had not his own father complied with the requisition of government⁴, (as to which he once observed to me, when I pressed him upon it, “*That*, sir, he was to settle with himself,”) he would probably have thought more unfavourably of a Jacobite who took the oaths,

“————— had he not resembled
My father as he *swore* ———.”

Mr. Strahan talked of launching into the great ocean of London, in order to have a chance for rising into eminence; and observing that many men were kept back from trying their fortunes there, because they were born to a competency, said, “Small certainties are the bane of men of talents;” which Johnson confirmed. Mr. Strahan put Johnson in mind of a remark which he had made to him: “There are few ways in which a man can be more innocently employed than in getting money.” “The more one thinks of this,” said Strahan, “the juster it will appear.”

Mr. Strahan had taken a poor boy from the country as an apprentice, upon Johnson’s recommendation. Johnson having inquired after him, said, “Mr. Strahan, let me have five guineas on account, and I’ll give this boy one. Nay, if a man recommends a boy, and does nothing for him, it is sad work. Call him down.”

I followed him into the court-yard⁵, behind Mr. Strahan’s house; and there I had a proof of what I had heard him profess, that he talked alike to all. “Some people tell you that they let themselves down to

³ [Mr. Boswell was too civil when he called this *an argument*. It seems very *lax sophistry*. Why should it follow, that because a man is conscientious in one point, he should be profligate in another?—ED.]

⁴ [Extract from the book containing the proceedings of the corporation of Lichfield: “19th July, 1712, Agreed that Mr. Michael Johnson be, and he is hereby elected a magistrate and brother of their incorporation; a day is given him to Thursday next to take the oath of fidelity and allegiance, and the oath of a magistrate. Signed, &c.”—“25th July, 1712. Mr. Johnson took the oath of allegiance, and that he believed there was no transubstantiation in the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, before, &c.”—HARWOOD.]

⁵ [This was “*surveillance*,” as the French call it, with a vengeance! and this fact, which Mr. Boswell owns with such amusing simplicity, which he exercised over Johnson. The reader will have observed, that two French phrases are here used, because, though Mr. Boswell’s affectionate curiosity led *him* into such courses, English manners have no such practice, nor the English language a term to describe it.—ED.]

¹ This was not merely a cursory remark; for, in his *Life of Fenton*, he observes, “With many other wise and virtuous men, who, at that time of discord and debate (about the beginning of this century), consulted conscience, well or ill formed, more than interest, he doubted the legality of the government; and, refusing to qualify himself for publick employment, by taking the oaths required, left the University without a degree.” This conduct Johnson calls “perverseness of integrity.” The question concerning the morality of taking oaths, of whatever kind, imposed by the prevailing power at the time, rather than to be excluded from all consequence, or even any considerable usefulness in society, has been agitated with all the acuteness of casuistry. It is related, that he who devised the oath of abjuration profligately boasted, that he had framed a test which should “damn one half of the nation, and starve the other.” Upon minds not exalted to inflexible rectitude, or minds in which zeal for a party is predominant to excess, taking that oath against conviction may have been palliated under the plea of necessity, or ventured upon in heat, as upon the whole producing more good than evil. At a county election in Scotland, many years ago, when there was a warm contest between the friends of the Hanoverian succession, and those against it, the oath of abjuration having been demanded, the freeholders upon one side rose to go away. Upon which a very sanguine gentleman, one of their number, ran to the door to stop them, calling out with much earnestness, “Stay, stay, my friends, and let us swear the rogues out of it!” —BOSWELL. [What a proof is this of the impolicy and inefficacy of these sorts of tests when we find a man of Johnson’s morality and religious scruples characterising a conscientious refusal to take the oaths as a *perverse integrity*, and justifying a compliance by such loose talk as he used on this occasion!—ED.]

² [What evidence is there of this being the prevailing sin of the nonjuring clergy beyond Cibber’s comedy, which, slight evidence as a comedy would be in any such case, is next to none at all on this occasion, for Cibber’s play was a mere adaptation of Moliere’s *Tartuffe*?—ED.]

the capacity of their hearers. I never do that. I speak uniformly, in as intelligible a manner as I can."

"Well, my boy, how do you go on?" "Pretty well, sir; but they are afraid I ar'n't strong enough for some parts of the business." JOHNSON. "Why I shall be sorry for it; for when you consider with how little mental power and corporeal labour a printer can get a guinea a week, it is a very desirable occupation for you. Do you hear—take all the pains you can; and if this does not do, we must think of some other way of life for you. There's a guinea."

Here was one of the many, many instances of his active benevolence. At the same time, the slow and sonorous solemnity with which, while he bent himself down, he addressed a little thick short-legged boy, contrasted with the boy's awkwardness and awe, could not but excite some ludicrous emotions.

I met him at Drury-lane playhouse in the evening. Sir Joshua Reynolds, at Mrs. Abingdon's request, had promised to bring a body of wits to her benefit; and having secured forty places in the front boxes, had done me the honour to put me in the group. Johnson sat on the seat directly behind me; and as he could neither see nor hear at such a distance from the stage, he was wrapped up in grave abstraction, and seemed quite a cloud, amidst all the sunshine of glitter and gaiety. I wondered at his patience in sitting out a play of five acts, and a farce of two. He said very little; but after the prologue to "Bon Ton" had been spoken, which he could hear pretty well from the more slow and distinct utterance, he talked on prologue-writing, and observed, "Dryden has written prologues superiour to any that David Garrick has written; but David Garrick has written more good prologues than Dryden has done. It is wonderful that he has been able to write such variety of them."

At Mr. Beauclerk's, where I supped, was Mr. Garrick, whom I made happy with Johnson's praise of his prologues; and I suppose in gratitude to him, he took up one of his favourite topics, the nationality of the Scotch, which he maintained in a pleasant manner, with the aid of a little poetical fiction. "Come, come, do 'nt deny it: they are really national. Why, now, the Adams are as liberal-minded men as any in the world: but, I do n't know how it is, all their workmen are Scotch. You are, to be sure, wonderfully free from that nationality: but so it happens, that you employ the only Scotch shoebblack in London¹." He imitated the manner of his old master with ludi-

crous exaggeration; repeating, with pauses and half-whistlings interjected,

"Os homini sublime dedit,—cælumque tueri,
Jussit,—et erectos ad sidera—tollere vultus,"

looking *downwards* all the time², and, while pronouncing the four last words, absolutely touching the ground with a kind of contorted gesticulation³.

Garrick, however, when he pleased, could imitate Johnson very exactly; for that great actor, with his distinguished powers of expression which were so universally admired, possessed also an admirable talent of mimicry. He was always jealous⁴ that Johnson spoke lightly of him. I recollect his exhibiting him to me one day, as if saying, "Davy has some convivial pleasantry about him, but 't is a futile fellow;" which he uttered perfectly with the tone and air of Johnson.

I cannot too frequently request of my readers, while they peruse my account of

² [This exhibition of Johnson's *downward* look and gesticulations while reciting *os sublime* and *tollere vultus*, resembles one which Lord Byron describes. "Mr. Grattan's manners in private life were odd, but natural. Curran used to take him off, *bowing to the very ground*, and '*thanking God that he had no peculiarity of gesture or appearance*,' in a way irresistibly ridiculous."—*Moore's Life of Byron*, vol. i. p. 405.—Ed.]

³ [Mr. Whyte has related an anecdote of Johnson's violence of gesticulation, which, but for this evidence of Garrick's, one could have hardly believed. "The house on the right at the bottom of Beaufort Buildings was occupied by Mr. Chamberlaine, Mrs. Sheridan's eldest brother (an eminent surgeon), by whom Johnson was often invited in the snug way with the family party. At one of those social meetings Johnson as usual sat next the lady of the house; the dessert still continuing, and the ladies in no haste to withdraw, Mrs. Chamberlaine had moved a little back from the table, and was carelessly dangling her foot backwards and forwards as she sat, enjoying 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul.' Johnson, the while, in a moment of abstraction, was convulsively working his hand up and down, which the lady observing, she roguishly edged her foot within his reach, and, as might partly have been expected, Johnson clenched bold of it, and drew off her shoe; she started, and hastily exclaimed, 'O, fie! Mr. Johnson!' The company at first knew not what to make of it: but one of them, perceiving the joke, tittered. Johnson, not improbably aware of the trick, apologised. 'Nay, madam, recollect yourself; I know not that I have justly incurred your rebuke; the emotion was involuntary, and the action not intentionally rude.'"
—*Whyte's Miscel. Nova*, p. 50.—Ed.]

⁴ [On the contrary, the anecdote which follows rather proves that Garrick had learned to repel Johnson's contemptuous expressions with an easy gaiety.—Ed.]

¹ [See *ante*, p. 315 and *n.*—Ed.]



SIR RICHARD STEELE.

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Johnson's conversation, to endeavour to keep in mind his deliberate and strong utterance. His mode of speaking was indeed very impressive¹; and I wish it could be preserved as music is written, according to the very ingenious method of Mr. Steele², who has shown how the recitation of Mr. Garrick, and other eminent speakers, might be transmitted to posterity *in score*³.

Next day I dined with Johnson at Mr. Thrale's. He attacked Gray, calling him "a dull fellow." BOSWELL. "I understand he was reserved, and might appear dull in company; but surely he was not dull in poetry." JOHNSON. "Sir, he was dull in company, dull in his closet, dull every where. He was dull in a new way, and that made many people think him GREAT. He was a mechanical poet." He then repeated some ludicrous lines, which have escaped my memory, and said, "Is not that GREAT, like his Odes?" Mrs. Thrale maintained that his Odes were melodious; upon which he exclaimed,

"Weave the warp, and weave the woof;"—

I added, in a solemn tone,

"The winding-sheet of Edward's race."

¹ My noble friend Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, with a happy pleasantry and some truth, "that Dr. Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his *bow-wow way*." The sayings themselves are generally of sterling merit; but, doubtless, his *manner* was an addition to their effect; and therefore should be attended to as much as may be. It is necessary, however, to guard those who were not acquainted with him against overcharged imitations or caricatures of his manner, which are frequently attempted, and many of which are second-hand copies from the late Mr. Henderson, the actor, who, though a good mimic of some persons, did not represent Johnson correctly.—BOSWELL.

² See "*Prosodia Rationalis*; or, an Essay towards establishing the Melody and Measure of Speech, to be expressed and perpetuated by peculiar Symbols. London, 1779."—BOSWELL.

³ I use the phrase *in score*, as Dr. Johnson has explained it in his Dictionary. "*A song in score*, the words with the musical notes of a song annexed." But I understand that in scientific propriety it means all the parts of a musical composition noted down in the characters by which it is exhibited to the eye of the skilful.—BOSWELL. It was *declamation* that Steele pretended to reduce to notation by new characters. This he called the *melody* of speech, not the *harmony*, which the term *in score* implies.—BURNET. [The true meaning of the term *score*, as that when music, in different parts for different voices or instruments, is written on the same page, the bars, instead of being drawn only across each stave, are, to lead the eyes of the several performers, *scored* from the top to the bottom of the pages.—ED.]

There is a good line.—"Ay (said he), and the next line is a good one, (pronouncing it contemptuously),

'Give ample verge and room enough.'—

No, sir, there are but two good stanzas in Gray's poetry, which are in his 'Elegy in a Country Church-yard.' He then repeated the stanza,

"For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey," &c.

mistaking one word; for instead of *precincts* he said *confines*. He added, "The other stanza I forget."

A young lady⁴ who had married a man much her inferior in rank being mentioned, a question arose how a woman's relations should behave to her in such a situation; and, while I recapitulate the debate, and recollect what has since happened, I cannot but be struck in a manner that delicacy⁵ forbids me to express. While I contended that she ought to be treated with an inflexible steadiness of displeasure, Mrs. Thrale was all for mildness and forgiveness, and, according to the vulgar phrase, "making the best of a bad bargain." JOHNSON. "Madam, we must distinguish. Were I a man of rank, I would not let a daughter starve who had made a mean marriage; but having voluntarily degraded herself from the station which she was originally entitled to hold, I would support her only in that which she herself had chosen; and would not put her on a level with my other daughters. You are to consider, madam, that it is our duty to maintain the subordination of civilized society; and when there is a gross and shameful deviation from rank, it should be punished so as to deter others from the same perversion."

After frequently considering this subject, I am more and more confirmed in what I then meant to express, and which was sanctioned by the authority, and illustrated by the wisdom of Johnson; and I think it of the utmost consequence to the happiness of society, to which subordination is absolutely necessary. It is weak and contemptible, and unworthy, in a parent to relax in such a case. It is sacrificing general advantage to private feelings. And let it be considered that the claim of a daughter who has acted thus, to be restored to her former situation, is either fantastical or unjust. If

⁴ [No doubt Lady Susan Fox, eldest daughter of the first Earl of Ilchester, born in 1743, who, in 1773, married Mr. William O'Brien, an actor. She died on the 9th August, 1827.—ED.]

⁵ [Mr. Boswell's *delicacy* to Mrs. Piozzi is quite exemplary! but after all, there is nothing which he has insinuated or said too bad for such a lamentable and degrading weakness as she was guilty of in her marriage with Mr. Piozzi.—ED.]

there be no value in the distinction of rank, what does she suffer by being kept in the situation to which she has descended? If there be a value in that distinction, it ought to be steadily maintained. If indulgence be shown to such conduct, and the offenders know that in a longer or shorter time they shall be received as well as if they had not contaminated their blood by a base alliance, the great check upon that inordinate caprice which generally occasions low marriages will be removed, and the fair and comfortable order of improved life will be miserably disturbed.

Lord Chesterfield's letters being mentioned, Johnson said, "It was not to be wondered at that they had so great a sale, considering that they were the letters of a statesman, a wit, one who had been so much in the mouths of mankind, one long accustomed *virum volitare per ora*."

On Friday, 31st March, I supped with him and some friends at a tavern. One of the company¹ attempted, with too much forwardness, to rally him on his late appearance at the theatre; but had reason to repent of his temerity. "Why, sir, did you go to Mrs. Abingdon's benefit? Did you see?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." "Did you hear?" JOHNSON. "No, sir." "Why then, sir, did you go?" JOHNSON. "Because, sir, she is a favourite of the publick; and when the publick cares the thousandth part for you that it does for her, I will go to your benefit too."

Next morning I won a small bet from Lady Diana Beauclerk, by asking him as to one of his particularities, which her ladyship laid I durst not do. It seems he had been frequently observed at the club to put into his pocket the Seville oranges, after he had squeezed the juice of them into the drink which he made for himself. Beauclerk and Garrick talked of it to me, and seemed to think that he had a strange unwillingness to be discovered. We could not divine what he did with them; and this was the bold question to be put. I saw on his table, the spoils of the preceding night, some fresh peels nicely scraped and cut into pieces. "O, sir (said I), I now partly see what you do with the squeezed oranges which you put into your pocket at the club." JOHNSON. "I have a great love for them." BOSWELL. "And pray, sir, what do you do with them? You scrape them it seems, very neatly, and what next?" JOHNSON. "Let them dry, sir." BOSWELL. "And what next?" JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, you shall know their fate no further." BOSWELL. "Then the world must be left in the dark. It must be said (assuming a mock solemnity)

he scraped them and let them dry, but what he did with them next he never could be prevailed upon to tell." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, you should say it more emphatically:—he could not be prevailed upon, even by his dearest friends, to tell²."

He had this morning received his diploma as doctor of laws from the university of Oxford. He did not vaunt of his new dignity, but I understood he was highly pleased with it. I shall here insert the progress and completion of that high academical honour, in the same manner as I have traced his obtaining that of master of arts.

"TO THE REV. DR. FOTHERGILL,

Vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford, to be communicated to the Heads of Houses, and proposed in Convocation.

"Downing-street, 3d March, 1775.

"MR. VICE-CHANCELLOR AND GENTLEMEN,—The honour of the degree of M. A. by diploma, formerly conferred upon Mr. Samuel Johnson, in consequence of his having eminently distinguished himself by the publication of a series of essays, excellently calculated to form the manners of the people, and in which the cause of religion and morality has been maintained and recommended by the strongest powers of argument and elegance of language, reflected an equal degree of lustre upon the university itself.

"The many learned labours which have since that time employed the attention and displayed the abilities of that great man, so

¹ [This is supposed to have been Mr. Boswell himself.—ED.]

² [The following extract of one of what Miss Seward would call his *love-letters* to Miss Boothby, probably explains, in terms hardly suitable to the correspondence with a lady, the use to which he put these orange peels.—"Give me leave, who have thought much on medicine, to propose to you an easy and, I think, very probable remedy for indigestion and lubricity of the bowels. Dr. Lawrence has told me your case. Take an ounce of dried orange peel, finely powdered, divide it into scruples, and take one scruple at a time in any manner: the best way is, perhaps, to drink it in a glass of hot red port, or to eat it first, and drink the wine after it. If you mix cinnamon or nutmeg with the powder it were not worse; but it will be more bulky, and so more troublesome. This is a medicine not disgusting, not costly, easily tried, and if not found useful, easily left off. I would not have you offer it to the doctor as mine. Physicians do not love intruders; yet do not take it without his leave. But do not be easily put off, for it is in my opinion very likely to help you, and not likely to do you harm: do not take too much in haste; a scruple once in three hours, or about five scruples a day, will be sufficient to begin, or less if you find any aversion. I think using sugar with it might be bad; if syrup, use old syrup of quinces; but even that I do not like. I should think better of conserve of sloes."—*Lett.* 31st Dec. [1755].—ED.]

much to the advancement of literature and the benefit of the community, render him worthy of more distinguished honours in the republic of letters; and I persuade myself that I shall act agreeably to the sentiments of the whole university, in desiring that it may be proposed in convocation to confer on him the degree of doctor in civil law by diploma, to which I readily give my consent; and am, Mr. Vice-chancellor and gentlemen, your affectionate friend and servant,

“NORTH 1.”

DIPLOMA.

“*Cancellarius, magistri, et scholares universitatis Oxoniensis omnibus ad quos presentes literæ pervenerint, salutem in Domino sempiternam.*”

“*Sciatis, virum illustrem, Samuelem Johnson, in omni humaniorum literarum genere eruditum, omniumque scientiarum comprehensione felicissimum, scriptis suis, ad popularium mores formandos summâ verborum elegantia ac sententiarum gravitate compositis, ita olim inclarusse, ut dignus videretur cui ab academia sua eximia quædam laudis præmia deferrentur, quique venerabilem Magistrorum ordinem summâ cum dignitate cooparetur:*

“*Cum verò eundem clarissimum virum tot postea tantique labores, in patriâ præsertim linguâ ornandâ et stabilendâ feliciter impensi, ita insigniverint, ut in literarum republicâ princeps jam et primarius jure habeatur; nos, cancellarius, magistri, et scholares universitatis Oxoniensis, quò talis viri merita pari honoris remuneratione exæquentur, et perpetuum sue simul laudis, nostræque erga literas propensissimæ voluntatis extet monumentum, in solenni convocatione doctorum et magistrorum regentium, et non regentium, prædictum Samuelem Johnson doctorem in jure civili renunciavimus et constituimus, eumque, virtute præsentis diplomatis, singulis juribus, privilegiis et honoribus, ad istum gradum quaquâ pertinentibus, frui et gaudere jussimus. In cujus rei testimonium commune universitatis Oxoniensis sigillum præsentibus apponi fecimus.*

“*Datum in domo nostræ convocationis die tricesimo mensis Martii, anno Domini millesimo septingentesimo, septuagesimo quinto.*”

¹ Extracted from the Convocation Register, Oxford.—BOSWELL.

² The original is in my possession. He showed me the diploma, and allowed me to read it, but would not consent to my taking a copy of it, fearing perhaps that I should blaze it abroad in his lifetime. His objection to this appears from the [following] letter to Mrs. Thrale, in which he scolds her for the grossness of her flattery of him. It is remarkable that he never, so far as I know, assumed his title of *doctor*, but called himself *Mr. Johnson*, as appears from many of his cards or notes to myself, and I have seen many from him to other persons, in which he uniformly takes that

“*Viro Reverendo THOMÆ FOTHERGILL, S.T.P. universitatis Oxoniensis vice-cancellario.*”

“S. P. D.

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“*Multis non est opus, ut testimonium quo, te præside, Oxonienses nomen meum posteris commendârunt, quali animo acceperim compertum faciam. Nemo sibi placens non lætatur; nemo sibi non placet, qui vobis, literarum arbitris, placere potuit. Hoc tamen habet incommodi tantum beneficium, quod mihi nunquam posthac sine vestrâ famæ detrimento vel labi liceat vel cessare; semperque sit timendum ne quod mihi tam eximie laudi est, vobis aliquando fiat opprobrio. Vale.*”

“7. Id. Apr. 1775.”

[“TO MRS. THRALE.

“1st April, 1775.

“I had mistaken the day on which I was to dine with Mr. Bruce, and hear of Abyssinia, and therefore am to dine this day with Mr. Hamilton. Lett. v. i. p. 213.

“The news from Oxford is that no tennis-court can be hired at any price⁴; and that the vice-chancellor will not write to the Clarendon trustees without some previous intimation that his request will not be unacceptable. We must, therefore, find some way of applying to Lord Mansfield, who, with the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chester, holds the trust. Thus are we thrown to a vexatious distance. Poor [Carter]! do not tell him.

“The other Oxford news is that they have sent me a degree of doctor of laws, with such praises in the diploma as, perhaps, ought to make me ashamed; they are

designation. I once observed on his table a letter directed to him with the addition of *esquire*, and objected to it as being a designation inferior to that of doctor; but he checked me, and seemed pleased with it, because, as I conjectured, he liked to be sometimes taken out of the class of literary men, and to be merely *genteel*—*un gentilhomme comme un autre*. [The editor suspects that one reason why Johnson was a little reserved about this Oxford degree was that *Lord North* appeared as the prime mover in it, and that Johnson did not much relish the appearance of owing literary distinction to Lord North; first, because he was personally dissatisfied with his lordship; and, secondly, because the degree, at that particular moment, might look like a reward for his *political* pamphlets. When Mr. Boswell is so severe on Mrs. Piozzi for inaccuracy and exaggeration, may we not fairly ask whether the gentle allusion to *flattery* (in the letter which Mr. Boswell did not publish) can be fairly called “*scolding* Mrs. Piozzi for the *grossness* of her flattery?”—Ed.]

³ “The original is in the hands of Dr. Fothergill, then vice-chancellor, who made this transcript.”—T. WARTON.

⁴ [For a riding-school for Mr. Carter.—Ed.]

very like your praises. I wonder whether I shall ever show them to you.

"Boswell will be with you. Please to ask Murphy the way to Lord Mansfield. Dr. Wetherell, who is now here, and will be here for some days, is very desirous of seeing the brew-house; I hope Mr. Thrale will send him an invitation. He does what he can for Carter.

"To-day I dine with Hamilton; to-morrow with Hoole; on Monday with Paradise; on Tuesday with master and mistress; on Wednesday with Dilly; but come back to the *tower* ¹."

He revised some sheets of Lord Hailes's "Annals of Scotland," and wrote a few notes on the margin with red ink, which he bade me tell his lordship did not sink into the paper, and might be wiped off with a wet sponge, so that it did not spoil his manuscript. I observed to him that there were very few of his friends so accurate as that I could venture to put down in writing what they told me as his sayings. JOHNSON. "Why should you write down *my* sayings?" BOSWELL. "I write them when they are good." JOHNSON. "Nay, you may as well write down the sayings of any one else that are good." But *where*, I might with great propriety have added, can I find such?

I visited him by appointment in the evening, and we drank tea with Mrs. Williams. He told me that he had been in the company of a gentleman² whose extraordinary travels had been much the subject of conversation. But I found he had not listened to him with that full confidence, without which there is little satisfaction in the society of travellers. I was curious to hear what opinion so able a judge as Johnson had formed of his abilities, and I asked if he was not a man of sense. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, he is not a distinct relater; and I should say, he is neither abounding nor deficient in sense. I did not perceive any superiority of understanding." BOSWELL. "But will you not allow him a nobleness of resolution, in penetrating into distant regions?" JOHNSON. "That, sir, is not to the present purpose: we are talking of sense. A fighting cock has a nobleness of resolution."

Next day, Sunday, 2d April, I dined with him at Mr. Hoole's. We talked of Pope. JOHNSON. "He wrote his 'Dunciad' for

fame. That was his primary motive. Had it not been for that, the dunces might have railed against him till they were weary, without his troubling himself about them. He delighted to vex them, no doubt; but he had more delight in seeing how well he could vex them."

The "Odes to Obscurity and Oblivion," in ridicule of "cool Mason and warm Gray," being mentioned, Johnson said, "They are Colman's best things." Upon its being observed that it was believed these odes were made by Colman and Lloyd;—JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, how can two people make an ode? Perhaps one made one of them, and one the other." I observed that two people had made a play, and quoted the anecdote of Beaumont and Fletcher, who were brought under suspicion of treason, because while concerting the plan of a tragedy when sitting together at a tavern, one of them was overheard saying to the other, "I'll kill the king." JOHNSON. "The first of these odes is the best; but they are both good. They exposed a very bad kind of writing ³." BOSWELL. "Surely, sir, Mr. Mason's 'Elfrida' is a fine poem: at least you will allow there are some good passages in it." JOHNSON. "There are now and then some good imitations of Milton's bad manner."

[Mrs. Piozzi has heard Johnson Piozzi,
p. 28. relate how he used to sit in some coffee-house, and turn Mason's *Character* into ridicule for the diversion of himself and of chance comers-in. "The *Elfrida* (says he) was too exquisitely pretty⁴; I could make no fun out of that." When upon some occasions he would express his astonishment that he should have an enemy in the world, while he had been doing nothing but good to his neighbours, Mrs. Piozzi used to make him recollect these circumstances: "Why, child, (said he), what harm could that do the fellow? I always thought very well of Mason for a *Cambridge* man: he is, I believe, a mighty blameless character."]

I often wondered at his low estimation of the writings of Gray and Mason. Of Gray's poetry I have in a former part of this work expressed my high opinion; and for that of Mr. Mason I have ever entertained a warm admiration. His "Elfrida" is exquisite, both in poetical description and

¹ [The *tower* was a separate room at Streatham, where Dr. Johnson slept.—Prozzi. So called probably because it was *bowed*. The editor slept in that room many years after, and was pleased to find that Dr. Johnson's writing-table was carefully preserved, and that even the blots of his ink were not cleaned away.—Ed.]

² [Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, with whom he had dined this day at Mr. Gerard Hamilton's.—Ed.]

³ [Gray's odes are still on every table and in every mouth, and there are not, the editor believes, a dozen libraries in England which could produce these "*best things*," written by two *professed* wits in ridicule of them.—Ed.]

⁴ [The editor has not thought himself at liberty to suppress this judgment, because it seems in substance authorised by Boswell's account, although the expression is very unlike Johnson's style.—Ed.]

moral sentiment; and his "Caractacus" is a noble drama. Nor can I omit paying my tribute of praise to some of his smaller poems, which I have read with pleasure, and which no criticism shall persuade me not to like. If I wondered at Johnson's not tasting the works of Mason and Gray, still more have I wondered at their not tasting his works: that they should be insensible to his energy of diction, to his splendour of images, and comprehension of thought. Tastes may differ as to the violin, the flute, the hautboy; in short all the lesser instruments: but, who can be insensible to the powerful impressions of the majestic organ?

His "Taxation no Tyranny" being mentioned, he said, "I think I have not been attacked enough for it. Attack is the reaction; I never think I have hit hard, unless it rebounds." BOSWELL. "I don't know, sir, what you would be at. Five or six shots of small arms in every newspaper, and repeated cannonading in pamphlets, might, I think, satisfy you. But, sir, you'll never make out this match, of which we have talked, with a certain political lady¹, since you are so severe against her principles." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, I have the better chance for that. She is like the Amazons of old; she must be courted by the sword. But I have not been severe upon her." BOSWELL. "Yes, sir, you have made her ridiculous." JOHNSON. "That was already done, sir. To endeavour to make her ridiculous, is like blacking the chimney."

I put him in mind that the landlord at Ellon in Scotland said, that he heard he was the greatest man in England, next to Lord Mansfield. "Ay, sir (said he), the exception defined the idea. A Scotchman could go no farther:

'The force of Nature could no farther go.'

Lady Miller's collection of verses by fashionable people, which were put into her Vase at Batheaston villa², near Bath,

¹ [Mrs. Macaulay: see *ante*, p. 102. Dr. Macaulay had been dead some years, and the lady did not re-marry till 1778.—Ed.]

² [Batheaston.—The following extract, from one of Horace Walpole's letters, will explain the personages and proceedings of this farce: "You must know, that near Bath is erected a new Parnassus, composed of three laurels, a myrtle-tree, a weeping-willow, and a view of the Avon, which has been new christened Helicon. Ten years ago there lived a madam [Riggs], an old rough humourist, who passed for a wit; her daughter, who passed for nothing, married to a captain [Miller], full of good natured officiousness. These good folks were friends of Miss Rich*, who carried me to dine with them at Bath-Easton,

* Daughter of Sir Robert Rich, and sister to the second wife of George, Lord Lyttelton.

in competition for honorary prizes, being mentioned, he held them very cheap: "Bouts-rimés," said he, "is a mere conceit, and an old conceit now; I wonder how people were persuaded to write in that manner for this lady." I named a gentleman of his acquaintance³ who wrote for the Vase. JOHNSON. "He was a block-head for his pains." BOSWELL. "The Duchess of Northumberland wrote⁴." JOHNSON. "Sir, the Duchess of Northumberland may do what she pleases: nobody will say any thing to a lady of her high rank. But I should be apt to throw *****s verses in his face."

I talked of the cheerfulness of Fleet-street, owing to the constant quick succession of people which we perceive passing through it. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, Fleet-street has a very animated appearance; but I

now Pindus. They caught a little of what was then called taste, built, and planted, and begot children, till the whole caravan were forced to go abroad to retrieve. Alas! Mrs. Miller is returned a beauty, a genius, a Sappho, a tenth muse, as romanticas Mademoiselle Scuderi, and as sophisticated as Mrs. V[esey †]. The captain's fingers are loaded with cameos, his tongue runs over with *virtù*; and that both may contribute to the improvement of their own country, they have introduced *bouts-rimés* as a new discovery. They hold a Parnassus-fair every Thursday, give out rhymes and themes, and all the flux of quality at Bath contend for the prizes. A Roman vase, dressed with pink ribands and myrtles, receives the poetry, which is drawn out every festival: six judges of these Olympic games retire and select the brightest composition, which the respective successful acknowledge, kneel to Mrs. Calliope [Miller], kiss her fair hand, and are crowned by it with myrtle, with—I don't know what. You may think this a fiction, or exaggeration. Be dumb, unbelievers! The collection is printed, published,—yes, on my faith! there are *bouts-rimés* on a buttered muffin, by her Grace the Duchess of Northumberland; receipts to make them, by Corydon the venerable, alias —; others very pretty, by Lord P[almerston]; some by Lord C[armarthen]; many by Mrs. [Miller] herself, that have no fault but wanting metre; and immortality promised to her without end or measure. In short, since folly, which never ripens to madness but in this hot climate, ran distracted, there never was any thing so entertaining, or so dull—for you cannot read so long as I have been telling."—*Works*, vol. v. p. 185.—Ed.]

³ [Probably the Rev. Richard Graves, who was for some years tutor in the house of Johnson's friend, Mr. Fitzherbert, and who contributed to the Batheaston Vase. He was Rector of Claverton, near Bath, where he died in 1804.—Ed.]

⁴ [Lady Anne Stuart, second daughter of Lord Bute, married in 1764 to the second Duke of Northumberland, from whom she was divorced in 1779.—Ed.]

† [A literary lady, of whom we shall see more hereafter, —Ed.]

think the full tide of human existence is at Charing-cross.”

He made the common remark on the unhappiness which men who have led a busy life experience, when they retire in expectation of enjoying themselves at ease, and that they generally languish for want of their habitual occupation, and wish to return to it. He mentioned as strong an instance of this as can well be imagined. “An eminent tallow-chandler in London, who had acquired a considerable fortune, gave up the trade in favour of his foreman, and went to live at a country-house near town. He soon grew weary, and paid frequent visits to his old shop, where he desired they might let him know their *melting-days*, and he would come and assist them; which he accordingly did. Here, sir, was a man to whom the most disgusting circumstances in the business to which he had been used was a relief from idleness.”

On Wednesday, 5th April, I dined with him at Messieurs Dillys, with Mr. John Scott of Amwell, the Quaker, Mr. Langton, Mr. Miller (now Sir John), and Dr. Thomas Campbell¹, an Irish clergyman, whom I took the liberty of inviting to Mr. Dilly’s table, having seen him at Mr. Thrale’s, and been told that he had come to England chiefly with a view to see Dr. Johnson, for whom he entertained the highest veneration. He has since published “A Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland,” a very entertaining book, which has, however, one fault—that it assumes the fictitious character of an Englishman.

We talked of publick speaking. JOHNSON. “We must not estimate a man’s powers by his being able or not able to deliver his sentiments in publick. Isaac Hawkins Browne, one of the first wits of this country, got into parliament, and never opened his mouth. For my own part, I think it is more disgraceful never to try to speak, than to try it and fail; as it is more disgraceful not to fight, than to fight and be beaten.” This argument appeared to me fallacious; for if a man has not spoken, it may be said that he would have done very well if he had tried; whereas, if he has tried and failed, there is nothing to be said for him. “Why then,” I asked, “is it thought disgraceful for a man not to fight, and not disgraceful not to speak in publick?” JOHNSON. “Because there may be other reasons for a man’s not speaking in publick than want of resolution: he may have nothing to say (laughing). Whereas, sir, you know courage is reckoned the greatest of all virtues; because, unless a man has that virtue, he has no security for preserving any other.”

He observed, that “the statutes against bribery were intended to prevent upstarts with money from getting into parliament:” adding, that “if he were a gentleman of landed property, he would turn out all his tenants who did not vote for the candidate whom he supported.” LANGTON. “Would not that, sir, be checking the freedom of election?” JOHNSON. “Sir, the law does not mean that the privilege of voting should be independent of old family interest, of the permanent property of the country.”

On Thursday, 6th April, I dined with him at Mr. Thomas Davies’s, with Mr. Hicky, the painter, and my old acquaintance Mr. Moody, the player.

Dr. Johnson, as usual, spoke contemptuously of Colley Cibber. “It is wonderful that a man, who for forty years had lived with the great and the witty, should have acquired so ill the talents of conversation: and he had but half to furnish; for one half of what he said was oaths.” He, however, allowed considerable merit to some of his comedies, and said there was no reason to believe that the “Careless Husband” was not written by himself. Davies said, he was the first dramattick writer who introduced genteel ladies upon the stage. Johnson refuted his observation by instancing several such characters in comedies before his time. DAVIES (trying to defend himself from a charge of ignorance). “I mean genteel moral characters.” “I think,” said Hicky, “gentility and morality are inseparable.” BOSWELL. “By no means, sir. The genteel characters are often the most immoral. Does not Lord Chesterfield give precepts for uniting wickedness and the graces? A man, indeed, is not genteel when he gets drunk; but most vices may be committed very genteelly: a man may debauch his friend’s wife genteelly: he may cheat at cards genteelly.” HICKY. “I do not think *that* is genteel.” BOSWELL. “Sir, it may not be like a gentleman, but it may be genteel.” JOHNSON. “You are meaning two different things. One means exteriour grace; the other honour. It is certain that a man may be very immoral with exteriour grace. Lovelace, in ‘Clarissa,’ is a very genteel and a very wicked character. Tom Hervey², who died t’other day, though a vicious man, was one of the genteel men that ever lived.” Tom Davies instanced Charles the Second. JOHNSON (taking fire at any attack upon that Prince, for whom he had an extraordinary partiality). “Charles the Second was licentious in his practice; but he always had a reverence for what was good. Charles the Second knew his people, and

¹ [See *post*, 6th April.—Ed.]

² [See *ante*, p. 238.—Ed.]

rewarded merit. The church was at no time better filled than in his reign. He was the best king we have had from his time till the reign of his present majesty, except James the Second, who was a very good king¹, but unhappily believed that it was necessary for the salvation of his subjects that they should be Roman Catholics. *He* had the merit of endeavouring to do what he thought was for the salvation of the souls of his subjects, till he lost a great empire. *We*, who thought that we should not be happy if we were Roman Catholics, had the merit of maintaining our religion, at the expense of submitting ourselves to the government of King William, (for it could not be done otherwise,)—to the government of one of the most worthless scoundrels that ever existed². No, Charles the Second was not such a man as ———³,

¹ [All this seems so contrary to historical truth and common sense, that no explanation can be given of it; but it excites a lively curiosity to know more of Dr. Johnson's personal history during the years 1745 and 1746, during which Boswell could find no trace of him. See *ante*, p. 71.—ED.]

² [He was always vehement against King William: a gentleman who dined at a nobleman's table in his company and that of Mr. Thrale, who related the anecdote, was willing to enter the lists in defence of King William's character, and, having opposed and contradicted Johnson two or three times petulantly enough, the master of the house began to feel uneasy, and expect disagreeable consequences; to avoid which he said, loud enough for the Doctor to hear, "Our friend here has no meaning now in all this, except just to relate at club to-morrow how he teased Johnson at dinner to-day—this is all to do himself honour." "No, upon my word," replied the other, "I see no honour in it, whatever you may do." "Well, sir," returned Dr. Johnson, sternly, "if you do not see the honour, I am sure I feel the disgrace."—Piozzi, p. 156.—ED.]

³ [George the Second.—The story of the will is told by Horace Walpole, in his very amusing (but often inaccurate) *Reminiscences*: "At the first council held by the new sovereign, Dr. Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, produced the will of the late king, and delivered it to the successor, expecting it would be opened and read in council. On the contrary, his majesty put it into his pocket and stalked out of the room, without uttering a word on the subject. The poor prelate was thunderstruck, and had not the presence of mind or the courage to demand the testament's being opened, or at least to have it registered. No man present chose to be more hardy than the person to whom the deposit had been intrusted; perhaps none of them immediately conceived the possible violation of so solemn an act, so notoriously existent. Still, as the king never mentioned the will more, whispers, only by degrees, informed the public that the will was burnt, at least that its injunctions were never fulfilled."—*Reminiscences*, ch. vi.—ED.]

(naming another king). He did not destroy his father's will. He took money, indeed, from France: but he did not betray those over whom he ruled: he did not let the French fleet pass ours. George the First knew nothing, and desired to know nothing; did nothing, and desired to do nothing; and the only good thing that is told of him is, that he wished to restore the crown to its hereditary successor." He roared with prodigious violence against George the Second. When he ceased, Moody interjected, in an Irish tone, and with a comick look, "Ah! poor George the Second."

I mentioned that Dr. Thomas Campbell had come from Ireland to London, principally to see Dr. Johnson. He seemed angry at this observation. DAVIES. "Why, you know, sir, there came a man from Spain to see Livy⁴; and Corelli came to England to see Purcell⁵, and when he heard he was dead, went directly back again to Italy." JOHNSON. "I should not have wished to be dead to disappoint Campbell, had he been so foolish as you represent him; but I should have wished to have been a hundred miles off." This was apparently perverse; and I do believe it was not his real way of thinking: he could not but like a man who came so far to see him. He laughed with some complacency, when I told him Campbell's odd expression to me concerning him: "That having seen such a man, was a thing to talk of a century hence,"—as if he could live so long⁶.

⁴ Plin. Epist. Lib. ii. Ep. 3.—BOSWELL.

⁵ Mr. Davies was here mistaken. Corelli never was in England.—BURNBY.

⁶ [Mrs. Thrale gives, in her lively style, a sketch of this gentleman: "We have a flashy friend here (at Bath) already, who is much your adorer. I wonder how you will like him? An Irishman he is; very handsome, very hot-headed, loud and lively, and sure to be a favourite with you, he tells us, for he can live with a man of ever so odd a temper. *My master* laughs, but likes him, and it diverts me to think what you will do when he professes that he would clean shoes for you; that he would shed his blood for you; with twenty more extravagant flights; and you say I flatter! *Upon my honour, sir, and indeed now*, as Dr. Campbell's phrase is, I am but a twitter to him."—*Letters*, 16th May, 1776. Johnson, in his reply, 18th May, 1776, asks "Who can be this new friend of mine?" The Editor is unable to reconcile Mrs. Thrale's wonder "*how Johnson would like him*," and Johnson's ignorance of "*who he was*," in May, 1776, with Boswell's statement, that Campbell had dined *thrice* in his company, in April, 1775—one of the places being Mr. and Mrs. Thrale's own house: see *post*, 8th May. There can be no error in the date of the letters 1776, because they were written while Mrs. Thrale was at Bath, after

We got into an argument whether the judges who went to India might with propriety engage in trade. Johnson warmly maintained that they might. "For why," he urged, "should not judges get riches, as well as those who deserve them less?" I said, they should have sufficient salaries, and have nothing to take off their attention from the affairs of the publick. JOHNSON. "No judge, sir, can give his whole attention to his office; and it is very proper that he should employ what time he has to himself to his own advantage, in the most profitable manner¹." "Then, sir," said Davies, who enlivened the dispute by making it somewhat dramatick, "he may become an insurer; and when he is going to the bench, he may be stopped,—Your lordship cannot go yet; here is a bunch of invoices; several ships are about to sail." JOHNSON. "Sir, you may as well say a judge should not have a house; for they may come and tell him—'Your lordship's house is on fire;' and so, instead of minding the business of his court, he is to be occupied in getting the engine with the greatest speed. There is no end of this. Every judge who has land, trades to a certain extent in corn or in cattle, and in the land itself: undoubtedly his steward acts for him, and so do clerks for a great merchant. A judge may be a farmer, but he is not to geld his own pigs. A judge may play a little at cards for his amusement; but he is not to play at marbles, or chuck-farthing in the piazza. No, sir, there is no profession to which a man gives a very great proportion of his time. It is wonderful, when a calculation is made, how little the mind is actually employed in the discharge of any profession. No man would be a judge, upon the condition of being totally a judge. The best employed lawyer has his mind at work but for a small proportion of his time; a great deal of his occupation is merely mechanical. I once wrote for a magazine:

the loss of her son, which event took place in March, 1776, and is alluded to in the letters. Nor can Mr. Boswell's date be mistaken, for he says, that Campbell dined at Mr. Dilly's on Wednesday the 5th April, and the 5th April fell on a Wednesday in 1775. Mr. Boswell had, moreover, left London in 1776, prior to the date of Mrs. Thrale's, so that he could not have met Dr. Campbell in that year. The discrepancy is on a point of no importance, but it seems inexplicable.—Ed.]

¹ [This must have been said in a mere spirit of argumentation, for we have seen (*ante*, p. 359.) that he was angry at a judge's being so much like an ordinary gentleman as even to wear a *round hat* in his own country house, and he censured him for being so much of a farmer as to farm a part of his demesne for his own amusement.—Ed.]

I made a calculation, that if I should write but a page a day, at the same rate, I should, in ten years, write nine volumes in folio, of an ordinary size and print." BOSWELL. "Such as 'Carter's History?'" JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; when a man writes from his own mind, he writes very rapidly². The greatest part of a writer's time is spent in reading, in order to write; a man will turn over half a library, to make one book."

I argued warmly against the judges trading, and mentioning Hale as an instance of a perfect judge, who devoted himself entirely to his office. JOHNSON. "Hale, sir, attended to other things besides law; he left a great estate." BOSWELL. "That was because what he got accumulated without any exertion and anxiety on his part."

While the dispute went on, Moody once tried to say something on our side. Tom Davies clapped him on the back, to encourage him. Beauclerk, to whom I mentioned this circumstance, said, "that he could not conceive a more humiliating situation than to be clapped on the back by Tom Davies."

We spoke of Rolt, to whose 'Dictionary of Commerce' Dr. Johnson wrote the preface. JOHNSON. "Old Gardener, the bookseller, employed Rolt and Smart to write a monthly miscellany, called 'The Universal Visitor.' There was a formal written contract, which Allen the printer saw. Gardener thought as you do of the judge. They were bound to write nothing else; they were to have, I think, a third of the profits of his sixpenny pamphlet; and the contract was for ninety-nine years. I wish I had thought of giving this to Thurlow, in the cause about literary property. What an excellent instance would it have been of the oppression of booksellers towards poor authors!" smiling³. Davies, zealous for the honour of *the trade*, said Gardener was not properly a bookseller. JOHNSON. "Nay, sir; he certainly was a bookseller. He had served his time regularly, was a member of the Stationers' Company, kept a shop in the face of mankind, purchased copyright, and was a *bibliopole*, sir, in every sense. I wrote for some months in 'The Universal Visitor' for poor Smart, while he was mad, not then knowing the terms on which he was engaged to write, and thinking I was

² Johnson certainly did, who had a mind stored with knowledge, and teeming with imagery; but the observation is not applicable to writers in general.—BOSWELL.

³ There has probably been some mistake as to the terms of this supposed extraordinary contract, the recital of which from hearsay afforded Johnson so much play for his sportive acuteness. Or if it was worded as he supposed, it is so strange that I should conclude it was a joke. Mr. Gardener, I am assured, was a worthy and liberal man.—BOSWELL.

doing him good. I hoped his wits would soon return to him. Mine returned to me, and I wrote in 'The Universal Visitor' no longer."

Friday, 7th April, I dined with him at a tavern, with a numerous company¹. JOHNSON. "I have been reading 'Twiss's Travels in Spain,' which are just come out. They are as good as the first book of travels that you will take up. They are as good as those of Keyser or Blainville; nay, as Addison's, if you except the learning. They are not so good as Brydone's, but they are better than Poccoke's. I have not, indeed, cut the leaves yet; but I have read in them where the pages are open, and I do not suppose that what is in the pages which are closed is worse than what is in the open pages. It would seem," he added, "that Addison had not acquired much Italian learning, for we do not find it introduced into his writings. The only instance that I recollect is his quoting '*Stavo bene; per star meglio, sto qui*'²."

I mentioned Addison's having borrowed many of his classical remarks from Leandro Alberti³. Mr. Beauclerk said, "It was

¹ [At the Club, where there were present Mr. Charles Fox (president), Sir J. Reynolds, Drs. Johnson and Percy, Messrs. Beauclerk, Boswell, Chamier, Gibbon, Langton, and Stevens: why Mr. Boswell sometimes *sinks the club* is not quite clear. He might very naturally have felt some reluctance to betray the private conversation of a convivial meeting, but that feeling would have operated on all occasions. It may, however, be observed that he generally endeavours to confine his report to what was said either by *Johnson* or *himself*.—ED.]

² Addison, however, does not mention where this celebrated epitaph, which has eluded a very diligent inquiry, is found.—MALONE. [It is mentioned by old Howell. "The Italian saying may be well applied to poor England: "I was well—would be better—took physic—and died."—*Lett.* 20th Jan. 1647.—ED.]

³ [This observation is, as Mr. Markland observes to me, to be found in Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son: "I have been lately informed of an Italian book, which I believe may be of use to you, and which, I dare say, you may get at Rome; written by one Alberti, about fourscore or a hundred years ago, a thick quarto. It is a classical description of Italy; from whence I am assured that Mr. Addison, to save himself trouble, has taken most of his remarks and classical references. I am told that it is an excellent book for a traveller in Italy."—Vol. ii. p. 351. If credit is to be given to Addison himself (and who can doubt his veracity?) this supposition must be groundless. He expressly says, "*I have taken care to consider particularly the several passages of the ancient poets, which have any relation to the places or curiosities I met with: for, before I entered on my voyage, I took care to refresh my memory among the classic authors, and to make such collections out of them as I might after-*

alleged that he had borrowed also from another Italian authour." JOHNSON. "Why, sir, all who go to look for what the classicists have said of Italy must find the same passages⁴; and I should think it would be one of the first things the Italians would do on the revival of learning, to collect all that the Roman authours have said of their country."

Ossian being mentioned;—JOHNSON. "Supposing the Irish and Erse languages to be the same, which I do not believe⁵, yet as there is no reason to suppose that the inhabitants of the Highlands and Hebrides ever wrote their native language, it is not to be credited that a long poem was preserved among them. If we had no evidence of the art of writing being practised in one of the counties of England, we should not believe that a long poem was preserved *there*, though in the neighbouring counties, where the same language was spoken, the inhabitants could write." BEAUCLERK. "The ballad of 'Lilliburlero' was once in the mouths of all the people of this country, and is said to have had a great effect in bringing about the revolution. Yet I question whether any body can repeat it now; which shows how improbable it is that much poetry should be preserved by tradition."

One of the company suggested an internal objection to the antiquity of the poetry said to be Ossian's, that we do not find the *wolf* in it, which must have been the case had it been of that age.

The mention of the wolf had led Johnson to think of other wild beasts; and while Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. Langton were carrying on a dialogue about something which engaged them earnestly, he, in the midst of it, broke out, "Pennant tells of bears." What he added I have forgotten. They went on, which he, being dull of hearing, did not perceive, or, if he did, was not willing to break off his talk; so he continued to vociferate his remarks, and *bear* ("like a word in a catch," as Beauclerk said) was repeatedly heard at intervals; which coming from him who, by those who did not know him, had been so often assimilated to that ferocious animal, while we who were sitting round could hardly stifle laughter, produced a very ludicrous effect. Silence having ensued, he proceeded: "We are told, that the black bear is innocent; but I should not like to trust myself with him." Mr. Gibbon muttered, in a low tone of voice, "I should not like to

wards have occasion for, &c."—*Preface to Remarks*.—ED.]

⁴ "But if you find the same *applications* in another book, then Addison's learning falls to the ground," *ante*, p. 431.—MALONE.

⁵ [He was in error. See *ante*, p. 234.—ED.]

trust myself with you." This piece of sarcastick pleasantry was a prudent resolution, if applied to a competition of abilities¹.

Patriotism having become one of our topics, Johnson suddenly uttered, in a strong determined tone, an apophthegm, at which many will start: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel²." But let it be considered, that he did not mean a real and generous love of our country, but that pretended patriotism, which so many, in all ages and countries, have made a cloak for self-interest. I maintained, that certainly all patriots were not scoundrels. Being urged (not by Johnson) to name one exception, I mentioned an eminent person³, whom we all greatly admired. JOHNSON. "Sir, I do not say that he is *not* honest; but we have no reason to conclude from his political conduct that he *is* honest. Were he to accept a place from this ministry, he would lose that character of firmness which he has, and might be turned out of his place in a year. This ministry is neither stable, nor grateful to their friends, as Sir Robert Walpole was; so that he may think it more for his interest to take his chance of his party coming in."

Mrs. Pritchard being mentioned, he said, "Her playing was quite mechanical. It is wonderful how little mind she had. Sir, she had never read the tragedy of Macbeth all through. She no more thought of the play out of which her part was taken, than a shoemaker thinks of the skin out of which the piece of leather of which he is making a pair of shoes is cut."

On Saturday, May 8, I dined with him at Mr. Thrale's, where we met the Irish Dr. Campbell⁴. Johnson had supped the night before at Mrs. Abington's with some fashionable people whom he named; and he seemed much pleased with having made one in so elegant a circle. Nor did he omit to pique his *mistress* a little with jealousy of

her housewifery; for he said, with a smile, "Mrs. Abington's jelly, my dear lady, was better than yours."

Mrs. Thrale, who frequently practised a coarse⁵ mode of flattery, by repeating his *bon mots* in his hearing, told us that he had said, a certain celebrated actor⁶ was just fit to stand at the door of an auction-room with a long pole, and cry, "Pray, gentlemen, walk in;" and that a certain authour, upon hearing this, had said, that another still more celebrated actor⁷ was fit for nothing better than that, and would pick your pocket after you came out. JOHNSON. "Nay, my dear lady, there is no wit in what our friend added; there is only abuse. You may as well say of any man that he will pick a pocket. Besides, the man who is stationed at the door does not pick people's pockets; that is done within by the auctioneer."

Mrs. Thrale told us that Tom Davies repeated, in a very bald manner, the story of Dr. Johnson's first repartee to me, which I have related exactly⁸. He made me say, "I was born in Scotland," instead of "I come from Scotland;" so that Johnson's saying, "That, sir, is what a great many of your countrymen cannot help," had no point, or even meaning; and that upon this being mentioned to Mr. Fitzherbert, he observed, "It is not every man that can carry a *bon mot*."

On Monday, April 10, I dined with him at General Oglethorpe's⁹, with Mr. Lang-

⁵ [Certainly coarse enough; but not unfrequently practised by Boswell himself; and not much coarser than writing every *mot*, *bon* or otherwise, which he spoke, and giving him the record to read next morning.—See *Tuor to the Hebrides*, *passim*.—ED.]

⁶ [Probably Sheridan.—ED.]

⁷ [Certainly Garrick; the *authour* was, perhaps, Murphy: a great friend of the Thrales, and who had occasional differences with Garrick.—ED.]

⁸ *Ante*, p. 178.—BOSWELL.

⁹ Let me here be allowed to pay my tribute of most sincere gratitude to the memory of that excellent person, my intimacy with whom was the more valuable to me, because my first acquaintance with him was unexpected and unsolicited. Soon after the publication of my "Account of Corsica," he did me the honour to call on me, and approaching me with a frank courteous air, said, "My name, sir, is Oglethorpe, and I wish to be acquainted with you." I was not a little flattered to be thus addressed by an eminent man, of whom I had read in Pope, from my early years,

"Or, driven by strong benevolence of soul,
Will fly like Oglethorpe from pole to pole."

I was fortunate enough to be found worthy of his good opinion, insomuch, that I not only was invited to make one in the many respectable companies whom he entertained at his table, but had a cover at his hospitable board every day when I

¹ [Mr. Green, the anonymous author of the "Diary of a Lover of Literature" (printed at Ipswich), states, under the date of 13th June, 1796, that a friend whom he designates by the initial M (and whom I believe to be my able and obliging friend Sir James Mackintosh), talking to him of the relative ability of Burke and Gibbon, said, "Gibbon might have been cut out of a corner of Burke's mind without his missing it." I fancy, now that enthusiasm has cooled, Sir James would be inclined to allow Gibbon a larger share of mind, though his intellectual powers can never be compared with Burke's.—ED.]

² [This remarkable *sortie*, which has very much amused the world, will hereafter be still more amusing, when it is known, that it appears by the books of the Club, that at the moment it was uttered, Mr. Fox was in the chair.—ED.]

³ [No doubt Mr. Burke.—ED.]

⁴ [See *ante*, pp. 516 and 517.—ED.]

ton and the Irish Dr. Campbell, whom the General had obligingly given me leave to bring with me. This learned gentleman was thus gratified with a very high intellectual feast, by not only being in company with Dr. Johnson, but with General Oglethorpe, who had been so long a celebrated name both at home and abroad¹.

I must, again and again, entreat of my readers not to suppose that my imperfect record of conversation contains the whole of what was said by Johnson, or other eminent persons who lived with him. What I have preserved, however, has the value of the most perfect authenticity.

He this day enlarged upon Pope's melancholy remark,

“Man never is, but always to be blest.”

He asserted, that *the present* was never a happy state to any human being; but that, as every part of life, of which we are conscious, was at some point of time a period yet to come, in which felicity was expected, there was some happiness produced by hope. Being pressed upon this subject, and asked if he really was of opinion, that though, in general, happiness was very rare in human life, a man was not sometimes happy in the moment that was present, he answered, “Never, but when he is drunk.” [It was a gloomy

Reyn.
Recoll.

axiom of his, that the pains and miseries of human life outweighed its happiness and good; but on a lady's asking him, whether he would not permit *the ease and quiet of common life* to be put into the scale of happiness and good, he seemed embarrassed (very unusual with him), and, answering in the affirmative, rose from his seat, as if to avoid the inference and reply, which his answer authorized the lady to make.]

[Dr. Johnson did not like any one who said they were happy, or who said any one else was so. “It was all *cant*,” he would cry; “the dog knows he is miserable all the time.” A friend whom he loved exceedingly told him on some occasion notwithstanding, that his wife's sister was *really* happy, and called upon the lady to confirm his assertion, which she did somewhat roundly as we say, and with an accent and manner capable of offending Dr. Johnson, if her position had not been sufficient, without any thing more, to put him in a very ill humour. “If your sister-in-law is really the contented being she professes herself, sir,” said he, “her life gives the lie to every research of hu-

manity; for she is happy without health, without beauty, without money, and without understanding.” This story he told me himself; and when I expressed something of the horror I felt, “The same stupidity,” said he, “which prompted her to extol felicity she never felt, hindered her from feeling what shocks you on repetition. I tell you, the woman is ugly, and sickly, and foolish, and poor; and would it not make a man hang himself to hear such a creature say it was happy?”]

He urged General Oglethorpe to give the world his Life. He said, “I know no man whose Life would be more interesting. If I were furnished with materials, I should be very glad to write it².”

Mr. Scott of Amwell's Elegies were lying in the room. Dr. Johnson observed, “They are very well, but such as twenty people might write.” Upon this I took occasion to controvert Horace's maxim,

“———— mediocribus esse poetis

Non Di, non homines, non concessere columnæ:”

for here (I observed) was a very middle-rate poet, who pleased many readers, and therefore poetry of a middle sort was entitled to some esteem; nor could I see why poetry should not, like every thing else, have different gradations of excellence, and consequently of value. Johnson repeated the common remark, that “as there is no necessity for our having poetry at all, it being merely a luxury, an instrument of pleasure, it can have no value, unless when exquisite in its kind.” I declared myself not satisfied. “Why, then, sir,” said he, “Horace and you must settle it.” He was not much in the humour of talking.

No more of his conversation for some days appears in my journal, except that when a gentleman told him he had bought a suit of lace for his lady, he said, “Well, sir, you have done a good thing and a wise thing.” “I have done a good thing,” said the gentleman, “but I do not know that I have done a wise thing.” JOHNSON. “Yes, sir; no money is better spent than what is laid out for domestic satisfaction. A man is pleased that his wife is dressed as well as other people; and a wife is pleased that she is dressed.”

On Friday, April 14, being Good Friday, I repaired to him in the morning, according

² The General seemed unwilling to enter upon it at this time; but upon a subsequent occasion he communicated to me a number of particulars, which I have committed to writing; but I was not sufficiently diligent in obtaining more from him, not apprehending that his friends were so soon to lose him; for notwithstanding his great age, he was very healthy and vigorous, and was at last carried off by a violent fever, which is often fatal at any period of life.—BOSWELL.

¹ [See *ante*, p. 48.]—ED.]

to my usual custom on that day, and breakfasted with him. I observed that he fasted so very strictly, that he did not even taste bread, and took no milk with his tea; I suppose because it is a kind of animal food.

He entered upon the state of the nation, and thus discoursed: "Sir, the great misfortune now is, that government has too little power. All that it has to bestow must of necessity be given to support itself; so that it cannot reward merit. No man, for instance, can now be made a bishop for his learning and piety¹; his only chance for promotion is his being connected with somebody who has parliamentary interest. Our several ministers in this reign have outbid each other in concessions to the people. Lord Bute, though a very honourable man,—a man who meant well,—a man who had his blood full of prerogative,—was a theoretical statesman, a book-minister, and thought this country could be governed by the influence of the crown alone. Then, sir, he gave up a great deal. He advised the king to agree that the judges should hold their places for life, instead of losing them at the accession of a new king. Lord Bute, I suppose, thought to make the king popular by this concession; but the people never minded it; and it was a most impolitic measure. There is no reason why a judge should hold his office for life, more than any other person in publick trust. A judge may be partial otherwise than to the crown; we have seen judges partial to the populace. A judge may become corrupt, and yet there may not be legal evidence against him. A judge may become froward from age. A judge may grow unfit for his office in many ways. It was desirable that there should be a possibility of being delivered from him by a new king. That is now gone by an act of parliament *ex gratiâ* of the crown. Lord Bute advised the king to give up a very large sum of money²,

for which nobody thanked him. It was of consequence to the king, but nothing to the publick, among whom it was divided. When I say Lord Bute advised, I mean, that such acts were done when he was minister, and we are to suppose that he advised them. Lord Bute showed an undue partiality to Scotchmen. He turned out Dr. Nichols³, a very eminent man, from being physician to the king, to make room for one of his countrymen, a man very low in his profession⁴. He had *****⁵ and **** to go on errands for him. He had occasion for people to go on errands for him; but he should not have had Scotchmen; and, certainly, he should not have suffered them to have access to him before the first people in England."

I told him, that the admission of one of them before the first people in England, which had given the greatest offence, was no more than what happens at every minister's levee, where those who attend are admitted in the order that they have come, which is better than admitting them according to their rank: for if that were to be the

ted at 200,000*l.* more. Surely, there was a noble munificence in this gift from a monarch to his people. And let it be remembered, that during the Earl of Bute's administration, the king was graciously pleased to give up the hereditary revenues of the crown, and to accept, instead of them, of the limited sum of 800,000*l.* a year; upon which Blackstone observes, that "The hereditary revenues, being put under the same management as the other branches of the publick patrimony, will produce more, and be better collected than heretofore; and the publick is a gainer of upwards of 100,000*l.* *per annum*, by this disinterested bounty of his majesty."—*Com. book i. chap. viii. p. 330.*—BOSWELL.

³ [Frank Nichols. He was of Exeter College; M. A., June, 1721; B. M., February, 1724; M. D., 1729. Died 1778, in the eightieth year of his age.—HALL.]

⁴ [Probably Dr. Duncan, who was appointed physician to the king in 1760; and not, as has been surmised, Sir John Pringle, who was appointed physician to the queen in 1761.—ED.]

⁵ [The Editor was convinced that the first of these blanks meant *Wedderburn*, till he found that Sir James Mackintosh doubted it, from thinking that *Wedderburn* was already too high in the scale of society to be spoken of so contemptuously as Johnson here does; but, on a full consideration of all the circumstances, the Editor is finally satisfied that *Wedderburn* was here meant. The second blank, Sir James thinks, and the Editor agrees with him, means, certainly, *Home*, the author of *Douglas*. Boswell *always* puts a number of asterisks equal to the letters of the names he suppresses, and, in this case, the asterisks fit the names of *Wedderburn* and *Home*; and, moreover, we find *Wedderburn* and *Home* distinctly associated as satellites of Lord Bute, in Wilkes's celebrated dedication of *Mortimer*.—ED.]

¹ From this too just observation there are some eminent exceptions.—BOSWELL. [That a general assertion should be pronounced *too just* by the very person who admits that it is not universally just is a little odd; but, moreover, the "eminent exceptions" destroy the whole force of the assertion. In a constitution of government and society like ours, influence, interest, and connexions must have *some* weight in the distribution even of church patronage. Johnson's assertion was that they had *all* the weight, to the *utter exclusion* of piety and learning. Boswell, by denying the entire exclusion, defeats the force of Johnson's observation, which certainly was too broadly, and, of course, incorrectly expressed.—ED.]

² The money arising from the property of the prizes taken before the declaration of war, which were given to his majesty by the peace of Paris, and amounted to upwards of 700,000*l.*, and from the lands in the ceded islands, which were estima-

rule, a man who has waited all the morning might have the mortification to see a peer, newly come, go in before him, and keep him waiting still. JOHNSON. "True, sir; but ****¹ should not have come to the levee, to be in the way of people of consequence. He saw Lord Bute at all times; and could have said what he had to say at any time, as well as at the levee. There is now no prime minister: there is only an agent for government in the house of commons. We are governed by the cabinet; but there is no one head there since Sir Robert Walpole's time." BOSWELL. "What then, sir, is the use of parliament?" JOHNSON. "Why, sir, parliament is a large council to the king; and the advantage of such a council is, having a great number of men of property concerned in the legislature, who, for their own interest, will not consent to bad laws. And you must have observed, sir, the administration is feeble and timid, and cannot act with that authority and resolution which is necessary. Were I in power, I would turn out every man who dared to oppose me. Government has the distribution of offices, that it may be enabled to maintain its authority."

"Lord Bute," he added, "took down too fast, without building up something new." BOSWELL. "Because, sir, he found a rotten building. The political coach was drawn by a set of bad horses; it was necessary to change them." JOHNSON. "But he should have changed them one by one."

I told him I had been informed by Mr. Orme, that many parts of the East Indies were better mapped than the Highlands of Scotland. JOHNSON. "That a country may be mapped, it must be travelled over." "Nay," said I, meaning to laugh with him at one of his prejudices, "can't you say, it is not *worth* mapping?"

As we walked to St. Clement's church, and saw several shops open upon this most solemn fast-day of the christian world, I remarked, that one disadvantage arising from the immensity of London was, that nobody was heeded by his neighbour; there was no fear of censure for not observing Good Friday, as it ought to be kept, and as it is kept in country towns. He said, it was, upon the whole, very well observed even in London. He however owned that London was too large²; but added, "It is nonsense to say the head is too big for the body. It would be as much too big, though the body were ever so large; that is to say, though the country was ever so extensive.

It has no similarity to a head connected with a body."

Dr. Wetherell, master of the University College, Oxford, accompanied us home from church; and after he was gone, there came two other gentlemen, one of whom uttered the common-place complaints, that by the increase of taxes, labour would be dear, other nations would undersell us, and our commerce would be ruined. JOHNSON. (smiling). "Never fear, sir; our commerce is in a very good state, and suppose we had no commerce at all, we could live very well on the produce of our own country." I cannot omit to mention, that I never knew any man who was less disposed to be querulous than Johnson. Whether the subject was his own situation, or the state of the publick, or the state of human nature in general, though he saw the evils, his mind was turned to resolution, and never to whining or complaint.

We went again to St. Clement's in the afternoon. He had found fault with the preacher in the morning for not choosing a text adapted to the day. The preacher in the afternoon had chosen one extremely proper: "It is finished."

After the evening service, he said, "Come, you shall go home with me, and sit just an hour." But he was better than his word; for after we had drunk tea with Mrs. Williams, he asked me to go up to his study with him, where we sat a long while together in a serene undisturbed frame of mind, sometimes in silence, and sometimes conversing, as we felt ourselves inclined, or more properly speaking, as *he* was inclined; for during all the course of my long intimacy with him, my respectful attention never abated, and my wish to hear him was such, that I constantly watched every dawning of communication from that great and illuminated mind.

He observed, "All knowledge is of itself of some value. There is nothing so minute or inconsiderable, that I would not rather know it than not. In the same manner, all power, of whatever sort, is of itself desirable. A man would not submit to learn to hem a ruffle of his wife, or his wife's maid; but if a mere wish could attain it, he would rather wish to be able to hem a ruffle³."

He again advised me to keep a journal fully and minutely, but not to mention such trifles as that meat was too much or too little done, or that the weather was fair or rainy. He had till very near his death a contempt for the notion that the weather affects the human frame.

¹ [Home.—Ed.]

² [Yet how enormously the metropolis has increased in population and extent since the year 1775.—Ed.]

³ [Johnson said that he had once attempted to learn knitting from Dempster's sister: *post*, 7th April, 1778.—Ed.]

I told him that our friend Goldsmith had said to me that he had come too late into the world, for that Pope and other poets had taken up the places in the Temple of Fame; so that as but a few at any period can possess poetical reputation, a man of genius can now hardly acquire it. JOHNSON. "That is one of the most sensible things I have ever heard of Goldsmith. It is difficult to get literary fame, and it is every day growing more difficult. Ah, sir, that should make a man think of securing happiness in another world, which all who try sincerely for it may attain. In comparison of that, how little are all other things! The belief of immortality is impressed upon all men, and all men act under an impression of it, however they may talk, and though, perhaps, they may be scarcely sensible of it." I said, it appeared to me that some people had not the least notion of immortality; and I mentioned a distinguished gentleman² of our acquaintance. JOHNSON. "Sir, if it were not for the notion of immortality, he would cut a throat to fill his pockets." When I quoted this to Beauclerk, who knew much more of the gentleman than we did, he said in his acid manner, "He would cut a throat to fill his pockets, if it were not for fear of being hanged."

Dr. Johnson proceeded: "Sir, there is a great cry about infidelity: but there are, in reality, very few infidels. I have heard a person, originally a quaker, but now, I am afraid, a deist, say, that he did not believe there were, in all England, above two hundred infidels³."

He was pleased to say, "If you come to settle here, we will have one day in the week on which we will meet by ourselves."

¹ [With all due deference, it seems as silly as any thing that poor Goldsmith ever said. Literary fame was perhaps as cheaply earned in the last half of the eighteenth century as at any time in our history, and when Johnson said it is difficult to get literary fame, he should have recollected that if it were not difficult, it would not be fame; and, after all, did not Goldsmith himself gain a great reputation without any very great difficulty? Goldsmith, who had read and borrowed a great deal from the light literature of the French, found a somewhat similar observation in *Vigneu-Marvilliana*, from La Bruyere, "Les anciens ont tout dit-on vient aujourd'hui trop tard pour dire des choses nouvelles."—See *Vig. Mar.* v. i. p. 349.—Ed.]

² [All this seems so extravagantly abusive, that the editor hopes he will be forgiven for not venturing a surmise as to the name of the "distinguished gentleman" so ill, and probably so unjustly, treated by his friends.—Ed.]

³ [The editor would have had no doubt that this was Cuming (see *ante*, p. 400), but that Johnson says "now a deist," and that Cuming had died in 1774. Sir James Mackintosh thought Dyer was meant; but he too was dead.—Ed.]

"That is the happiest conversation where there is no competition, no vanity, but a calm quiet interchange of sentiments." In his private register this evening is thus marked,

"Boswell sat with me till night; we had some serious talk."

It also appears from the same record, that after I left him he was occupied in religious duties, in "giving Francis, his servant, some directions for preparation to communicate; in reviewing his life, and resolving on better conduct."

[“Easter Eve, 15th April, 1775.

“I rose more early than is common, after a night disturbed by flatulencies, though I had taken so little. I prayed, but my mind was unsettled, and I did not fix upon the book. After the bread and tea, I trifled, and about three ordered coffee and buns for my dinner. I find more faintness and uneasiness in fasting than I did formerly.

“While coffee was preparing, Collier came in, a man whom I had not seen for more than twenty years, but whom I consulted about Macky’s books. We talked of old friends and past occurrences, and ate and drank together.

“I then read a little in the Testament, and tried Fiddes’s Body of Divinity, but did not settle.

“I then went to evening prayer, and was tolerably composed.”]

The humility and piety which he discovers on such occasions is truly edifying. No saint, however, in the course of his religious warfare, was more sensible of the unhappy failure of pious resolves than Johnson. He said one day, talking to an acquaintance on this subject, "Sir, hell is paved with good intentions⁴."

On Sunday, 16th April, being Easter-day, after having attended the solemn service at St. Paul's, I dined with Dr. Johnson and Mrs. Williams. I maintained that Horace was wrong in placing happiness in *Nil admirari*, for that I thought admiration one of the most agreeable of all our feelings; and I regretted that I had lost much of my disposition to admire, which people generally do as they advance in life. JOHNSON. "Sir, as a man advances in life, he gets what is better than admiration,—judgment, to estimate things at their true value." I still insisted that admiration was more pleasing than judgment, as love is more pleasing than friendship. The feeling of friendship is like that of being comfortably filled with roast beef; love, like being enlivened with champagne. JOHN-

⁴ This is a proverbial sentence. "Hell (says Herbert) is full of good meanings and wishings."—*Jacula Prudentum*, p. 11. edit. 1651.—MALONE.

son. "No, sir; admiration and love are like being intoxicated with champagne; judgment and friendship like being enlivened. Waller has hit upon the same thought with you!; but I do n't believe you have borrowed from Waller. I wish you would enable yourself to borrow more."

He then took occasion to enlarge on the advantages of reading, and combated the idle superficial notion, that knowledge enough may be acquired in conversation. "The foundation (said he) must be laid by reading. General principles must be had from books, which, however, must be brought to the test of real life. In conversation you never get a system. What is said upon a subject is to be gathered from a hundred people. The parts of a truth, which a man gets thus, are at such a distance from each other that he never attains to a full view."

"TO BENNET LANGTON, ESQ.

"17th April, 1775.

"DEAR SIR,—I have inquired more minutely about the medicine for the rheumatism, which I am sorry to hear that you still want. The receipt is this:

"Take equal quantities of flour of sulphur, and *flour* of mustard-seed, make them an electuary with honey or treacle; and take a bolus as big as a nutmeg several times a day, as you can bear it; drinking after it a quarter of a pint of the infusion of the root of lovage.

"Lovage, in Ray's 'Nomenclature,' is levisticum: perhaps the botanist may know the Latin name.

"Of this medicine I pretend not to judge. There is all the appearance of its efficacy, which a single instance can afford: the patient was very old, the pain very violent, and the relief, I think, speedy and lasting.

"My opinion of alterative medicine is not high, but *quid tentasse nocebit?* if it does harm, or does no good, it may be omitted; but that it may do good, you have, I hope, reason to think is desired by, sir, your most affectionate, humble servant,

"SAM. JOHNSON."

On Tuesday, April 18, he and I were engaged to go with Sir Joshua Reynolds to dine with Mr. Cambridge, at his beautiful villa on the banks of the Thames, near Twickenham. Dr. Johnson's tardiness was such, that Sir Joshua, who had an appointment at Richmond early in the day, was

obliged to go by himself on horseback, leaving his coach to Johnson and me. Johnson was in such good spirits, that every thing seemed to please him as we drove along.

Our conversation turned on a variety of subjects. He thought portrait-painting an improper employment for a woman². "Publick practice of any art," he observed, "and staring in men's faces, is very indelicate in a female." I happened to start a question, whether when a man knows that some of his intimate friends are invited to the house of another friend, with whom they are all equally intimate, he may join them without an invitation. JOHNSON. "No, sir; he is not to go when he is not invited. They may be invited on purpose to abuse him," smiling.

As a curious instance how little a man knows, or wishes to know, his own character in the world, or rather as a convincing proof that Johnson's roughness was only external, and did not proceed from his heart, I insert the following dialogue. JOHNSON. "It is wonderful, sir, how rare a quality good humour is in life. We meet with very few good-humoured men." I mentioned four of our friends, none of whom he would allow to be good-humoured. One was *acid*, another was *muddy*, and to others he had objections which have escaped me. Then shaking his head and stretching himself at ease in the coach, and smiling with much complacency, he turned to me and said, "I look upon *myself* as a good-humoured fellow." The epithet *fellow*, applied to the great lexicographer, the stately moralist, the masterly critic, as if it had been *Sam Johnson*, a mere pleasant companion, was highly diverting; and this light notion of himself struck me with wonder. I answered, also smiling, "No, no, sir; that will *not* do. You are good-natured, but not good-humoured; you are irascible. You have not patience with folly and absurdity. I believe you would pardon them, if there were time to deprecate your vengeance; but punishment follows so quick alter sentence, that they cannot escape³."

I had brought with me a great bundle of Scotch magazines and newspapers, in which his "Journey to the Western Islands" was attacked in every mode; and I read a great part of them to him, knowing they would afford him entertainment. I wish the writers of them had been present; they would have been sufficiently vexed. One ludi-

1 "Amoret's as sweet and good
As the most delicious food;
Which but tasted does impart
Life and gladness to the heart.

"Sacharissa's beauty's wine,
Which to madness does incline;
Such a liquor as no brain
That is mortal can sustain."—BOSWELL

² [This topic was probably suggested to them by Miss Reynolds, who practised that art; and we shall see that one of the last occupations of Johnson's life was to sit for his picture to that lady.—ED.]

³ [See, on Johnson's politeness, *post*, 30th April, 1778.—ED.]

crous imitation of his style, by Mr. Maclaurin¹, now one of the Scotch judges, with the title of Lord Dreghorn, was distinguished by him from the rude mass. "This," said he, "is the best. But I could caricature my own style much better myself." He defended his remark upon the general insulphency of education in Scotland; and confirmed to me the authenticity of his witty saying on the learning of the Scotch—"Their learning is like bread in a besieged town; every man gets a little, but no man gets a full meal."² "There is," said he, "in Scotland a diffusion of learning, a certain portion of it widely and thinly spread. A merchant has as much learning as one of their clergy."

He talked of "Isaac Walton's Lives," which was one of his most favourite books. Dr. Donne's life, he said, was the most perfect of them. He observed, that "it was wonderful that Walton, who was in a very low situation of life, should have been familiarly received by so many great men, and that at a time when the ranks of society were kept more separate than they are now."³ He supposed that Walton had then given up his business as a linen-draper and sempster, and was only an authour⁴; and added, "that he was a great panegyrist." BOSWELL. "No quality will get a man more friends than a disposition to admire the qualities of others. I do not mean flattery, but a sincere admiration." JOHNSON. "Nay, sir, flattery pleases very generally. In the first place, the flatterer may think what he says to be true; but, in the second place, whether he thinks so or not,

he certainly thinks those whom he flatters of consequence enough to be flattered."

No sooner had we made our bow to Mr. Cambridge, in his library, than Johnson ran eagerly to one side of the room, intent on poring over the backs of the books⁵. Sir Joshua observed (aside), "He runs to the books as I do to the pictures; but I have the advantage. I can see much more of the pictures than he can of the books." Mr. Cambridge, upon this, politely said, "Dr. Johnson, I am going, with your pardon, to accuse myself, for I have the same custom which I perceive you have. But it seems odd that one should have such a desire to look at the backs of books." Johnson, ever ready for contest, instantly started from his reverie, wheeled about and answered, "Sir, the reason is very plain. Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it. When we inquire into any subject, the first thing we have to do is to know what books have treated of it. This leads us to look at catalogues, and the backs of books in libraries." Sir Joshua observed to me the extraordinary promptitude with which Johnson flew upon an argument. "Yes," said I, "he has no formal preparation, no flourishing with his sword; he is through your body in an instant." [Mr. Piozzi describes Johnson's promptitude of thought and expression on such occasions by a very happy classical allusion: "His notions rose up like the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus, all ready clothed, and in bright armour fit for battle."]

Johnson was here solaced with an elegant entertainment, a very accomplished family, and much good company: among whom was Mr. Harris, of Salisbury, who paid him many compliments on his "Journey to the Western Islands."

The common remark as to the utility of reading history being made;—JOHNSON. "We must consider how very little history there is; I mean real authentick history⁶. That certain kings reigned, and certain battles were fought, we can depend upon as true; but all the colouring, all the philosophy of history is conjecture." BOSWELL. "Then, sir, you would reduce all history to no better than an almanack⁷, a mere

⁵ The first time he dined with me, he was shown into my book room, and instantly pored over the lettering of each volume within his reach. My collection of books is very miscellaneous, and I feared there might be some among them that he would not like. But seeing the number of volumes very considerable, he said, "You are an honest man to have formed so great an accumulation of knowledge."—BURNEX.

⁶ [See ante, p. 257, n.—ED.]

⁷ [This allusion was revived in our day, in a

¹ [It may be doubted whether, if Mr. Maclaurin had not taken this liberty, Mr. Boswell would have recorded Dr. Johnson's censure of his cook.—See ante, p. 208.—ED.]

² [Mrs. Piozzi repeats this story (p. 203), probably more truly and more forcibly, though with rather less delicacy of expression—"Every man gets a mouthful, but no man a bellyful;" and adds, that Johnson told her that some officious friend carried it to Lord Bute, while the question of his pension was afloat, and that Lord Bute only replied, "He will have the pension, nevertheless."—ED.]

³ [Dr. Johnson seems to confound distinction of ranks with separation. Literature has always been a passport into higher society. Walton was received as Johnson himself was, not on a footing of personal or political equality, but of social and literary intercourse.—ED.]

⁴ Johnson's conjecture was erroneous. Walton did not retire from business till 1643. But in 1664, Dr. King, bishop of Chichester, in a letter prefixed to his "Lives," mentions his having been familiarly acquainted with him for forty years; and in 1631 he was so intimate with Dr. Donne, that he was one of the friends who attended him on his death-bed.—J. BOSWELL.

chronological series of remarkable events." Mr. Gibbon, who must at that time have been employed upon his history, of which he published the first volume in the following year, was present; but did not step forth in defence of that species of writing. He probably did not like to *trust* himself with Johnson¹.

Johnson observed, that the force of our early habits was so great, that though reason approved, nay, though our senses relished a different course, almost every man returned to them. I do not believe there is any observation upon human nature better founded than this; and in many cases, it is a very painful truth; for where early habits have been mean and wretched, the joy and elevation resulting from better modes of life must be damped by the gloomy consciousness of being under an almost inevitable doom to sink back into a situation which we recollect with disgust. It surely may be prevented, by constant attention and unremitting exertion to establish contrary habits of superiour efficacy.

"The Beggar's Opera," and the common question, whether it was pernicious in its effects, having been introduced:—JOHNSON. "As to this matter, which has been very much contested, I myself am of opinion, that more influence has been ascribed to 'The Beggar's Opera' than it in reality ever had; for I do not believe that any man was ever made a rogue by being present at its representation. At the same time I do not deny that it may have some influence, by making the character of a rogue familiar, and in some degree pleasing²." Then collecting himself, as it were, to give a heavy stroke: "There is in it such a *labe-factation* of all principles as may be injurious to morality."

very striking manner, by Mr. (now Lord) Plunkett, in one of his speeches in the house of commons, in which he said, that if not read in the spirit of prudence and experience, "history was no better than an *old almanack*."—*Par. Deb.* 28th Feb. 1825.—Ed.]

¹ See *ante*, p. 520.—BOSWELL.

² A very eminent physician, whose discernment is as acute and penetrating in judging of the human character as it is in his own profession, remarked once at a club where I was, that a lively young man, fond of pleasure, and without money, would hardly resist a solicitation from his mistress to go upon the highway, immediately after being present at the representation of "The Beggar's Opera." I have been told of an ingenious observation by Mr. Gibbon, that "The Beggar's Opera, may, perhaps, have sometimes increased the number of highwaymen: but that it has had a beneficial effect in refining that class of men, making them less ferocious, more polite, in short, more like gentlemen." Upon this Mr. Courtenay said, that "Gay was the Orpheus of highwaymen."—BOSWELL.

While he pronounced this response, we sat in a comical sort of restraint, smothering a laugh, which we were afraid might burst out. In his *Life of Gay*, he has been still more decisive as to the inefficiency of "The Beggar's Opera" in corrupting society.—But I have ever thought somewhat differently; for, indeed, not only are the gaiety and heroism of a highwayman very captivating to a youthful imagination, but the arguments for adventurous depredation are so plausible, the allusions so lively, and the contrasts with the ordinary and more painful modes of acquiring property are so artfully displayed, that it requires a cool and strong judgment to resist so imposing an aggregate: yet, I own, I should be very sorry to have "The Beggar's Opera" suppressed; for there is in it so much of real London life, so much brilliant wit, and such a variety of airs, which, from early association of ideas, engage, soothe, and enliven the mind, that no performance which the theatre exhibits delights me more.

The late "*worthy*" Duke of Queensbury³, as 'Thomson, in his "Seasons," justly characterizes him, told me, that when Gay showed him "The Beggar's Opera," his grace's observation was, "This is a very odd thing, Gay; I am satisfied that it is either a very good thing, or a very bad thing." It proved the former, beyond the warmest expectations of the authour, or his friends. Mr. Cambridge, however, showed us to-day, that there was good reason enough to doubt concerning its success. He was told by Quin, that during the first night of its appearance it was long in a very dubious state; that there was a disposition to damn it, and that it was saved by the song,

"Oh ponder well! be not severe!"

the audience being much affected by the innocent looks of Polly, when she came to those two lines, which exhibit at once a painful and ridiculous image,

"For on the rope that hangs my dear,
Depends poor Polly's life."

Quin himself had so bad an opinion of it, that he refused the part of Captain Macheath, and gave it to Walker, who acquired great celebrity by his grave⁴ yet animated performance of it.

We talked of a young gentleman's marriage⁵ with an eminent singer, and his de-

³ [The third Duke of Queensbury, and second Duke of Dover; the patron of Gay and Thomson. He died in 1778, in the 80th year of his age.—Ed.]

⁴ [The *gravity* of the performance of Macheath seems a strange merit.—Ed.]

⁵ [This, no doubt, alludes to Mr. R. B. Sheridan's refusal to allow his wife to sing in pub-

termination that she should no longer sing in publick, though his father was very earnest she should, because her talents would be liberally rewarded, so as to make her a good fortune. It was questioned whether the young gentleman who had not a shilling in the world, but was blest with very uncommon talents, was not foolishly delicate, or foolishly proud, and his father truly rational without being mean. Johnson, with all the high spirit of a Roman senator, exclaimed, "He resolved wisely and nobly to be sure. He is a brave man. Would not a gentleman be disgraced by having his wife singing publicly for hire? No, sir, there can be no doubt here **1."

Johnson arraigned the modern politicks of this country, as entirely devoid of all principle of whatever kind. "Politicks," said he, "are now nothing more than means of rising in the world. With this sole view do men engage in politicks, and their whole conduct proceeds upon it². How different in that respect is the state of the nation now from what it was in the time of Charles the First, during the Usurpation, and after the Restoration, in the time of Charles the Second. Hudibras affords a strong proof how much hold political principles had then upon the minds of men. There is in Hudibras a great deal of bullion which will always last. But to be sure the brightest strokes of his wit owed their force to the impression of the characters, which was upon men's minds at the time; to their knowing them, at table and in the street; in short, being familiar with them; and above all, to his satire being directed against those whom a little while before they had hated and feared. The nation in general has ever been loyal, has been at all times attached to the monarch, though a few daring rebels have been wonderfully powerful for a time.

lic. Her singing at Oxford, at the installation of Lord North, as chancellor, in 1773, was put on the footing of obliging his lordship and the university; and when, on that occasion, several degrees were conferred "*honoris causâ*," Lord North observed, that Sheridan's degree should be *uxoris causâ*."—HALL.]

¹ [An indelicate allusion is here omitted.—Ed.]

² [In those troublesome times men were contending for *fundamental principles*, and were always zealous, and sometimes disinterested in proportion to the greatness of the public stake; but since the Revolution, and the extinction of the claims of the house of Stuart, the principles of our constitution are so generally admitted, that little is left to be contested for, except the hands by which affairs shall be administered: in such junctures, politics must become more of a *profession*, in which men will seek *personal* advancement, than when their private feelings were mixed up with questions of vital public importance.—Ed.]

The murder of Charles the First was undoubtedly not committed with the approbation or consent of the people. Had that been the case, parliament would not have ventured to consign the regicides to their deserved punishment³. And we know what exuberance of joy there was when Charles the Second was restored. If Charles the Second had bent all his mind to it, had made it his sole object, he might have been as absolute as Louis the Fourteenth." A gentleman observed he would have done no harm if he had. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, absolute princes seldom do any harm. But they who are governed by them are governed by chance. There is no security for good government." CAMBRIDGE. "There have been many sad victims to absolute government." JOHNSON. "So, sir, have there been to popular factions." BOSWELL. "The question is, which is worst, one wild beast or many?"

Johnson praised "The Spectator," particularly the character of Sir Roger de Coverley. He said, "Sir Roger did not die a violent death, as has been generally fancied. He was not killed; he died only because others were to die, and because his death afforded an opportunity to Addison for some very fine writing. We have the example of Cervantes making Don Quixote die. I never could see why Sir Roger is represented as a little cracked. It appears to me that the story of the widow was intended to have something superinduced upon it; but the superstructure did not come."

Somebody found fault with writing verses in a dead language, maintaining that they were merely arrangements of so many words, and laughed at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, for sending forth collections of them not only in Greek and Latin, but even in Syriack, Arabick, and other more unknown tongues. JOHNSON. "I would have as many of these as possible; I would have verses in every language that there are the means of acquiring. Nobody imagines that an university is to have at once two hundred poets: but it should be able to show two hundred scholars. Pierese's death was lamented, I think, in forty languages.

³ [The Editor concurs in Johnson's opinion as to the *fact*; but it seems to him, that the *proof* adduced is very inconclusive, for if the execution of the regicides proves *one* state of the public mind, surely the execution of the king himself might be adduced to prove *another*.—Ed.]

⁴ [Did Dr. Johnson forget the power of the public purse, placed in the hands of the house of commons, and all the arts, intrigues, and violence which Charles and his ministers tried, and tried in vain to evade, or resist that control? Did he also forget that there were *juries* in that reign? a jury might occasionally be packed or intimidated, but there still were *juries*!—Ed.]

And I would have had at every coronation, and every death of a king, every *Gaudium*, and every *Luctus*, university-verses, in as many languages as can be acquired. I would have the world to be thus told, 'Here is a school where every thing may be learnt.'"

Having set out next day on a visit to the Earl of Pembroke, at Wilton, and to my friend, Mr. Temple, at Mamhead, in Devonshire, and not having returned to town till the second of May, I did not see Dr. Johnson for a considerable time, and during the remaining part of my stay in London kept very imperfect notes of his conversation, which had I according to my usual custom written out at large soon after the time, much might have been preserved, which is now irretrievably lost. I can now only record some particular scenes, and a few fragments of his *memorabilia*. But to make some amends for my relaxation of diligence in one respect, I can present my readers with arguments upon two law cases, with which he favoured me¹.

On Saturday, the sixth of May, we dined by ourselves at the Mitre, and he dictated to me [an argument, which will be found in the Appendix], to obviate the complaint already mentioned², which had been made in the form of an action in the court of session by Dr. Memis, of Aberdeen, that in the same translation of a charter in which *physicians* were mentioned, he was called *doctor of medicine*.

A few days afterwards, I consulted him upon a cause, *Paterson and others* against *Alexander and others*, which had been decided by a casting vote in the court of session, determining that the corporation of Stirling was corrupt, and setting aside the election of some of their officers, because it was proved that three of the leading men who influenced the majority had entered into an unjustifiable compact, of which, however, the majority were ignorant. He dictated to me, after a little consideration, some sentences upon the subject [which will also be found in the Appendix.]

This, in my opinion, was a very nice case; but the decision was affirmed in the house of lords.

On Monday, May 8, we went together and visited the mansions of Bedlam. I had been informed that he had once been there before with Mr. Wedderburne (now Lord Loughborough), Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Foote; and I had heard Foote give a very entertaining account of Johnson's happening to have his attention arrested by a man who was very furious, and who, while beating his straw, supposed it was William,

Duke of Cumberland, whom he was punishing for his cruelties in Scotland, in 1746³. There was nothing peculiarly remarkable this day; but the general contemplation of insanity was very affecting. I accompanied him home, and dined and drank tea with him.

Talking of an acquaintance of ours⁴, distinguished for knowing an uncommon variety of miscellaneous articles both in antiquities and polite literature, he observed, "You know, sir, he runs about with little weight upon his mind." And talking of another very ingenious gentleman⁵, who from the warmth of his temper was at variance with many of his acquaintance, and wished to avoid them, he said, "Sir, he leads the life of an outlaw."

On Friday, May 12, as he had been so good as to assign me a room in his house, where I might sleep occasionally, when I happened to sit with him to a late hour, I took possession of it this night, found every thing in excellent order, and was attended by honest Francis with a most civil assiduity. I asked Johnson whether I might go to a consultation with another lawyer upon Sunday, as that appeared to me to be doing work as much in my way, as if an artisan should work on the day appropriated for religious rest. JOHNSON. "Why, sir, when you are of consequence enough to oppose the practice of consulting upon Sunday, you should do it: but you may go now. It is not criminal, though it is not what one should do, who is anxious for the preservation and increase of piety, to which a peculiar observance of Sunday is a great help. The distinction is clear between what is of moral and what is of ritual obligation⁶."

[“ TO MRS. THRALE.

“ 12th May, 1775.

“ I wish I could say or send any thing to divert you; but I have done nothing, and seen nothing. I dined one day with Paoli, and yesterday with Mrs. Southwells⁷, and

³ My very honourable friend, General Sir George Howard, who served in the Duke of Cumberland's army, has assured me that the cruelties were not imputable to his royal highness.—BOSWELL. [On the morning of the battle of Culloden, Lord George Murray, the chief of the Pretender's staff, issued an order to give *no quarter* to the royal forces. The Jacobites affected to say that this was the act of the individual, and not of the prince or his party; but it is undeniable that such a general order was given, and that it was the excuse, if not the cause, of the severities which followed the battle on the part of the conquerors.—ED.]

⁴ [Probably Dr. Percy.—ED.]

⁵ [No doubt Mr. George Stevens.—ED.]

⁶ [See *ante*, p. 252, 344, and 436.—ED.]

⁷ [See *ante*, p. 302.—ED.]

¹ [Most readers, it is suspected, will not think the compensation adequate.—ED.]

² *Ante*, page 496.—BOSWELL.

called on Congreve¹. Mr. Twiss, hearing that you talked of despoiling his book of the fine print, has sent you a copy to frame. He is going to Ireland, and I have given him letters to Dr. Leland and Mr. Falkner².

“Mr. M[ontagu] is so ill that the lady is not visible; but yesterday I had I know not how much kiss of Mrs. Abington, and very good looks from Miss * * * *³, the maid of honour.

“Boswell has made me promise not to go to Oxford till he leaves London; I had no great reason for haste, and therefore might as well gratify a friend. I am always proud and pleased to have my company desired. Boswell would have thought my absence a loss, and I know not who else would have considered my presence as profit. He has entered himself at the Temple, and I joined in his bond. He is to plead before the lords, and hopes very nearly to gain the cost of his journey. He lives much with his friend Paoli, who says, a man must see Wales to enjoy England.

“The book which is now most read, but which, as far as I have gone, is but dull, is Gray’s Letters, prefixed by Mr. Mason to his poems. I have borrowed mine, and therefore cannot lend it, and I can hardly recommend the purchase⁴.

“I have offended; and, what is stranger, have justly offended the nation of *Rasay*. If they could come hither, they would be as fierce as the Americans. *Rasay* has written to Boswell an account of the injury done him, by representing his home as subordinate to that of Dunvegan. Boswell has his letter, and I believe copied my answer. I have appeased him, if a degraded chief can possibly be appeased; but it will be thirteen days—days of resentment and discontent—before my recantation can reach him. Many a dirk will imagination, during that interval, fix in my heart. I really question if at this time my life would not be in danger, if distance did not secure it.

¹ [See *post*, 22d March, 1776.—ED.]

² [George Faulkener, the celebrated printer.—ED.]

³ [Probably Miss Beaulereck.—ED.]

⁴ [Nothing but a strong prejudice could have made Johnson thus speak of those very entertaining letters.—ED.]

“Boswell will find his way to Streatham before he goes, and will detail this great affair. I would have come on Saturday, but that I am engaged to do Dr. Lawrence a little service on Sunday. Which day shall I come next week? I hope you will be well enough to see me often.”]

On Saturday, May 13, I breakfasted with him by invitation, accompanied by Mr. Andrew Crosbie, a Scotch advocate, whom he had seen at Edinburgh, and the Hon. Colonel (now General) Edward Stopford, brother to Lord Courtown, who was desirous of being introduced to him. His tea and rolls and butter, and whole breakfast apparatus, were all in such decorum, and his behavior was so courteous, that Colonel Stopford was quite surprised, and wondered at his having heard so much said of Johnson’s slovenliness and roughness. I have preserved nothing of what passed, except that Crosbie pleased him much by talking learnedly of alchymy, as to which Johnson was not a positive unbeliever, but rather delighted in considering what progress had actually been made in the transmutation of metals, what near approaches there had been to the making of gold; and told us that it was affirmed that a person in the Russian dominions had discovered the secret, but died without revealing it, as imagining it would be prejudicial to society. He added, that it was not impossible but it might in time be generally known.

It being asked whether it was reasonable for a man to be angry at another whom a woman had preferred to him? JOHNSON. “I do not see, sir, that it is reasonable for a man to be angry at another, whom a woman has preferred to him: but angry he is, no doubt; and he is loth to be angry at himself.”

Before setting out for Scotland on the 23d, I was frequently in his company at different places, but during this period have recorded only two remarks; one concerning Garrick: “He has not Latin enough. He finds out the Latin by the meaning rather than the meaning by the Latin.” And another concerning writers of travels, who, he observed, “were more defective than any other writers.”

⁵ [Second son of the first Lord Courtown; born 1732; a major-general in 1782.—ED.]

APPENDIX.

No. I.

SPECIMENS of Dr. Johnson's early poetical compositions, referred to in p. 19.

TRANSLATION OF VIRGIL.

PASTORAL I.

Melibæus. Now, Tityrus, you, supine and careless laid,

Play on your pipe beneath this beechen shade ;
While wretched we about the world must roam,
And leave our pleasing fields and native home ;
Here at your ease you sing your amorous flame,
And the wood rings with Amarillis' name.

Tityrus. Those blessings, friend, a deity bestow'd,

For I shall never think him less than God ;
Oft on his altar shall my firstlings lie,
Their blood the consecrated stones shall dye :
He gave my flocks to graze the flowery meads,
And me to tune at ease th' unequal reeds.

Mel. My admiration only I express,
(No spark of envy harbours in my breast)
That, when confusion o'er the country reigns,
To you alone this happy state remains.
Here I, though faint myself, must drive my goats,
Far from their ancient fields and humble cots.
This scarce I lead, who left on yonder rock
Two tender kids, the hopes of all the flock.
Had we not been perverse and careless grown,
This dire event by omens was foreshown ;
Our trees were blasted by the thunder stroke,
And left-hand crows, from an old hollow oak,
Foretold the coming evil by their dismal croak. }

TRANSLATION OF HORACE.

BOOK I. ODE XXII.

THE man, my friend, whose conscious heart
With virtue's sacred ardour glows,
Nor taints with death the evenmorn'd dart,
Nor needs the guard of Moorish bows ;
Though Scythia's icy cliffs he treads,
Or horrid Africk's faithless sands ;
Or where the famed Hydaspes spreads
His liquid wealth o'er barbarous lauds.
For while by Chloe's image charm'd,
Too far in Sabine woods I stray'd ;
Me singing, careless and unarm'd,
A grisly wolf surpris'd, and fled.
No savage more portentous stain'd
Apulia's spacious wilds with gore ;
No fiercer Juba's thirsty land,
Dire nurse of raging lions, bore.
Place me where no soft summer gale
Among the quivering branches sighs ;
Where clouds condensed for ever veil
With horrid gloom the frowning skies :
Place me beneath the burning line,
A clime denied to human race :
I'll sing of Chloe's charms divine,
Her heav'nly voice, and beauteous face.

TRANSLATION OF HORACE.

BOOK II. ODE IX.

CLOUDS do not always veil the skies,
Nor showers immerse the verdant plain ;
Nor do the billows always rise,
Or storms afflict the ruffled main.

Nor, Valgius, on th' Armenian shores
Do the chain'd waters always freeze ;
Nor always furious Boreas roars,
Or bends with violent force the trees.

But you are ever drown'd in tears,
For Myses dead you ever mourn ;
No setting Sol can ease your cares,
But finds you sad at his return.

The wise experienc'd Grecian sage
Mourn'd not Antiochus so long ;
Nor did King Priam's hoary age
So much lament his slaughter'd son.

Leave off, at length, these woman's sighs,
Augustus' numerous trophies sing ;
Repeat that prince's victories,
To whom all nations tribute bring.

Niphates rolls an humbler wave,
At length the undaunted Scythian yields,
Content to live the Roman's slave,
And scarce forsakes his native fields.

TRANSLATION OF PART OF THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

FROM THE SIXTH BOOK OF HOMER'S ILIAD.

SHE ceas'd ; then godlike Hector answer'd kind,
(His various plumage sporting in the wind)
'That post, and all the rest, shall be my care ;
But shall I, then, forsake the unfinish'd war ?
How would the Trojans brand great Hector's name !
And one base action sully all my fame,
Acquir'd by wounds and battles bravely fought !
Oh ! how my soul abhors so mean a thought.
Long since I learn'd to slight this fleeting breath,
And view with cheerful eyes approaching death.
The inexorable sisters have decreed
That Priam's house, and Priam's self shall bleed :
The day will come, in which proud Troy shall
yield,
And spread its smoking ruins o'er the field.
Yet Hecuba's, nor Priam's hoary age,
Whose blood shall quench some Grecian's thirsty
rage,
Nor my brave brothers, that have bit the ground,
Their souls dismiss'd through many a gastly wound,
Can in my bosom half that grief create,
As the sad thought of your impending fate :
When some proud Grecian dame shall tasks im-
pose,
Mimick your tears, and ridicule your woes ;
Beneath Hyperia's waters shall you sweat,
And, fainting, scarce support the liquid weight :
Then shall some Argive loud insulting cry,
Behold the wife of Hector, guard of Troy !

Tears, at my name, shall drown those beauteous eyes,
And that fair bosom heave with rising sighs !
Before that day, by some brave hero's hand
May I lie slain, and spurn the bloody sand.

TO A YOUNG LADY ON HER BIRTHDAY ¹.

THIS tributary verse receive, my fair,
Warm with an ardent lover's fondest prayer.
May this returning day forever find
Thy form more lovely, more adorn'd thy mind ;
All pains, all cares, may favouring Heav'n remove,
All but the sweet solicitudes of love !
May powerful nature join with grateful art
To point each glance, and force it to the heart !
O then, when conquer'd crowds confess thy sway,
When ev'n proud wealth and prouder wit obey,
My fair, be mindful of the mighty trust :
Alas ! 'tis hard for beauty to be just.
Those sovereign charms with strictest care employ ;
Nor give the generous pain, the worthless joy :
With his own form acquaint the forward fool,
Shown in the faithful glass of ridicule ;
Teach mimick censure her own faults to find,
No more let coquettes to themselves be blind,
So shall Belinda's charms improve mankind.

THE YOUNG AUTHOR ².

WHEN first the peasant, long inclin'd to roam,
Forsakes his rural sports and peaceful home,
Pleas'd with the scene the smiling ocean yields,
He scorns the verdant meads and flow'ry fields ;
Then dances jocund o'er the watery way,
While the breeze whispers, and the streamers play :
Unbounded prospects in his bosom roll,
And future millions lift his rising soul ;
In blissful dreams he digs the golden mine,
And raptur'd sees the new-found ruby shine.
Joys insincere ! thick clouds invade the skies,
Loud roar the billows, high the waves arise ;
Sick'ning with fear, he longs to view the shore,
And vows to trust the faithless deep no more.
So the young author, panting after fame,
And the long honours of a lasting name,
Intrusts his happiness to human kind,
More false, more cruel, than the seas or wind.
"Toil on, dull crowd," in ecstasies he cries,
"For wealth or title, perishable prize ;
"While I those transitory blessings scorn,
"Secure of praise from ages yet unborn."
This thought once form'd, all counsel comes too late,
He flies to press, and hurries on his fate ;
Swiftly he sees the imagin'd laurels spread,
And feels the unfading wreath surround his head.
Warn'd by another's fate, vain youth, be wise ;
Those dreams were Settle's once, and Ogilby's :
The pamphlet spreads, incessant hisses rise,
To some retreat the baffled writer flies ;
Where no sour criticks snarl, no sneers molest,
Safe from the tart lampoon, and stinging jest ;
There begs of Heaven a less distinguish'd lot,
Glad to be hid, and proud to be forgot.

¹ Mr. Hector informs me, that this was made almost *impromptu*, in his presence.

² This he inserted, with many alterations, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1743.

He, however, did not add his name. See *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. xiii. p. 378—MALONE.

EPILOGUE.

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN BY A
LADY WHO WAS TO PERSONATE THE
GHOST OF HERMIONE ³.

YE blooming train, who give despair or joy,
Bless with a smile, or with a frown destroy ;
In whose fair cheeks destructive Cupids wait,
And with unerring shafts distribute fate ;
Whose snowy breasts, whose animated eyes,
Each youth admires, though each admirer dies ;
Whilst you deride their pangs in barb'rous play,
Unpitying see them weep, and hear them pray,
And unrelenting sport ten thousand lives away ;
For you, ye fair, I quit the gloomy plains,
Where sable night in all her horror reigns ;
No fragrant bowers, no delightful glades,
Receive the unhappy ghosts of scornful maids.
For kind, for tender nymphs the myrtle blooms,
And weaves her bending boughs in pleasing glooms
Perennial roses deck each purple vale,
And scents ambrosial breathe in every gale :
Far hence are banished vapours, spleen, and tears,
Tea, scandal, ivory teeth, and languid airs :
No pug, nor favourite Cupid there enjoys
The balmy kiss, for which poor Thyrsis dies ;
Form'd to delight, they use no foreign arms,
Nor torturing whalebones pinch them into charms ;
No conscious blushes there their cheeks inflame ;
For those who feel no guilt can know no shame ;
Unfaded still their former charms they shew,
Around them pleasures wait, and joys forever new.
But cruel virgins meet severer fates ;
Expell'd and exil'd from the blissful seats,
To dismal realms, and regions void of peace,
Where furies ever howl, and serpents hiss.
O'er the sad plains perpetual tempests sigh,
And pois'nous vapours, black'ning all the sky,
With livid hue the fairest face o'ercast,
And every beauty withers at the blast :
Where'er they fly their lovers' ghosts pursue,
Inflicting all those ills which once they knew ;
Vexation, Fury, Jealousy, Despair,
Vex every eye, and every bosom tear ;
Their foul deformities by all descried,
No maid to flatter, and no point to hide.
Then melt, ye fair, while crowds around you sigh,
Nor let disdain sit low'ring in your eye ;
With pity soften every awful grace,
And beauty smile auspicious in each face ;
To ease their pains exert your milder power,
So shall you guiltless reign, and all mankind adore.

No. II.

[TRANSLATION (attributed to Mr. Jackson, of Canterbury) of the Ode AD URBANUM, substituted as shorter and better than the translation by an anonymous correspondent, given by Mr. BOSWELL,—*referred to in p. 43.*

URBAN, whom neither toil profound
Fatigues, nor calumnies o'erthrow,
The wreath, thy learned brows around
Still grows, and will for ever grow.

³ Some young ladies at Lichfield having proposed to act "The Distressed Mother," Johnson wrote this, and gave it to Mr. Hector to convey it privately to them.

Of rivals let no cares infest,
 Of what they threaten or prepare ;
 Blest in thyself, thy projects blest,
 Thy hours still let the muses share.
 The leaden shafts which Folly throws,
 In silent dignity despise :
 Superior o'er opposing foes,
 Thy vigorous diligence shall rise.
 Exert thy strength, each vain design,
 Each rival soon shalt thou disdain ;
 Arise, for see, thy task to join,
 Approach the muses' fav'ring train.
 How grateful to each muse the page,
 Where grave with sprightly themes are join'd ;
 And useful levities engage,
 And recreate the wearied mind.
 Thus the pale violet to the rose
 Adds beauty 'midst the garland's dies ;
 And thus the changeful rainbow throws
 Its various splendours o'er the skies.]

NO. III.

[THE following complete list of THE CLUB (referred to in p. 212), with the dates of the elections of all the members, and of the deaths of those deceased, from its foundation to the present times, and the observations prefixed and annexed, have been obligingly furnished to the editor by Mr. Hatchett, the present treasurer.

“THE CLUB was founded in 1764, by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Samuel Johnson, and for some years met on Monday evenings. In 1772 the day of meeting was changed to Friday; and about that time, instead of supping they agreed to dine together once in every fortnight during the sitting of parliament.

“In 1773, the Club, which soon after its foundation consisted of twelve members, was enlarged to twenty; March 11, 1777, to twenty-six; November 27, 1778, to thirty; May 9, 1780, to thirty-five; and it was then resolved that it never should exceed forty.

“It met originally at the Turk's-head, in Gerard-street, and continued to meet there till 1783, when their landlord died, and the house was soon afterwards shut up. They then removed to Prince's, in Sackville-street; and on his house being soon afterwards shut up, they removed to Baxter's, which afterwards became Thomas's, in Dover-street. In January, 1792, they removed to Parsloe's, in St. James's-street; and, on February 26, 1799, to the Thatched-house in the same street.

“From the original foundation to this time, the total number of members is one hundred and two. *Esto perpetua.* “C. H.

“Belle Vue House, Chelsea, July 10, 1829.”

Original.	Members.	Died.
1.—1764	Sir Joshua Reynolds	Feb. 23, 1792.
2.—	Dr. Samuel Johnson	Dec 13, 1784.
3.—	Rt. Hon. Edm. Burke	July 9, 1797.
4.—	Christ'r Nugent, M. D.	Nov. 12, 1775.
5.—	Bennet Langton, Esq.	Dec. 18, 1801.
6.—	Topham Beauclerk, Esq.	Mar. 11, 1780.

Original	Members.	Died.
7.—	Oliver Goldsmith, M. D.	Apr. 4, 1774.
8.—	Anthony Chamier, Esq.	Oct. 12, 1780.
9.—	Sir John Hawkins, who soon withdrew	May 21, 1789.
Elected.		
10.—1764	Samuel Dyer, Esq.	Sep. 14, 1772.
11.—1765	Dr. Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore	Sep. 30, 1811.
12.—1765	Sir Robert Chambers	May 9, 1803.
13.—1768, Mar.	George Colman, Esq.	Aug. 14, 1794.
14.—1773, Mar.	Earl of Charlemont	Aug. 4, 1799.
15.—1773, Mar.	David Garrick, Esq.	Jan. 20, 1779.
16.—1773, Apr. 2.	Sir William Jones	Apr. 17, 1794.
17.—1773	Agmondesham Vesey, Esq.	Aug. 11, 1785.
18.—1773, Apr. 30.	James Boswell, Esq.	May 19, 1795.
19.—1774, Feb.	Rt. Hon. Chas. James Fox	Sep. 13, 1806.
20.—	Feb. Sir Charles Bunbury, Bart.	Mar. 31, 1821.
21.—	Feb. Dr. George Fordyce	May 27, 1802.
22.—	Mar. 4. George Stevens, Esq.	Jan. 22, 1800.
23.—	Edward Gibbon, Esq.	Jan. 26, 1794.
24.—1775, Dec.	Adam Smith, Esq.	July 17, 1790.
25.—	Dr. Thomas Bernard, Bishop of Limerick	July 7, 1806.
26.—1777, Jan.	Rev. Dr. Joseph Warton	Feb. 23, 1800.
27.—	Mar. Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq.	July 7, 1816.
28.—	Earl of Upper Ossory	Feb. 1, 1813.
29.—	Rt. Rev. Dr. Richard Marley, Bishop of Waterford	July 2, 1802.
30.—	John Dunning, Lord Ashburton	Aug. 28, 1783.
31.—1778, Dec.	Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph Banks, P. R. S.	Jun. 19, 1820.
32.—	Rt. Hon. William Windham	Jun. 4, 1810.
33.—	Rt. Hon. Sir William Scott, Lord Stowell	
34.—	The Earl Spencer	
35.—1780, Nov.	Dr. J. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph	Dec. 9, 1788.
36.—1782, Jan. 22.	Lord Eliot	Feb. 17, 1804.
37.—	Feb. 5. Edmond Malone, Esq.	May 25, 1812.
38.—	Mar. 5. Rev. Thomas Warton	May 21, 1790.
39.—	Apr. 2. The Earl of Lucan	Mar. 29, 1799.
40.—	Apr. 16. Richard Burke, Esq.	Apr. 2, 1794.
41.—1784, Feb. 10.	Sir William Hamilton	Apr. 6, 1803.
42.—	Feb. Viscount Palmerston	Apr. 16, 1802.
43.—	Feb. 17. Chas. Burney, Mus. D.	Apr. 12, 1214.
44.—	Dec. 23. Richard Warren, M. D.	Jun. 22, 1797.
45.—1786, May 9.	The Earl of Macartney	Mar. 31, 1806.
46.—1788, Dec. 22.	John Courtenay, Esq.	Mar. 24, 1816.
47.—1792, Mar. 27.	Dr. J. Hinchcliffe, Bishop of Peterborough	Jan. 11, 1794.
48.—	May 8. Duke of Leeds	Jan. 31, 1799.
49.—	May 22. Dr. John Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury	May 19, 1807.
50.—1794, Mar. 18.	Sir Charles Blagden	Mar. 27, 1820.
51.—1795, Jan. 22.	Major Rennell	
52.—	Feb. 3. Rev. Dr. Richard Farmer	Sep. 8, 1797.
53.—	Jun. 9. The Marquess of Bath	Nov. 20, 1796.
54.—1797, Jan. 21.	Frederick North, Earl of Guilford	Oct. 14, 1827.
55.—1799, Feb. 12.	The Rt. Hon. George Canning	Aug. 8, 1827
56.—	Feb. 26. William Marsden, Esq.	
57.—1800, Feb. 4.	Rt. Hon. John Hookham Frere	
58.—	Mar. 4. Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville	
59.—	Mar. 13. Dr. Vincent, Dean of Westminster	Dec. 21, 1815.
60.—1800, Jun. 10.	William Lock, jr. Esq.	
61.—1804, Mar. 17.	George Ellis, Esq.	Apr. 10, 1815.
62.—1802, Dec. 7.	Gilbert Lord Minto	Jun. 24, 1814.
63.—	Dec. 21. Dr. French Lawrence	Feb. 27, 1809
64.—1803, Jan. 25.	Rt. Hon. Sir William Grant	
65.—	Feb. 28. Sir George Staunton, Bart.	
66.—1804, Mar. 20.	Dr. S. Horsley, Bishop of St. Asaph	Oct. 4, 1806
67.—1806, Jan. 21.	Charles Wilkins, Esq.	

<i>Elected.</i>	<i>Members.</i>	<i>Died.</i>
68.— . . . May 13.	Rt. Hon. Sir William Drummond	Mar. 29, 1828.
69.— . . . May 27.	Sir Henry Halford, Bart.	;
70.—1808, Mar. 22.	Sir H. C. Englefield, Bart.	Mar. 21, 1822.
71.— . . . May 3.	The Lord Holland	
72.— . . . May 31.	The Earl of Aberdeen	
73.—1809, Feb. 21.	Charles Hatchett, Esq.	
74.— . . . Mar. 7.	Rt. Hon. Charles Vaughan	
75.— . . . Mar. 21.	Sir Humphrey Davy, Bart.	May 29, 1829.
76.—1810, Feb. 27.	The Rev. Dr. Charles Burney	Dec. 28, 1817.
77.—1811, Jun. 4.	Sir William Gell	
78.—1813, Mar. 2.	Rt. Hon. William Elliot	Oct. 26, 1818.
79.— . . . Mar. 2.	Richard Heber, Esq.	
80.—1814, Jun. 7.	Thomas Phillips, Esq. R. A.	
81.— . . . Jul. 19.	Rt. Hon. Sir James Mackintosh	
82.— . . . Aug. 2.	Lord Chief Justice Gibbs	Feb. 8, 1820.
83.—1815, Feb. 21.	The Marquess of Lansdowne	
84.— . . . Apr. 4.	The Lord Lyttelton	
85.—1816, Mar. 26.	Dr. William Howley, Bishop of London*	
86.—1817, Apr. 3.	Roger Wilbraham, Esq.	Jan. 6, 1829.
87.—1818, Jan. 27.	The Lord Glenbervie	May 2, 1823.
88.— . . . Apr. 7.	Dr. William Hyde Wollaston	Dec. 22, 1828.
89.— . . . Apr. 21.	Sir Walter Scott, Bart.	
90.—1820, Jan. 25.	The Earl of Liverpool	Dec. 4, 1828.
91.—	Charles Butler, Esq.	
92.—1821, Mar. 20.	Dr. C. J. Blomfield, Bishop of London	
93.—1822, Apr. 16.	Rt. Hon. W. C. Plunket, Lord Plunket	
94.—1823, May 27.	Francis Chantrey, Esq. R. A.	
95.—	Henry Hallam, Esq.	
96.—1826, Dec. 12.	Sir Thomas Lawrence, P. R. A.	
97.—1823, May 6.	Lieut.-Col. W. M. Leake	
98.— . . . May 20.	Thomas Young, M. D.	May 10, 1829.
99.—	Rev. William Buckland, D. D.	
100.—1823, Apr. 7.	J. N. Fazakerley, Esq.	
101.—	Dr. Edward Copleston, Bishop of Llandaff	
102.—1823, May 19.	Davies Gilbert, Esq. P. R. S.	

THE CLUB, as it stood, 10th JULY, 1829.

The Earl of Aberdeen, P. S. A.
 Rev. Dr. Buckland.
 Charles Butler, Esq.
 Francis Chantrey, Esq.
 J. N. Fazakerley, Esq.
 The Rt. Hon. John Hookham Frere.
 Sir William Gell.
 Davies Gilbert, Esq., P. R. S.
 Rt. Hon. Sir William Grant.
 Rt. Hon. Thomas Grenville.
 Sir Henry Halford, Bart.
 Henry Hallam, Esq.
 Charles Hatchett, Esq.
 Richard Heber, Esq.
 Lord Holland.
 The Bishop of Llandaff (Dr. Copleston).
 The Marquis of Lansdowne.
 Sir Thomas Lawrence, P. R. A.
 Lieut. Col. Leake.
 William Lock, Esq.
 The Bishop of London (Dr. C. J. Blomfield.)
 Lord Lyttelton.
 Rt. Hon. Sir James Mackintosh.
 William Marsden.
 Thomas Phillips, Esq. R. A.
 Lord Plunket
 Major Rennell.

* Dr. William Howley withdrew from the club on becoming Archbishop of Canterbury, Feb. 1829.

Sir Walter Scott, Bart.
 The Earl Spencer.
 Sir George Staunton, Bart.
 Lord Stowell (senior member of the club).
 The Rt. Hon. Charles Vaughan.
 Charles Wilkins, Esq.

At the meetings of the club the chair is taken in rotation by the members, according to the alphabetical arrangement of their names; the only permanent officer being the treasurer.

Mr. Malone was the first treasurer; and upon his decease, in 1812, Sir Henry Charles Englefield was elected to that office, which, however, on account of weakness of sight, he resigned in 1814; when the Rev. Dr. Charles Burney was chosen, and continued to be treasurer until his death, which took place in December, 1817; and on the 10th of March, 1818, Mr. Hatchett, the present treasurer, was elected.]

NO. IV.

[LETTER from Dr. Johnson to Mr. (now Sir Francis) Barnard, librarian to the King, when employed on a mission to the continent for increasing his Majesty's library,—referred to in page 239.]

“SIR,—It is natural for a scholar to interest himself in an expedition, undertaken, like yours, for the importation of literature; and therefore, though, having never travelled myself, I am very little qualified to give advice to a traveller, yet, that I may not seem inattentive to a design so worthy of regard, I will try whether the present state of my health will suffer me to lay before you what observation or report have suggested to me, that may direct your inquiries, or facilitate your success. Things of which the mere rarity makes the value, and which are prized at a high rate by a wantonness rather than by use, are always passing from poorer to richer countries, and therefore, though Germany and Italy were principally productive of typographical curiosities, I do not much imagine, that they are now to be found there in great abundance. An eagerness for scarce books and early editions, which prevailed among the English about half a century ago, filled our shops with all the splendour and nicety of literature, and when the Harleian Catalogue was published, many of the books were bought for the library of the King of France.

“I believe, however, that by the diligence with which you have enlarged the library under your care, the present stock is so nearly exhausted, that till new purchases supply the booksellers with new stores, you will not be able to do much more than glean up single books, as accident shall produce them; this, therefore, is the time for visiting the continent.

“What addition you can hope to make by ransacking other countries we will now consider. English literature you will not seek in any place but in England. Classical learning is diffused every where, and is not, except by accident, more copious in one part of the polite world than in another. But every country has literature of its own, which may be best gathered in its native soil. The studies of the learned are influenced

by forms of government and modes of religion, and, therefore, those books are necessary and common in some places, which, where different opinions or different manners prevail, are of little use, and for that reason rarely to be found.

“Thus in Italy you may expect to meet with canonists and scholastic divines, in Germany with writers on the feudal laws, and in Holland with civilians. The schoolmen and canonists must not be neglected, for they are useful to many purposes, nor too anxiously sought, for their influence among us is much lessened by the reformation. Of the canonists at least a few eminent writers may be sufficient. The schoolmen are of more general value. But the feudal and civil law I cannot but wish to see complete. The feudal constitution is the original of the law of property, over all the civilized part of Europe; and the civil law, as it is generally understood to include the law of nations, may be called with great propriety a regal study. Of these books, which have been often published, and diversified by various modes of impression, a royal library should have at least the most curious edition, the most splendid, and the most useful. The most curious edition is commonly the first, and the most useful may be expected among the last. Thus of Tully’s Offices, the edition of Fust is the most curious, and that of Grævius the most useful. The most splendid the eye will discern. With the old printers you are now become well acquainted; if you can find any collection of their productions to be sold, you will undoubtedly buy it; but this can scarcely be hoped, and you must catch up single volumes where you can find them. In every place things often occur where they are least expected. I was shown a Welsh grammar written in Welsh, and printed at Milan, I believe, before any grammar of that language had been printed here. Of purchasing entire libraries, I know not whether the inconvenience may not overbalance the advantage. Of libraries collected with general views, one will have many books in common with another. When you have bought two collections, you will find that you have bought many books twice over, and many in each which you have left at home, and, therefore, did not want; and when you have selected a small number, you will have the rest to sell at a great loss, or to transport hither at perhaps a greater. It will generally be more commodious to buy the few that you want, at a price somewhat advanced, than to encumber yourself with useless books. But libraries collected for particular studies will be very valuable acquisitions. The collection of an eminent civilian, feudist, or mathematician, will perhaps have very few superfluities. Topography or local history prevails much in many parts of the continent. I have been told that scarcely a village of Italy wants its historian. These books may be generally neglected, but some will deserve attention by the celebrity of the place, the eminence of the authors, or the beauty of the sculptures. Sculpture has always been more cultivated among other nations than among us. The old art of cutting on wood, which decorated the books of ancient impression, was never carried here to any excellence; and the practice of engraving on copper, which succeeded, has never been much employed

among us in adorning books. The old books with wooden cuts are to be diligently sought; the designs were often made by great masters, and the prints are such as cannot be made by any artist now living. It will be of great use to collect in every place maps of the adjacent country, and plans of towns, buildings, and gardens. By this care you will form a more valuable body of geography than can otherwise be had. Many countries have been very exactly surveyed, but it must not be expected that the exactness of actual mensuration will be preserved, when the maps are reduced by a contracted scale, and incorporated into a general system.

“The king of Sardinia’s Italian dominions are not large, yet the maps made of them in the reign of Victor fill two Atlantic folios. This part of your design will deserve particular regard, because, in this, your success will always be proportionate to your diligence. You are too well acquainted with literary history not to know, that many books derive their value from the reputation of the printers. Of the celebrated printers you do not need to be informed, and if you did, might consult Baillet Jugemens des Scavans. The productions of Aldus are enumerated in the Bibliotheca Græca, so that you may know when you have them all; which is always of use, as it prevents needless search. The great ornaments of a library, furnished for magnificence as well as use, are the first editions, of which, therefore, I would not willingly neglect the mention. You know, sir, that the annals of typography begin with the Codex, 1457; but there is great reason to believe, that there are latent, in obscure corners, books printed before it. The secular feast, in memory of the invention of printing, is celebrated in the fortieth year of the century; if this tradition, therefore, is right, the art had in 1457 been already exercised nineteen years.

“There prevails among typographical antiquaries a vague opinion, that the Bible had been printed three times before the edition of 1462, which Calmet calls ‘La premiere edition bien averée.’ One of these editions has been lately discovered in a convent, and transplanted into the French king’s library. Another copy has likewise been found, but I know not whether of the same impression, or another. These discoveries are sufficient to raise hope and instigate inquiry. In the purchase of old books, let me recommend to you to inquire with great caution, whether they are perfect. In the first edition the loss of a leaf is not easily observed. You remember how near we both were to purchasing a mutilated Missal at a high price.

“All this perhaps you know already, and, therefore, my letter may be of no use. I am, however, desirous to show you, that I wish prosperity to your undertaking. One advice more I will give, of more importance than all the rest, of which I, therefore, hope you will have still less need. You are going into a part of the world divided, as it is said, between bigotry and atheism: such representations are always hyperbolic, but there is certainly enough of both to alarm any mind solicitous for piety and truth; let not the contempt of superstition precipitate you into infidelity, or the horror of infidelity ensnare you in supersti-

tion!—I sincerely wish you successful and happy, for I am, sir, your affectionate humble servant,

“SAM. JOHNSON.

“May 28, 1768.

“To F. A. Barnard, Esq.”

No. V.

[ARGUMENT in behalf of Hastie, the schoolmaster, prosecuted for undue severity,—referred to (*sub* 11th April, 1772) p. 296.]

“The charge is, that he has used immoderate and cruel correction. Correction in itself is not cruel; children, being not reasonable, can be governed only by fear. To impress this fear is, therefore, one of the first duties of those who have the care of children. It is the duty of a parent; and has never been thought inconsistent with parental tenderness. It is the duty of a master, who is in his highest exaltation when he is *loco parentis*. Yet, as good things become evil by excess, correction, by being immoderate, may become cruel. But when is correction immoderate? When it is more frequent or more severe than is required *ad monendum et docendum*, for reformation and instruction. No severity is cruel which obstinacy makes necessary; for the greatest cruelty would be, to desist, and leave the scholar too careless for instruction, and too much hardened for reproof. Locke, in his treatise of education, mentions a mother, with applause, who whipped an infant eight times before she subdued it; for had she stopped at the seventh act of correction, her daughter, says he, would have been ruined. The degrees of obstinacy in young minds are very different: as different must be the degrees of persevering severity. A stubborn scholar must be corrected till he is subdued. The discipline of a school is military. There must be either unbounded licence or absolute authority. The master, who punishes, not only consults the future happiness of him who is the immediate subject of correction, but he propagates obedience through the whole school; and establishes regularity by exemplary justice. The victorious obstinacy of a single boy would make his future endeavours of reformation or instruction totally ineffectual. Obstinacy, therefore, must never be victorious. Yet, it is well known, that there sometimes occurs a sullen and hardy resolution, that laughs at all common punishment, and bids defiance to all common degrees of pain. Correction must be proportionate to occasions. The flexible will be reformed by gentle discipline, and the refractory must be subdued by harsher methods. The degrees of scholastic, as of military punishment, no stated rules can ascertain. It must be enforced till it overpowers temptation; till stubbornness becomes flexible, and perverseness regular. Custom and reason have, indeed, set some bounds to scholastic penalties. The schoolmaster inflicts no capital punishments;

nor enforces his edicts by either death or mutilation. The civil law has wisely determined, that a master who strikes at a scholar's eye shall be considered as criminal. But punishments, however severe, that produce no lasting evil, may be just and reasonable, because they may be necessary. Such have been the punishments used by the respondent. No scholar has gone from him either blind or lame, or with any of his limbs or powers injured or impaired. They were irregular, and he punished them: they were obstinate, and he enforced his punishment. But however provoked, he never exceeded the limits of moderation, for he inflicted nothing beyond present pain: and how much of that was required, no man is so little able to determine as those who have determined against him—the parents of the offenders. It has been said, that he used unprecedented and improper instruments of correction. Of this accusation the meaning is not very easy to be found. No instrument of correction is more proper than another, but as it is better adapted to produce present pain without lasting mischief. Whatever were his instruments, no lasting mischief has ensued; and therefore, however unusual, in hands so cautious they were proper. It has been objected, that the respondent admits the charge of cruelty by producing no evidence to confute it. Let it be considered, that his scholars are either dispersed at large in the world, or continue to inhabit the place in which they were bred. Those who are dispersed cannot be found; those who remain are the sons of his prosecutors, and are not likely to support a man to whom their fathers are enemies. If it be supposed that the enmity of their fathers proves the justness of the charge, it must be considered how often experience shows us, that men who are angry on one ground will accuse on another; with how little kindness, in a town of low trade, a man who lives by learning is regarded; and how implicitly, where the inhabitants are not very rich, a rich man is hearkened to and followed. In a place like Campbell-town, it is easy for one of the principal inhabitants to make a party. It is easy for that party to heat themselves with imaginary grievances. It is easy for them to oppress a man poorer than themselves; and natural to assert the dignity of riches, by persisting in oppression. The argument which attempts to prove the impropriety of restoring him to the school, by alleging that he has lost the confidence of the people, is not the subject of juridical consideration; for he is to suffer, if he must suffer, not for their judgment, but for his own actions. It may be convenient for them to have another master; but it is a convenience of their own making. It would be likewise convenient for him to find another school; but this convenience he cannot obtain. The question is not what is now convenient, but what is generally right. If the people of Campbell-town be distressed by the restoration of the respondent, they are distressed only by their own fault; by turbulent passions and unreasonable desires; by tyranny, which law has defeated, and by malice, which virtue has surmounted.”

1 [See *ante*, p. 97, 98, n.—Ed.]

NO. VI.

[ARGUMENT, by Dr. Johnson, in favour of the Scottish law doctrine of "Vicious Intromission,"—referred to (*sub 9th May, 1772*), p. 300.]

"This, we are told, is a law which has its force only from the long practice of the court; and may, therefore, be suspended or modified as the court shall think proper.

"Concerning the power of the court to make or to suspend a law, we have no intention to inquire. It is sufficient for our purpose that every just law is dictated by reason; and that the practice of every legal court is regulated by equity. It is the quality of reason to be invariable and constant; and of equity, to give to one man what, in the same case, is given to another. The advantage which humanity derives from law is this; that the law gives every man a rule of action, and prescribes a mode of conduct which shall entitle him to the support and protection of society. That the law may be a rule of action, it is necessary that it be known; it is necessary that it be permanent and stable. The law is the measure of civil right; but if the measure be changeable, the extent of the thing measured never can be settled.

"To permit a law to be modified at discretion, is to leave the community without law. It is to withdraw the direction of that publick wisdom, by which the deficiencies of private understanding are to be supplied. It is to suffer the rash and ignorant to act at discretion, and then to depend for the legality of that action on the sentence of the judge. He that is thus governed lives not by law, but by opinion: not by a certain rule to which he can apply his intention before he acts, but by an uncertain and variable opinion, which he can never know but after he has committed the act on which that opinion shall be passed. He lives by a law (if a law it be), which he can never know before he has offended it. To this case may be justly applied that important principle, *misera est servitus ubi jus est aut incognitum aut vagum*. If intromission be not criminal till it exceeds a certain point, and that point be unsettled, and consequently different in different minds, the right of intromission, and the right of the creditor arising from it, are all *jura vaga*, and, by consequence, are *jura incognita*; and the result can be no other than a *misera servitus*, an uncertainty concerning the event of action, a servile dependence on private opinion."

"It may be urged, and with great plausibility, that there may be intromission without fraud; which, however true, will by no means justify an occasional and arbitrary relaxation of the law. The end of law is protection as well as vengeance. Indeed, vengeance is never used but to strengthen protection. That society only is well governed, where life is freed from danger, and from suspicion; where possession is so sheltered by salutary prohibitions, that violation is prevented more frequently than punished. Such a prohibition was this, while it operated with its original force. The creditor of the deceased was not only without loss, but without fear. He was not to seek

a remedy for an injury suffered; for injury was warded off.

"As the law has been sometimes administered, it lays us open to wounds, because it is imagined to have the power of healing. To punish fraud when it is detected is the proper art of vindictive justice; but to prevent frauds, and make punishment unnecessary, is the great employment of legislative wisdom. To permit intromission, and to punish fraud, is to make law no better than a pitfall. To tread upon the brink is safe; but to come a step further is destruction. But, surely, it is better to enclose the gulf, and hinder all access, than by encouraging us to advance a little, to entice us afterwards a little further, and let us perceive our folly only by our destruction.

"As law supplies the weak with adventitious strength, it likewise enlightens the ignorant with extrinsick understanding. Law teaches us to know when we commit injury and when we suffer it. It fixes certain marks upon actions, by which we are admonished to do or to forbear them. *Qui sibi bene temperat in licitis*, says one of the fathers, *nunquam cadet in illicita*. He who never intromits at all, will never intromit with fraudulent intentions.

"The relaxation of the law against vicious intromission has been very favourably represented by a great master of jurisprudence¹, whose words have been exhibited with unnecessary pomp, and seem to be considered as irresistibly decisive. The great moment of his authority makes it necessary to examine his position. 'Some ages ago (says he), before the ferocity of the inhabitants of this part of the island was subdued, the utmost severity of the civil law was necessary, to restrain individuals from plundering each other. Thus, the man who intermeddled irregularly with the moveables of a person deceased was subjected to all the debts of the deceased without limitation. This makes a branch of the law of Scotland, known by the name of *vicious intromission*; and so rigidly was this regulation applied in our courts of law, that the most trifling moveable abstracted *malà fide*, subjected the intermeddler to the foregoing consequences, which proved in many instances a most rigorous punishment. But this severity was necessary, in order to subdue the undisciplined nature of our people. It is extremely remarkable, that in proportion to our improvement in manners, this regulation has been gradually softened and applied by our sovereign court with a sparing hand.'

"I find myself under a necessity of observing, that this learned and judicious writer has not accurately distinguished the deficiencies and demands of the different conditions of human life, which, from a degree of savageness and independence, in which all laws are vain, passes or may pass, by innumerable gradations, to a state of reciprocal benignity, in which laws shall be no longer necessary. Men are first wild and unsocial, living each man to himself, taking from the weak and losing to the strong. In their first coalitions of society, much of this original savageness is retain-

¹ Lord Kames, in his "*Historical Law Tracts*."—BOSWELL

ed. Of general happiness, the product of general confidence, there is yet no thought. Men continue to prosecute their own advantages by the nearest way; and the utmost severity of the civil law is necessary to restrain individuals from plundering each other. The restraints then necessary are restraints from plunder, from acts of public violence, and undisguised oppression. The ferocity of our ancestors, as of all other nations, produced not fraud, but rapine. They had not yet learned to cheat, and attempted only to rob. As manners grow more polished, with the knowledge of good, men attain likewise dexterity in evil. Open rapine becomes less frequent, and violence gives way to cunning. Those who before invaded pastures and stormed houses, now begin to enrich themselves by unequal contracts and fraudulent intrusions. It is not against the violence of ferocity, but the circumventions of deceit, that this law was framed; and I am afraid the increase of commerce, and the incessant struggle for riches which commerce excites, gives us no prospect of an end speedily to be expected of artifice and fraud. It therefore seems to be no very conclusive reasoning, which connects those two propositions:—'the nation is become less ferocious, and therefore the laws against fraud and *covin* shall be relaxed.'

"Whatever reason may have influenced the judges to a relaxation of the law, it was not that the nation was grown less fierce; and, I am afraid, it cannot be affirmed, that it is grown less fraudulent.

"Since this law has been represented as rigorously and unreasonably penal, it seems not improper to consider what are the conditions and qualities that make the justice or propriety of a penal law.

"To make a penal law reasonable and just, two conditions are necessary, and two proper. It is necessary that the law should be adequate to its end; that, if it be observed, it shall prevent the evil against which it is directed. It is, secondly, necessary that the end of the law be of such importance as to deserve the security of a penal sanction. The other conditions of a penal law, which, though not absolutely necessary, are to a very high degree fit, are, that to the moral violation of the law there are many temptations, and that of the physical observance there is great facility.

"All these conditions apparently concur to justify the law which we are now considering. Its end is the security of property; and property very often of great value. The method by which it effects the security is efficacious, because it admits, in its original rigour, no gradations of injury; but keeps guilt and innocence apart, by a distinct and definite limitation. He that intronits, is criminal: he that intronits not, is innocent. Of the two secondary considerations it cannot be denied that both are in our favour. The temptation to intronit is frequent and strong; so strong and so frequent, as to require the utmost activity of justice, and vigilance of caution, to withstand its prevalence; and the method by which a man may entitle himself to legal intronission is so open and so facile, that to neglect it is a proof of fraudulent intention; for why should a man omit to do (but for reasons which he will not confess) that which

he can do so easily, and that which he knows to be required by the law? If temptation were rare, a penal law might be deemed unnecessary. If the duty enjoined by the law were of difficult performance, omission, though it could not be justified, might be pitied. But in the present case neither equity nor compassion operate against it. A useful, a necessary law is broken, not only without a reasonable motive, but with all the inducements to obedience that can be derived from safety and facility.

"I therefore return to my original position, that a law, to have its effects, must be permanent and stable. It may be said in the language of the schools, *Lex non recipit majus et minus*,—we may have a law, or we may have no law, but we cannot have half a law. We must either have a rule of action, or be permitted to act by discretion and by chance. Deviations from the law must be uniformly punished, or no man can be certain when he shall be safe.

"That from the rigour of the original institution this court has sometimes departed cannot be denied. But, as it is evident that such deviations, as they make law uncertain, make life unsafe, I hope, that of departing from it there will now be an end; that the wisdom of our ancestors will be treated with due reverence; and that consistent and steady decisions will furnish the people with a rule of action, and leave fraud and fraudulent intronissions no future hope of impunity or escape."

No. VII.

[ARGUMENT by Dr. Johnson in defence of lay patronage,—referred to (*sub 1st May, 1773*), p. 316.]

"Against the right of patrons is commonly opposed, by the inferior judicatures, the plea of conscience. Their conscience tells them that the people ought to choose their pastor; their conscience tells them that they ought not to impose upon a congregation a minister ungrateful and unacceptable to his auditors. Conscience is nothing more than a conviction felt by ourselves of something to be done, or something to be avoided; and in questions of simple unperplexed morality, conscience is very often a guide that may be trusted. But before conscience can determine, the state of the question is supposed to be completely known. In questions of law, or of fact, conscience is very often confounded with opinion. No man's conscience can tell him the rights of another man; they must be known by rational investigation or historical inquiry. Opinion, which he that holds it may call his conscience, may teach some men that religion would be promoted, and quiet preserved, by granting to the people universally the choice of their ministers. But it is a conscience very ill informed that violates the rights of one man for the convenience of another. Religion cannot be promoted by injustice; and it was never yet found that a popular election was very quietly transacted.

"That justice would be violated by transferring to the people the right of patronage is apparent to all who know whence that right had its original.

The right of patronage was not at first a privilege torn by power from unresisting poverty. It is not an authority at first usurped in times of ignorance, and established only by succession and by precedents. It is not a grant capriciously made from a higher tyrant to a lower. It is a right dearly purchased by the first possessors, and justly inherited by those that succeeded them. When Christianity was established in this island, a regular mode of public worship was prescribed. Public worship requires a public place; and the proprietors of lands, as they were converted, built churches for their families and their vassals. For the maintenance of ministers, they settled a certain portion of their lands; and a district, through which each minister was required to extend his care, was, by that circumscription, constituted a parish. This is a position so generally received in England, that the extent of a manor and of a parish are regularly received for each other. The churches which the proprietors of lands had thus built and thus endowed, they justly thought themselves entitled to provide with ministers; and where the episcopal government prevails, the bishop has no power to reject a man nominated by the patron, but for some crime that might exclude him from the priesthood. For the endowment of the church being the gift of the landlord, he was consequently at liberty to give it, according to his choice, to any man capable of performing the holy offices. The people did not choose him, because the people did not pay him.

“We hear it sometimes urged, that this original right is passed out of memory, and is obliterated and obscured by many translations of property and changes of government; that scarce any church is now in the hands of the heirs of the builders; and that the present persons have entered subsequently upon the pretended rights by a thousand accidental and unknown causes. Much of this, perhaps, is true. But how is the right of patronage extinguished? If the right followed the lands, it is possessed by the same equity by which the lands are possessed. It is, in effect, part of the manor, and protected by the same laws with every other privilege. Let us suppose an estate forfeited by treason, and granted by the crown to a new family. With the lands were forfeited all the rights appendant to those lands; by the same power that grants the lands, the rights also are granted. The right lost to the patron falls not to the people, but is either retained by the crown, or, what to the people is the same thing, is by the crown given away. Let it change hands ever so often, it is possessed by him that receives it with the same right as it was conveyed. It may, indeed, like all our possessions, be forcibly seized or fraudulently obtained. But no injury is still done to the people; for what they never had, they have never lost. Caius may usurp the right of Titius, but neither Caius nor Titius injure the people; and no man's conscience, however tender or however active, can prompt him to restore what may be proved to have been never taken away. Supposing, what I think cannot be proved, that a popular election of ministers were to be desired, our desires are not the measure of equity. It were to be desired that power should be only in the hands of the merciful, and riches in the possession of the generous; but the law must leave both riches and

power where it finds them; and must often leave riches with the covetous, and power with the cruel. Convenience may be a rule in little things, where no other rule has been established. But as the great end of government is to give every man his own, no inconvenience is greater than that of making right uncertain. Nor is any man more an enemy to public peace, than he who fills weak heads with imaginary claims, and breaks the series of civil subordination, by inciting the lower classes of mankind to encroach upon the higher.

“Having thus shown that the right of patronage, being originally purchased, may be legally transferred, and that it is now in the hands of lawful possessors, at least as certainly as any other right;—we have left to the advocates of the people no other plea than that of convenience. Let us, therefore, now consider what the people would really gain by a general abolition of the right of patronage. What is most to be desired by such a change is, that the country should be supplied with better ministers. But why should we suppose that the parish will make a wiser choice than the patron? If we suppose mankind actuated by interest, the patron is more likely to choose with caution, because he will suffer more by choosing wrong. By the deficiencies of his minister, or by his vices, he is equally offended with the rest of the congregation; but he will have this reason more to lament them, that they will be imputed to his absurdity or corruption. The qualifications of a minister are well known to be learning and piety. Of his learning the patron is probably the only judge in the parish; and of his piety not less a judge than others; and is more likely to inquire minutely and diligently before he gives a presentation, than one of the parochial rabble, who can give nothing but a vote. It may be urged, that though the parish might not choose better ministers, they would at least choose ministers whom they like better, and who would therefore officiate with greater efficacy. That ignorance and perverseness should always obtain what they like, was never considered as the end of government; of which it is the great and standing benefit, that the wise see for the simple, and the regular act for the capricious. But that this argument supposes the people capable of judging, and resolute to act according to their best judgments, though this be sufficiently absurd, it is not all its absurdity. It supposes not only wisdom, but unanimity in those, who upon no other occasions are unanimous or wise. If by some strange concurrence all the voices of a parish should unite in the choice of any single man, though I could not charge the patron with injustice for presenting a minister, I should censure him as unkind and injudicious. But, it is evident, that as in all other popular elections there will be contrariety of judgment and acrimony of passion, a parish upon every vacancy would break into factions, and the contest for the choice of a minister would set neighbours at variance, and bring discord into families. The minister would be taught all the arts of a candidate, would flatter some, and bribe others; and the electors, as in all other cases, would call for holidays and ale, and break the heads of each other during the jollity of the canvass. The time must, however, come at last, when one of the factions

must prevail, and one of the ministers get possession of the church. On what terms does he enter upon his ministry but those of enmity with half his parish? By what prudence or what diligence can he hope to conciliate the affections of that party by whose defeat he has obtained his living? Every man who voted against him will enter the church with hanging head and downcast eyes, afraid to encounter that neighbour by whose vote and influence he has been overpowered. He will hate his neighbour for opposing him, and his minister for having prospered by the opposition; and as he will never see him but with pain, he will never see him but with hatred. Of a minister presented by the patron, the parish has seldom any thing worse to say than that they do not know him. Of a minister chosen by a popular contest, all those who do not favour him have nursed up in their bosoms principles of hatred and reasons of rejection. Anger is excited principally by pride. The pride of a common man is very little exasperated by the supposed usurpation of an acknowledged superior. He bears only his little share of a general evil, and suffers in common with the whole parish: but when the contest is between equals, the defeat has many aggravations; and he that is defeated by his next neighbour is seldom satisfied without some revenge: and it is hard to say what bitterness of malignity would prevail in a parish where these elections should happen to be frequent, and the enmity of opposition should be rekindled before it had cooled."

No. VIII.

In justice to the ingenious Dr. Blacklock, I publish the following letter from him, relative to a passage in the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. See p. 336.—BOSWELL.

"TO JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ.

Edinburgh, Nov. 12, 1785.

"DEAR SIR,—Having lately had the pleasure of reading your account of the journey which you took with Dr. Samuel Johnson to the Western Isles, I take the liberty of transmitting my ideas of the conversation which happened between the doctor and myself concerning lexicography and poetry, which, as it is a little different from the delineation exhibited in the former edition of your journal, cannot, I hope, be unacceptable; particularly since I have been informed that a second edition of that work is now in contemplation, if not in execution: and I am still more strongly tempted to encourage that hope, from considering that, if every one concerned in the conversations related were to send you what they can recollect of these colloquial entertainments, many curious and interesting particulars might be recovered, which the most assiduous attention could not observe, nor the most tenacious memory retain. A little reflection, sir, will convince you, that there is not an axiom in Euclid more intuitive nor more evident than the Doctor's assertion that poetry was of much easier execution than lexicography. Any mind, therefore, endowed with common sense, must have been extremely absent from itself, if it

discovered the least astonishment from hearing that a poem might be written with much more facility than the same quantity of a dictionary.

"The real cause of my surprise was what appeared to me much more paradoxical, that he could write a sheet of dictionary *with as much pleasure* as a sheet of poetry. He acknowledged, indeed, that the latter was much easier than the former. For in the one case, books and a desk were requisite; in the other, you might compose when lying in bed, or walking in the fields, &c. He did not, however, descend to explain, nor to this moment can I comprehend, how the labours of a mere philologist, in the most refined sense of that term, could give equal pleasure with the exercise of a mind replete with elevated conceptions and pathetic ideas, while taste, fancy, and intellect were deeply enamoured of nature, and in full exertion. You may likewise, perhaps, remember, that when I complained of the ground which scepticism in religion and morals was continually gaining, it did not appear to be on my own account, as my private opinions upon these important subjects had long been inflexibly determined. What I then deplored, and still deplore, was the unhappy influence which that gloomy hesitation had, not only upon particular characters, but even upon life in general; as being equally the bane of action in our present state, and of such consolations as we might derive from the hopes of a future.

"I have the pleasure of remaining with sincere esteem and respect, dear sir, your most obedient humble servant,

"THOMAS BLACKLOCK."

I am very happy to find that Dr. Blacklock's apparent uneasiness on the subject of scepticism was not on his own account (as I supposed), but from a benevolent concern for the happiness of mankind. With respect, however, to the question concerning poetry, and composing a dictionary, I am confident that my state of Dr. Johnson's position is accurate. One may misconceive the motive by which a person is induced to discuss a particular topic (as in the case of Dr. Blacklock's speaking of scepticism); but an assertion, like that made by Dr. Johnson, cannot be easily mistaken. And, indeed, it seems not very probable, that he who so pathetically laments the *drudgery* to which the unhappy lexicographer is doomed, and is known to have written his splendid imitation of Juvenal with astonishing rapidity, should have had "as much pleasure in writing a sheet of a dictionary as a sheet of poetry." Nor can I concur with the ingenious writer of the foregoing letter, in thinking it an axiom as evident as any in Euclid, that "poetry is of easier execution than lexicography." I have no doubt that Bailey, and the "mighty blunderbus of law," Jacob, wrote ten pages of their respective dictionaries with more ease than they could have written five pages of poetry.

If this book should again be reprinted, I shall, with the utmost readiness, correct any errors I may have committed, in stating conversations, provided it can be clearly shown to me that I have been inaccurate. But I am slow to believe (as I have elsewhere observed) that any man's

memory, at the distance of several years, can preserve facts or sayings with such fidelity as may be done by writing them down when they are recent: and I beg it may be remembered, that it is not upon *memory*, but upon what was *written at the time*, that the authenticity of my journal rests.—BOSWELL.

No. IX.

THE following verses, written by Sir Alexander (now Lord) Macdonald, and addressed and presented to Dr. Johnson, at Armidale, in the Isle of Sky, should have appeared in the proper place, if the authour of this Journal had been possessed of them; but this edition was almost printed off when he was accidentally furnished with a copy by a friend.—BOSWELL. [These are the verses referred to in p. 372, n. They have not been removed to the text, because Mr. Boswell did not think proper to do so in his subsequent editions, and because the Editor really does not profess to understand them. It seems hard to guess what Sir Alexander could have meant by presenting Dr. Johnson with such lines.—ED.]

Viator, o qui nostra per aequora
Visurus agros Skiaticos venis,
En te salutantes tributim
Undique conglomerantur oris.

Donaldiani,—quotquot in insulis
Compescit arctis limitibus mare ;
Alitque jamdudum, ac alendos
Piscibus indigenas fovēbit.

Ciere fluctus siste, Procelliger,
Nec tu laborans perge, precor, ratis,
Ne conjugem plangat marita,
Ne doleat soboles parentem.

Nec te vicissim pæniteat virum
Luxisse ;—vestro scinnus ut æstant
In corde luctantes dolores,
Cum feriant inopina corpora.

Quidni ! peremptum clade tuentibus
Plus semper illo qui moritur pati
Datur, doloris dum profundos
Pervia mens aperit recessus.

Valete luctus ;—hinc lacrymabiles
Arcete visus :—ibimus, ibimus
Superbienti qua theatro
Fingaliæ memorantur aulæ.

Illustris hospes ! mox spatia bere
Qua mens ruinæ ducta meatibus
Gaudebit explorare cætas
Buccina qua cecinit triumphos.

Audin ? resurgens spirat anhelitu
Dux usitato, suscitatur efficax
Poeta manes, ingruitque
Vi solitâ redivivus horror.

Ahæna quassans tela gravi manu
Sic ibat atrox Ossiani pater :
Quiescat urnâ, stet fidelis
Phersonius vigil ad favillam.

No. X.

[INSCRIPTION on the monument of Sir James Macdonald, Bart., in the church of Slate, and two letters from that young gentleman to his mother,—referred to in p. 373.

To the memory
Of SIR JAMES MACDONALD, Bart.

Who, in the flower of youth,
Had attained to so eminent a degree of knowledge
In mathematics, philosophy, languages,
And in every other branch of useful and polite
learning,

As few have acquired in a long life
Wholly devoted to study :

Yet to this erudition he joined,
What can rarely be found with it,

Great talents for business,
Great propriety of behaviour,
Great politeness of manners !

His eloquence was sweet, correct, and flowing ;

His memory vast and exact ;
His judgment strong and acute ;

All which endowments,
United with the most amiable temper
And every private virtue,

Procured him, not only in his own country,
But also from foreign nations,
The highest marks of esteem.

In the year of our Lord
1766,

The 25th of his life,

After a long and extremely painful illness,
Which he supported with admirable patience and
fortitude,

He died at Rome,

Where, notwithstanding the difference of religion,
Such extraordinary honours were paid to his
memory,

As had never graced that of any other British
subject,

Since the death of Sir Philip Sydney.

The fame he left behind him is the best consolation

To his afflicted family,

And to his countrymen in this isle,
For whose benefit he had planned
Many useful improvements,

Which his fruitful genius suggested,
And his active spirit promoted,
Under the sober direction

Of a clear and enlightened understanding.

Reader, bewail our loss,
And that of all Britain.

In testimony of her love,

And as the best return she can make
To her departed son,

For the constant tenderness and affection
Which, even to his last moments,

He showed for her,
His much afflicted mother,

The LADY MARGARET MACDONALD,
Daughter to the Earl of Eglington,

Erected this monument,
A. D. 1768.

This extraordinary young man, whom I had the pleasure of knowing intimately, having been deeply regretted by his country, the most minute particulars concerning him must be interesting to many.

I shall therefore insert his two last letters to his mother, Lady Margaret Macdonald, which her ladyship has been pleased to communicate to me.

SIR J. MACDONALD TO LADY MARGARET.
"Rome, 9th July, 1766.

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—Yesterday's post brought me your answer to the first letter in which I acquainted you of my illness. Your tenderness and concern upon that account are the same I have always experienced, and to which I have often owed my life. Indeed it never was in so great danger as it has been lately; and though it would have been a very great comfort to me to have had you near me, yet perhaps I ought to rejoice, on your account, that you had not the pain of such a spectacle. I have been now a week in Rome, and wish I could continue to give you the same good accounts of my recovery as I did in my last; but I must own that, for three days past, I have been in a very weak and miserable state, which however seems to give no uneasiness to my physician. My stomach has been greatly out of order, without any visible cause; and the palpitation does not decrease. I am told that my stomach will soon recover its tone, and that the palpitation must cease in time. So I am willing to believe; and with this hope support the little remains of spirits which I can be supposed to have, on the forty-seventh day of such an illness. Do not imagine I have relapsed; I only recover slower than I expected. If my letter is shorter than usual, the cause of it is a dose of physic, which has weakened me so much to-day, that I am not able to write a long letter. I will make up for it next post, and remain always your most sincerely affectionate son.
"J. MACDONALD."

He grew, however, gradually worse; and on the night before his death he wrote as follows from Frescati:

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—Though I did not mean to deceive you in my last letter from Rome, yet certainly you would have very little reason to conclude of the very great and constant danger I have gone through ever since that time. My life, which is still almost entirely desperate, did not at that time appear to me so, otherwise I should have represented, in its true colours, a fact which acquires very little horror by that means, and comes with redoubled force by deception. There is no circumstance of danger and pain of which I have not had the experience, for a continued series of above a fortnight; during which time I have settled my affairs, after my death, with as much distinctness as the hurry and the nature of the thing could admit of. In case of the worst, the Abbé Grant will be my executor in this part of the world, and Mr. Mackenzie in Scotland, where my object has been to make you and my younger brother as independent of the eldest as possible."—BOSWELL.

No. XI.

[MEMOIRS of his own Life, by the late General Macleod,—referred to in p. 383, and several subsequent notes.]

[1785.]

"Having often been highly entertained and instructed by the perusal of memoirs of men who

have lived in an interesting period, and who have borne some part in the transactions of their time, a thought has for some time possessed me of leaving to my family and friends an account of myself, and of those affairs in which I have been, or may hereafter be, engaged. My chief design, if I shall live to execute it, is to make my son acquainted with his father, to inform him of the rank and situation in which I found the family, which he should think himself born to raise and advance, and to encourage him, by my example, to persevere in the design of acquiring that station in the state to which our blood entitles him, but to which the local position of our ancestors has yet hindered us from attaining.

"My family is derived from the ancient royal stock of Denmark. In those unhappy times, when heroism was little better than piracy, and when the Danes first infested and then subdued England, my ancestor was invested with the tributary sovereignty of the Isle of Man. His history, the succession, or the share these princes of Man had in the predatory wars of that rude age, are lost in dark and vague tradition. The first fact, which seems clearly ascertained, is, that Leod, the son of the King of Man, on the conquest of that island by the English, in*, under the Earl of Derby, fled with his followers to the Hebrides. He probably found his countrymen there; and either by conquest, agreement, or alliance, possessed himself of that part of these isles now called Lewes and Harries.

"Leod had two sons, Tormod and Torquil. The first married the daughter of a powerful chief in the Isle of Skye; he was a warrior, and of great prowess; his father gave or left to him Harries; and, by dint of his valour and marriage, he possessed himself of a large domain in Skye; which, together with Harries, I, his lineal successor, inherited; Torquil and his posterity possessed Lewes; which, with other acquisitions, they have since lost, and that family is now represented by Macleod of Rasay. From Leod, whose name is held in high traditional veneration, all his descendants, and many of his followers, have taken the patronymic of Macleod. My ancestors, whose family-seat has always been at Duuvgan, seem to have lived, for some centuries, as might be expected from men who had gained their lands by their swords, and who were placed in islands of no easy access. They had frequent wars and alliances with their neighbours in Skye, by which it appears they neither gained nor lost; they frequently attacked or assisted the petty kings in Ireland, or the chiefs on the coast of Scotland, but they neither increased nor diminished their own possessions. In the reign of King David of Scotland, they at last took a charter for their lands, from which time they seem long to have practised the patriarchal life, beloved by their people, unconnected with the government of Scotland, and undisturbed by it. When James the Sixth was about to take possession of the throne of England, Macleod, called *Roderick More*, from his great size and strength¹, went to Edinburgh to pay his homage. It is remarkable, that this chieftain was an adept in Latin, had travelled on the Continent, and spoke French with fluency, but could neither

¹ [Mr. Boswell states, *ante*, p. 390, that he was so called, not from his size, but his spirit.—Ed.]

utter nor understand the Scottish or English dialect. Two younger sons of Roderick led a body of Macleods to the assistance of Charles the Second [First], who knighted them, and they, like their unfortunate sovereign, escaped, with the loss of their followers, from the fatal field of Worcester. From John, their elder brother, I am descended, his son being an orphan minor, when his uncles led the clan to battle. It is singular, that my great grandfather, by his marriage with _____, descended from the family of Athol, has mixed with the blood of Leod and that of the Earl of Derby, who drove him from Man; and that I am thus, probably, the descendant of the invading earl and the expelled prince.

“My grandfather, *Norman*, was an only and posthumous son; by the fugality of his ancestors, and the savings of his minority, he found our ancient inheritance in the most prosperous condition. I knew him in his advanced age; and from himself, and many other friends, have heard much of the transactions of his life. With a body singularly well made and active, he possessed very lively parts. The circumstances of the times introduced him to the public with great advantage; and, till the unfortunate 1745, he was much considered. An attachment to the race of Stuart then prevailed in Scotland; and many of the leading men in England still favoured it. His independent fortune and promising character early obtained him the representation in parliament of Invernesshire, his native county. The numbers and fidelity of his clan, and his influence with his neighbours, were known; and I have reason to believe that many allurements were held out to seduce him into engagements, which were then considered only as dangerous, but neither guilty nor dishonourable.

“It would be neither pleasing nor useful to inquire how deeply he was concerned in the prelude to the rebellion; nor, indeed, have I been able to learn. It is certain that, in the year 1746, he raised a company of his vassals to serve under my father, his only son, in Lord Loudon's regiment, and afterwards appeared, with six hundred of his clan; in defence of the present royal family. From this period he was unfortunate; the Jacobites treated him as an apostate, and the successful party did not reward his loyalty. The former course of his life had been expensive; his temper was convivial and hospitable; and he continued to impair his fortune till his death, in 1772. He was the first of our family who was led, by the change of manners, to leave the patriarchal government of his clan, and to mix in the pursuits and ambition of the world. It was not then common to see the representatives of the Highland tribes endeavouring to raise themselves to eminence in the nation by the arts of eloquence, or regular military gradation; they were contented with their private opulence and local dignity, or trusted their rank in the state to the antiquity of their families, or their provincial influence. Had Norman felt in his youth the necessity of professional or parliamentary exertions, and had he received a suitable education, he would not have left his family in distress; but the excellence of his parts and the vigour of his mind would have attained a station more advantageous for the flight of his successors.

“I was born on the 4th day of March, 1754,

at Brodie-house, the seat of my maternal grandfather, Brodie of Brodie, Lyon King at Arms. When I attained the age of eleven, my father, with his family, went to reside at Beverley, in Yorkshire, where, in the year following, he died, and was buried in the minister. I was placed under the care of Mr. George Stuart, one of the professors in the college of Edinburgh; and the abilities, care, and maternal love of my surviving parent left me no other reason to regret my father, than that which nature dictates for a brave worthy, and so near relation.

“Under Mr. Stuart, and in the sight of my grandfather, who lived near Edinburgh, I continued to pursue an excellent and classical education for near five years; in this time I obtained a competent knowledge of Latin and French; and I acquired a taste for reading, and a desire of general knowledge which has never left me. I was permitted to pay a visit to my mother, who had settled in Hampshire, for the education of her daughters; after which I was summoned to the University of St. Andrew's by my grandfather, who had taken a house in the neighbourhood. Here, for one year, I attended the lectures of Dr. Watson (author of the History of Philip the Second) on logic, rhetoric, and belles lettres; and those of Dr. Wilkie, author of the *Epigoniad*, on Natural Philosophy: I also read Italian. Next summer I again visited my mother; and was sent in the winter to University College, in Oxford. My tutor, Mr. George Strahan, zealously endeavoured to supply my deficiency in Greek, and I made some progress; but approaching now to manhood, having got a tincture of more entertaining and pleasing knowledge, and a taste for the Latin, French, and English classics, I could never sufficiently labour again as a schoolboy, which I now and will for ever lament.

“I have no title to impose myself on my son as a learned man; my reading has been general and diffuse; a scholar would very justly call it superficial; but if superficial knowledge has contributed so much to my happiness, how fondly should I recommend larger and more solid attainments to *my future self!*

“In the year 1771, a strange passion for emigrating to America seized many of the middling and poorer sort of Highlanders. The change of manners in their chieftains, since 1745, produced effects which were evidently the proximate cause of this unnatural dereliction of their own, and appetite for a foreign, country. The laws which deprived the Highlanders of their arms and garb would certainly have destroyed the feudal military powers of the chieftains; but the fond attachment of the people to their patriarchs would have yielded to no laws. They were themselves the destroyers of that pleasing influence. Sucked into the vortex of the nation, and allured to the capitals, they degenerated from patriarchs and chieftains to landlords; and they became as anxious for increase of rent as the new-made lairds—the *novi homines*—the mercantile purchasers of the Lowlands. Many tenants, whose fathers, for generations, had enjoyed their little spots, were removed for higher bidders. Those who agreed, at any price, for their ancient *lares*, were forced to pay an increased rent, without being taught any new method to increase their

produce. In the Hebrides, especially, this change was not gradual but sudden,—and sudden and baleful were its effects. The people, freed by the laws from the power of the chieftains, and loosened by the chieftains themselves from the bonds of affection, turned their eyes and their hearts to new scenes. America seemed to open its arms to receive every discontented Briton. To those possessed of very small sums of money, it offered large possessions of uncultivated but excellent land, in a preferable climate;—to the poor, it held out high wages for labour;—to all, it promised property and independence. Many artful emissaries, who had an interest in the transportation or settlement of emigrants, industriously displayed these temptations; and the desire of leaving their country, for the new land of promise, became furious and epidemic. Like all other popular furies, it infected not only those who had reason to complain of their situation or injuries, but those who were most favoured and most comfortably settled. In the beginning of 1772, my grandfather, who had always been a most beneficent and beloved chieftain, but whose necessities had lately induced him to raise his rents, became much alarmed by this new spirit which had reached his clan. Aged and infirm, he was unable to apply the remedy in person;—he devolved the task on me; and gave me for an assistant our nearest male relation, Colonel Macleod, of Talisker. The duty imposed on us was difficult: the estate was loaded with debt, incumbered with a numerous issue from himself and my father, and charged with some jointures. His tenants had lost, in that severe winter, above a third of their cattle, which constituted their substance; their spirits were soured by their losses, and the late augmentations of rent; and their ideas of America were inflamed by the strongest representations, and the example of their neighbouring clans. My friend and I were empowered to grant such deductions in the rents as might seem necessary and reasonable; but we found it terrible to decide between the justice to creditors, the necessities of an ancient family which we ourselves represented, and the claims and distresses of an impoverished tenantry. To God I owe, and I trust will ever pay, the most fervent thanks that this terrible task enabled us to lay the foundation of circumstances (though then unlooked for) that I hope will prove the means not only of the rescue, but of the aggrandisement of our family. I was young, and had the warmth of the liberal passions natural to that age; I called the people of the different districts of our estate together; I laid before them the situation of our family—its debts, its burthens, its distress; I acknowledged the hardships under which they laboured; I described and reminded them of the manner in which they and their ancestors had lived with mine; I combated their passion for America by a real account of the dangers and hardships they might encounter there; I besought them to love their young chieftain, and to renew with him the ancient manners; I promised to live among them; I threw myself upon them; I recalled to their remembrance an ancestor who had also found his estate in ruin, and whose memory was held in the highest veneration; I desired every district to point out some of their oldest and most

respected men, to settle with me every claim; and I promised to do every thing for their relief which in reason I could. My worthy relation ably seconded me, and our labour was not in vain. We gave considerable abatements in the rents: few emigrated; and the clan conceived the most lively attachment to me, which they most effectually manifested, as will be seen in the course of these memoirs. When we were engaged in these affairs, my grandfather died, and was buried at St. Andrew's. I returned to Hampshire, and easily prevailed with my excellent mother and sisters to repair, in performance of my promise to my clan, to Dunvegan. In my first visit to Skye, Mr. Pennant arrived there; and he has kindly noticed in his tour the exertions we then made.

“I remained at home with my family and clan till the end of 1774; but I confess that I consider this as the most gloomy period of my life. Educated in a liberal manner, fired with ambition, fond of society, I found myself in confinement in a remote corner of the world; without any hope of extinguishing the debts of my family, or of ever emerging from poverty and obscurity. A long life of painful economy seemed my only method to perform the duty I owed to my ancestors and posterity; and the burden was so heavy, that only partial relief could be hoped even from that melancholy sacrifice. I had also the torment of seeing my mother and sisters, who were fitted for better scenes, immured with me; and their affectionate patience only added to my sufferings.

“In 1774¹ Dr. Samuel Johnson, with his companion, Mr. Boswell, visited our dreary regions: it was my good fortune to be enabled to practise the virtue of hospitality on this occasion. The learned traveller spent a fortnight at Dunvegan; and indeed amply repaid our cares to please him by the most instructive and entertaining conversation. I procured for him the company of the most learned clergymen and sagacious inhabitants of the islands; and every other assistance within our power to the inquiries he wished to make.

“The nature of those inquiries, and the extraordinary character of Dr. Johnson, may make some account of them from me agreeable.

“His principal design was to find proofs of the inauthenticity of Ossian's poems; and in his inquiries it became very soon evident that he wished not to find them genuine. I was present in a part of his search; his decision is now well known; and I will very freely relate what I know of them. Dr. McQueen, a very learned minister in Skye, attended him, and was the person whom he most questioned, and through whom he proposed his questions to others.

“The first question he insisted on was whether any person had ever seen the Poems of Ossian in manuscript, as the translator had found them; how and where these manuscripts had been preserved; and whether faith was given to them by the Highlanders? I must avow that, from the

¹ [The reader will perhaps agree with the editor that this little error of date adds to the interest of these memoirs: it is an additional proof that they were not studied or corrected for the public eye. It must be remembered that Mr. Boswell's Tour was not published when this was written.—ED.]

answers given to these questions, he had no right to believe the manuscripts genuine. In this he exulted much; and formed an unjust conclusion, that because the translator had been guilty of an imposition, the whole poems were impositions. Dr. McQueen brought him, in my opinion, very full proofs of his error. He produced several gentlemen who had heard repeated in Erse long passages of these poems¹, which they averred did coincide with the translation; and he even procured a person who recited some lines himself. Had Dr. Johnson's time permitted, many proofs of the same nature would have been adduced; but he did not wish for them. My opinion of this controversy is that the poems certainly did exist in detached pieces and fragments; that few of them had been committed to paper before the time of the translator; that he collected most of them from persons who could recite them, or parts of them; that he arranged and connected the parts, and perhaps made imitative additions for the sake of connexion; that those additions cannot² be large or numerous; and that the foundations and genuine remains of the poems are sufficiently authentic for every purpose of taste or criticism. It might be wished, for the sake of squeamish critics, that the translator had given them to the world as he found them; though, as a reader, I own myself delighted with Fingal and Temora, in their present appearance.

"The most sceptical writers on other subjects never applied the laws of evidence more strictly than Dr. Johnson did in his inquiries about Ossian: he was not so precise in other matters. The ridiculous notion of the *second-sight*, or of supernatural visions, was not disrelished by him. He listened to all the tables of that nature which abound in the Highlands; and, though no one fact was so well vouched as to command its particular belief, he held that the thing was not impossible; and that the number of facts alleged formed a favourable presumption.

"No human being is genuine in anything: the mind which is filled with just devotion is apt to sink into superstition; and, on the other hand, the genius which detects holy imposition frequently slides into presumptuous infidelity."

[Thus abruptly ends a paper which every reader will wish had been longer.—Ed.]

No. XII.

[Account of the escape of the young Pretender, drawn up by Mr. Boswell,—*referred to (sub 13th Sept. 1773) p. 387.*]

Prince Charles Edward, after the battle of Culloden, was conveyed to what is called the

¹ [We readily forgive Macleod his desire to save as much as possible from the wreck of Ossian; and subsequent publications have certainly adduced some passages of Macpherson's version which have been found in the original Erse; but we can find in Boswell (who probably quotes all that Johnson knew) but one such passage, and that passage was accompanied by two others; one of which was *something like*, and the other *nothing like* Macpherson's version.—Ed.]

² [Why not? All the evidence goes to show that they formed the *bulk*, though, perhaps, not the spirit of the work.—Ed.]

Long Island, where he lay for some time concealed. But intelligence having been obtained where he was, and a number of troops having come in quest of him, it became absolutely necessary for him to quit that country without delay. Miss Flora Macdonald, then a young lady, animated by what she thought the sacred principle of loyalty, offered, with the magnanimity of a heroine, to accompany him in an open boat to Sky, though the coast they were to quit was guarded by ships. He dressed himself in women's clothes, and passed as her supposed maid, by the name of Betty Bourke, an Irish girl. They got off undiscovered, though several shots were fired to bring them to, and landed at Mugstot, the seat of Sir Alexander Macdonald. Sir Alexander was then at Fort Augustus, with the Duke of Cumberland; but his lady was at home. Prince Charles took his post upon a hill near the house. Flora Macdonald waited on Lady Margaret³, and acquainted her of the enterprise in which she was engaged. Her ladyship, whose active benevolence was ever seconded by superior talents, showed a perfect presence of mind and readiness of invention, and at once settled that Prince Charles should be conducted to old *Rasay*, who was himself concealed with some select friends. The plan was instantly communicated to *Kingsburgh*, who despatched to the hill to inform the wanderer, and carry him refreshments. When *Kingsburgh* approached, he started up, and advanced, holding a large knotted stick, and in appearance ready to knock him down, till he said, "I am Macdonald of Kingsburgh, come to serve your highness." The wanderer answered, "It is well," and was satisfied with the plan.

Flora Macdonald dined with Lady Margaret, at whose table there sat an officer of the army, stationed here with a party of soldiers, to watch for Prince Charles in case of his flying to the Isle of Sky. She afterwards often laughed in good humour with this gentleman, on her having so well deceived him.

After dinner, Flora Macdonald on horseback and her supposed maid, and *Kingsburgh*, with a servant carrying some linen, all on foot, proceeded towards that gentleman's house. Upon the road was a small rivulet which they were obliged to cross. The wanderer, forgetting his assumed sex, that his clothes might not be wet, held them up a great deal too high. *Kingsburgh* mentioned this to him, observing, it might make a discovery. He said he would be more careful for the future. He was as good as his word; for the next brook they crossed, he did not hold up his clothes at all, but let them float upon the water. He was very

³ [Though her husband took arms for the house of Hanover, she was suspected of being an ardent Jacobite, and, on that supposition, Flora Macdonald guided the Pretender to Mugstot.—Ed.] [On the subject of Lady Margaret Macdonald, it is impossible to omit an anecdote which does much honour to Frederick, Prince of Wales. By some chance Lady Margaret had been presented to the Princess, who, when she learnt what share she had taken in the Chevalier's escape, hastened to excuse herself to the prince, and explain to him that she was not aware that Lady Margaret was the person who had harboured the fugitive. The Prince's answer was noble: "And would you not have done the same, madam, had he come to you, as to her, in distress and danger? I hope—I am sure you would!"—WALTER SCOTT.]

awkward in his female dress. His size was so large, and his strides so great, that some women whom they met reported that they had seen a very big woman, who looked like a man in woman's clothes, and that perhaps it was (as they expressed themselves) the *Prince*, after whom so much search was making.

At Kingsburgh he met with a most cordial reception; seemed gay at supper, and after it indulged himself in a cheerful glass with his worthy host. As he had not had his clothes off for a long time, the comfort of a good bed was highly relished by him, and he slept soundly till next day at one o'clock.

The *mistress* of Corrichatachin told me, that in the forenoon she went into her father's room, who was also in bed, and suggested to him her apprehensions that a party of the military might come up, and that his guest and he had better not remain here too long. Her father said, "Let the poor man repose himself after his fatigues; and as for me, I care not, though they take off this old gray head ten or eleven years sooner than I should die in the course of nature." He then wrapped himself in the bed-clothes, and again fell fast asleep.

On the afternoon of that day, the wanderer, still in the same dress, set out for Portree, with Flora Macdonald and a man-servant. His shoes being very bad, *Kingsburgh* provided him with a new pair, and taking up the old ones, said, "I will faithfully keep them till you are safely settled at St. James's. I will then introduce myself by shaking them at you, to put you in mind of your night's entertainment and protection under my roof." He smiled, and said, "Be as good as your word!" *Kingsburgh* kept the shoes as long as he lived. After his death, a zealous jacobite gentleman gave twenty guineas for them.

Old Mrs. Macdonald, after her guest had left the house, took the sheets in which he had lain, folded them carefully, and charged her daughter that they should be kept unwashed, and that, when she died, her body should be wrapped in them as a winding sheet. Her will was religiously observed.

Upon the road to Portree, Prince Charles changed his dress, and put on man's clothes again; a tartan short coat and waistcoat, with phillibeg and short hose, a plaid, and a wig and bonnet.

Mr. Donald McDonald, called *Donald Roy*, had been sent express to the present *Rasay*, then the young laird, who was at that time at his sister's house, about three miles from Portree, attending his brother, Dr. Macleod, who was recovering of a wound he had received at the battle of Culloden. Mr. McDonald communicated to young *Rasay* the plan of conveying the wanderer to where old *Rasay* was; but was told that old *Rasay* had fled to Knoidart, a part of *Glengarry's* estate. There was then a dilemma what should be done. *Donald Roy* proposed that he should conduct the wanderer to the main land; but young *Rasay* thought it too dangerous at that time, and said it would be better to conceal him in the island of *Rasay*, till old *Rasay* could be informed where he was, and give his advice what was best. But the difficulty was, how to get him

to *Rasay*. They could not trust a Portree crew, and all the *Rasay* boats had been destroyed, or carried off by the military, except two belonging to Malcolm M'Leod, which he had concealed somewhere.

Dr. Macleod being informed of this difficulty, said he would risk his life once more for Prince Charles; and it having occurred, that there was a little boat upon a fresh water lake in the neighbourhood, young *Rasay* and Dr. Macleod, with the help of some women, brought it to the sea, by extraordinary exertion, across a Highland mile of land, one half of which was bog, and the other a steep precipice.

These gallant brothers, with the assistance of one little boy, rowed the small boat to *Rasay*, where they were to endeavour to find Captain M'Leod, as Malcolm was then called, and get one of his good boats, with which they might return to Portree, and receive the wanderer; or, in case of not finding him, they were to make the small boat serve, though the danger was considerable.

Fortunately, on their first landing, they found their cousin Malcolm, who, with the utmost alacrity, got ready one of his boats, with two strong men, John M'Kenzie, and Donald M'Friar. Malcolm, being the oldest man, and most cautious, said, that as young *Rasay* had not hitherto appeared in the unfortunate business, he ought not to run any risk; but that Dr. Macleod and himself, who were already publicly engaged, should go on this expedition. Young *Rasay* answered, with an oath, that he would go, at the risk of his life and fortune. "In God's name then," said Malcolm, "let us proceed." The two boatmen, however, now stopped short, till they should be informed of their destination; and M'Kenzie declared he would not move an oar till he knew where they were going. Upon which they were both sworn to secrecy; and the business being imparted to them, they were eager to put off to sea without loss of time. The boat soon landed about half a mile from the inn at Portree.

All this was negotiated before the wanderer got forward to Portree. Malcolm Macleod, and M'Friar, were despatched to look for him. In a short time he appeared, and went into the publick house. Here *Donald Roy*, whom he had seen at Mugstot, received him, and informed him of what had been concerted. He wanted silver for a guinea, but the landlord had only thirteen shillings. He was going to accept of this for his guinea; but *Donald Roy* very judiciously observed, that it would discover him to be some great man; so he desisted. He slipped out of the house, leaving his fair protectress, whom he never again saw; and Malcolm M'Leod was presented to him by *Donald Roy*, as a captain in his army. Young *Rasay* and Dr. Macleod had waited, in impatient anxiety, in the boat. When he came, their names were announced to him. He would not permit the usual ceremonies of respect, but saluted them as his equals.

Donald Roy staid in Sky, to be in readiness to get intelligence, and give an alarm in case the troops should discover the retreat to *Rasay*; and Prince Charles was then conveyed in a boat to that island in the night. He slept a little upon the passage, and they landed about daybreak. There

was some difficulty in accommodating him with a lodging, as almost all the houses in the island had been burnt by the soldiery. They repaired to a little hut, which some shepherds had lately built, and having prepared it as well as they could, and made a bed of heath for the stranger, they kindled a fire, and partook of some provisions which had been sent with him from Kingsburgh. It was observed, that he would not taste wheat-bread, or brandy, while oat-bread and whisky lasted; "for these," said he, "are my own country bread and drink." This was very engaging to the Highlanders.

Young *Rasay* being the only person of the company that durst appear with safety, he went in quest of something fresh for them to eat; but though he was amidst his own cows, sheep, and goats, he could not venture to take any of them for fear of a discovery, but was obliged to supply himself by stealth. He therefore caught a kid, and brought it to the hut in his plaid, and it was killed and dressed, and furnished them a meal which they relished much. The distressed wanderer, whose health was now a good deal impaired by hunger, fatigue, and watching, slept a long time, but seemed to be frequently disturbed. Malcolm told me he would start from broken slumbers, and speak to himself in different languages, French, Italian, and English. I must however acknowledge, that it is highly probable that my worthy friend Malcolm did not know precisely the difference between French and Italian. One of his expressions in English was, "O God! poor Scotland."

While they were in the hut, M'Kenzie and M'Friar, the two boatmen, were placed as sentinels upon different eminences; and one day an incident happened, which must not be omitted. There was a man wandering about the island, selling tobacco. Nobody knew him, and he was suspected to be a spy. M'Kenzie came running to the hut, and told that this suspected person was approaching. Upon which the three gentlemen, young *Rasay*, Dr. Macleod, and Malcolm, held a council of war upon him, and were unanimously of opinion that he should instantly be put to death. Prince Charles, at once assuming a grave and even severe countenance, said, "God forbid that we should take away a man's life, who may be innocent, while we can preserve our own." The gentlemen however persisted in their resolution, while he as strenuously continued to take the merciful side. John M'Kenzie, who sat watching at the door of the hut, and overheard the debate, said in Erse, "Well, well; he must be shot. You are the king, but we are the parliament, and will do what we choose." Prince Charles, seeing the gentlemen smile, asked what the man had said, and being told it in English, he observed that he was a clever fellow, and, notwithstanding the perilous situation in which he was, laughed loud and heartily. Luckily the unknown person did not perceive that there were people in the hut, at least did not come to it, but walked on past it, unknowing of his risk. It was afterwards found out that he was one of the Highland army, who was himself in danger. Had he come to them, they were resolved to despatch him; for, as Malcolm said to me, "We could not keep him with

us, and we durst not let him go. In such a situation, I would have shot my brother, if I had not been sure of him." John M'Kenzie was at *Rasay's* house when we were there. About eighteen years before, he hurt one of his legs when dancing, and being obliged to have it cut off, he was now going about with a wooden leg. The story of his being a *member of parliament* is not yet forgotten. I took him out a little way from the house, gave him a shilling to drink *Rasay's* health, and led him into a detail of the particulars which I have just related. With less foundation, some writers have traced the idea of a parliament, and of the British constitution, in rude and early times. I was curious to know if he had really heard, or understood, any thing of that subject, which, had he been a greater man, would probably have been eagerly maintained. "Why, John," said I, "did you think the king should be controlled by a parliament?" He answered, "I thought, sir, there were many voices against one."

The conversation then turning on the times, the wanderer said, that, to be sure, the life he had led of late was a very hard one; but he would rather live in the way he now did, for ten years, than fall into the hands of his enemies. The gentlemen asked him, what he thought his enemies would do with him, should he have the misfortune to fall into their hands. He said, he did not believe they would dare to take his life publicly, but he dreaded being privately destroyed by poison or assassination. He was very particular in his inquiries about the wound which Dr. Macleod had received at the battle of Culloden, from a ball which entered at one shoulder, and went cross to the other. The doctor happened still to have on the coat which he wore on that occasion. He mentioned, that he himself had his horse shot under him at Culloden; that the ball hit the horse about two inches from his knee, and made him so unruly that he was obliged to change him for another. He threw out some reflections on the conduct of the disastrous affair at Culloden, saying, however, that perhaps it was rash in him to do so. I am now convinced that his suspicions were groundless; for I have had a good deal of conversation upon the subject with my very worthy and ingenious friend, Mr. Andrew Lumisden, who was under secretary to Prince Charles, and afterwards principal secretary to his father at Rome, who, he assured me, was perfectly satisfied both of the abilities and honour of the generals who commanded the Highland army on that occasion. Mr. Lumisden has written an account of the three battles in 1745-6, at once accurate and classical. Talking of the different Highland corps, the gentlemen who were present wished to have his opinion which were the best soldiers. He said, he did not like comparisons among those corps: they were all best.

He told his conductors, he did not think it advisable to remain long in any one place; and that he expected a French ship to come for him to Loehbroom, among the Maekenzies. It then

¹ This old Scottish *member of parliament*, I am informed, is still living (1785).—BOSWELL.

was proposed to carry him in one of Malcolm's boats to Lochbroom, though the distance was fifteen leagues coastwise. But he thought this would be too dangerous, and desired that, at any rate, they might first endeavour to obtain intelligence. Upon which young *Rasay* wrote to his friend, Mr. M'Kenzie of Applecross, but received an answer, that there was no appearance of any French ship.

It was therefore resolved that they should return to Sky, which they did, and landed in Strath, where they reposed in a cow-house belonging to Mr. Niccolson of Scorbreck. The sea was very rough, and the boat took in a good deal of water. The wanderer asked if there was danger, as he was not used to such a vessel. Upon being told there was not, he sung an Erse song with much vivacity. He had by this time acquired a good deal of the Erse language.

Young *Rasay* was now despatched to where *Donald Roy* was, that they might get all the intelligence they could; and the wanderer, with much earnestness, charged Dr. Macleod to have a boat ready, at a certain place about seven miles off, as he said he intended it should carry him upon a matter of great consequence; and gave the doctor a case¹, containing a silver spoon, knife, and fork, saying, "Keep you that till I see you," which the doctor understood to be two days from that time. But all these orders were only blinds: for he had another plan in his head, but wisely thought it safest to trust his secrets to no more persons than was absolutely necessary. Having then desired Malcolm to walk with him a little way from the house, he soon opened his mind, saying, "I deliver myself to you. Conduct me to the Laird of M'Kinnon's country." Malcolm objected that it was very dangerous, as so many parties of soldiers were in motion. He answered, "There is nothing now to be done without danger." He then said, that Malcolm must be the master, and he the servant; so he took the bag, in which his linen was put up, and carried it on his shoulder; and observing that his waistcoat, which was of scarlet tatan, with a gold twist button, was finer than Malcolm's, which was of a plain ordinary tatan, he put on Malcolm's waistcoat, and gave him his; remarking at the same time, that it did not look well that the servant should be better dressed than the master.

Malcolm, though an excellent walker, found himself excelled by Prince Charles, who told him he should not much mind the parties that were looking for him, were he once but a musquet shot from them; but that he was somewhat afraid of the Highlanders who were against him. He was well used to walking in Italy, in pursuit of game; and he was even now so keen a sportsman that, having observed some partridges, he was going to take a shot; but Malcolm cautioned him against it, observing that the firing might be heard by the tenders who were hovering upon the coast.

As they proceeded through the mountains,

¹ [The case with the silver spoon, knife, and fork, given by the Chevalier to Dr. Macleod, came into the hands of Mary, Lady Clerk of Penicuik, who intrusted me with the honorable commission of presenting them, in her ladyship's name, to his present majesty, upon his visit to Scotland.—WALTER SCOTT.]

taking many a circuit to avoid any houses, Malcolm, to try his resolution, asked him what they should do, should they fall in with a party of soldiers: he answered, "Fight, to be sure!" Having asked Malcolm if he should be known in his present dress, and Malcolm having replied he would, he said, "Then I'll blacken my face with powder." "That (said Malcolm) would discover you at once." "Then (said he), I must be put in the greatest dishabille possible." So he pulled off his wig, tied a handkerchief round his head, and put his nightcap over it, tore the ruffles from his shirt, took the buckles out of his shoes, and made Malcolm fasten them with strings; but still Malcolm thought he would be known. "I have so odd a face (said he), that no man ever saw me but he would know me again."

He seemed unwilling to give credit to the horrid narrative of men being massacred in cold blood, after victory had declared for the army commanded by the Duke of Cumberland. He could not allow himself to think that a general could be so barbarous.

When they came within two miles of M'Kinnon's house, Malcolm asked if he chose to see the laird. "No (said he), by no means. I know M'Kinnon to be as good and as honest a man as any in the world, but he is not fit for my purpose at present. You must conduct me to some other house; but let it be a gentleman's house." Malcolm then determined that they should go to the house of his brother-in-law, Mr. John M'Kinnon, and from thence be conveyed to the main land of Scotland, and claim the assistance of Macdonald of Scotchouse. The wanderer at first objected to this, because *Scothouse* was cousin to a person of whom he had suspicions. But he acquiesced in Malcolm's opinion.

When they were near Mr. John M'Kinnon's house, they met a man of the name of Ross, who had been a private soldier in the Highland army. He fixed his eyes steadily on the wanderer in his disguise, and having at once recognized him, he clapped his hands, and exclaimed, "Alas! is this the case?" Finding that there was now a discovery, Malcolm asked "What's to be done?" "Swear him to secrecy," answered Prince Charles. Upon which Malcolm drew his dirk, and on the naked blade made him take a solemn oath, that he would say nothing of his having seen the wanderer, till his escape should be made public.

Malcolm's sister, whose house they reached pretty early in the morning, asked him who the person was that was along with him. He said it was one Lewis Caw, from Crieff, who, being a fugitive like himself, for the same reason, he had engaged him as his servant, but that he had fallen sick. "Poor man! (said she) I pity him. At the same time my heart warms to a man of his appearance." Her husband was gone a little way from home; but was expected every minute to return. She set down to her brother a plentiful Highland breakfast. Prince Charles acted the servant very well, sitting at a respectful distance, with his bonnet off. Malcolm then said to him, "Mr. Caw, you have as much need of this as I have; there is enough for us both: you had better draw nearer and share with me." Upon which he rose, made

a profound bow, sat down at table with his supposed master, and ate very heartily. After this, there came in an old woman, who, after the mode of ancient hospitality, brought warm water and washed Malcolm's feet. He desired her to wash the feet of the poor man who attended him. She at first seemed averse to this, from pride, as thinking him beneath her, and in the periphrastick language of the Highlanders and the Irish, said warmly, "Though I wash your father's son's feet, why should I wash his father's son's feet?" She was however persuaded to do it.

They then went to bed, and slept for some time; and when Malcolm awaked, he was told that Mr. John M'Kinnon, his brother-in-law, was in sight. He sprang out to talk to him before he should see Prince Charles. After saluting him, Malcolm, pointing to the sea, said, "What, John, if the prince should be prisoner on board one of those tenders?" "God forbid!" replied John. "What if we had him here?" said Malcolm. "I wish we had," answered John; "we should take care of him." "Well, John," said Malcolm, "he is in your house." John, in a transport of joy, wanted to run directly in, and pay his obeisance; but Malcolm stopped him, saying, "Now is your time to behave well, and do nothing that can discover him." John composed himself, and having sent away all his servants upon different errands, he was introduced into the presence of his guest, and was then desired to go and get ready a boat lying near his house, which, though but a small leaky one, they resolved to take, rather than go to the Laird of M'Kinnon. John M'Kinnon, however, thought otherwise; and upon his return told them, that his chief and Lady M'Kinnon were coming in the laird's boat. Prince Charles said to his trusty Malcolm, "I am sorry for this, but must make the best of it." M'Kinnon then walked up from the shore, and did homage to the wanderer. His lady waited in a cave, to which they all repaired, and were entertained with cold meat and wine. Mr. Malcolm M'Leod being now superseded by the Laird of M'Kinnon, desired leave to return, which was granted him, and Prince Charles wrote a short note, which he subscribed James Thompson, informing his friends that he had got away from Sky, and thanking them for their kindness; and he desired this might be speedily conveyed to young *Rasay* and Dr. Macleod, that they might not wait longer in expectation of seeing him again. He bade a cordial adieu to Malcolm, and insisted on his accepting of a silver stock-buckle, and ten guineas from his purse, though, as Malcolm told me, it did not appear to contain above forty. Malcolm at first begged to be excused, saying, that he had a few guineas at his service; but Prince Charles answered, "You will have need of money. I shall get enough when I come upon the main land."

The Laird of M'Kinnon then conveyed him to the opposite coast of Knoidart. Old *Rasay*, to whom intelligence had been sent, was crossing at the same time to Sky; but as they did not know of each other, and each had apprehensions, the two boats kept aloof.

These are the particulars which I have collected concerning the extraordinary concealment and

escapes of Prince Charles, in the Hebrides. He was often in imminent danger. The troops traced him from the Long Island, across Sky, to Portree, but there lost him.

Here I stop,—having received no farther authentic information of his fatigues and perils before he escaped to France. Kings and subjects may both take a lesson of moderation from the melancholy fate of the house of Stuart; that kings may not suffer degradation and exile, and subjects may not be harassed by the evils of a disputed succession.

Let me close the scene on that unfortunate house with the elegant and pathetic reflections of Voltaire, in his *Histoire Generale*.

"Que les hommes privés (says that brilliant writer, speaking of Prince Charles) qui se croyent malheureux, jettent les yeux sur ce prince et ses ancêtres."

In another place he thus sums up the sad story of the family in general:

"il n'y a aucun exemple dans l'histoire d'une maison si long tems infortunée. Le premier des Rois d'Ecosse, qui eut le nom de Jacques, après avoir été dix-huit ans prisonnier en Angleterre, mourut assassiné, avec sa femme, par la main de ses sujets. Jacques II. son fils, fut tué à vingt-neuf ans en combattant contre les Anglois. Jacques III. mis un prison par son peuple, fut tué ensuite par les revoltés, dans une bataille. Jacques IV. périt dans un combat qu'il perdit. Marie Stuart, sa petite fille, chassée, de son trône, fugitive en Angleterre, ayant languï dix-huit ans en prison, se vit condamnée à mort par des juges Anglois, et eut la tête tranchée. Charles I. petit fils de Marie, Roi d'Ecosse et d'Angleterre, vendu par les Ecossois, et jugé à mort par les Anglois, mourut sur un échaffaut dans la place publique. Jacques, son fils, septième du nom, et deuxième en Angleterre, fut chassé de ses trois royaumes; et pour comble de malheur on contesta à son fils sa naissance; le fils ne tenta de remonter sur le trône de ces pères, que pour faire périr ses amis par des boureaux; et nous avons vu le Prince Charles Edouard, réunissant en vain les vertus de ses pères, et le courage du Roy Jean Sobieski, son ayeul maternel, exécuter les exploits et essayer les malheurs les plus incroyables. Si quelque chose justifie ceux qui croyent une fatalité à laquelle rien ne peut se soustraire, c'est cette suite continuelle de malheurs qui a persecuté la maison de Stuart, pendant plus de troiscent années."

[The foregoing account is by no means so full, or so curious, as might have been expected from Mr. Boswell's activity of inquiry, and his means of information. It relates only to a few days of the Pretender's adventures, which, however, lasted five months. Even of Miss Flora Macdonald it tells less than had been already in print forty years before Mr. Boswell's publication. It does not say *who* she was, nor *when* she met the prince, nor *why* she was selected or induced to interfere, and, in short, tells as little as possible of her personal share in the events. We should particularly have liked to know, from her own report, the particulars of her examination and re-

ception in London. The reader who may be curious to know more of the details of the Pretender's escape will find them in the *Gent. Mag.* for 1747, p. 531, 638; in the little volume before referred to, called *Ascanius*; and in a *journal* in the second volume of the *Lockhart Papers*. —Ed.]

No. XIII.

[ARGUMENT against Dr. Memis's complaint that he was styled "*doctor of medicine*" instead of "*physician*,"—referred to in p. 529.]

"There are but two reasons for which a physician can decline the title of *doctor of medicine*—because he supposes himself disgraced by the doctorship, or supposes the doctorship disgraced by himself. To be disgraced by a title which he shares in common with every illustrious name of his profession, with Boerhaave, with Arbuthnot, and with Cullen, can surely diminish no man's reputation. It is, I suppose, to the doctorate, from which he shrinks, that he owes his right of practising physick. A doctor of medicine is a physician under the protection of the laws, and by the stamp of authority. The physician who is not a doctor usurps a profession, and is authorised only by himself to decide upon health and sickness, and life and death. That this gentleman is a doctor, his diploma makes evident; a diploma not obtained upon him, but obtained by solicitation, and for which fees were paid. With what countenance any man can refuse the title which he has either begged or bought, is not easily discovered.

"All verbal injury must comprise in it either some false position, or some unnecessary declaration of defamatory truth. That in calling him doctor, a false appellation was given him, he himself will not pretend, who at the same time that he complains of the title would be offended if we supposed him to be not a doctor. If the title of doctor be a defamatory truth, it is time to dissolve our colleges; for why should the publick give salaries to men whose approbation is reproach? It may likewise deserve the notice of the publick to consider what help can be given to the professors of physick, who all share with this unhappy gentleman the ignominious appellation, and of whom the very boys in the street are not afraid to say, *There goes the doctor*.

"What is implied by the term doctor is well known. It distinguishes him to whom it is granted, as a man who has attained such knowledge of his profession as qualifies him to instruct others. A doctor of laws is a man who can form lawyers by his precepts. A doctor of medicine is a man who can teach the art of curing diseases. This is an old axiom which no man has yet thought fit to deny. *Nil dat quod non habet*. Upon this principle, to be doctor implies skill, for *nemo docet quod non didicit*. In England, whoever practises physick, not being a doctor, must practise by a license; but the doctorate conveys a license in itself.

"By what accident it happened that he and

the other physicians were mentioned in different terms, where the terms themselves were equivalent, or where in effect that which was applied to him was the most honourable, perhaps they who wrote the paper cannot now remember. Had they expected a lawsuit to have been the consequence of such petty variation, I hope they would have avoided it¹. But, probably, as they meant no ill, they suspected no danger, and, therefore, consulted only what appeared to them propriety or convenience."

No. XIV.

[ARGUMENT in favour of the Corporation of Stirling, —referred to in page 529.]

"There is a difference between majority and superiority; majority is applied to number, and superiority to power; and power, like many other things, is to be estimated *non numero sed pondere*. Now though the greater *number* is not corrupt, the greater *weight* is corrupt so that corruption predominates in the borough, taken *collectively*, though, perhaps, taken *numerically*, the greater part may be uncorrupt. That borough, which is so constituted as to act corruptly, is in the eye of reason corrupt, whether it be by the uncontrollable power of a few, or by an accidental pravity of the multitude. The objection, in which is urged the injustice of making the innocent suffer with the guilty, is an objection not only against society, but against the possibility of society. All societies, great and small, subsist upon this condition; that as the individuals derive advantages from union, they may likewise suffer inconveniences; that as those who do nothing, and sometimes those who do ill, will have the honours and emoluments of general virtue and general prosperity, so those likewise who do nothing, or perhaps do well, must be involved in the consequences of predominant corruption."

No. XV.

[DR. JOHNSON'S Letters to Mrs. Thrale, giving an Account of the Journey to the Hebrides.

As these letters have been thought the best Dr. Johnson ever wrote, and been by some persons preferred even to his elaborate account of the "Journey," it is thought that they will be acceptable to the reader in this place, as they could not have been introduced into the text.]

"12th August, 1773.

"We left London on Friday, the 6th, not very early, and travelled without any memorable accident through a country which I had seen before. In the evening I was not well, and was forced to stop at Stilton, one stage short of Stamford, where we intended to have lodged.

¹ In justice to Dr. Memis, though I was against him as an advocate, I must mention, that he objected to the variation very earnestly, before the translation was printed off.

“On the 7th, we passed through Stamford and Grantham, and dined at Newark, where I had only time to observe that the market place was uncommonly spacious and neat. In London we should call it a square, though the sides were neither straight nor parallel. We came at night to Doncaster, and went to church in the morning, where Chambers found the monument of Robert of Doncaster, who says on his stone something like this: ‘What I gave, that I have; what I spent, that I had; what I left, that I lost.’ So saith Robert of Doncaster, who reigned in the world sixty-seven years, and all that time lived not one. Here we were invited to dinner, and therefore made no great haste away.

“We reached York however that night. I was much disordered with old complaints. Next morning we saw the Minster, an edifice of loftiness and elegance equal to the highest hopes of architecture. I remember nothing but the dome of St. Paul’s that can be compared with the middle walk. The Chapter-house is a circular building, very stately, but I think excelled by the Chapter-house of Lincoln.

“I then went to see the ruins of the Abbey, which are almost vanished, and I remember nothing of them distinct.

“The next visit was to the jail, which they call the castle; a fabrick built lately, such is terrestrial mutability, out of the materials of the ruined abbey. The under jailor was very officious to show his fetters, in which there was no contrivance. The head jailor came in, and seeing me look I suppose fatigued, offered me wine, and when I went away would not suffer his servant to take money. The jail is accounted the best in the kingdom, and you find the jailor deserving of his dignity.

“We dined at York, and went on to Northalerton, a place of which I know nothing, but that it afforded us a lodging on Monday night, and about two hundred and seventy years ago gave birth to Roger Ascham.

“Next morning we changed our horses at Darlington, where Mr. Cornelius Harrison, a cousin-german of mine, was perpetual curate. He was the only one of my relations who ever rose in fortune above penury, or in character above neglect.

“The church is built crosswise, with a fine spire, and might invite a traveller to survey it, but I perhaps wanted vigour, and thought I wanted time.

“The next stage brought us to Durham, a place of which Mr. Thrale bade me take particular notice. The bishop’s palace has the appearance of an old feudal castle built upon an eminence, and looking down upon the river, upon which was formerly thrown a draw-bridge, as I supposed, to be raised at night, lest the Scots should pass it.

“The cathedral has a massiness and solidity such as I have seen in no other place; it rather awes than pleases, as it strikes with a kind of gigantic dignity, and aspires to no other praise than that of rocky solidity and indeterminate duration. I had none of my friends resident, and therefore saw but little. The library is mean and scanty.

“At Durham, beside all expectation, I met an old friend: Miss Fordyce is married there to a physician. We met, I think, with honest kindness on both sides. I thought her much decayed, and having since heard that the banker had involved her husband in his extensive ruin, I cannot forbear to think that I saw in her withered features more impression of sorrow than of time.

“Qua terra patet, fera regnat Erinnyis.

—OVID, Met. i. 241.

“He that wanders about the world sees new forms of human misery, and if he chances to meet an old friend, meets a face darkened with troubles.

“On Tuesday night we came hither; yesterday I took some care of myself, and to-day I am quite polite. I have been taking a view of all that could be shown me, and find that all very near to nothing. You have often heard me complain of finding myself disappointed by books of travels; I am afraid travel itself will end likewise in disappointment. One town, one country, is very like another. Civilized nations have the same customs, and barbarous nations have the same nature. There are indeed minute discriminations both of places and of manners, which, perhaps, are not wanting of curiosity, but which a traveller seldom stays long enough to investigate and compare. The dull utterly neglect them, the acute see a little, and supply the rest with fancy and conjecture.

“I shall set out again to-morrow, but I shall not, I am afraid, see Alhwick, for Dr. Percy is not there. I hope to lodge to-morrow night at Berwick, and the next at Edinburgh, where I shall direct Mr. Drummond, bookseller at Ossian’s-head, to take care of my letters.

“15th August.

“Thus far I had written at Newcastle. I forgot to send it. I am now at Edinburgh; and have been this day running about. I ran pretty well.”

“Edinburgh, 17th August, 1773.

“On the 13th I left Newcastle, and in the afternoon came to Alhwick, where we were treated with great civility by the duke. I went through the apartments, walked on the wall, and climbed the towers. That night we lay at Belford, and on the next night came to Edinburgh. On Sunday (15th) I went to the English chapel. After dinner, Dr. Robertson came in, and promised to show me the place. On Monday, I saw their public buildings. The cathedral, which I told Robertson I wished to see because it had once been a church, the courts of justice, the parliament-house, the advocate’s library, the repository of records, the college and its library, and the palace, particularly the old tower where the king of Scotland seized David Rizzio in the queen’s presence. Most of their buildings are very mean; and the whole town bears some resemblance to the old part of Birmingham.

“Boswell has very handsome and spacious rooms; level with the ground on one side of the house, and on the other four stories high.

“At dinner on Monday we the Duchess of Douglas, an old lady who talks broad Scotch with a paralytick voice, and is scarce understood by

her own countrymen; the Lord Chief Baron, Sir Adolphus Oughton, and many more. At supper there was such a conflux of company that I could scarcely support the tumult. I have never been well in the whole journey, and am very easily disordered.

"This morning I saw at breakfast Dr. Blacklock, the blind poet, who does not remember to have seen light, and is read to by a poor scholar in Latin, Greek, and French. He was originally a poor scholar himself. I looked on him with reverence. To-morrow our journey begins: I know not when I shall write again. I am but poorly."

"Banff, 25th August, 1773.

"August 18th, I passed with Boswell the Frith of Forth, and began our journey. In the passage we observed an island, which I persuaded my companions to survey. We found it a rock somewhat troublesome to climb, about a mile long, and half a mile broad. In the middle were the ruins of an old fort, which had on one of the stones, 'Marie-Re. 1564.' It had been only a block-house one story high. I measured two apartments, of which the walls were entire, and found them twenty-seven feet long, and twenty-three broad. The rock had some grass and many thistles; both cows and sheep were grazing. There was a spring of water. The name is Inchkeith. Look on your maps. This visit took about an hour. We pleased ourselves with being in a country all our own, and then went back to the boat, and landed at Kinghorn, a mean town; and travelling through Kirkcaldie, a very long town meanly built, and Cowpar, which I could not see because it was night, we came late to St. Andrew's, the most ancient of the Scotch universities, and once the see of the primate of Scotland. The inn was full, but lodgings were provided for us at the house of the professor of rhetoric, a man of elegant manners, who showed us in the morning the poor remains of a stately cathedral, demolished in Knox's reformation, and now only to be imaged by tracing its foundation, and contemplating the little ruins that are left. Here was once a religious house. Two of the vaults or cellars of the sub-prior are even yet entire. In one of them lives an old woman, who claims an hereditary residence in it, boasting that her husband was the sixth tenant of this gloomy mansion, in a lineal descent, and claims by her marriage with this lord of the cavern an alliance with the Bruces. Mr. Boswell stayed awhile to interrogate her, because he understood her language. She told him, that she and her cat lived together; that she had two sons somewhere, who might perhaps be dead; that when there were quality in the town, notice was taken of her, and that now she was neglected, but did not trouble them. Her habitation contained all that she had; her turf for fire was laid in one place, and her balls of coal dust in another, but her bed seemed to be clean. Boswell asked her if she never heard any noises, but she could tell him of nothing supernatural, though she often wandered in the night among the graves and ruins, only she had sometimes notice by dreams of the death of her relations. We then viewed the remains of a castle on the margin of the sea, in

which the archbishops resided, and in which Cardinal Beaton was killed.

"The professors who happened to be resident in the vacation made a public dinner, and treated us very kindly and respectfully. They showed us their colleges, in one of which there is a library that for luminousness and elegance may vie at least with the new edifice at Streatham. But learning seems not to prosper among them; one of their colleges has been lately alienated, and one of their churches lately deserted. An experiment was made of planting a shrubbery in the church, but it did not thrive.

"Why the place should thus fall to decay I know not; for education, such as is here to be had, is sufficiently cheap. Their term, or as they call it their session, lasts seven months in the year, which the students of the highest rank and greatest expense may pass here for twenty pounds; in which are included board, lodging, books, and the continual instruction of three professors.

"20th. We left St. Andrew's, well satisfied with our reception, and crossing the Frith of Tay came to Dundee, a dirty, despicable town. We passed afterwards through Aberbrothwick, famous once for an abbey, of which there are only a few fragments left; but those fragments testify that the fabric was once of great extent, and of stupendous magnificence. Two of the towers are yet standing, though shattered; into one of them Boswell climbed, but found the stairs broken: the way into the other we did not see, and had not time to search; I believe it might be ascended, but the top I think is open.

"We lay at Montrose, a neat place, with a spacious area for the market, and an elegant town-house.

"21st. We travelled towards Aberdeen, another university, and in the way dined at Lord Monboddo's, the Scotch judge, who has lately written a strange book about the origin of language, in which he traces monkeys up to men, and says that in some countries the human species have tails like other beasts. He inquired for these long-tailed men of Banks, and was not well pleased that they had not been found in all his peregrination. He talked nothing of this to me, and I hope we parted friends; for we agreed pretty well, only we disputed in adjusting the claims of merit between a shopkeeper of London and a savage of the American wildernesses. Our opinions were, I think, maintained on both sides without full conviction. Monboddo declared boldly for the savage, and I, perhaps for that reason, sided with the citizen.

"We came late to Aberdeen, where I found my dear mistress's letter; and learned that all our little people were happily recovered of the measles. Every part of your letter was pleasing.

"There are two cities of the name of Aberdeen. The old town, built about a mile inland, once the see of a bishop, which contains the King's college and the remains of the cathedral, and the new town, which stands for the sake of trade upon a frith or arm of the sea, so that ships rest against the key.

"The two cities have their separate magistrates,

and the two colleges are in effect two universities, which confer degrees on each other.

“New Aberdeen is a large town, built almost wholly of that granite which is used for the new pavement in London, which, hard as it is, they square with very little difficulty. Here I first saw the women in plaids. The plaid makes at once a hood and cloak, without cutting or sewing, merely by the manner of drawing the opposite sides over the shoulders. The maids at the inns run over the house barefoot, and children, not dressed in rags, go without shoes or stockings. Shoes are indeed not yet in universal use; they came late into this country. One of the professors told us, as we were mentioning a fort built by Cromwell, that the country owed much of its present industry to Cromwell’s soldiers. They taught us, said he, to raise cabbage and make shoes. How they lived without shoes may yet be seen; but in the passage through villages, it seems to him that surveys their gardens that when they had not cabbage they had nothing.

“Education is here of the same price as at St. Andrew’s, only the session is but from the 1st of November to the 1st of April. The academical buildings seem rather to advance than decline. They showed their libraries, which were not very splendid; but some manuscripts were so exquisitely penned, that I wished my dear mistress to have seen them. I had an unexpected pleasure, by finding an old acquaintance now professor of physick in the King’s college. We were on both sides glad of the interview, having not seen nor perhaps thought on one another for many years; but we had no emulation, nor had either of us risen to the other’s envy, and our old kindness was easily renewed. I hope we shall never try the effect of so long an absence.”

“Inverness, 23th Aug., 1773.

“August 23d. I had the honour of attending the Lord Provost of Aberdeen, and was presented with the freedom of the city, not in a gold box, but in good Latin. Let me pay Scotland one just praise! There was no officer gaping for a fee. This could have been said of no city on the English side of the Tweed. I wore my patent of freedom *pro more* in my hat, from the new town to the old, about a mile. I then dined with my friend the professor of physick at his house, and saw the King’s college. Boswell was very angry that the Aberdeen professors would not talk. When I was at the English church in Aberdeen I happened to be espied by Lady Di. Middleton, whom I had some time seen in London. She told what she had seen to Mr. Boyd, Lord Errol’s brother, who wrote us an invitation to Lord Errol’s house, called Slane’s Castle. We went thither on the next day (24th of August), and found a house, not old, except but one tower, built upon the margin of the sea upon a rock, scarce accessible from the sea. At one corner a tower makes a perpendicular continuation of the lateral surface of the rock, so that it is impracticable to walk round: the house inclosed a square court, and on all sides within the court is a piazza or gallery two stories high. We came in as we were invited to dinner, and after dinner offered to go; but Lady Errol sent us word by Mr. Boyd,

that if he went before Lord Errol came home we must never be forgiven, and ordered out the coach to show us two curiosities. We were first conducted by Mr. Boyd to Dunbuys, or the yellow rock. Dunbuys is a rock consisting of two, protuberances, each perhaps one hundred yards round, joined together by a narrow neck, and separated from the land by a very narrow channel or gully. These rocks are the haunts of sea fowl, whose clang, though this is not their season, we heard at a distance. The eggs and the young are gathered here in great numbers at the time of breeding. There is a bird here called a coote, which, though not much bigger than a duck, lays a larger egg than a goose. We went then to see the Buller or Boulloir of Buchan; Buchan is the name of the district, and the Buller is a small creek or gulf, into which the sea flows through an arch of the rock. We walked round it, and saw it black at a great depth. It has its name from the violent ebullition of the water, when high winds or high tides drive it up the arch into the basin. Walking a little further I spied some boats, and told my companions that we would go into the Buller and examine it. There was no danger; all was calm; we went through the arch, and found ourselves in a narrow gulf surrounded by craggy rocks, of height not stupendous, but to a Mediterranean visiter uncommon. On each side was a cave, of which the fisherman knew not the extent, in which smugglers hide their goods, and sometimes parties of pleasure take a dinner.”

“Skie, 6th Sept., 1773.

“I am now looking on the sea from a house of Sir Alexander Macdonald, in the Isle of Skie. Little did I once think of seeing this region of obscurity, and little did you once expect a salutation from this verge of European life. I have now the pleasure of going where nobody goes, and seeing what nobody sees. Our design is to visit several of the smaller islands, and then pass over to the southwest of Scotland.

“I returned from the sight of Buller’s Buchan to Lord Errol’s, and having seen his library, had for a time only to look upon the sea, which rolled between us and Norway. Next morning, August 25, we continued our journey through a country not uncultivated, but so denuded of its woods that in all this journey I had not travelled a hundred yards between hedges, or seen five trees fit for the carpenter. A few small plantations may be found, but I believe scarcely any thirty years old; at least, as I do not forget to tell, they are all posterior to the union. This day we dined with a country gentleman, who has in his grounds the remains of a Druid’s temple, which when it is complete is nothing more than a circle or double circle of stones, placed at equal distances, with a flat stone, perhaps an altar, at a certain point, and a stone taller than the rest at the opposite point. The tall stone is erected I think at the south. Of these circles there are many in all the unfrequented parts of the island. The inhabitants of these parts respect them as memorials of the sepulture of some illustrious person. Here I saw a few trees. We lay at Barniff.

“August 26th. We dined at Elgin, where we saw the ruins of a noble cathedral; the chapter-

house is yet standing. A great part of Elgin is built with small piazzas to the lower story. We went on to Foris, over the heath where Macbeth met the witches, but had no adventure; only in the way we saw for the first time some houses with fruit trees about them. The improvements of the Scotch are for immediate profit; they do not yet think it quite worth their while to plant what will not produce something to be eaten or sold in a very little time. We rested at Foris.

"A very great proportion of the people are barefoot; shoes are not yet considered as necessities of life. It is still the custom to send out the sons of gentlemen without them into the streets and ways. There are more beggars than I have ever seen in England; they beg, if not silently, yet very modestly.

"Next day we came to Nairn, a miserable town, but a royal burgh, of which the chief annual magistrate is styled lord provost. In the neighbourhood we saw the castle of the old Thane of Cawdor. There is one ancient tower with its battlements and winding stairs yet remaining; the rest of the house is, though not modern, of later erection.

"On the 28th we went to Fort George, which is accounted the most regular fortification in the island. The major of artillery walked with us round the walls, and showed us the principles upon which every part was constructed, and the way in which it could be defended. We dined with the governor, Sir Eyre Coote, and his officers. It was a very pleasant and instructive day, but nothing puts my honoured mistress out of my mind.

"At night we came to Inverness, the last considerable town in the north, where we stayed all the next day, for it was Sunday, and saw the ruins of what is called Macbeth's castle. It never was a large house, but was strongly situated. From Inverness we were to travel on horseback.

"August 30th. We set out with four horses. We had two Highlanders to run by us, who were active, officious, civil, and hardy. Our journey was for many miles along a military way made upon the banks of Lough Ness, a water about eighteen miles long, but not I think half a mile broad. Our horses were not bad, and the way was very pleasant; the rock out of which the road was cut was covered with birch trees, fern and heath. The lake below was beating its bank by a gentle wind, and the rocks beyond the water on the right stood sometimes horrid and wild, and sometimes opened into a kind of bay, in which there was a spot of cultivated ground yellow with corn. In one part of the way we had trees on both sides for perhaps half a mile. Such a length of shade perhaps Scotland cannot show in any other place.

"You are not to suppose that here are to be any more towns or inns. We came to a cottage which they called the general's hut, where we alighted to dine, and had eggs and bacon, and mutton with wine, rum and whiskey. I had water.

"At a bridge over the river, which runs into the Ness, the rocks rise on three sides, with a direction almost perpendicular, to a great height;

they are in part covered with trees, and exhibit a kind of dreadful magnificence—standing like the barriers of nature placed to keep different orders of being in perpetual separation. Near this bridge is the Fall of Fiers, a famous cataract, of which, by clambering over the rocks, we obtained a view. The water was low, and therefore we had only the pleasure of knowing that rain would make it at once pleasing and formidable; there will then be a mighty flood, foaming along a rocky channel, frequently obstructed by protuberances and exasperated by reverberation, at last precipitated with a sudden descent, and lost in the depth of a gloomy chasm.

"We came somewhat late to Fort Augustus, where the lieutenant-governor met us beyond the gates, and apologised that at that hour he could not by the rules of the garrison admit us otherwise than at a narrow door, which only one can enter at a time. We were well entertained and well lodged, and next morning, after having viewed the fort, we pursued our journey.

"Our way now lay over mountains, which are not to be passed by climbing them directly, but by traversing, so that as we went forward we saw our baggage following us below in a direction exactly contrary. There is in these ways much labour but little danger, and perhaps other places of which very terrific representations are made are not in themselves more formidable. These roads have all been made by hewing the rock away with pickaxes, or bursting it with gunpowder. The stones so separated are often piled loose as a wall by the way-side. We saw an inscription importing the year in which one of the regiments made two thousand yards of the road eastward.

"After tedious travel of some hours, we came to what I believe we must call a village, a place where there were three huts built of turf, at one of which we were to have our dinner and our bed, for we could not reach any better place that night. This place is called Enock in Glenmorrisson. The house in which we lodged was distinguished by a chimney, the rest had only a hole for the smoke. Here we had eggs, and mutton, and a chicken, and a sausage, and rum. In the afternoon tea was made by a very decent girl in a printed linen. She engaged me so much that I made her a present of Cocker's arithmetic."

"Skie, 14th September, 1773.

"The post, which comes but once a week into these parts, is so soon to go that I have not time to go on where I left off in my last letter. I have been several days in the island of Raarsa, and am now again in the Isle of Skie, but at the other end of it.

"Skie is almost equally divided between the two great families of Macdonald and Macleod, other proprietors having only small districts. The two great lords do not know within twenty square miles the contents of their own territories.

"I kept up but ill the reputation of Highland hospitality. We are now with Macleod, quite at the other end of the island, where there is a fine young gentleman and fine ladies. The

1 [Sir Alexander Macdonald.—ED.]

ladies are studying Erse. I have a cold, and am miserably deaf, and am troublesome to Lady Macleod. I force her to speak loud, but she will seldom speak loud enough.

“Raarsa is an island about fifteen miles long and two broad, under the dominion of one gentleman, who has three sons and ten daughters: the eldest is the beauty of this part of the world, and has been polished at Edinburgh. They sing and dance, and without expense have upon their table most of what sea, air, or earth can afford. I intended to have written about Raarsa, but the post will not wait longer than while I send my compliments to my dear master and little mistresses.”

“Skie, 21st September, 1773.

“I am so vexed at the necessity of sending yesterday so short a letter, that I purpose to get a long letter beforehand by writing something every day, which I may the more easily do, as a cold makes me now too deaf to take the usual pleasure in conversation. Lady Macleod is very good to me; and the place at which we now are is equal in strength of situation, in the wilderness of the adjacent country, and in the plenty and elegance of the domestick entertainment, to a castle in Gothic romances. The sea with a little island is before us. Cascades play within view. Close to the house is the formidable skeleton of an old castle, probably Danish; and the whole mass of building stands upon a protuberance of rock, inaccessible till of late but by a pair of stairs on the sea-side, and secure in ancient times against any enemy that was likely to invade the kingdom of Skie.

“Macleod has offered me an island. If it were not too far off, I should hardly refuse it. My island would be pleasanter than Brightelmstone, if you and my master could come to it; but I cannot think it pleasant to live quite alone,

Oblitusque meorum, obliviscendus et illis.

That I should be elated by the dominion of an island to forgetfulness of my friends at Streatham I cannot believe, and I hope never to deserve that they should be willing to forget me.

“It has happened that I have been often recognized in my journey where I did not expect it. At Aberdeen I found one of my acquaintance professor of physick; turning aside to dine with a country gentleman, I was owned at table by one who had seen me at a philosophical lecture; at Macdonald’s I was claimed by a naturalist, who wanders about the islands to pick up curiosities; and I had once in London attracted the notice of Lady Macleod. I will now go on with my account.

“The Highland girl made tea, and looked and talked not inelegantly. Her father was by no means an ignorant or a weak man. There were books in the cottage, among which were some volumes of *Prideaux’s Connexion*. This man’s conversation we were glad of while we staid. He had been *out*, as they call it, in *forty-five*, and still retained his old opinions. He was going to America, because his rent was raised beyond what he thought himself able to pay.

“At night our beds were made, but we had some difficulty in persuading ourselves to lie down

in them, though we had put on our own sheets; at last we ventured, and I slept very soundly in the vale of Glenmorrison, amidst the rocks and mountains. Next morning, our landlord liked us so well, that he walked some miles with us for our company, through a country so wild and barren, that the proprietor does not, with all his pressure upon his tenants, raise more than four hundred pounds a year for near one hundred square miles, or sixty thousand acres. He let us know that he had forty head of black cattle, an hundred goats, and an hundred sheep, upon a farm that he remembered let at five pounds a year, but for which he now paid twenty. He told us some stories of their march into England. At last he left us, and we went forward, winding among mountains, sometimes green and sometimes naked, commonly so steep as not easily to be climbed by the greatest vigour and activity. Our way was often crossed by little rivulets, and we were entertained with small streams trickling from the rocks, which after heavy rains must be tremendous torrents.

“About noon we came to a small glen, so they call a valley, which compared with other places appeared rich and fertile; here our guides desired us to stop, that the horses might graze, for the journey was very laborious, and no more grass would be found. We made no difficulty of compliance, and I sat down to take notes on a green bank, with a small stream running at my feet, in the midst of savage solitude, with mountains before me, and on either hand covered with heath. I looked around me, and wondered that I was not more affected, but the mind is not at all times equally ready to be put in motion. If my mistress and master and Queeney had been there, we should have produced some reflections among us, either poetical or philosophical; for though solitude be the nurse of woe, conversation is often the parent of remarks and discoveries.

“In about an hour we remounted, and pursued our journey. The lake by which we had travelled for some time ended in a river, which we passed by a bridge, and came to another glen, with a collection of huts, called *Auknashealds*. The huts were generally built of clods of earth, held together by the intertexture of vegetable fibres, of which earth there are great levels in Scotland, which they call mosses. *Moss* in Scotland is *bog* in Ireland, and moss-trooper is bog-trotter. There was, however, one hut built of loose stones, piled up with great thickness into a strong though not solid wall. From this house we obtained some great pails of milk; and having brought bread with us, were very liberally regaled. The inhabitants, a very coarse tribe, ignorant of any language but Erse, gathered so fast about us, that if we had not had Highlanders with us, they might have caused more alarm than pleasure; they are called the *Clan of Macrae*.

“We had been told that nothing gratified the Highlanders so much as snuff and tobacco, and had accordingly stored ourselves with both at Fort Augustus. Boswell opened his treasure, and gave them each a piece of tobacco-roll. We had more bread than we could eat for the present, and were more liberal than provident. Boswell cut it in slices, and gave them an opportunity of tasting wheaten bread for the first time. I then

'got some halfpence for a shilling, and made up the deficiencies of Boswell's distribution, who had given some money among the children. We then directed that the mistress of the stone house should be asked what we must pay her: she, who perhaps had never before sold anything but cattle, knew not, I believe, well what to ask, and referred herself to us. We obliged her to make some demand, and one of the Highlanders settled the account with her at a shilling. One of the men advised her, with the cunning that clowns never can be without, to ask more; but she said that a shilling was enough. We gave her half-a-crown, and she offered part of it again. The Macraes were so well pleased with our behaviour, that they declared it the best day they had seen since the time of the old Laird of Macleod, who I suppose, like us, stopped in their valley as he was travelling to Skie.

"We were mentioning this view of the Highlander's life at Macdonald's, and mentioning the Macraes with some degree of pity, when a Highland lady informed us that we might spare our tenderness, for she doubted not but the woman who supplied us with milk was mistress of thirteen or fourteen milch cows.

"I cannot forbear to interrupt my narrative. Boswell, with some of his troublesome kindness, has informed this family and reminded me that the 18th of September is my birthday. The return of my birthday, if I remember it, fills me with thoughts which it seems to be the general care of humanity to escape. I can now look back upon threescore and four years, in which little has been done, and little has been enjoyed; a life diversified by misery, spent part in the sluggishness of penury, and part under the violence of pain, in gloomy discontent or importunate distress. But perhaps I am better than I should have been if I had been less afflicted. With this I will try to be content.

"In proportion as there is less pleasure in retrospective considerations, the mind is more disposed to wander forward into futurity; but at sixty-four what promises, however liberal, of imaginary goods, can futurity venture to make? yet something will be always promised, and some promises will always be credited. I am hoping and I am praying that I may live better in the time to come, whether long or short, than I have yet lived, and in the solace of that hope endeavour to repose. Dear Queeney's day is next. I hope she at sixty-four will have less to regret.

"I will now complain no more, but tell my mistress of my travels.

"After we left the Macraes, we travelled on through a country like that which we passed in the morning. The Highlands are very uniform, for there is little variety in universal barrenness. The rocks, however, are not all naked: some have grass on their sides, and birches and alders on their tops; and in the valleys are often broad and clear streams, which have little depth, and commonly run very quick: the channels are made by the violence of the wintry floods: the quickness of the stream is in proportion to the declivity of the descent, and the breadth of the channel makes the water shallow in a dry season.

"There are red deer and roebucks in the

mountains; but we found only goats in the road, and had very little entertainment as we travelled either for the eye or ear. There are, I fancy, no singing birds in the Highlands.

"Towards night we came to a very formidable hill called Rattiken, which we climbed with more difficulty than we had yet experienced, and at last came to Glanelg, a place on the sea-side opposite to Skie. We were by this time weary and disgusted; nor was our humour much mended by our inn, which, though it was built of lime and slate, the Highlander's description of a house which he thinks magnificent, had neither wine, bread, eggs, nor any thing that we could eat or drink. When we were taken up stairs, a dirty fellow bounced out of the bed where one of us was to lie. Boswell blustered, but nothing could be got. At last a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who heard of our arrival, sent us rum and white sugar. Boswell was now provided for in part; and the landlord prepared some mutton-chops, which we could not eat, and killed two hens, of which Boswell made his servant broil a limb, with what effect I know not. We had a lemon and a piece of bread, which supplied me with my supper. When the repast was ended, we began to deliberate upon bed. Mrs. Boswell had warned us that we should *catch something*, and had given us *sheets for our security*; for _____ and _____, she said, came back from Skie so scratching themselves. I thought sheets a slender defence against the confederacy with which we were threatened, and by this time our Highlanders had found a place where they could get some hay. I ordered hay to be laid thick upon the bed, and slept upon it in my great coat. Boswell laid sheets upon his bed, and reposed in linen like a gentleman. The horses were turned out to grass, with a man to watch them. The hill Rattiken and the inn at Glanelg were the only things of which we, or travellers yet more delicate, could find any pretensions to complain.

"September 2d, I rose rustling from the hay, and went to tea, which I forget whether we found or brought. We saw the Isle of Skie before us, darkening the horizon with its rocky coast. A boat was procured, and we launched into one of the straits of the Atlantick ocean. We had a passage of about twelve miles to the point where _____¹ resided, having come from his seat in the middle of the island to a small house on the shore, as we believe, that he might with less reproach entertain us meanly. If he aspired to meanness, his retrograde ambition was completely gratified; but he did not succeed equally in escaping reproach. He had no cook, nor I suppose much provision, nor had the lady the common deencies of her tea-table: we picked up our sugar with our fingers. Boswell was very angry, and reproached him with his improper parsimony: I did not much reflect upon the conduct of a man with whom I was not likely to converse as long at any other time.

"You will now expect that I should give you some account of the Isle of Skie, of which, though I have been twelve days upon it, I have little to

¹ [Sir Alexander Macdonald.—Ed.]

say. It is an Island, perhaps fifty miles long, so much indented by inlets of the sea that there is no part of it removed from the water more than six miles. No part that I have seen is plain: you are always climbing or descending, and every step is upon rock or mire. A walk upon ploughed ground in England is a dance upon carpets compared to the toilsome drudgery of wandering in Skie. There is neither town nor village in the island, nor have I seen any house but Macleod's, that is not much below your habitation at Bright-helmstone. In the mountains there are stags and roebucks, but no hares and few rabbits; nor have I seen any thing that interested me as a zoologist, except an otter, bigger than I thought an otter could have been.

"You are perhaps imagining that I am withdrawn from the gay and the busy world into regions of peace and pastoral felicity, and am enjoying the reliques of the golden age; that I am surveying Nature's magnificence from a mountain, or remarking her minuter beauties on the flowery bank of a winding rivulet; that I am invigorating myself in the sunshine, or delighting my imagination with being hidden from the invasion of human evils and human passions in the darkness of a thicket; that I am busy in gathering shells and pebbles on the shore, or contemplative on a rock, from which I look upon the water, and consider how many waves are rolling between me and Streatham.

"The use of travelling is to regulate imagination by reality, and instead of thinking how things may be, to see them as they are. Here are mountains which I should once have climbed; but to climb steep is now very laborious, and to descend them dangerous; and I am now content with knowing that by scrambling up a rock I shall only see other rocks, and a wider circuit of barren desolation. Of streams we have here a sufficient number; but they murmur not upon pebbles, but upon rocks. Of flowers, if Chloris herself were here, I could present her only with the bloom of heath. Of lawns and thickets, he must read that would know them, for here is little sun and no shade. On the sea I look from my window, but am not much tempted to the shore; for since I came to this island, almost every breath of air has been a storm, and, what is worse, a storm with all its severity, but without its magnificence; for the sea is here so broken into channels, that there is not a sufficient volume of water either for lofty surges or a loud roar.

"On September 6th we left Macdonald's to visit Raarsa, the island which I have already mentioned. We were to cross part of Skie on horseback—a mode of travelling very uncomfortable, for the road is so narrow, where any road can be found, that only one can go, and so craggy that the attention can never be remitted: it allows, therefore, neither the gaiety of conversation, nor the laxity of solitude; nor has it in itself the amusement of much variety, as it affords only all the possible transpositions of bog, rock, and rivulet. Twelve miles, by computation, make a reasonable journey for a day.

"At night we came to a tenant's house, of the first rank of tenants, where we were entertained better than at the landlord's. There were books,

both English and Latin. Company gathered about us, and we heard some talk of the second-sight, and some talk of the events of *forty-five*, a year which will not soon be forgotten among the islanders. The next day we were confined by a storm. The company, I think, increased, and our entertainment was not only hospitable but elegant. At night, a minister's sister, in very fine brocade, sung Erse songs: I wished to know the meaning, but the Highlanders are not much used to scholastick questions, and no translations could be obtained.

"Next day, September 8th, the weather allowed us to depart; a good boat was provided for us, and we went to Raarsa under the conduct of Mr. Malcolm Macleod, a gentleman who conducted Prince Charles through the mountains in his distresses. The prince, he says, was more active than himself; they were, at least, one night without any shelter.

"The wind blew enough to give the boat a kind of dancing agitation, and in about three or four hours we arrived at Raarsa, where we were met by the laird and his friends upon the shore. Raarsa, for such is his title, is master of two islands, upon the smaller of which, called Rona, he has only flocks and herds. Rona gives title to his eldest son. The money which he raises annually by rent from all his dominions, which contain at least fifty thousand acres, is not believed to exceed two hundred and fifty pounds; but as he keeps a large farm in his own hands, he sells every year great numbers of cattle, which add to his revenue; and his table is furnished from the farm and from the sea, with very little expense, except for those things this country does not produce, and of those he is very liberal. The wine circulates vigorously, and the tea, chocolate, and coffee, however they are got, are always at hand.

"We are this morning trying to get out of Skie."

"Skie, 24th September, 1773.

"I am still in Skie. Do you remember the song?

Every island is a prison
Strongly guarded by the sea?

We have at one time no boat, and at another may have too much wind; but of our reception here we have no reason to complain. We are now with Colonel Macleod, in a more pleasant place than I thought Skie could afford. Now to the narrative.

"We were received at Raarsa on the sea-side, and after clambering with some difficulty over the rocks—a labour which the traveller, wherever he reposes himself on land, must in these islands be contented to endure—we were introduced into the house, which one of the company called the Court of Raarsa, with politeness which not the Court of Versailles could have thought defective. The house is not large, though we were told in our passage that it had eleven fine rooms; nor magnificently furnished, but our utensils were most commonly silver. We went up into a dining-room about as large as your blue room, where we had something given us to eat, and tea and coffee.

"Raarsa himself is a man of no elegant appearance, and of manners uncommonly refined.

Lady Raarsa makes no very sublime appearance for a sovereign, but is a good housewife, and a very prudent and diligent conductress of her family. Miss Flora Macleod is a celebrated beauty, has been admired at Edinburgh, dresses her head very high, and has manners so lady-like that I wish her head-dress was lower. The rest of the nine girls are all pretty; the youngest is between Queeny and Lucy. The youngest boy of four years old runs barefoot, and wandered with us over the rocks to see a mill. I believe he would walk on that rough ground without shoes ten miles in a day.

The Laird of Raarsa has sometimes disputed the chieftainry of the clan with Macleod of Skie; but being much inferior in extent of possessions, has, I suppose, been forced to desist. Raarsa and its provinces have descended to its present possessor through a succession of four hundred years without any increase or diminution. It was indeed lately in danger of forfeiture, but the old laird joined some prudence with his zeal, and when Prince Charles landed in Scotland made over his estate to his son, the present laird, and led one hundred men of Raarsa into the field, with officers of his own family. Eighty-six only came back after the last battle. The prince was bidden, in his distress, two nights at Raarsa; and the king's troops burnt the whole country, and killed some of the cattle.

"You may guess at the opinions that prevail in this country: they are, however, content with fighting for their king; they do not drink for him. We had no foolish healths. At night, unexpectedly to us who were strangers, the carpet was taken up, the fiddler of the family came up, and a very vigorous and general dance was begun. As I told you, we were two-and-thirty at supper: there were full as many dancers; for though all who supped did not dance, some danced of the young people who did not sup. Raarsa himself danced with his children; and old Malcolm, in his filibeg, was as nimble as when he led the prince over the mountains. When they had danced themselves weary, two tables were spread, and I suppose at least twenty dishes were upon them. In this country some preparations of milk are always served up at supper, and sometimes in the place of tarts at dinner. The table was not coarsely heaped, but at once plentiful and elegant. They do not pretend to make a loaf; there are only cakes, commonly of oats or barley, but they made me very nice cakes of wheat flour. I always sat at the left hand of Lady Raarsa, and young Macleod of Skie, the chieftain of the clan, sat on the right.

"After supper a young lady, who was visiting, sung Erse songs, in which Lady Raarsa joined prettily enough, but not gracefully: the young ladies sustained the chorus better. They are very little used to be asked questions, and not well prepared with answers. When one of the songs was over, I asked the princess that sat next me, 'What is that about?' I question if she conceived that I did not understand it. 'For the entertainment of the company,' said she. 'But, madam, what is the meaning of it?' 'It is a love-song.' This was all the intelligence that I

could obtain, nor have I been able to procure the translation of a single line of Erse.

"At twelve it was bedtime. I had a chamber to myself, which, in eleven rooms to forty people, was more than my share. How the company and the family were distributed is not easy to tell. Macleod the chieftain, and Boswell, and I, had all single chambers on the first floor. There remained eight rooms only for at least seven-and-thirty lodgers. I suppose they put up temporary beds in the dining-room, where they stowed all the young ladies. There was a room above stairs with six beds, in which they put ten men. The rest in my next."

"Ostich in Skie, 30th September, 1773.

"I am still confined in Skie. We were unskilful travellers, and imagined that the sea was an open road which we could pass at pleasure; but we have now learned, with some pain, that we may still wait for a long time the caprices of the equinoctial winds, and sit reading or writing as I now do, while the tempest is rolling the sea, or roaring in the mountains. I am now no longer pleased with the delay. You can hear from me but seldom, and I cannot at all hear from you. It comes into my mind that some evil may happen, or that I might be of use while I am away. But these thoughts are vain: the wind is violent and adverse, and our boat cannot yet come. I must content myself with writing to you, and hoping that you will some time receive my letter. Now to my narrative.

"Sept. 9th, having passed the night as is usual, I rose, and found the dining-room full of company. We feasted and talked, and when the evening came it brought music and dancing. Young Macleod, the great proprietor of Skie, and head of his clan, was very distinguishable—a young man of nineteen, bred awhile at St. Andrew's, and afterwards at Oxford, a pupil of G. Strahan. He is a young man of a mind as much advanced as I have ever known, very elegant of manners, and very graceful in his person. He has the full spirit of a feudal chief; and I was very ready to accept his invitation to Dunvegan. All Raarsa's children are beautiful. The ladies all, except the eldest, are in the morning dressed in their hair. The true Highlander never wears more than a riband on her head till she is married.

"On the third day Boswell went out with old Malcolm to see a ruined castle, which he found less entire than was promised, but he saw the country. I did not go, for the castle was perhaps ten miles off, and there is no riding at Raarsa, the whole island being rock or mountain, from which the cattle often fall and are destroyed. It is very barren, and maintains, as near as I could collect, about seven hundred inhabitants, perhaps ten to a square mile. In these countries you are not to suppose that you shall find villages or enclosures. The traveller wanders though a naked desert, gratified sometimes, but rarely, with the sight of cows, and now and then finds a heap of loose stones and turf in a cavity between rocks, where a being born with all those powers which education expands, and all those sensations which culture refines, is condemned to shelter itself from

the wind and rain. Philosophers there are who try to make themselves believe that this life is happy; but they believe it only while they are saying it, and never yet produced conviction in a single mind: he whom want of words or images sunk into silence, still thought, as he thought before, that privation of pleasure can never please, and that content is not to be much envied when it has no other principle than ignorance of good.

“This gloomy tranquillity, which some may call fortitude, and others wisdom, was, I believe, for a long time to be very frequently found in these dens of poverty. Every man was content to live like his neighbours, and never wandering from home saw no mode of life preferable to his own, except at the house of the laird, or the laird’s nearest relations, whom he considered as a superior order of beings, to whose luxuries or honours he had no pretensions. But the end of this reverence and submission seems now approaching: the Highlanders have learned that there are countries less bleak and barren than their own, where, instead of working for the laird, every man may till his own ground, and eat the produce of his own labour. Great numbers have been induced by this discovery to go every year for some time past to America. Macdonald and Macleod of Skie have lost many tenants and many labourers, but Raarsa has not yet been forsaken by a single inhabitant.

“Rona is yet more rocky and barren than Raarsa; and though it contains perhaps four thousand acres, is possessed only by a herd of cattle and the keepers.

“I find myself not very able to walk upon the mountains, but one day I went out to see the walls yet standing of an ancient chapel. In almost every island the superstitious votaries of the Romish church erected places of worship, in which the drones of convents or cathedrals performed the holy offices, but by the active zeal of protestant devotion almost all of them have sunk into ruin¹. The chapel at Raarsa is now only considered as the burying-place of the family, and I suppose of the whole island.

“We would now have gone away and left room for others to enjoy the pleasures of this little court, but the wind detained us till the 12th, when, though it was Sunday, we thought it proper to snatch the opportunity of a calm day. Raarsa accompanied us in his six-oared boat, which he said was his coach and six. It is indeed the vehicle in which the ladies take the air and pay their visits, but they have taken very little care for accommodations. There is no way in or out of the boat for a woman but by being carried; and in the boat thus dignified with a pompous name there is no seat but an occasional bundle of straw. Thus we left Raarsa, the seat of plenty, civility, and cheerfulness.

“We dined at a publick-house at Port Re, so called because one of the Scottish kings landed there in a progress through the western isles. Raarsa paid the reckoning privately. We then got on horseback, and by a short but very tedious journey came to Kingsburgh, at which the same king lodged after he landed. Here I had the honour of saluting the far-famed Miss Flora Macdonald, who conducted the prince, dressed as her

maid, through the English forces from the island of Lewes; and, when she came to Skie, dined with the English officers, and left her maid below. She must then have been a very young lady; she is now not old, of a pleasing person, and elegant behaviour. She told me that she thought herself honoured by my visit, and I am sure that whatever regard she bestowed on me was liberally repaid. ‘If thou likest her opinions, thou wilt praise her virtue.’ She was carried to London, but dismissed without a trial, and came down with Malcolm Macleod, against whom sufficient evidence could not be procured. She and her husband are poor, and are going to try their fortune in America. Sic rerum volvitur orbis!

“At Kingsburgh we were very liberally feasted, and I slept in the bed on which the prince reposed in his distress: the sheets which he used were never put to any meaner offices, but were wrapped up by the lady of the house, and at last, according to her desire, were laid round her in her grave. These are not whigs!

“On the 13th, travelling partly on horseback where we could not row, and partly on foot where we could not ride, we came to Dunvegan, which I have described already. Here, though poor Macleod had been left by his grandfather overwhelmed with debts, we had another exhibition of feudal hospitality. There were two stags in the house, and venison came to the table every day in its various forms. Macleod, besides his estate in Skie—larger I suppose than some English counties—is proprietor of nine uninhabited isles; and of his islands uninhabited I doubt if he very exactly knows the number. I told him that he was a mighty monarch. Such dominions fill an Englishman with envious wonder; but when he surveys the naked mountain, and treads the quaking moor, and wanders over the wild regions of gloomy barrenness, his wonder may continue, but his envy ceases. The unprofitableness of these vast domains can be conceived only by the means of positive instances. The heir of *Col*, an island not far distant, has lately told me how wealthy he should be if he could let *Rum*, another of his islands, for twopence halfpenny an acre; and Macleod has an estate, which the surveyor reports to contain eighty thousand acres, rented at six hundred pounds a year.

“While we were at Dunvegan, the wind was high and the rain violent, so that we were not able to put forth a boat to fish in the sea, or to visit the adjacent islands, which may be seen from the house; but we filled up the time as we could, sometimes by talk, sometimes by reading. I have never wanted books in the isle of Skie.

“We were visited one day by the laird and lady of Muck, one of the western islands, two miles long, and three quarters of a mile high. He has half his island in his own culture, and upon the other half live one hundred and fifty dependants, who not only live upon the product, but export corn sufficient for the payment of their rent.

“Lady Macleod had a son and four daughters: they have lived long in England, and have the language and manners of English ladies. We lived with them very easily. The hospitality of this remote region is like that of the golden age. We have found ourselves treated at every house as if we came to confer a benefit.

¹ [Is it necessary to point out the irony here?—ED.]

"We were eight days at Dunvegan, but we took the first opportunity which the weather afforded, after the first days, of going away, and on the 21st went to Ulinish, where we were well entertained, and wandered a little after curiosities. In the afternoon an interval of calm sunshine courted us out to see a cave on the shore famous for its echo. When we went into the boat, one of our companions was asked in Erse, by the boatmen, who they were that came with him? He gave us characters, I suppose, to our advantage, and was asked, in the spirit of the Highlands, whether I could recite a long series of ancestors? The boatmen said, as I perceived afterwards, that they heard the cry of an English ghost. This, Boswell says, disturbed him. We came to the cave, and clambering up the rocks came to an arch, open at one end, one hundred and eighty feet long, thirty broad in the broadest part, and about thirty high. There was no echo; such is the fidelity of report; but I saw what I had never seen before, muscles and whilks in their natural state. There was another arch in the rock, open at both ends.

"Sept. 23d, we removed to Talisker, a house occupied by Mr. Macleod, a lieutenant-colonel in the Dutch service. Talisker has been long in the possession of gentlemen, and therefore has a garden well cultivated; and, what is here very rare, is shaded by trees: a place where the imagination is more amused cannot easily be found. The mountains about it are of great height, with waterfalls succeeding one another so fast, that as one ceases to be heard another begins. Between the mountains there is a small valley extending to the sea, which is not far off, beating upon a coast very difficult of access.

"Two nights before our arrival, two boats were driven upon this coast by the tempest: one of them had a pilot that knew the passage, the second followed, but a third missed the true course, and was driven forward, with great danger of being forced into the vast ocean, but however gained at last some other island. The crews crept to Talisker, almost lifeless with wet, cold, fatigue, and terror; but the lady took care of them. She is a woman of more than common qualifications: having travelled with her husband, she speaks four languages.

"You find that all the islanders, even in these recesses of life, are not barbarous. One of the ministers who has adhered to us almost all the time is an excellent scholar. We have now with us the young laird of Col, who is heir, perhaps, to two hundred square miles of land. He has first studied at Aberdeen, and afterwards gone to Hertfordshire to learn agriculture, being much impressed with desire of improvement: he likewise has the notions of a chief, and keeps a piper. At Macleod's the bagpipe always played while we were dining.

"Col has undertaken, by the permission of the waves and wind, to carry us about several of the islands, with which he is acquainted enough to show us whatever curious is given by nature or left by antiquity; but we grew afraid of deviating from our way home, lest we should be shut up for months upon some little protuberance of rock, that just appears above the sea, and perhaps is scarcely marked upon a map.

"You remember the Doge of Genoa, who, being asked what struck him most at the French court, answered, "Myself." I cannot think things here more likely to affect the fancy than to see Johnson ending his sixty-fourth year in the wilderness of the Hebrides.

"Mr. Thrale probably wonders how I live all this time without sending to him for money. Travelling in Scotland is dear enough, dearer in proportion to what the country affords than in England; but residence in the isles is unexpensive. Company is, I think, considered as a supply of pleasure, and a relief of that tediousness of life which is felt in every place, elegant or rude. Of wine and punch they are very liberal, for they get them cheap; but as there is no custom-house on the island, they can hardly be considered as smugglers. Their punch is made without lemons or any substitute.

"Their tables are very plentiful; but a very nice man would not be pampered. As they have no meat but as they kill it, they are obliged to live while it lasts upon the same flesh. They kill a sheep, and set mutton boiled and roast on the table together. They have fish both of the sea and of the brooks; but they can hardly conceive that it requires any sauce. To sauce in general they are strangers: now and then butter is melted, but I dare not always take, lest I should offend by disliking it. Barley-broth is a constant dish, and is made well in every house. A stranger, if he is prudent, will secure his share, for it is not certain that he will be able to eat any thing else.

"Their meat being often newly killed is very tough, and, as nothing is sufficiently subdued by the fire, is not easily to be eaten. Carving is here a very laborious employment, for the knives are never whetted. Table-knives are not of long subsistence in the Highlands: every man, while arms were a regular part of dress, had his knife and fork appendant to his dirk. Knives they now lay upon the table, but the handles are apt to show that they have been in other hands, and the blades have neither brightness nor edge.

"Of silver there is no want; and it will last long, for it is never cleaned. They are a nation just rising from barbarity; long contented with necessaries, now somewhat studious of convenience, but not yet arrived at delicate discriminations. Their linen is however both clean and fine. Bread, such as we mean by that name, I have never seen in the isle of Skie. They have ovens, for they bake their pies; but they never ferment their meal, nor mould a loaf. Cakes of oats and barley are brought to the table, but I believe wheat is reserved for strangers. They are commonly too hard for me, and therefore I take potatoes to my meat, and am sure to find them on almost every table.

"They retain so much of the pastoral life, that some preparation of milk is commonly one of the dishes both at dinner and supper. Tea is always drank at the usual times; but in the morning the table is polluted with a plate of slices of strong cheese. This is peculiar to the Highlands: at Edinburgh there are always honey and sweetmeats on the morning tea-table.

"Strong liquors they seem to love. Every man, perhaps woman, begins the day with a dram; and the punch is made both at dinner and supper

"They have neither wood nor coal for fuel, but burn peat or turf in their chimneys. It is dug out of the moors or mosses, and makes a strong and lasting fire—not always very sweet, and somewhat apt to smoke the pot.

"The houses of inferior gentlemen are very small, and every room serves many purposes. In the bed-rooms, perhaps, are laid up stores of different kinds; and the parlour of the day is a bedroom at night. In the room which I inhabited last, about fourteen feet square, there were three chests of drawers, a long chest for larger clothes, two closet cupboards, and the bed. Their rooms are commonly dirty, of which they seem to have little sensibility; and if they had more, clean floors would be difficultly kept where the first step from the door is into the dirt. They are very much inclined to carpets, and seldom fail to lay down something under their feet—better or worse, as they happen to be furnished.

"The highland dress being forbidden by law is very little used: sometimes it may be seen; but the English traveller is struck with nothing so much as the *nudité des pieds* of the common people.

"Skie is the greatest island, or the greatest but one, among the Hebrides. Of the soil I have already given some account: it is generally barren, but some spots are not wholly unfruitful. The gardens have apples and pears, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, currants, and gooseberries; but all the fruit that I have seen is small. They attempt to sow nothing but oats and barley. Oats constitute the bread corn of the place. Their harvest is about the beginning of October; and being so late, is very much subject to disappointments from the rains that follow the equinox. This year has been particularly disastrous. Their rainy season lasts from autumn to spring. They have seldom very hard frosts; nor was it ever known that a lake was covered with ice strong enough to bear a skater. The sea round them is always open. The snow falls, but soon melts; only in 1771 they had a cold spring, in which the island was so long covered with it, that many beasts, both wild and domestick, perished, and the whole country was reduced to distress, from which I know not if it is even yet recovered.

"The animals here are not remarkably small; perhaps they recruit their breed from the main land. The cows are sometimes without horns. The horned and unhorned cattle are not accidental variations, but different species: they will, however, breed together.

"October 3d. The wind is now changed, and if we snatch the moment of opportunity, an escape from this island is become practicable. I have no reason to complain of my reception. yet I long to be again at home.

"You and my master may perhaps expect, after this description of Skie, some account of myself. My eye is, I am afraid, not fully recovered; my ears are not mended; my nerves seem to grow weaker, and I have been otherwise not as well as I sometimes am, but think myself lately better. This climate, perhaps, is not within my degree of healthy latitude."

Mull, 15th October, 1773.

"October 3d. After having been detained by storms many days at Skie, we left it, as we

thought, with a fair wind; but a violent gust, which Bos. had a great mind to call a tempest, forced us into Col, an obscure island, on which

— nulla campis
Arbor æstivâ recreatur aurâ.

There is literally no tree upon the island: part of it is a sandy waste, over which it would be really dangerous to travel in dry weather and with a high wind. It seems to be little more than one continued rock, covered from space to space with a thin layer of earth. It is, however, according to the Highland notion, very populous, and life is improved beyond the manners of Skie; for the huts are collected into little villages, and every one has a small garden of roots and cabbage. The laird has a new house built by his uncle, and an old castle inhabited by his ancestors. The young laird entertained us very liberally: he is heir, perhaps, to three hundred square miles of land, which, at ten shillings an acre, would bring him ninety-six thousand pounds a year. He is desirous of improving the agriculture of his country; and, in imitation of the czar, travelled for improvement, and worked with his own hands upon a farm in Hertfordshire, in the neighbourhood of your uncle, Sir Thomas Salusbury. He talks of doing useful things, and has introduced turnips for winter fodder. He has made a small essay towards a road.

"Col is but a barren place. Description has here few opportunities of spreading her colours. The difference of day and night is the only vicissitude. The succession of sunshine to rain, or of calms to tempests, we have not known: wind and rain have been our only weather.

"At last, after about nine days, we hired a sloop; and having lain in it all night, with such accommodations as these miserable vessels can afford, were landed yesterday on the isle of Mull, from which we expect an easy passage into Scotland. I am sick in a ship, but recover by lying down.

"Inverary, 23d October, 1773.

"My last letters were written from Mull, the third island of the Hebrides in extent. There is no post, and I took the opportunity of a gentleman's passage to the main land.

"In Mull we were confined two days by the weather: on the third we got on horseback; and after a journey difficult and tedious, over rocks naked and valleys untracked, through a country of barrenness and solitude, we came, almost in the dark, to the sea-side, weary and dejected, having met with nothing but water falling from the mountains that could raise any image of delight. Our company was the young laird of Col and his servant. Col made every Maclean open his house where we came, and supply us with horses when we departed; but the horses of this country are small, and I was not mounted to my wish.

"At the sea-side we found the ferry-boat departed; if it had been where it was expected, the wind was against us, and the hour was late, nor was it very desirable to cross the sea in darkness with a small boat. The captain of a sloop that had been driven thither by the storms saw our distress, and as we were hesitating and deliberating, sent his boat, which, by Col's order, trans-

ported us to the isle of *Ulva*. We were introduced to Mr. Macquarry, the head of a small clan, whose ancestors have reigned in *Ulva* beyond memory, but who has reduced himself, by his negligence and folly, to the necessity of selling this venerable patrimony.

"On the next morning we passed the strait of *Inch Kenneth*, an island about a mile in length, and less than half a mile broad; in which *Kenneth*, a Scottish saint, established a small clerical college, of which the chapel walls are still standing. At this place I beheld a scene which I wish you, and my master, and *Queeney* had partaken.

"The only family on the island is that of *Sir Allan*, the chief of the ancient and numerous clan of *Maclean*; the clan which claims the second place, yielding only to *Macdonald* in the line of battle. *Sir Allan*, a chieftain, a baronet, and a soldier, inhabits in this insulated desert a thatched hut with no chambers. Young *Col*, who owns him as his chief, and whose cousin was his lady, had, I believe, given him some notice of our visit; he received us with the soldier's frankness and the gentleman's elegance, and introduced us to his daughters, two young ladies, who have not wanted education suitable to their birth, and who, in their cottage, neither forgot their dignity, nor affected to remember it. Do not you wish to have been with us?

"*Sir Allan's* affairs are in disorder by the fault of his ancestors; and while he forms some scheme for retrieving them, he has retreated hither.

"When our salutations were over, he showed us the island. We walked uncovered into the chapel, and saw in the reverend ruin the effects of precipitate reformation. The floor is covered with ancient grave-stones, of which the inscriptions are not now legible; and without, some of the chief families still continue the right of sepulture. The altar is not yet quite demolished; beside it, on the right side, is a bas relief of the *Virgin* with her child, and an angel hovering over her. On the other side still stands a hand-bell, which, though it has no clapper, neither presbyterian bigotry nor barbarian wantonness has yet taken away. The chapel is thirty-eight feet long, and eighteen broad. *Boswell*, who is very pious, went into it at night to perform his devotions, but came back in haste, for fear of spectres. Near the chapel is a fountain, to which the water, remarkably pure, is conveyed from a distant hill, through pipes made by the *Romish* clergy, which still perform the office of conveyance, though they have never been repaired since popery was suppressed.

"We soon after went in to dinner, and wanted neither the comforts nor the elegancies of life. There were several dishes, and variety of liquors. The servants live in another cottage: in which, I suppose, the meat is dressed.

"Towards evening *Sir Allan* told us, that Sunday never passed over him like another day. One of the ladies read, and read very well, the evening service; and 'paradise was opened in the wild.'

"Next day, 18th, we went and wandered among the rocks on the shore, while the boat was busy in catching oysters, of which there is a great bed. Oysters lie upon the sand, one, I

think, sticking to another, and cockles are found a few inches under the sand.

"We then went in the boat to *Sonniland*, a little island very near. We found it a wild rock, of about ten acres; part naked, part covered with sand, out of which we picked shells; and part clothed with a thin layer of mould, on the grass of which a few sheep are sometimes fed. We then came back and dined. I passed part of the afternoon in reading, and in the evening one of the ladies played on her harpsichord, and *Boswell* and *Col* danced a reel with the other.

"On the 19th, we persuaded *Sir Allan* to launch his boat again, and go with us to *Icolmkill*, where the first great preacher of christianity to the Scots built a church, and settled a monastery. In our way we stopped to examine a very uncommon cave on the coast of *Mull*. We had some difficulty to make our way over the vast masses of broken rocks that lie before the entrance, and at the mouth were embarrassed with stones, which the sea had accumulated, as at *Brightlithelstone*; but as we advanced, we reached a floor of soft sand, and as we left the light behind us, walked along a very spacious cavity, vaulted over head with an arch almost regular, by which a mountain was sustained, at least a very lofty rock. From this magnificent cavern went a narrow passage to the right hand, which we entered with a candle, and though it was obstructed with great stones, clambered over them to a second expansion of the cave, in which there lies a great square stone, which might serve as a table. The air here was very warm, but not oppressive, and the flame of the candle continued pyramidal. The cave goes onward to an unknown extent, but we were now one hundred and sixty yards under ground; we had but one candle, and had never heard of any that went further and came back; we therefore thought it prudent to return.

"Going forward in our boat, we came to a cluster of rocks, black and horrid, which *Sir Allan* chose for the place where he would eat his dinner. We climbed till we got seats. The stores were opened, and the repast taken.

"We then entered the boat again; the night came upon us; the wind rose; the sea swelled; and *Boswell* desired to be set on dry ground: we however pursued our navigation, and passed by several little islands, in the silent solemnity of faint moonshine, seeing little, and hearing only the wind and the water. At last we reached the island, the venerable seat of ancient sanctity; where secret piety reposed, and where fallen greatness was repositied. The island has no house of entertainment, and we manfully made our bed in a farmer's barn. The description I hope to give you another time."

"Inverary, 23d October, 1773.

"Yesterday we landed, and to-day came hither. We purpose to visit *Anchenleck*, the seat of *Mr. Boswell's* father, then to pass a day at *Glasgow*, and return to *Edinburgh*.

"About ten miles of this day's journey were uncommonly amusing. We travelled with very little light, in a storm of wind and rain; we passed about fifty-five streams that crossed our way, and fell into a river that, for a very great part of our road, foamed and roared beside us;

all the rougher powers of nature, except thunder, were in motion, but there was no danger. I should have been sorry to have missed any of the inconveniences, to have had more light or less rain, for the co-operation crowded the scene and filled the mind."

"Inverary, 26th Oct. 1773.

"The duke kept us yesterday, or we should have gone forward. Inverary is a stately place. We are now going to Edinburgh by Lochlomond, Glasgow, and Auchenleck."

"Glasgow, 28th Oct. 1773.

"I have been in this place about two hours. On Monday, 25th, we dined with the Duke and Duchess of Argyle, and the duke lent me a horse for my next day's journey.

"26th. We travelled along a deep valley between lofty mountains, covered only with barren heath; entertained with a succession of cataracts on the left hand, and a roaring torrent on the right. The duke's horse went well; the road was good and the journey pleasant, except that we were incommoded by perpetual rain. In all September we had, according to Boswell's register, only one day and a half of fair weather; and October perhaps not more. At night we came to the house of Sir James Colhune, who lives upon the banks of Lochlomond; of which the Scotch boast, and boast with reason.

"27th. We took a boat to rove upon the lake, which is in length twenty-four miles, in breadth from perhaps two miles to half a mile. It has about thirty islands, of which twenty belong to Sir James. Young Colhune went into the boat with us, but a little agitation of the water frightened him to shore. We passed up and down, and landed upon one small island, on which are the ruins of a castle; and upon another much larger, which serves Sir James for a park, and is remarkable for a large wood of cugh trees.

"We then returned, very wet, to dinner, and Sir James lent us his coach to Mr. Smollet's, a relation of Dr. Smollet, for whom he has erected a monumental column on the banks of the Leven, a river which issues from the Loch. This was his native place. I was desired to revise the inscription.

"When I was upon the deer island, I gave the keeper who attended me a shilling, and he said it was too much. Boswell afterwards offered him another, and he excused himself from taking it because he had been rewarded already.

"This day I came hither, and go to Auchenleck on Monday."

"Auchenleck, 3d Nov. 1773.

"August 23d. Mrs. [Boswell] has the mien and manners of a gentlewoman; and such a person and mind as would not be in any place either admired or contemned. She is in a proper degree inferior to her husband; she cannot rival him, nor can he ever be ashamed of her.

"Little Miss [Veronica Boswell], when I left her, was like any other miss of seven months. I believe she is thought pretty; and her father and mother have a mind to think her wise.

"I have done thinking of * * * * * whom we now call Sir Sawney. He has disgusted all mankind by injudicious parsimony, and given occasion to so many stories, that * * * * * has some thoughts of collecting them, and making a novel of his life. Scrambling I have not willingly left off; the power of scrambling has left me; I have however been forced to exert it on many occasions. I am, I thank God, better than I was. I am grown very much superior to wind and rain; and am too well acquainted both with mire and with rocks to be afraid of a Welsh journey. I had rather have Bardsey and Macleod's island, though I am told much of the beauty of my new property, which the storms did not suffer me to visit. Boswell will praise my resolution and perseverance; and I shall in return celebrate his good humour and perpetual cheerfulness. He has better faculties than I had imagined; more justness of discernment; and more fecundity of images. It is very convenient to travel with him, for there is no house where he is not received with kindness and respect.

"I will now continue my narrative.

"Oct. 29th was spent in surveying the city and college of Glasgow. I was not much pleased with any of the professors. The town is opulent and handsome.

"30th. We dined with the Earl of London, and saw his mother the countess, who at ninety-three has all her faculties, helps at table, and exerts all the powers of conversation that she ever had. Though not tall, she stoops very much. She had lately a daughter, Lady Betty, whom at seventy she used to send after supper early to bed, for girls must not use late hours, while she sat up to entertain the company.

"31st. Sunday, we passed at Mr. Campbell's, who married Mr. Boswell's sister.

"Nov. 1st. We paid a visit to the Countess of Eglington, a lady who for many years gave the laws of elegance to Scotland. She is in full vigour of mind, and not much impaired in form. She is only eighty-three. She was remarking that her marriage was in the year eight; and I told her my birth was in nine. Then, says she, I am just old enough to be your mother, and I will take you for my son. She called Boswell, the boy; yes, madam, said I, we will send him to school. He is already, said she, in a good school; and expressed her hope of his improvement. At last night came, and I was sorry to leave her.

"2d. We came to Auchenleck. The house is like other houses in this country built of stone, scarcely yet finished, but very magnificent and very convenient. We purpose to stay here some days; more or fewer as we are used. I shall find no kindness such as will suppress my desire of returning home."

"Edinburgh, 12th Nov. 1773."

"We came hither on the ninth of this month. I long to come under your care, but for some days cannot decently get away. They congratulate our return as if we had been with Phipps or Banks: I am ashamed of their salutations."

† [Sir A. Macdonald.—Ed.]





