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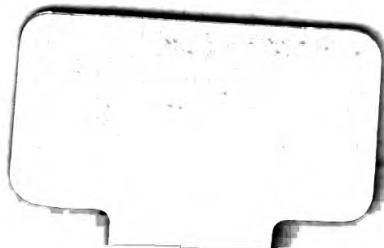


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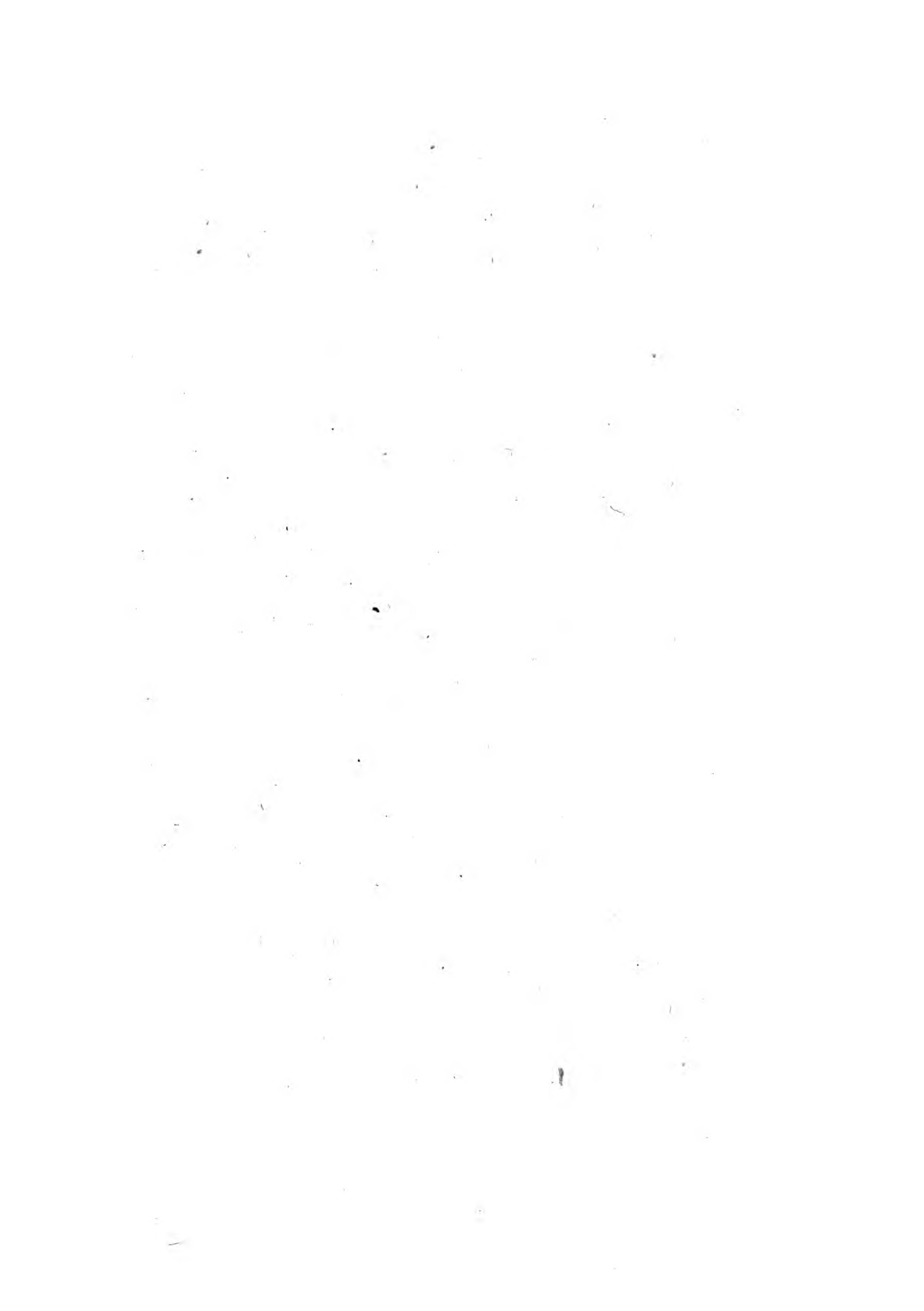
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E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN
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L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM THE LATE

Samuel Johnson, LL.D.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

S O M E P O E M S

NEVER BEFORE PRINTED.

PUBLISHED

FROM THE ORIGINAL MSS. IN HER POSSESSION,
By HESTER LYNCH PIOZZI.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. STRAHAN; and T. CADDELL, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXXVIII.

CANCELLED

IA. 14



Collegii Sti Augustini
apud Cantuarienses
Liber.

P R E F A C E.

THEY who solicit the favour of the Publick are often led to lament the instability of its regard; and volumes have been written to deter men from trying ever to obtain that which is acknowledged so difficult to keep: yet numbers still endeavour, in spite of admonition, to sit upon themselves that fairy garland, which they have so often seen snatched by malice from the head of the unwary, dropt by a sudden toss from the temples of the arrogant, and fading through mere negligence round the brows of the sluggard. The obsidional crown however, composed only of that grass which grew in the place besieged, —may still, as in the days of ancient Rome perhaps—be worn while it lasts without envy; nor can I form pretensions to any higher reward, for having made known the true character of a dead friend, by printing his opinions, sentences, and letters, which best explain it.

An Editor's duty is indeed that of most danger and least renown through all the ranks of literary warfare; all merit is attributed (and justly) to the author; for faults, the person who publishes must be responsible.

It is difficult enough too, in a previous address, to defend one's self from censures, of which we yet know not the form or force; the first and greatest danger is here indeed little to be dreaded: as these letters will doubtless be deemed authentick, even by those who profess themselves least pleased with their perusal—and he was accounted among the wisest of the ancients, who chose rather *to displease by truth, than give delight by falsehood.*

None but domestick and familiar events can be expected from a private correspondence; no reflexions but such as they excite can be found there; yet whoever turns away disgusted by the insipidity with which this, and I suppose every correspondence must naturally and almost necessarily begin—will here be likely to lose some genuine pleasure, and some useful knowledge of what our heroick Milton was himself contented to respect, as

That which before thee lies in daily life.

And

And should I be charged with obtruding trifles on the Publick, I might reply, that the meanest animals preserved in amber become of value to those who form collections of natural history, that the fish found in Monte Bolca serve as proofs of sacred writ, and that the cart-wheel stuck in the rock of Tivoli, is now found useful in computing the rotation of the earth.

Were I disposed to deprecate future criticism, I might here undertake the defence of Dr. Johnson's sentiments, as they will be found strewn up and down these volumes; but for the Editor it is sufficient, that they are the sentiments of him who, when living, above all men knew how to compel acquiescence, even from the few who forbore a loud and clamorous applause. The letters therefore remain just as he wrote them; and I did not like to mutilate such as contained either sallies of humour or precepts of morality, because they might be mingled with family affairs; nor will I much extend myself in empty apologies for letting such passages stand, which at worst may serve to gratify petty curiosity, while readers who search for something better will not long be detained, and consequently can complain but little.

It has been frequently lamented, that we have few letters in our language printed from genuine copies—scarce any from authors of eminence; such as were prepared for the press by their writers, have forfeited all title to the name of letters; nor are I believe ever considered as familiar chat spread upon paper for the advantage or entertainment of a distant friend. Here might I add much about epistolary style, echoing perhaps with less novelty than pleasure, the just praises of Sevigné's tenderness, and Maintenon's piety; but who could hope to add one useful observation to those contained in No. 152 of the Rambler? It were easy to dilute the salt of Johnson's expressions by pages of my own insipidity; but very different is the compensation deserved by those who received my Anecdotes with a degree of approbation I had not dared to hope.

May these letters in some measure pay my debts of gratitude! they will not surely be the *first*, the *only* thing written by Johnson, with which our nation has not been pleased. The good taste by which our countrymen are distinguished, will lead them to prefer the native thoughts and unstudied phrases scattered over these pages, to the more laboured elegance of

his other works—as bees have been observed to reject roses, and fix upon the wild fragrance of a neighbouring heath. I have however been attentive to avoid paining many individuals, even for the gratification of that Publick to which I am much more obliged—for duty bids me defend an enemy from censure, while inclination eagerly brings forward the praises of every friend.

But on revival of these letters when at last they were collected, some notes began to appear almost necessary; partly therefore to avoid writing what could in that form have given little satisfaction, partly from finding in my own answers to him, a better comment on his meaning than I could *now* have written, I was induced to print trifles not originally intended for the Publick, on whose indulgence I depend for protection. Mean time, to such of our intimate companions as have been spared by death, this correspondence can scarcely fail to be interesting—yet even from kindness some objections may be feared: for though all delight in hanging up a handsome portrait of their friends—many refuse admission in a fine apartment to waxen figures modelled from the life, and dressed with such

minuteness of propriety—they startle while they please,

The verses from Boethius will be accepted as a literary rarity; it was about the year 1765 when our Doctor told me that he would translate the Consolations of Philosophy, but said, I must do the Odes for him, and produce one every Thursday: he was obeyed; and in commending some, and correcting others, about a dozen Thursdays passed away.—Of those which are given here however, he did many entirely himself; and of the others—I suffered my own lines to be printed, that his might not be lost. The work was broken off without completion, because some gentleman, whose name I have forgotten, took it in hand; and against him, for reasons of delicacy——Johnson did not chuse to contend.

Here, however, shall cease my explanations and apologies; the furling up of that curtain which keeps Shakespear and Siddons from our sight—though the allegorical figures upon it were painted by Pouffin, would be ever impatiently sighed for: and the audience might be reasonably enough expected to clatter their sticks, till *As you like it* were presented to their view.

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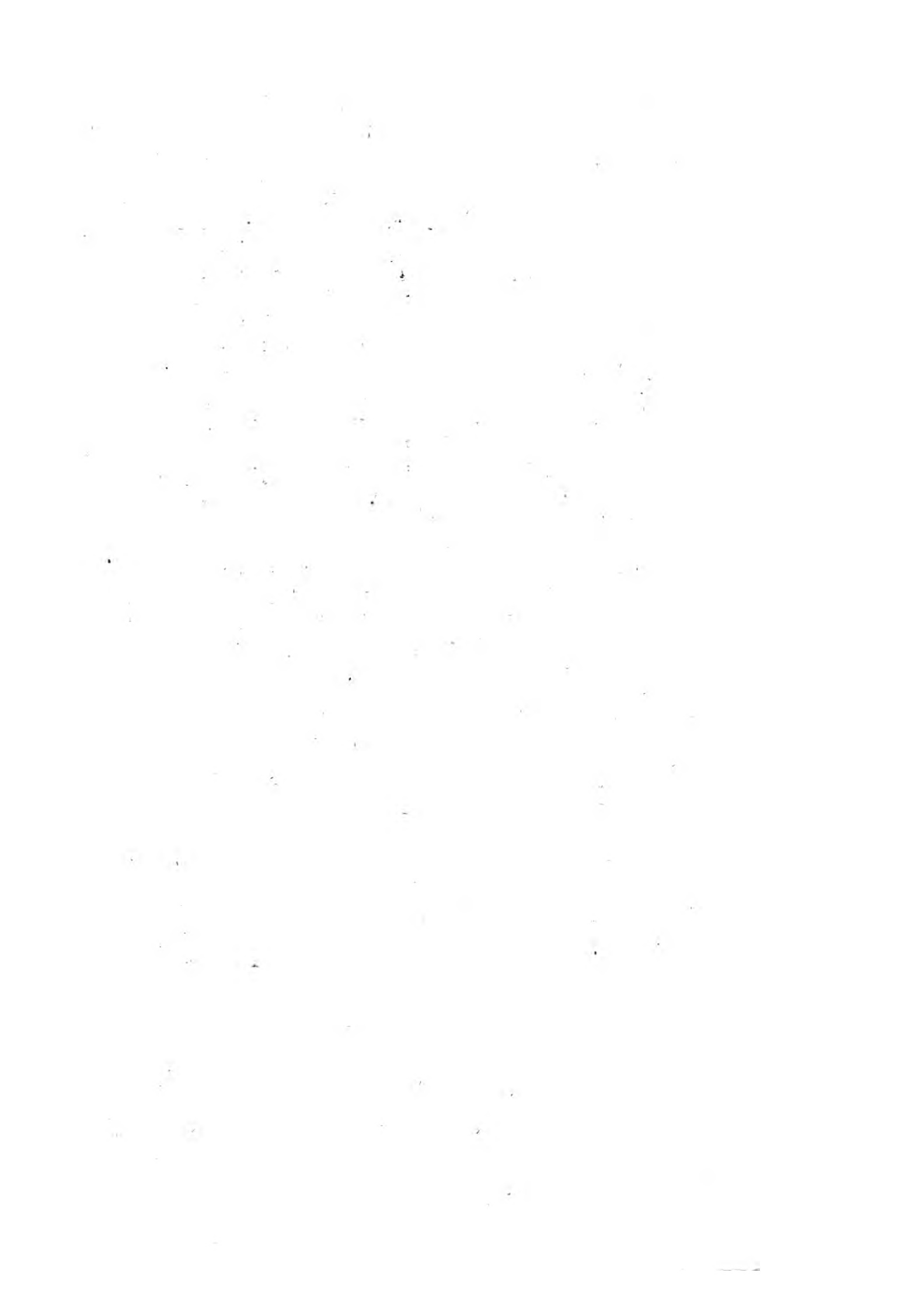
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LET-



L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM

Samuel Johnson, LL. D.

L E T T E R I. *

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

London, Aug. 13, 1765.

IF you have really so good an opinion of me as you express, it will not be necessary to inform you, how unwillingly I miss the opportunity of coming to Brighthelmstone in Mr. Thrale's company; or, since I cannot do what I wish first, how eagerly I shall catch the second degree of pleasure, by coming to

* This is the first letter ever received by the Editor from Dr. Johnson, who was at that time engaged in preparing for the press his edition of Shakespeare.

VOL. I.

B

you

2 LETTERS TO AND FROM

you and him, as soon as I can dismiss my work from my hands.

I am afraid to make promises even to myself; but I hope that the week after the next will be the end of my present business. When business is done, what remains but pleasure? and where should pleasure be sought, but under Mrs. Thrale's influence?

Do not blame me for a delay by which I must suffer so much, and by which I suffer alone. If you cannot think I am good, pray think I am mending, and that in time I may deserve to be,

DEAR MADAM,

Your most obedient, and
Most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

L E T T E R II.

To Mrs. SALUSBURY*.

MADAM,

February 14, 1767.

I HOPE it will not be considered as one of the mere formalities of life, when I declare, that to have heard nothing of Mrs. Thrale for so long a time, has given me pain. My uneasiness is sincere, and therefore deserves to be relieved. I do not write to Mrs. Thrale, lest it should give her trouble at an inconvenient time. I beg, Dear Madam, to know how she does; and shall honestly partake of your grief if she is ill, and of your pleasure if she is well. I am,

MADAM,

Your most obliged, and
Most humble servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

* Mother to the Editor.

L E T T E R I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

Lichfield, July 20, 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. But complaint can be of no use; and why then should I depress your hopes by my lamentations? I suppose it is the condition of humanity to design what never

* Miss Lucy Porter, daughter to Dr. Johnson's wife by a former husband.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 5

will be done, and to hope what never will be obtained. But among the vain hopes, let me not number the hope which I have, of being long, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R I V.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Oct. 3, 1767.

YOU are returned, I suppose, from Bright-helmstone, and this letter will be read at Streatham.

—Sine me, liber, ibis in urbem.

I have felt in this place something like the shackles of destiny. There has not been one day of pleasure, and yet I cannot get away. But when I do come, I perhaps shall not be easily persuaded to pass again to the other side of Styx, to venture myself on the irre-meable road. I long to see you, and all those of whom the sight is included in seeing you. *Nil mihi rescribas*; for though I have no right to say, *ipsa veni*, I hope that *ipse veniam*. Be pleased to make my compliments.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

March 3, 1768.

I THOUGHT Mr. W— had been secured. Since what I have done is ineffectual, I doubt the power of my sollicitation; but, to leave nothing undone, I have written to him.

Mr. Pennick I have seen, but with so little approach to intimacy that I could not have recollected his name; yet to him I have inclosed a letter, which, after this information, you may use as you think is best. I suppose it can do no harm.

Do you think there is any danger, that you are thus anxious for a single vote? Pray let me know, as often as you can find a little time; for I love to see a letter.

Be pleased to make my compliments to Mr. Thrale and Mrs. Salusbury, and Miss Hetty, and every body. How does the poor little maid?

I am, &c.

Dr. JOHNSON'S Letter to Mr. PENNICK in
favour of Mr. THRALE.

S I R,

I AM flattered by others with an honour with which I dare not presume to flatter myself, that of having obtained so much of your kindness or regard, as that my recommendation of a candidate for Southwark may have some influence in determining your vote at the approaching election. As a man is willing to believe well of himself, I now indulge my vanity, by soliciting your vote and interest for Mr. Thrale, whose encomium I shall make very compendiously, by telling you that you would most certainly vote for him if you knew him. I ought to have waited on you with this request, even though my right to make it had been greater; but, as the election approaches, and I know not how long I shall be detained here, I hope you will not impute this unceremonious treatment to any want of respect in, Sir,

Your most obedient servant.

L E T T E R V I.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

March 14, 1768.

MY last letter came a day after its time, by being carried too late to the post. This I mention, that you may not suspect me of negligence. I wrote at the same time to Mr. W. in more forcible terms than perhaps he thinks I had a right to: he has not answered me. He and his wife are on such terms, that I know not whether his inclination can be inferred from her's.

If I can be of any use, I will come directly to London; but if Mr. Thrale thinks himself certain, I have no doubt. That they all express the same certainty, has very little effect on those who know how many men are confident without certainty, and positive without confidence. We have not any reason to suspect Mr. Thrale of deceiving us or himself.

I hope all our friends at Streatham are well; and am glad to hope that the poor maid will recover. When the mind is drawn toward a
dying-

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dying bed, how small a thing is an election? But on death we cannot be always thinking, and, I suppose, we need not. The thought is very dreadful!

This little dog does nothing, but I hope he will mend; he is now reading Jack the Giant-killer. Perhaps so noble a narrative may rouse in him the soul of enterprise.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R VII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

March 18, 1768.

NO part of Mr. Thrale's troubles would have been troublesome to me, if any endeavours of mine could have made them less. But I know not that I could have done more for him, than, in your approaching danger, I can do for you. I wish you both well, and have little doubt of seeing you both emerge from your difficulties.

When the election is decided, I entreat to be immediately informed; and when you retreat to Streatham, if I shall not have returned

turned to town, I hope that Mrs. Salusbury will favour me now and then with an account of you, when you can less conveniently give it of yourself. To be able to do nothing in the exigence of a friend is an uneasy state, but in the most pressing exigencies it is the natural state of humanity, and in all has been commonly that of, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R V I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, Oxford, March 24, 1768.

YOU serve me very forrily. You may write every day to this place; and yet I do not know what is the event of the Southwark election, though, I am sure, you ought to believe that I am very far from indifference about it. Do; let me know as soon as you can.

Our election was yesterday. Every possible influence of hope and fear was, I believe, enforced on this occasion; the slaves of power, and the sollicitors of favour, were driven hither
from

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 to 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 enquiring 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 these voters are poor, and never can be much less poor but by the favour of those whom they are now opposing.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R I X.

T O M R S . T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

Oxford, April 19, 1768.

IF I should begin with telling you what is very true, that I have of late been very much disordered, you might perhaps think that in the next line I should impute this disorder to my distance from you ; but I am not yet well enough to contrive such stratagems of compliment. I have been really very bad, and am glad that I was not at Streatham, where I should have been troublesome to you, and you could have given no help to me.

I am not, however, without hopes of being better, and therefore hear with great pleasure of the welfare of those from whom I always expect to receive pleasure when I am capable of receiving it, and think myself much favoured that you made so much haste to tell me of your recovery.

I design to love little Miss Nanny very well ; but you must let us have a Bessy some other time. I suppose the Borough bells rung for the

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young lady's arrival. I hope she will be happy. I will not welcome her with any words of ill omen. She will certainly be happy, if she be as she and all friends are wished to be by, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

Oxford, April 28th, 1768.

IT is indeed a great alleviation of sickness to be nursed by a mother, and it is a comfort in return to have the prospect of being nursed by a daughter, even at that hour when all human attention must be vain. From that social desire of being valuable to each other, which produces kindness and officiousness, it proceeds, and must proceed, that there is some pleasure in being able to give pain. To roll the weak eye of helpless anguish, and see nothing on any side but cold indifference, will, I hope, happen to none whom I love or value; it may tend to withdraw the mind from life, but has no tendency to kindle those affections

affections which fit us for a purer and a nobler state.

Yet when any man finds himself disposed to complain with how little care he is regarded, let him reflect how little he contributes to the happiness of others, and how little, for the most part, he suffers from their pains. It is perhaps not to be lamented, that those solitudes are not long nor frequent, which must commonly be vain; nor can we wonder that, in a state in which all have so much to feel of their own evils, very few have leisure for those of another. However, it is so ordered, that few suffer for want of assistance; and that kindness which could not assist, however pleasing, may be spared.

These reflections do not grow out of any discontent at C—'s behaviour: he has been neither negligent nor troublesome; nor do I love him less for having been ill in his house. This is no small degree of praise. I am better, having scarce eaten for seven days. I shall come home on Saturday.

I am, &c.

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L E T T E R XI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

May 23d, 1768.

THOUGH I purpose to come home to-morrow, I could not omit even so long, to tell you how much I think myself favoured by your notice. Every man is desirous to keep those friends whom he is proud to have gained, and I count the friendship of your house among the felicities of life.

I thank God that I am better, and am at least within hope of being as well as you have ever known me. Let me have your prayers.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

June 17, 1768.

I KNOW that you were not displeas'd to find me gone abroad, when you were so kind as to favour me with a visit. I find it useful

to be moving; but whithersoever I may wander, I shall not, I hope, leave behind me that gratitude and respect, with which your attention to my health, and tenderness for my weakness, have impressed my heart. May you be long before you want the kindness which you have shown to, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

MADAM,

Nov. 11, 1768.

I AM sincerely sorry for you both; nor is my grief disinterested; for I cannot but think the life of Mrs. Salusbury some addition to the happiness of all that know her. How much soever I wish to see you, I hope you will give me no pleasure at the expence of one to whom you have so much greater reason to be attentive.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

Dec. 2, 1768.

I CAN readily find no paper that is not ruled for juridical use. You will wonder that I have not written, and indeed I wonder too; but I have been oddly put by my purpose. If my omission has given you any uneasiness, I have the mortification of paining that mind which I would most wish to please. I am not, I thank God, worse than when I went; and you have no hope that I should grow better here. But I will show myself to-morrow, and only write in hope that my letter will come before me, and that you will have forgiven the negligence of, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X V .

To Mifs F L I N T . *

MADEMOISELLE, A Londres, Mars 31, 1769.

IL faut avouer que la lettre que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'écrire, a été long-tems sans réponse. Voici mon apologie. J'ai été affligé d'une maladie de violence peu supportable, & d'un lenteur bien ennuiant. Tout état a ses droits particuliers. On compte parmi les droits d'un malade ce de manquer aux offices de respect, et aux devoirs de reconnoissance. Généré par ses douleurs, il ne scait veiller qu'à soi-même. Il ne pense qu'à se soulager, et à se retablir, peu attentif à tout autre soin, et peu sensible à la gloire d'être traduit d'une main telle que la vôtre.

Neanmoins, Mademoiselle, votre merite auroit exigé que je m'efforcasse à vous rendre graces de vos egards, se je l'aurois pu faire sans y meler des querelles. Mais comment

* Mifs Flint was a *very* young lady, who had translated his Strictures at the end of Shakespear's Plays.

m'em-

m'empescher de me plaindre de ces àppas par lesquelles vous avez gagné sur l'esprit de Mademoiselle Reynolds jusqu'a ce qu'elle ne se souvient plus ni de sa patrie ni de ses amis. C'est peu de nous louer, c'est peu de repandre nos ouvrages par des traductions les plus belles, pendant que vous nous privez du plaisir de voir Mademoiselle Reynolds & de l'ecouter. Enfin, Mademoiselle, il faut être moins aimable, afin que nous vous aimions plus.

Je suis,

MADemoisELLE,

Vôte tres humble, &

Obeissant Serviteur.

L E T T E R X V I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

May 18, 1769.

Now I know you want to be forgetting me, but I do not want to be forgotten, and would rather send you letters, like * *Presto's*, than suffer myself to slip out of your memory.

* Dean Swift, who signs himself *Presto* in his Familiar Letters.

C 2

That

That I should forget you, there is no danger; for I have time enough to think both by night and day; and he that has leisure for any thing that is not present, always turns his mind to that which he likes best.

One reason for thinking on you is, that I must for a while be content with thinking, for our affairs will not suffer me to come home till Saturday.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X V I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, New Inn Hall, June 27, 1769.

I HAD your note sent hither; and can easily spare the pineapple, and be satisfied with the reason for which it was sent. Though I hope I shall never want any new memorials to keep you in my mind, yet I am glad to find you flicitous not to be forgotten, though I should not deserve to be remembered if there could be any reason for such solicitude.

The pain and sickness which you suffer, you may bear to feel and I to think on with less
impatience

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impatience on your part, and less grief on mine, because the crisis is within view. I will not encrease you uneasiness with mine. I hope I grow better. I am very cautious, and very timorous. Whether fear and caution do much for me, I can hardly tell. Time will perhaps do more than both.

I purpose to come to town in a few days, but I suppose I must not see you. I will, however, call on Mr. Thrale in the Borough, and shall hope to be soon informed that your trouble is over, and that you are well enough to resume your care for that which yet continues, and which your kindness may sometimes alleviate.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

Oxford, June 29, 1769.

HESIOD, who was very wise in his time, though nothing to such wise people as we, says, that the evil of the worst times has

C 3

some

some good mingled with it. Hesiod was in the right. These times are not much to my mind ; I am not well ; but in these times you are safe, and have brought a pretty little Miss. I always wished it might be a Miss, and now that wish is gratified, nothing remains but that I entreat you to take care of yourself ; for whatever number of girls or boys you may give us, we are far from being certain that any of them will ever do for us what you can do ; it is certain that they cannot now do it, and the ability which they want, they are not likely to gain but by your precepts and your example ; by an example of excellence, and by the admonitions of truth.

Mr. Thrale tells me, that my furlough is shortened ; I am always ready to obey orders ; I have not yet found any place from which I shall not willingly depart to come back to you. I am, Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XIX.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

SIR, New Inn Hall, Oxford, June 29, 1769.

THAT Mrs. Thrale is safely past through her danger is an event at which nobody but yourself can rejoice more than I rejoice. I think myself very much honoured by the choice that you have been pleased to make of me to become related to the little maiden. Let me know when she will want me, and I will very punctually wait on her.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, July 6, 1769.

THOUGH I am to come home to-morrow, I would not let the alarming letter which I received this morning be without notice.

C 4

Dear

Dear Madam, take all possible care of your health. How near we always are to danger ! I hope your danger is now past ; but that fear, which is the necessary effect of danger, must remain always with us. I hope my little Miss is well. Surely I shall be very fond of her. In a year and half she will run and talk. But how much ill may happen in a year and half ! Let us however hope for the better side of possibility, and think that I may then and afterwards continue to be, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X X I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

Lichfield, August 14, 1769.

I SET out on Thursday morning, and found my companion, to whom I was very much a stranger, 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

Next day we came early to Lucy, who was, I believe, glad to see us. She 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 Hamadryads 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.

I took care to tell Miss Porter, that I have got another Lucy. I hope she is well. Tell
Mrs,

Mrs. Salusbury, that I beg her stay at Streatham, for little Lucy's sake.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, July 7, 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. I hope Streatham will long be the place.

To write to you about Lichfield is of no use, for you never saw Stow-pool, nor Borrowcop-

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rowcop-hill. I believe you may find Borow or Boroughcop-hill in my Dictionary, under *cop* or *cob*. Nobody here knows what the name imports.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a letter; for, though you do not know it, three groats make a shilling. I am, Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

Lichfield, July 11, 1770.

SINCE my last letter nothing extraordinary has happened. Rheumatism, which has been very troublesome, is grown better. I have not yet seen Dr. Taylor, and July runs fast away. I shall not have much time for him, if he delays much longer to come or send. Mr. Grene, 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

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.

Do not imagine, Madam, that I wrote this letter for the sake of these philosophical meditations; for when I began it, I had neither Mr. Grene, nor his book, in my thoughts; but was resolved to write, and did not know what I had to send, but my respects to Mrs. Salusbury, and Mr. Thrale, and Harry, and the Misses. I am, Dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X X I V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, July 14, 1770.

WHEN any calamity is suffered, the first thing to be remembered is, how much has been escaped. The house might have been
been

been entered by ruffians when Mrs. Salusbury had been in it, and who can tell what horrors might have followed !

I thought you would in time compliment your compliments away. Nothing goes well when I am from you, for when I am from you the house is robbed*. You must therefore suppose, that if I had been with you, the robbery would not have been. But it was not our gang. I should have had no interest.

Your loss, I am afraid, is very great; but the loss of patience would have been greater.

My rheumatism torments me very much, though not as in the winter. I think I shall go to Ashbourne on Monday or Tuesday.

You will be pleased to make all my compliments.

I am, &c.

* Mrs. Salusbury's house in town was robbed of goods and linen to a large amount, while she was absent at Streatham.

L E T T E R XXV.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

S I R,

July 17, 1770.

I T is unlucky enough that my power of acknowledging and returning civility should fail just now, when you are daily giving me occasion to exert it; unmercifully indeed, and I fear with some wicked intention, to wear it quite out.

I see your gang;—the heads of it, however, have for this time, as you say, avoided suspicion. You have an *alibi* ready to prove; and Mr. Baretti's book shews, that he has been employed among more entertaining papers: 'tis a most pleasing performance, and meets with eager readers in our house: even Mrs. * * * * * is sure that *such* a gentleman must keep a carriage, though not so fine a one, *no sure*, as Mr. Thrale's.

I have been very bad of an odious fore throat, which few escape: all the little ones are well though; so is my mother, so is my master. All send their best compliments to
Mr.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 31

Mr. Johnson; and Mr. Thrale particularly vexes lest you should not see Matlock on a moon-light night.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 20, 1770.

I HOPE your complaint, however troublesome, is without danger; for your danger involves us all. When you were ill before, it was agreed that if you were lost, hope would be lost with you; for such another there was no expectation of finding.

I came hither on Wednesday, having staid one night at a lodge in the forest of Nede-wood. 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.

Let us not yet have done rejoicing that Mrs. Salusbury was not in the house. The robbery will be a noble tale when we meet again.

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 philosopher.

I have learned since I left you, that the names of two of the Pleiades were Coccymo and Lampado*.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Ashbourne, July 23, 1770.

THERE had not been so long an interval between my two last letters, but that when I came hither I did not at first understand the hours of the post.

* The allusion is to a search made at that time by the Streatham Coterie, for female names ending in O.

I have

I have seen the great bull; 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.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

March, 1771.

IN the Shrewsbury, an East India ship, commanded by Captain Jones, there is one Thomas Coxeter, who lately enlisted as a soldier in the Company's service. He repents of his adventure, and has written to his sister, who brings this letter, to procure him his discharge. He is the son of a gentleman, who was once my friend; and the boy was himself a favourite with my wife. I shall therefore think it a great favour, if you will be pleased to use

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D

your

your influence with Sir George Colebrook, that he may be discharged. The request is not great ; for he is slight and feeble, and worth nothing but to those who value him for some other merit than his own.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X X I X .

To Madame la Comtesse de ———.

May 16, 1771.

OUI, Madame, le moment est arrivé, et il faut que je parte, mais pourquoi faut il partir ? est ce que je m'ennuye ? je m'ennuierai ailleurs. Est ce que je cherche ou quelque plaisir ou quelque soulagement ? Je ne cherche rien, je n'espère rien. Aller, voir ce que j'ai vû, être un peu rejoué, un peu degouté, me resouvenir que la vie se passe & qu'elle se passe en vain, me plaindre de moi, m'enducir aux dehors, voici le tout de ce qu'on compte pour les delices de l'année.

Que Dieu vous donne, Madame, tous les agrements de la vie, avec un esprit qui peut en jouir, sans s'y livrer trop.

L E T T E R X X X .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

J u n e 1 5 , 1 7 7 1 .

I T seems strange that I should live a week so near you, and yet never see you. I have been once to enquire after you, and when I have written this note am going again. The use of the pamphlet the letter will shew, which lies at the proper page. When Mr. L—— shews so much attention, it cannot become me to shew less. What to think of the case I know not; the relation has all appearance of truth; and one great argument is, that the only danger is in not believing. The water can, I think, do no harm; Dr. Wall thinks it may do good. If Mrs. Salusbury should think fit to go before you can go with her, I will attend her, if she will accept of my company, with great readiness, at my own expence, and if I am in the country will come back.

D 2

I need

I need not tell you, that I hope you are with the necessary exceptions all well, or that

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X X X I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, Thursday, June 20, 1771.

THIS night, at nine o'clock, Sam. Johnson and Francis Barber Esquires, set out in the Lichfield stage; Francis is indeed rather upon it. What adventures we may meet with who can tell?

I shall write when I come to Lichfield, and hope to hear in return, that you are safe, and Mrs. Salusbury better, and all the rest as well as I left them.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, June 22, 1771.

L A S T night I came safe to Lichfield; this day I was visited by Mrs. Cobb. This afternoon I went to Mrs. Aston, where I found Miss T—, and waited on her home. Miss T— 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.

In all this there is nothing very memorable, but *sands form the mountain*. I hope to hear from Streatham of a greater event, that a new being is born that shall in time write such letters as this, and that another being is safe that she may continue to write such. She can indeed do many other things; she can add to the pleasure of many lives, and among others to that of

Her most obedient, and

Most humble servant.

L E T T E R X X X I I I .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

J u n e 2 5 , 1 7 7 1 .

ALL your troubles, I hope, are now past, and the little stranger safe in the cradle. You have then nothing to do but survey the lawn from your windows, and see Lucy try to run after Harry.

Here things go wrong. They have cut down another tree, but they do not yet grow very rich. I enquired of my barber after another barber; that barber, says he, is dead, and his son has left off, to turn maltster. Maltsters, I believe, do not get much money. The price of barley and the king's duty are known, and their profit is never suffered to rise high.—But there is often a rise upon stock.—There may as well be a fall—Very seldom. There are those in this town that have not a farthing less this year than fifty pounds by the rise upon stock. Did you think there had been yet left a city in England, where the gain of fifty pounds in a year would be mentioned with emphasis?

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 3, 1771.

LAST Saturday I came to Ashbourne; the dangers or the pleasures of the journey I have at present no disposition to recount; else might I paint the beauties of my native plains; might I tell of "the smiles of nature, and the charms of art:" else might I relate how I crossed the Staffordshire canal, one of the great efforts of human labour, and human contrivance; which, from the bridge on which I viewed it, passed away on either side, and loses itself in distant regions, uniting waters that nature had divided, and dividing lands which nature had united. I might tell how these reflections fermented in my mind till the chaise stopped at Ashbourne, at 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.

I am, &c.

D 4

L E T T E R X X X V .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M , A s h b o u r n e , J u l y 7 , 1 7 7 1 .

NO news yet of *****. Our expectations were premature.

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 mentioned in your letter, and is sure that I have spoken better of her than she desired. 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.

Be pleased to make my compliments to every body.

LETTER XXXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, July 7, 1771.

ONCE more I sit down to write, and hope you will once more be willing to read it.

Last Sunday an old acquaintance found me out, not, I think, a school-fellow, but one with whom I played perhaps before I went to school. I had not seen him for forty years, but was glad to find him alive. He has had, as he phrased it, *a matter of four wives*, for which neither you nor I like him much the better; but after all his marriages he is poor, and has now, at sixty-six, two very young children.

Such, Madam, are the strange things of which we that travel come to the knowledge. We see *mores hominum multorum*. You that waste your lives over a book at home, must take life upon trust.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Ashbourne, July 8, 1771.

INDIFFERENCE is indeed a strange word in a letter from me to you. Which way could it possibly creep in? I do not remember any moment, for a very long time past, when I could use it without contradiction from my own thoughts.

This naughty baby stays so long that I am afraid it will be a giant, like king Richard. I suppose I shall be able to tell it, "Teeth hadst thou in thy head when thou wert born." I wish your pains and your danger over.

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. Littelton's kind invitation, for beside the pleasure of his conversation, I should have had the opportunity of recollecting past times, and wandering *per montes notas et flumina nota*, of recalling the
images

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images of sixteen, and reviewing my conversations with poor Ford *. 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 ill health is a strong reason against desertion.

I return all the compliments, and hope I may add some at last to this wicked, tiresome, dilatory bantling.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Ashbourne, July 10, 1771.

I AM obliged to my friend Harry, for his remembrance ; but think it a little hard that I hear nothing from Miss.

There has been a man here to-day to take a farm. After some talk he went to see the bull, and said that he had seen a bigger. Do you think he is likely to get the farm?

Toujours strawberries and cream.

* Cornelius Ford, his mother's nephew.

Dr.

Dr. Taylor is much better, and my rheumatism is less painful. Let me hear in return as much good of you and of Mrs. Salisbury. You despise the Dog and Duck; things that are at hand are always slighted. I remember that Dr. Grevil, of Gloucester, sent for that water when his wife was in the same danger; but he lived near Malvern, and you live near the Dog and Duck. Thus, in difficult cases, we naturally trust most what we least know.

Why Bromfield, supposing that a lotion can do good, should despise laurel-water in comparison with his own receipt, I do not see; and see still less why he should laugh at that which Wall thinks efficacious. I am afraid philosophy will not warrant much hope in a lotion.

Be pleased to make my compliments from Mrs. Salisbury to Susy.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 15, 1771.

WHEN we come together to practise chymistry *, I believe we shall find our furnaces sufficient for most operations. We have a gentleman here reading philosophical lectures, who performs the chymical part with furnaces of the same kind with ours, but much less; yet he says, that he can in his little furnace raise a fire that will melt iron. I saw him smelt lead; and shall bring up some ore for our operations. The carriage will cost more than the lead perhaps will be worth; but a chymist is very like a lover;

“ And sees those dangers which he cannot shun.”

I will try to get other ore, both of iron and copper, which are all which this country affords, though *feracissima metallorum regio*.

* It was about this time that a laboratory was fitted up at Streatham, for Mr. Johnson's amusement.

The

The doctor has no park, but a little enclosure behind his house, in which there are about thirty bucks and does; and they take bread from the hand. Would it not be pity to kill them? It seems to be now out of his head.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X L.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 17, 1771.

AT Lichfield I found little to please me. One more of my few school-fellows is dead; upon which I might make a new reflection, and say, *Mors omnibus communis*. Miss Porter was rather better than last year; but I think Miss Aston grows rather worse. I took a walk in quest of juvenile images, but caught a cloud instead of Juno.

I longed for Taylor's chaise; but I think Lucy did not long for it, though she was not sorry to see it. Lucy is a philosopher; and considers me as one of the external and accidental

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dental things that are to be taken and left without emotion. If I could learn of Lucy would it be better? Will you teach me?

I would not have it thought that I forget Mrs. Salusbury; but nothing that I can say will be of use; and what comfort she can have, your duty will not fail to give her.

What is the matter that Queeney uses me no better? I should think she might have written to me; but she has neither sent a message nor a compliment. I thank Harry for remembering me.

Rheumatism teazes me yet.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 20, 1771.

SWEET meat and four fauce.—With your letter which was kind, I received another from Miss * * * * *, to let me know with what *frigidity* I have answered her; and to tell me, that she neither hopes nor desires to
excite

excite greater warmth. That my first salutation *Madam* surpris'd her, as if an old friend, newly meeting her, had thrown a glass of cold water in her face; and that she does not design to renew our conversations when I *con-*
descend to visit them, after * * * * gets up.

'Tis not for nothing that we live perdue.

I have certainly now such a letter as I never had before, and such as I know not how to answer. I dare neither write with *frigidity*, nor with fire. Our intercourse is something

Which good and bad does equally confound,
And either horn of fate's dilemma wound.

There was formerly in France a *cour de l'amour*; but I fancy nobody was ever summoned before it after threescore: yet in this court, if it now subsisted, I seem likely to be nonsuited.

I am not very sorry that she is so far off. There can be no great danger in writing to her.

Of long walks I cannot tell you; for I have no companion; and the rheumatism has taken away some of my courage: but last night I slept well.

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To strawberries and cream which still continue, we now add custard and bilberry pye.

Our two last fawns are well; but one of our swans is sick. Life, says Foresight, is chequer-work.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

July 22, 1771.

NOTHING new has happened, and yet I do not care to omit writing. Last post I had four letters, all female. Besides yours, I had one from Mrs. Hervey, Miss * * * * , and Mrs. Williams. Mrs. Hervey must stay; and what to say to * * * * I cannot devise.

My rheumatism continues to persecute me most importunately; and how to procure ease in this place, where there are no hot rooms, I do not see; but I always hope next day, or next night, will be better, and am not always disappointed.

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E

Queeney

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about a hundred loose bricks. I can at present think of no better place for chymistry, in fair weather, than the pump-side in the kitchen garden.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLIV.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

July 31, 1771.

I AM this morning come to Lichfield, a place which has no temptations to prolong my stay; but if it had more, would not have such as could withhold me from your house when I am at liberty to come to it. I hope our dear mistress is got up, and recovering. Pray tell her to mind, whether I am not got quite wild for want of government. My thoughts are now about getting to London. I shall watch for a place; for our carriages are only such as pass through the place, sometimes full, and sometimes vacant.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X L V .

T o M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M , L i c h f i e l d , S a t . A u g . 3 , 1 7 7 1 .

IF you were well enough to write last Tuesday, you will surely be well enough to read on Monday; and therefore I will now write to you as before.

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 be stopped by Lucy? Hearing me give Francis orders to take us 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 shewing you that I do not come an universal outcast. Lucy is likewise a very peremptory maiden; and if I had gone
without

without permission, I am not very sure that I might have been welcome at another time.

When we meet, we may compare our different uses of this interval. I shall charge you with having lingered away, in expectation and disappointment, two months, which are both physically and morally considered as analogous to the fervid and vigorous part of human life; two months, in which Nature exerts all her powers of benefaction, and graces the liberality of her hand by the elegance of her smile; two months, which, as Doodle says, "you never saw before," and which, as La Bruyere says, "you shall never see again."

But complaints are vain; we will try to do better another time.—To-morrow and to-morrow.—A few designs and a few failures, and the time of designing will be past.

Mr. Seward left Lichfield yesterday, I am afraid, not much mended by his opium. He purposes to wait on you; and if envy could do much mischief, he would have much to dread, since he will have the pleasure of seeing you sooner than, Dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X L V I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Aug. 5, 1771.

THOUGH I have now been two posts without hearing from you, I hope no harm has befallen you. I have just been with the old Dean, if I may call him old who is but seventy-eight; and find him as well, both in mind and body, as his younger neighbours. I went with my Lucy this morning to a philosophical lecture; and have been this evening to see Mr. Green's curiosities, both natural and artificial; and I am come home to write to my dear lady.

So rolls the world away.

The days grow visibly shorter.—*Immortalia ne speres monet annus.*—I think it time to return. Do you think that after all this roving you shall be able to manage me again? I suppose, like * * * * , that you are thinking how to reduce me; but you may spare your contrivances; and need not fear that I find
any

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any reception that gives me pleasure equal to
to that of being, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XLVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

October 19, 1772.

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.

I am here at present a little wind-bound, as
the paper will show you, and Lichfield is not
a place of much entertainment; yet, though
I have some thoughts of rambling a little, this
is to be my home long enough to receive a
letter, which will, I hope, tell me that you
are busy in reformation, that dear Mrs. Sa-
lisbury is easy, that all the young people are
well, and that Mr. Thrale brews at less ex-
pence than fourteen shillings a quarter. They
have had in this county a very prosperous

hay-harvest; but malt is five-and-sixpence a strike, or two pounds four shillings a quarter. Wheat is nine-and-sixpence a bushel. These are prices which are almost descriptive of a famine. Flesh is likewise very dear.

In this wide-extended calamity let us try what alleviation can be found in our kindness to each other.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X L V I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

MADAM,

Lichfield, October 24, 1772.

I WOULD have you consider whether it will not be best to write to Sir T——, not taking notice of any thing proposed to Mr. B——; and only letting him know, that the report which terrified you so much has had little effect; and that you have now no particular need of his money. By this you will free him from solicitude; and, having nothing to fear from you, he will love you as before. It will abate any triumph of your enemies, and dispose them less to censure, and him less to regard censure.

When

When you wrote the letter which you call injudicious, I told you that it would bring no money; but I do not see how, in that tumult of distress, you could have forborn it, without appearing to be too tender of your own personal connections, and to place your uncle above your family. You did what then seemed best, and are therefore not so reasonable as I wish my mistress to be, in imputing to yourself any unpleasing consequences. Your uncle, when he knows that you do not want, and mean not to disturb him, will probably subside in silence to his former stagnation of unactive kindness.

Do not suffer little things to disturb you. The brewhouse must be the scene of action, and the subject of speculation. The first consequence of our late trouble ought to be, an endeavour to brew at a cheaper rate; an endeavour not violent and transient, but steady and continual, prosecuted with total contempt of censure or wonder, and animated by resolution not to stop while more can be done. Unless this can be done, nothing can help us; and if this be done, we shall not want help.

Surely there is something to be saved; there is to be saved whatever is the difference between

tween vigilance and neglect, between parsimony and profusion.

The price of malt has risen again. It is now two pounds eight shillings the quarter. Ale is sold in the public houses at sixpence a quart, a price which I never heard of before.

This weather, if it continues, will certainly save hay; but it can but little balance the misfortune of the scanty harvest. This, however, is an evil which we only share with the whole nation, and which we did not bring upon ourselves.

I fancy the next letter may be directed to Ashbourne. Pray write word how long I may have leave to stay.

I sincerely wish Mrs. Salisbury continuance and increase of ease and comfort; and wish all good to you all.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XLIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Oct. 29, 1772.

I N writing to your unkle you certainly did well; but your letter was hardly confident enough. You might have ventured to speak with some degree of indifference, about money which you know that you shall not have. I have no doubt of the present perverseness of his intention; but, if I mistake not his character, his intention and execution are not very near each other; and, as he acts by mere irritation, when the disturbance is over, he will lie still.

What have I committed that I am to be left behind on Saturdays? The coach, I think, must go twice with the rest; and at one of the times you might make room for me, if you cared for me. But so am I served, that sit thinking and thinking of you, and all of you.

Poor dear Mrs. Salusbury! Is the place then open? I am however glad to hear,
that

that her vigour of mind is yet undiminished. I hope she will now have less pain.

We are here as we used to be. Our bulls and cows, if there is any change, seem to grow bigger.

That you are to go to the other house I am inwardly pleased, however I may pretend to pity you; and I am of Mamma's opinion, that you may find yourself something to do there, and something of importance.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

October 31, 1772.

THOUGH I am just informed, that, by some accidental negligence, the letter which I wrote on Thursday was not given to the post, yet I cannot refuse myself the gratification of writing again to my mistress; not that I have any thing to tell, but that by showing how much I am employed upon you, I hope to keep you from forgetting me.

Doctor

Doctor Taylor asked me this morning on what I was thinking? and I was thinking on Lucy. I hope Lucy is a good girl. But she cannot yet be so good as Queeney. I have got nothing yet for Queeney's cabinet.

I hope dear Mrs. Salusbury grows no worse. I wish any thing could be found that would make her better. You must remember her admonition, and bustle in the brewhouse. When I come you may expect to have your hands full with all of us.

Our bulls and cows are all well; but we yet hate the man that had seen a bigger bull. Our deer have died; but many are left. Our waterfall at the garden makes a great roaring this wet weather.

And so no more at present from, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R L I.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Nov. 4, 1772.

WE keep writing to each other when, by the confession of both, there is nothing to be said; but, on my part, I find it very pleasing to write; and what is pleasing is very willingly continued.

I hope your prescriptions have been successful, and Mr. Thrall is well. What pity it is that we cannot do something for the dear lady! 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; and I hope you think that, sick or well,

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Nov. 7, 1772.

SO many days and never a letter!—*Fugere fides, pietasque pudorque*. This is Turkish usage. And I have been hoping and hoping. But you are so glad to have me out of your mind.

I think you were quite right in your advice about the thousand pounds, for the payment could not have been delayed long; and a short delay would have lessened credit, without advancing interest. But in great matters you are hardly ever mistaken.

We have here very rainy weather; but it makes the grass grow, and makes our waterfall roar. I wish Queeney heard it; she would think it very pretty. I go down to it every day, for I have not much to do; and have not been very well; but by physick am grown better. You and all your train may be supposed to keep me company in my walks. I wish I could know how you brew, and how you go on; but you tell me nothing.

I am, &c.

LETTER LIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 9, 1772.

AFTER I had sent away my last letter, I received your's, which was an answer to it; but, being not fully directed, had lain, I think, two days at the office.

I am glad that you are at last come home, and that you exert your new resolution with so much vigour. But the fury of housewifery will soon subside; and little effect will be produced but by methodical attention and even frugality; nor can these powers be immediately attained. You have your own habits, as well as those of others, to combat: you have yet the skill of management to learn, as well as the practice to establish. Do not be discouraged either by your own failures, or the perverseness of others; you will, by resolution frequently renewed, and by perseverance properly excited, overcome in time both them and yourself.

Your letter to Sir * * * * will, I doubt not, have the effect intended. When he is not pinched he will sleep.

Mr. Thrale's money, to pay for all, must come from the sale of good beer. I am far from despairing of solid and durable prosperity. Nor will your success exceed my hopes, or my opinion of your state, if, after this tremendous year, you should annually add to your fortune three thousand pounds. This will soon dismiss all incumbrances; and, when no interest is paid, you will begin annually to lay up almost five thousand. This is very splendid; but this, I think, is in your power.

Dear mamma, I hope, continues to be cheerful. Do the ———s take her house furnished? I think it a very proper habitation for them, out of the smoke of the city, and yet not in the blaze of the court.

I am much obliged to you for your desire of my return; but if I make haste, will you promise not to spoil me? I do not much trust yet to your new character, which I have had only from yourself.

Be pleased to direct your next letter to Lichfield; for I shall, I think, be contriving to find my way back.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L I V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 19, 1772.

I LONGED for your letter to-day; for till that came I could not make any promises, or form any determinations. You need not doubt my readiness to return, but it is impossible to foresee all occasions of interruption, or all necessities of compliance.

Be pleased to tell poor dear Mrs. Salusbury, that I wish her better; and to wish is all the power that we have. In the greatest exigencies we can only regret our own inability. I think Mrs. Queeney might write again.

This year will undoubtedly be an year of struggle and difficulty; but I doubt not of getting through it; and the difficulty will grow yearly less and less. Supposing that our former mode of life kept us on the level, we shall, by the present contraction of expence, gain upon fortune a thousand a-year, even though no improvements can be made in the conduct of the trade. Every two thousand
pounds

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pounds faves an hundred pound interest, and therefore as we gain more we pay less. We have a rational hope of success; we have rather a moral certainty, with life and health. Let us therefore not be dejected. Continue to be a housewife, and be as frolicksome with your tongue as you please.

I am, dearest Lady, &c.

L E T T E R L V.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 23, 1772.

I AM sorry that none of your letters bring better news of the poor dear lady. I hope her pain is not great. To have a disease confessedly incurable and apparently mortal is a very heavy affliction; and it is still more grievous when pain is added to despair.

Every thing else in your letter pleased me very well, except that when I come I entreat I may not be flattered, as your letters flatter me. You have read of heroes and princes ruined by flattery, and I question if any of them had a flatterer so dangerous as you.

F 2

Pray

Pray keep strictly to your character of governess.

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.

Our house affords no revolutions. The great bull is well. But I write not merely to think on you, for I do that without writing, but to keep you a little thinking on me. I perceive that I have taken a broken piece of paper, but that is not the greatest fault that you must forgive in, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R LVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Nov. 27, 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

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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.

I am in hope of a letter to-day from you or Queeney, but the post has made some blunder, and the packet is not yet distributed. I wish it may bring me a little good of you all.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, Dec. 3, 1772.

I FOUND two letters here, to recompense my disappointment at Ashbourne. I shall not now be long before I hope to settle, for it is a

F 3

fine

fine thing to be settled. When one parts from friends it is uncertain when one shall come back, and when one comes back it is not very certain how long one shall stay. But hope, you know, was left in the box of Prometheus.

Miss Aston claims kin to you, for she says she is somehow a-kin to the Cottons. In a little time you shall make them all yet prouder of their kindred. Do not be depressed. Scarce years will not last for ever; there will sometime be good harvests. Scarcity itself produces plenty by inciting cultivation. I hope we shall soon talk these matters over very seriously, and that we shall talk of them again much less seriously many years hence.

My love to all,
Both great and small.

These verses I made myself, though perhaps they have been made by others before me.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

Tuesday, Jan. 26, 1773.

THE inequalities of human life have always employed the meditation of deep thinkers, and I cannot forbear to reflect on the difference between your condition and my own. You live upon mock turtle, and stewed rumps of beef; I dined yesterday upon crumpets. You sit with parish officers, careffing and careffed, the idol of the table, and the wonder of the day. I pine in the solitude of sickness, not bad enough to be pitied, and not well enough to be endured. You sleep away the night, and laugh or scold away the day. I cough and grumble, and grumble and cough. Last night was very tedious, and this 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 get rid of that without change of place. I

F 4

caught

caught cold in the coach as I went away, and am disordered by very little things. Is it accident or age?

I am, dearest Madam, &c.

L E T T E R L I X .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

Feb. 19, 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's. Miss Frances Southwell is not well.

I have an invitation to dine at Sir Joshua Reynolds's on Tuesday. May I accept it?

Do not think I am going to borrow the Roller. I have undertaken to beg from you the favour of lending to Miss Reynolds Newton on the Prophecies, and to Miss Williams Burney's Musical Journey. They are, I believe, both at Streatham.

Be pleased to make my most respectful compliments to dear Mrs. Salusbury. I wish I could send her any thing better.

Diversas hominum sortes. Here am I, sitting by myself, uncertain whether I shall dine on veal or mutton; and there are you with the top dish and the bottom dish, all upon a card, and on the other side of the card Tom Lifgow*. Of the rest that dwell in darker fame why should I make mention. Tom Lifgow is an assembly. But Tom Lifgow cannot people the world. Mr. K—— must have a place. The lion has his jackall. They will soon meet.

And when they talk, ye gods! how they will talk.

Pray let your voice and my master's help to fill the pauses.

I am, &c.

* Tom Lifgow was a voter at the Southwark election. Mr. K—— was another. When they were entertained at Mr. Thrale's table, the Editor of these letters used to write the bill of fare on one side of a large blank card in a small character, the names of the company on the other side, and refer to it from time to time as it lay by her plate, that no mistakes might be made, or offence given from ignorance or forgetfulness; to this practice Mr. Johnson laughingly alludes.

L E T T E R L X.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Johnfon's Court, Fleet-ftreet,
March 9, 1773.

DR. JAMES called on me laft night, deep, I think, in wine. Our dialogue was this :

—You find the cafe hopelefs?—Quite hopelefs.—But I hope you can procure her an eafier difmiffion out of life?—That, I believe, is in our power.

The reft of his talk was about other things.

If it can give the dear lady any comfort, be pleafed to let her know that my grief for her is very ferious and very deep. If I could be ufeful as you can be, I would devote myfelf to her as you muft do. But all human help is little ; her truft muft be in a better Friend.

You will not let me burft in ignorance of your tranfaction with A———. Surely my

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heart is with you in your whole system of life.

I am, dear Madam, &c.

I had written this letter before yours came.
God blefs you all.

L E T T E R L X I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

March 11, 1773.

YOUR negotiation will probably end as you desire. I wish your pious offices might have the same success, but death is necessary, and your tenderness will make it less painful. I am sorry that I can do nothing. The dear lady has my wishes, and sometimes my prayers. I hope our prayers will be heard for her, and her prayers for herself.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L X I I .

T O M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

M a r c h 1 7 , 1 7 7 3 .

TO tell you that I am sorry both for the poor lady and for you is useless. I cannot help either of you. The weakness of mind is perhaps only a casual interruption or intermission of the attention, such as we all suffer when some weighty care or urgent calamity has possession of the mind. She will compose herself. She is unwilling to die, and the first conviction of approaching death raised great perturbation. I think she has but very lately thought death close at hand. She will compose herself to do that as well as she can, which must at last be done. May she not want the Divine assistance.

You, Madam, will have a great loss; a greater than is common in the loss of a parent. Fill your mind with hope of her happiness, and turn your thoughts first to Him who gives and
takes

takes away, in whose presence the living and dead are standing together. Then remember, that when this mournful duty is paid, others yet remain of equal obligation, and, we may hope, of less painful performance. Grief is a species of idleness, and the necessity of attention to the present preserves us, by the merciful disposition of Providence, from being lacerated and devoured by sorrow for the past. You must think on your husband and your children, and do what this dear lady has done for you.

Not to come to town while the great struggle continues is undoubtedly well resolved. But do not harass yourself into danger; you owe the care of your health to all that love you, at least to all whom it is your duty to love. You cannot give such a mother too much, if you do not give her what belongs to another.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L X I I I .

T O M r s . T H R A L E .

M A D A M , M a r c h 20, 1773. T h e E q u i n o x .

I HAVE now heard twice to-day how the dear lady mends; twice is not often enough for such news. May she long and long continue mending. When I see her again, how I shall love her. If we could keep a while longer together, we should all, I hope, try to be thankful. Part we must at last; but the last parting is very afflictive. When I see her I shall torment her with caressing her. Has she yet been down stairs?

On Tuesday morning I hope to see you. I have not much to tell you, but will gather what little I can.

I shall be glad to see you, for you are much in my head, notwithstanding your negotiations for my master, he has mended his share for one year, you must think of cutting in pieces and boiling him. We will at least keep him
out

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out of J—ck—n's * copper. You will be at leisure now to think of brewing and negotiating, and a little of, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R LXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

March 25, 1773.

IF my letters can do you any good it is not fit that you should want them. You are always flattering me with the good that I do, without knowing it.

The return of Mrs. Salusbury's appetite will undoubtedly prolong her life; I therefore wish it to continue or to improve. You did not say whether she went down stairs.

* H—ph—y J—ck—n was a pretender to chymistry, who obtaining much of Mr. T.'s confidence, used it to his own emolument only, not his friend's, who suffered exceedingly from the experiments made by him at the brewhouse, in consequence of a notion that he had some secret to preserve wood from decay, and brew at a smaller expence than was possible with malt or hops.

Harry

Harry will be happier now he goes to school and reads Milton. Miss will want him for all her vapouring.

Did not I tell you that I thought I had written to Boswell? he has answered my letter.

I am going this evening to put young Otway to school with Mr. Elphinston.

C—— is so distressed with abuse about his play, that he has solicited Goldsmith to *take him off the rack of the newspapers*.

M—— is preparing a whole pamphlet against G——, and G—— is, I suppose, collecting materials to confute M——.

Jennens has published Hamlet, but without a preface, and S—— declares his intention of letting him pass the rest of his life in peace. Here is news.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L X V .

T O M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

A p r i l 2 7 , 1 7 7 3 .

HOPE is more pleasing than fear, but not less fallacious; you know, when you do not try to deceive yourself, that the disease which at last is to destroy, must be gradually growing worse, and that it is vain to wish for more than that the descent to death may be slow and easy. In this wish I join with you, and hope it will be granted. Dear, dear lady, whenever she is lost she will be missed, and whenever she is remembered she will be lamented. Is it a good or an evil to me that she now loves me? It is surely a good; for you will love me better, and we shall have a new principle of concord; and I shall be happier with honest sorrow, than with sullen indifference; and far happier still than with counterfeited sympathy.

I am reasoning upon a principle very far from certain, a confidence of surivance. You or I, or both, may be called into the presence

of the Supreme Judge before her. I have lived a life of which I do not like the review. Surely I shall in time live better.

I sat down with an intention to write high compliments, but my thoughts have taken another course, and some other time must now serve to tell you with what other emotions, benevolence, and fidelity,

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L X V I .

T O M r s . T H R A L E .

MADAM,

May 17, 1773.

NEVER imagine that your letters are long; they are always too short for my curiosity. I do not know that I was ever content with a single perusal.

Of dear Mrs. Salusbury I never expect much better news than you send me; *de pis en pis* is the natural and certain course of her dreadful malady. I am content when it leaves her ease enough for the exercise of her mind.

Why

Why should Mr. * * * * * suppose, that what I took the liberty of suggesting was concerted with you? He does not know how much I revolve his affairs, and how honestly I desire his prosperity. I hope he has let the hint take some hold of his mind.

Your declaration to Miss * * * * * is more general than my opinions allow. I think an unlimited promise of acting by the opinion of another so wrong, that nothing, or hardly any thing, can make it right. All unnecessary vows are folly, because they suppose a prescience of the future which has not been given us. They are, I think, a crime, because they resign that life to chance which God has given us to be regulated by reason; and superinduce a kind of fatality, from which it is the great privilege of our nature to be free. Unlimited obedience is due only to the Universal Father of Heaven and Earth. My parents may be mad or foolish; may be wicked and malicious; may be erroneously religious, or absurdly scrupulous. I am not bound to compliance with mandates either positive or negative, which either religion condemns, or reason rejects. There wanders about the world a wild notion, which extends

over marriage more than over any other transaction. If Miss * * * * followed a trade, would it be said that she was bound in conscience to give or refuse credit at her father's choice? And is not marriage a thing in which she is more interested, and has therefore more right of choice? When I may suffer for my own crimes, when I may be sued for my own debts, I may judge by parity of reason for my own happiness. The parent's moral right can arise only from his kindness, and his civil right only from his money.

Conscience cannot dictate obedience to the wicked, or compliance with the foolish; and of interest mere prudence is the judge.

If the daughter is bound without a promise, she promises nothing; and if she is not bound, she promises too much.

What is meant by tying up money in trade I do not understand. No money is so little tied as that which is employed in trade. Mr. * * * * perhaps only means, that in consideration of money to be advanced, he will oblige his son to be a trader. This is reasonable enough. Upon ten thousand pounds diligently occupied, they may live in great plenty and splendour, without the mischiefs of idleness.

I can

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I can write a long letter as well as my mistress; and shall be glad that my long letters may be as welcome as her's.

My nights are grown again very uneasy and troublesome. I know not that the country will mend them; but I hope your company will mend my days. Though I cannot now expect much attention, and would not wish for more than can be spared from the poor dear lady, yet I shall see you and hear you every now and then; and to see and hear you, is always to hear wit, and to see virtue.

I shall, I hope, see you to-morrow, and a little on the two next days; and with that little I must for the present try to be contented.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXVII.

Mrs. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

S I R,

SO many things happening all at once oppress me, and I cannot judge rightly of any;—'tis therefore I beg counsel from you.

G 3

This

This dear sweet lady is willing I should come to town; and I *will* come, and try the *gutta cavat lapidem* upon A——'s heart. I believe talking in high terms would be better; but how can I when my hopes are low? Meantime * * * * persecutes me for advice, as if I had nobody to think on but her; and you say, I am wrong there again; yet I cannot repent what I said about parental authority, and am only amazed at your little veneration for it.—All appears to me as if it would end *your* way, in this particular case; yet 'tis strange that a man of your notions should think that way uniformly right. When I have heard you treat regal claims to power as things too high and too sacred even for dispute, how could I expect to read under your hand such sentiments as I now receive concerning an authority elder than the regal one, if not equally venerable?—for men were fathers certainly before they were kings. Might I be more serious, I could remind those who despise upon principle a title which God himself disdains not to accept,—that the eighth part of the Post-diluvian world was cursed for a mere breach of filial reverence, not disobedience of command,—but a merry or malicious desire only of propagating the disgrace of a parent.

All

All this, however, will serve for us to dispute about at night, when I sit up in the next room to my poor suffering mother, whose mistaken tenderness drives me from her bedside at twelve o'clock; and my master will keep us from scolding *loud*; for 'tis astonishing how quick she hears every thing,—quicker than ever,—ay, and sees quicker too; for she knew Mr. Hale as he rode by yesterday, and said, What a lean horse he had!

This is a dismal house, and that A——'s callous cruelty makes the other no relief to me; but Mr. Thrale will come home now. I am really hurried, like the fallen spirits in Milton, from frost to fire, and from fire to frost; nor can get down a drop of the oblivious water on the road, though you will find the wash-way, as we call it, sadly out since these sudden rains. This letter goes by the early morning cart. Don't tell my master that I write low-spirited; the cold bath will refresh me before he comes.—You must depend on *his* coach for carriage home, not *mine*. Do not believe that I shall neglect my husband's affairs out of fondness for my mother. Indeed you cannot think how poorly my negotiation with that hard-hearted fellow has hitherto succeeded.

Farewell, my dear Sir, and do all you can for us ; and settle with Mr. Thrale about these lovers, for it would be really a choice thing to see *somebody* happy.—Yet I hope I do not precipitate their affairs for the sake of taking a little additional weight off the already oppressed mind of

Your, &c.

L E T T E R L X V I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR LADY,

May 22, 1773.

DR. Lawrence is of your mind about the intermission, and thought the bark would be best ; but I have had so good a night as makes me wonder. Dr. Lawrence is just gone. He says I have no fever, and may let bark alone, if I will venture, but it is *meo periculo*.

Make my compliments to the dear lady.

I think Mr. T—— has done right in not prohibiting at least F——'s flight with her lover. There is no danger of Mr. R——'s taking care of his son, and of his son's wife ;
and

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and as he is willing to receive a daughter-in-law without a fortune, he has a right to provide for her his own way. The great motive to his consent is, that his son will engage in trade; and therefore no doubt can be made but he will enable him to do it; and whether at Midsummer, or Michaelmas, we have no need to care, nor right to prescribe.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R L X I X .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAREST LADY,

May 23, 1773.

STILL flatter, flatter! Why should the poor be flattered? The doctor was with me again to-day, and we both think the fever quite gone. I believe it was not an intermittent, for I took of my own head physick yesterday; and Celsus says, it seems, that if a cathartick be taken the fit will return *certo certius*. I would bear something rather than Celsus should be detected in an error. But I say it was a *febris continua*, and had a regular crisis.

What

What poor * * * * said, is worthy of the greatest mind, since the greatest mind can get no further. In the highest and the lowest things we all are equal.

As to Mr. * * * *, let him see a couple of fellows within call ; and if he makes a savage noise, order them to come gradually nearer, and you will see how quiet he will grow.

Let the poor dear lady know that I am sorry for her sorrows, and sincerely and earnestly wish her all good.

Write to me when you can, but do not flatter me. I am sorry you can think it pleases me. It is enough for me to be, as Mr. * * * * phrases it,

MADAM,

Your friend and servant,

SAM. JOHNSON.

L E T T E R L X X .

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

May 23, 1773.

I WRITE again, Dear Sir, though the time of meeting is so near, and should be sorry to think my flattery did *not* please you—if flattery
it

it is—but I call it honest praise. Other people make more bustle about your merits every day, and you bear them patiently enough; pray let my incense-pot have a place among the rest. Mr. Thrale swears he found you one morning last week in the midst of a heap of men, who, he says, carried each a brass-headed cane in his hand, and that they were all flattering away *a qui mieux mieux*. Surely there was not in the whole company one to be found who uttered expressions of esteem with more sincerity than myself; none of them think you as much exalted over the common herd of mortals as I think you; and none of them can praise you from a purer motive. It is my consolation to have a wise friend, my delight to declare that I know him such; nor is this a time when I can afford to lose either delight or consolation. Should a man protest indeed, that a fever-fit would be more welcome to him than the detecting me in an error, I might reasonably enough begin to be alarmed, and fear that he was flattering me grossly—but I never did vent my partiality in any terms half as violent as those; and yet dear Mr. Johnson, who gravely says *that* of old Celsus, has the courage to reprove me for flattering.

Well!

Well! I was told this morning, that G—— O—— speaks very highly of our master up and down; as I believe he hates us all, *he* cannot be accused of playing the sycophant: the extorted praise of an enemy however, though in many respects grateful enough, has somewhat offensive in it too, like the coarse perfume obtained by chymical operations on a poisonous substance, while the natural emanation of a friend's good will, resembles the reviving scent of vegetable fragrance. I am glad, at all events, that he is forced to speak respectfully, and even my poor mother enjoys the thought.

What a loss am I about to endure in her death! Let me hope that your kindness may prompt you to soothe the pain, and as far as it is possible to fill up the chasm; though you shall permit me to add my firm persuasion that all endeavours will be insufficient. If the Emperor of China should take from one of his slaves the liberty of ever more tasting water, rice, or tea, he would be very ill compensated, poor soul! by the free use of every dainty his master's magnificent table could afford him. No companion however wise, no friend however useful, can be to me what my
mother

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mother has been: her image will long pursue my fancy; her voice for ever hang in my ears: may her precepts but sink into my heart! When fortune is taken away, chance or diligence may repair it; fame likewise has been found not wholly irrecoverable.—My loss alone can neither be restored nor supplied in this world; I will try to turn my best thoughts upon another. Meanwhile, a million of things press upon me *here*, and force me to defend a post scarcely tenable; give me your company, your counsel, and your prayers, for I am ever,

Your truly faithful servant.

L E T T E R LXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 24, 1773.

MY fever has departed; but has left me a very severe inflammation in the seeing eye. I take physick, and do not eat.

Recommend me to the poor dear lady, whom I hope to see again, however melancholy must be the interview. She has now
quickly

quickly to do, what I cannot reasonably hope to put off long,

Res siqua diu mortalibus ulla est;

and which is at no great distance from the youngest. I have the same hope with poor N——.

You do not tell me whither the young lovers are gone. I am glad * * * * is gone with them. What a life do they imagine in futurity! how unlike to what they are to find it! But to-morrow is an old deceiver, and his cheat never grows stale. I suppose they go to Scotland. Was * * * * * dressed *à la Nesbitienne*?

I shall not, I think, go into the country till you are so kind as to fetch me, unless some stronger invitation should be offered than I have yet found.

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 be drunk. If you love me, and surely I hope you do, why should you vitiate my mind with a false opinion of its own merit? why should you teach it to be unsatisfied with the civility of every other place? You know
how

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how much I honour you, and you are bound to use your influence well.

Do not let your own dear spirits forsake you. Your task at present is heavy, and yet you purpose to take me; but I hope I shall take from it one way what I add another. I purpose to watch the *mollia tempora fandi*, and to talk, as occasions offer, to * * * *.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

Friday.

I ENCLOSE my letter to our new married man.—Bring it me home at night *, and say you like it at least as well as Swift's, which you do *not* like, to the lady.

Adieu.

* He did bring it the same evening, and honoured it with his approbation.

(C O P Y .)

Mrs. THRALE to Mr. ———, inclosed
in the foregoing Letter to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED the news of your marriage with infinite delight, and hope that the sincerity with which I wish your happiness, may excuse the liberty I take in giving you a few rules whereby more certainly to obtain it. I see you smile at my wrong-headed kindness, and reflecting on the charms of your bride, cry out in a rapture, that you are happy enough without my rules. I know you are ; but after one of the forty years, which I hope you will pass pleasingly together, are over, this letter may come in turn, and rules for felicity may not be found unnecessary, however some of them may appear impracticable.

Could that kind of love be kept alive through the marriage state, which makes the charm of a single one, the sovereign good would no longer be sought for ; in the union of two faithful lovers it would be found : but reason

shews us that this is impossible, and experience informs us that it never was so; we must preserve it as long, and supply it as happily as we can.

When your present violence of passion subsides however, and a more cool and tranquil affection takes its place, be not hasty to censure yourself as indifferent, or to lament yourself as unhappy; you have lost that only which it was impossible to retain, and it were graceless amid the pleasures of a prosperous summer to regret the blossoms of a transient spring. Neither unwarily condemn your bride's insipidity till you have recollected that no object however sublime, no sounds however charming, can continue to transport us with delight when they no longer strike us with novelty. The skill to renovate the powers of pleasing are said indeed to be possessed by some women in an eminent degree, but the artifices of maturity are seldom seen to adorn the innocence of youth; you have made your choice, and ought to approve it.

Satiety follows quick upon the heels of possession; and to be happy, we must always have something in view. The person of your lady is already all your own, and will not grow

more pleasing in your eyes I doubt, though the rest of your sex will think her handsomer for these dozen years. Turn therefore all your attention to her mind, which will daily grow brighter by polishing. Study some easy science together, and acquire a familiarity of tastes while you enjoy a community of pleasures. You will, by this means, have many images in common, and be freed from the necessity of separating to find amusement; nothing is so dangerous to wedded love as the possibility of either being happy out of the company of the other; endeavour therefore to cement the present intimacy on every side; let your wife never be kept ignorant of your income, your expences, your friendships, or aversions; let her know your very faults, but make them amiable by your virtues; consider all concealment as a breach of fidelity; let her never have any thing to *find out* in your character, and remember, that from the moment one of the partners turns spy upon the other, they have commenced a state of hostility.

Seek not for happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a deviation into folly. Listen not to those sages who ad-

wife you always to scorn the counsel of a woman, and if you comply with her requests pronounce you to be wife-ridden. Think not any privation, except of positive evil, an excellence, and do not congratulate yourself that your wife is not a learned lady, that she never touches a card, or is wholly ignorant how to make a pudding. Cards, cookery, and learning, are all good in their places, and may all be used with advantage.

With regard to expence, I can only observe that the money laid out in the purchase of distinction is seldom or ever profitably employed. We live in an age when splendid furniture and glittering equipage are grown too common to catch the notice of the *meanest* spectator, and for the *greater* ones they only regard our wasteful folly with silent contempt, or open indignation.—This may perhaps be a displeasing reflection, but the following consideration ought to make amends. The age we live in, pays, I think, peculiar attention to the higher distinctions of wit, knowledge, and virtue, to which we may more safely, more cheaply, and more honourably aspire. The giddy flirt of quality frets at the respect she sees paid to Lady Edgumbe, and the gay

dunce sits pining for a partner, while Jones the orientalist leads up the ball.

I said that the person of your lady would not grow *more* pleasing to you, but pray let her never suspect that it grows *less* so: that a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person is well known; nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man; and what mortification can exceed the disappointment, if the end be not obtained? There is no reproof however pointed, no punishment however severe, that a woman of spirit will not prefer to neglect; and if she can endure it without complaint, it only proves that she means to make herself amends by the attention of others for the flights of her husband. For this, and for every reason, it behoves a married man not to let his politeness fail, though his ardour may abate, but to retain, at least, that general civility towards his *own* lady which he is so willing to pay to *every other*, and not shew a wife of eighteen or twenty years old, that every man in company can treat her with more complaisance than he who so often vowed to her eternal fondness.

It is not my opinion that a young woman should be indulged in every wild wish of her gay heart or giddy head, but contradiction may be softened by domestic kindness, and quiet pleasures substituted in the place of noisy ones. Public amusements are not indeed so expensive as is sometimes imagined, but they tend to alienate the minds of married people from each other. A well chosen society of friends and acquaintance, more eminent for virtue and good sense than for gaiety and splendour, where the conversation of the day may afford comment for the evening, seems the most rational pleasure this great town can afford; and to this, a game at cards now and then gives an additional relish.

That your own superiority should always be seen, but never felt, seems an excellent general rule. A wife should outshine her husband in nothing, not even in her dress. If she happens to have a taste for the trifling distinction that finery can confer, suffer her not for a moment to fancy, when she appears in public, that Sir Edward or the Colonel are finer gentlemen than her husband. The bane of married happiness among the *city* men in general has been, that finding themselves unfit

for polite life, they transferred their vanity to their ladies, dressed them up gaily, and sent them out a gallanting, while the good man was to regale with port wine or rum punch, perhaps among mean companions, after the compting-house was shut; this practice produced the ridicule thrown on them in all our comedies and novels since commerce began to prosper. But now that I am so near the subject, a word or two on Jealousy may not be amiss, for though not a failing of the present age's growth, yet the seeds of it are too certainly sown in every warm bosom for us to neglect it as a fault of no consequence. If you are ever tempted to be jealous, *watch* your wife narrowly—but never *teize* her; tell her your *jealousy*, but conceal your *suspicion*; let her, in short, be satisfied that it is only your odd temper, and even troublesome attachment, that makes you follow her; but let her not dream that you ever doubted seriously of her virtue even for a moment. If she is disposed towards jealousy of *you*, let me beseech you to be always explicit with her and never mysterious: be above delighting in her pain of all things,—nor do your business, nor pay your visits with an air of concealment, when all you
are

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are doing might as well be proclaimed perhaps in the parish vestry. But I will hope better than this of your tenderness and of your virtue, and will release you from a lecture you have so very little need of, unless your extreme youth and my uncommon regard will excuse it. And now farewell; make my kindest compliments to your wife, and be happy in proportion as happiness is wished you by,

Dear Sir, &c.

L E T T E R LXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

August 12, 1773.

WE left London on Friday the sixth, 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.

On the 7th, we passed through Stamford and Grantham, and dined at Newark, where

H 4

I had

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

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 shew 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 Northallerton, 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 Afcham.

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

The next stage brought us to Durham, a place of which Mr. Thrale bad 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 suppose to be raised at night, lest the Scots should pass it.

The cathedral has a massyness and solidity such as I have seen in no other place; it rather awes than pleases, as it strikes with a kind of gigantick 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 Erinny.

He

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 shewn 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 Alnwick, for Dr. Percy is not there. I hope to lodge to-morrow night at Berwick, and the next at Edinburgh, where
I shall

I shall direct Mr. Drummond, bookseller at Offian's head, to take care of my letters.

I hope the little dears are all well, and that my dear master and mistress may go somewhere, but wherever you go do not forget,

M A D A M,

Your most humble servant,

I am pretty well.

August 15.

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 run pretty well.

L E T T E R L X X I V .

To M r s . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, Edinburgh, August 17, 1773.

ON the 13th, I left Newcastle, and in the afternoon came to Alwick, where we were treated with great civility by the Duke: I went through the apartments, walked on the wall,

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 shew 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 were the Duchefs 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

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.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Bamff, August 25, 1773.

IT has so happened that though I am perpetually thinking on you, I could seldom find opportunity to write; I have in fourteen days sent only one letter; you must consider the fatigues of travel, and the difficulties encountered in a strange country.

August

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—*Maria Re. 1564.* It had been only a blockhouse 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 *Kirkaldie*, 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

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 subprior 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 staid a while to interrogate her, because he understood her language; she told him, that she and her cat lived together; that she had two sons some where, 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. Boswel 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

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 publick dinner, and treated us very kindly and respectfully. They shewed 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 Streattham. 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 expence 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 Aberbrothick, famous once for an abbey, of which there are only a few fragments left, but those fragments testify that the fabrick 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 enquired 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

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 independently 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 foldiers. 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. Andrews, 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 shewed 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

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 117

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, and that I shall always be, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R LXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Inverness, Aug. 28, 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 sometime 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 Slanes 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 we went before Lord Errol came home we must never be forgiven, and ordered out the coach to shew 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

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 visitor uncommon. On each side was a cave, of which the fishermen knew not the extent, in which smugglers hide their goods, and sometimes parties of pleasure take a dinner.

I am, &c.

* * I think I grow better.

L E T T E R LXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

Skie, Sept. 6, 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 south west of Scotland.

I returned from the fight 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 25th, we continued our journey through a country not uncultivated, but so denuded of its woods, that in all this journey I had not travelled an hundred yards between hedges, or seen five trees fit for the carpenter. A few small plantations may be found,

found, but I believe scarcely any thirty years old; at least, as I do not forget to tell, they are all posterious 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 Bamff.

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

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, and if one may judge by the rest of the dress, to send out boys without shoes into the streets or ways; there are however 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 shewed 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

At night we came to Inverness, the last considerable town in the north, where we staid 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 shew in any other place.

You

You are not to suppose that here are to be any more towns or inns. We came to a cottage which they call 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 Nefs, 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

the gates, and apologised that at that hour he could not, by the rules of a 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 the 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

dinner and our bed, for we could not reach any better place that night. This place is called Enock in Glenmorrison. 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 arithmetick.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Skie, Sept. 14, 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 Raarfa, 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

other proprietors having only small districts. The two great lords do not know within twenty square miles the contents of their own territories.

—— 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 ladies are studying Earse. 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.

Raarfa 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 expence have upon their table most of what sea, air, or earth can afford. I intended to have written about Raarfa, but the post will not wait longer than while I send my compliments to my dear master and little mistresses.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Skie, Sept. 21, 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 wildness of the adjacent country, and in the plenty and elegance of the domestick entertainment, to a castle in Gothick 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

Macleod has offered me an island; if it were not too far off I should hardly refuse it: my island would be pleasanter than Brighthelmstone, 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 Streattham 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 recognised 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 Connection: 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

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 Earse, 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.

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 any thing 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 birth-day. The return of my birth-day, 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 good can futurity venture to make? yet something will be always promised,
and

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 vallies 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

K 4 travelled

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

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 graze, 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.

Sept. 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 ——— 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

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 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 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 Brighthelmstone. 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

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 Sept. 6th, we left ——— to visit Raarfa, 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

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 fight, 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 Earse songs; I wished to know the meaning, but the Highlanders are not much used to scholastic questions, and no translations could be obtained.

Next day, Sept. 8th, the weather allowed us to depart; a good boat was provided us, and we went to Raarfa 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 Raarfa, where we were met by the Laird and his friends upon the shore. Raarfa, 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 expence, 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.

I am, &c.

We are this morning trying to get out of Skie.

L E T T E R LXXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Skie, Sept. 24, 1773.

I AM still in Skie. Do you remember the song?

Ev'ry 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 Raarfa 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 Raarfa, with politeness which not the Court of Versailles could

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.

Raarfa himself is a man of no inelegant appearance, and of manners uncommonly refined. Lady Raarfa 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 Queeney 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 Raarfa has sometimes disputed the chieftainry of the clan with Macleod of Skie, but being much inferior in extent of possessions,
has,

has, I suppose, been forced to desist. Raarfa 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 Raarfa into the field, with officers of his own family. Eighty-six only came back after the last battle. The Prince was hidden, in his distress, two nights at Raarfa, 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. Raarfa 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 Earse 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

telligence that I could obtain ; nor have I been able to procure the translation of a single line of Earfe.

At twelve it was bed time. 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.

L E T T E R LXXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Ostich in Skie, Sept. 30, 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 sometime receive my letter. Now to my narrative.

Sept.

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 musick and dancing. Young Macleod, the great proprietor of Skie and head of his clan, was very distinguishable; a young man of nineteen; bred a while at St. Andrews, 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 Raarfa'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 Raarfa, 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 inclosures. The traveller wanders through 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

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 Raarfa has not yet been forsaken by a single inhabitant.

Rona is yet more rocky and barren than Raarfa, 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 ruin. The chapel at Raarfa 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. Raarfa 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 Raarfa; 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. Raarfa paid the reckoning privately. We then got on horseback, and by a short but very tedious journey came to Kingsburgh,
at

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

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 inhabited 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

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 dependents, who not only live upon the product, but export corn sufficient for the payment of their rent.

Lady Macleod has 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,

We

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 Earse, 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

Colonel in the Dutch service. Talifker 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 Talifker, almost lifeless with wet, cold, fatigue, and terrour, 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

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 shew 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 many things here more likely to affect the fancy than to see Johnson ending his sixty-fourth year in the wilderness of the Hebrides.

But

But now I am here, it will gratify me very little to return without seeing, or doing my best to see what those places afford. I have a desire to instruct myself in the whole system of pastoral life; but I know not whether I shall be able to perfect the idea. However I have many pictures in my mind, which I could not have had without this journey, and should have passed it with great pleasure had you, and Master, and Queeney been in the party. We should have excited the attention and enlarged the observation of each other, and obtained many pleasing topics of future conversation. As it is, I travel with my mind too much at home, and perhaps miss many things worthy of observation, or pass them with transient notice; so that the images, for want of that reimpresion which discussion and comparison produce, easily fade away; but I keep a book of remarks, and 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 as Griffith.”

I hope, dearest Madam, you are equally careful to repose proper memorials of all that happens to you and your family, and then when we meet we shall tell our stories. I wish
you

you had gone this summer in your usual splendour to Brighthelmstone.

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-broath is a constant dish, and is made well in every house.

A stran-

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 shew 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 sweet-meats 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 chimnies. 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 bed-room at night. In the room which I inhabited

bited 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 pies* 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 begin-

ning 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

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.

Thus I have given my most honoured mistress the story of me and my little ramble. We are now going to some other isle, to what we know not, the wind will tell us.

I am, &c.

Compliments to Queeney, and Jack, and
Lucy, and all,

L E T T E R LXXXII.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

Isle of Mull, Oct. 15, 1773.

SINCE I had the honour of writing to my mistress, we have been hindered from returning, by a tempest almost continual. We tried eight days ago to come hither, but were driven by the wind into the isle of *Col*, in which we were confined eight days. We hired a sloop to bring us hither, and hope soon to get to Edinburgh.

Having for many weeks had no letter, my longings are very great to be informed how all things are at home, as you and mistress allow me to call it. A letter will now perhaps meet me at Edinburgh, for I shall be expected to pass a few days at Lord Auchenleck's, and I beg to have my thoughts set at rest by a letter from you or my mistress.

Be so kind as to send either to Mrs. Williams or Mr. Levett, and if they want money, advance them ten pounds.

6

I hope

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 167

I hope my mistress keeps all my very long letters, longer than I ever wrote before. I shall perhaps spin out one more before I have the happiness to tell you at home that I am

Your obliged humble servant.

L E T T E R LXXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Mull, Oct. 25, 1773.

THOUGH I have written to Mr. Thrale, yet having a little more time than was promised me, I would not suffer the messenger to go without some token of my duty to my mistress, who, I suppose, expects the usual tribute of intelligence, a tribute which I am not now very able to pay.

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 *Coll*, an obscure island; on which

—nulla campis

Arbor æstivâ recreatur aurâ,

M 4

There

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.

Coll is but a barren place. Description has here few opportunities of spreading her colours.

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.

I have not good health; I do not find that travelling much helps me. My nights are flatulent, though not in the utmost degree, and I have a weakness in my knees, which makes me very unable to walk.

Pray, dear Madam, let me have a long letter.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

HONOURED MISTRESS, Inverary, Oct. 23, 1773.

MY last letters to you and my dear master 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

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, transported 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 to *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

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 foldier, inhabits in this insulated defart 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 foldier'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

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 laid 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 liquours. 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
I
well,

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 *Sondiland*, 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

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 Brighthelmstone; 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

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 moon-shine, 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.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXV.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR, Inverary, Oct. 23, 1773.

WE have gotten at last out of the Hebrides. Some account of our travels I have sent to my mistress; and have inclosed an ode which I wrote in the isle of Skie.

Yesterday we landed, and to-day came hither. We purpose to visit Auchenleck, 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 inconveniencies, to have had

more light or less rain, for their co-operation crowded the scene and filled the mind.

I beg, however, to hear from you, and from my mistress. I have seen nothing that drives you from my thoughts, but continue in rain and sunshine, by night and day, dear Sir,

Your, &c.

O D E

Inclosed in the preceding Letter.

PERMEO terras, ubi nuda rupes
 Saxeas miscet nebulis ruinas,
 Torva ubi rident steriles coloni
 Rura labores.

Pervagor gentes hominum ferorum,
 Vita ubi nullo decorata cultu
 Squallet informis, tugurîque fumis
 Fœda latefcit.

Inter erroris falebrofa longi,
 Inter ignotæ strepitus loquelæ,
 Quot modis mecum, quid agat, requiro,
 Thralia dulcis.

Seu

Seu viri curas, pia nupta, mulcet,
Seu fovet mater sobolem benigna,
Sive cum libris novitate pascit
Sedula mentem ;

Sit memor nostri, fideique merces
Stet fides constans, meritoque blandum
Thraliæ discant resonare nomen
Littora Skiæ.

Scriptum in Skiâ, Sept. 6.

*The following elegant Translation of this ODE
was written by the learned Miss KNIGHT,
and presented by her to the Editor of these
Letters, who is happy in an opportunity of
giving this small Specimen of her very exten-
sive Attainments and Abilities.*

O'ER stony lands, where naked rocks,
The marks of nature's fearful shocks
In misty clouds appear ;
Through dismal fields, whose barren soil
Derides the swain's laborious toil,
My wand'ring steps I bear.

Through nations wild, a hardy race,
 Where life no cultivated grace,
 No elegance can know ;
 But shrinks abash'd from human eyes,
 And in the smoaky hovel lies ;
 Through scenes like these I go.

Amidst unknown and barb'rous speech,
 While wand'ring o'er this distant beach,
 In all my wat'ry way ;
 How think'st thou of thy absent friend ?
 How dost thou ? whither dost thou tend ?
 My gentle Thralia say.

If, pious wife, thy husband's cares
 Thou softly sooth ; or infant heirs,
 Watch o'er as mother kind :
 Or, 'mid the charms of letter'd lore,
 Thou add new treasures to thy store,
 And feed thy active mind ;

Remember me, thy friendship guard,
 Of constant friendship due reward,
 Howe'er on distant ground ;
 Ah ! let thy faith be still the same,
 And justly Thralia's pleasing name
 Shall Skia's shores resound.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 181

L E T T E R LXXXVI.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

Inverary, Oct. 26, 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.

I wrote to you from Mull, to send for Mr. Levett or Mrs. Williams, and let them have ten pounds, if it was wanted. I find that the passage of these insular letters is not very certain, and therefore think it necessary now to write again.

I do not limit them to ten pounds; be pleased to let them have what is necessary.

I have now not heard from London for more than two months; surely I shall have many letters in Edinburgh. I hope my dear mistress is well, with all her tribe.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Glasgow, Oct. 28, 1773.

I HAVE been in this place about two hours. On Monday, 25th, we dined with the Duke and Duchefs of Argyle, and the Duke lent me a horfe for my next day's journey.

26th, We travelled along a deep valley between lofty mountains, covered only with barren heath; entertained with a fucceffion of cataracts on the left hand, and a roaring torrent on the right. The Duke's horfe went well; the road was good; and the journey pleafant; 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 houfe of Sir James Cobune, who lives upon the banks of Lochlomond; of which the Scotch boast, and boast with reason.

27th,

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 Cohune 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 eugh 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 Auchencleck on Monday.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXVIII.

MRS. THRALE TO DR. JOHNSON.

IN spite of difficulties, distance and a long *et cætera*, I will venture this one letter to Edinburgh.—But I have not written Dear Sir at the top, and so I shall be scolded for the beginning—whereas if Dear Sir comes in at all, what can it signify where? Our children are all happily got through the measles; and little Susan best of all, for whom I was most afraid.

I have made my presents. * * * * received his with tears of acknowledgment; and t'other man looked out the finest words he could find; but they meant attachment and gratitude.

We talk of nothing but Italy. My master says, you will not have done us all the good you can, unless you go with him to Rome, and point his curiosity to proper objects. He will not die without seeing that capital he swears.

The

The Queen is said to be in danger; God preserve her for every reason. She has no disorder but mine—and if *that* should be fatal!

Mylne shone away o' Tuesday. He says you go on the wrong side of Scotland to see wood; you must return by the other coast. Oh! cried Master, you may all trust Boswell—he'll shew his country off to the best advantage. We had a world of friends yesterday; and all talked of you; and all talked well—Burke best. Mr. Thrale would not be *silent then*; he even battled for attention; but 'tis his favourite subject,

Every body is sorry for poor Lord Lyttelton.—'Tis dreadful to die of wounds made by our own children. R——, the surgeon, is just now expired of the same disease. Dear M—— came to us to forget it; I believe there was much confidence between them. Mr. M—— was robbed, going home two nights ago, and had a comical conversation with the highwayman, about behaving like a gentleman. He paid four guineas for it.

Your last letter was charming. It tells me about the place; but I want to hear of the *hard inhabitant*. Mean time I have seen little,
5
except

except the man that saw the mouse. He seems very ill, and very wild; I fancy *he* wants a governess; *your* merits, as usual, were talked of; and he made choice of your *health* as the subject of his eulogium.

Betsy C—— would do well enough, if her husband, whom you call Hoggarel, did not take away her money as fast as she got it.

We have had a great thunder storm. It has even split the obelisk in St. George's Fields; no exaggeration in this; you may see the crack when you come home.

Dr. Beattie is as charming as ever; and I like his lady extremely.—Very pretty, very pleasing she is. Every body rejoices that the Doctor will get his pension; every one loves him but Goldsmith, who says he cannot bear the sight of so much applause as we all bestow upon him. Did he not tell us so himself, who could believe he was so amazingly ill-natured?

* * * * and her husband set out very prettily, and will, I hope, stick to the city. Lothbury, as you say.—How in the world came you to think of Lothbury?

The opposition folks tell us, 'tis no joke to despise the Americans *now*; but our master says, that

that their rejoicing is only just as my little children rejoiced yesterday, and danced about for delight, because Jack the idle boy refused to obey the gardener, and said he should grow big enough in a year to beat him. So here's modern politicks in a letter from me; yes, and a touch of the *Punick war* too; for Mr. * * * * desired to consult with me, forsooth, instead of my husband, about his private affairs; and said how A—— and S—— had demanded their money, but he thought it imprudent to pay them *just now*, as cash ran low. Why that, Sir, said I, is the very reason you *should* pay them; and thereupon did I tell him how the old Romans were besieged by Brennus till famine had encouraged him to hope for their giving up on any terms, and how, to take all such hope away, they threw their last loaves over the wall, with an air, and made him believe they had bread enough within. And now, thinks I, Mr. Johnson says that history never is good to illustrate common life; but I say,

When house and land are gone and spent,
Then learning is most excellent.

I see you are happy,—that is, diverted; and I am very desirous to help to divert you. But
I am

I am far from happy; my mother is dead; my Lucy sick; my unkle ill; and myself tied up from attending him by *heavy* duties and sorrows at home. Yet you fret because of deafness; any man might catch cold in his ear, I suppose, doing what you do, and change of air and climate and all. I wish I *was* deaf to many things I am forced to hear, that are very disagreeable. What ails dear Lucy I cannot guess, but *her* ear is affected sure enough, and she goes about with her head on one side.

Well! 'tis better talk of Iceland. Gregory challenges you for an Iceland expedition; but I trust there is no need; I suppose good eyes might reach it from some of the places you have been in.

Adieu, dear Sir, all our afflictions make us turn our heads towards you—and *you* will come back to us; but I daily miss more and more another dear, dear friend—who never will come back to

Your, &c.

L E T T E R LXXXIX.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR, Streatham, Thursday, Oct. 7, 1773.

I KNOW not how sufficiently to thank you for your descriptive letters; and though you will not see this for a long time, I am desirous to return my true acknowledgments for the trouble you have given yourself to gratify my curiosity. When the scenes are shifted, and you return to Edinburgh, what I am now writing will serve to recal those images with which you were impressed when you wrote to me; and one pleasure of correspondence arises from the recollection of those accidents to which one's friend's letter is a reply.

The professor of physick at Aberdeen seems to have obtained (and justly) much of your kindness; but when a wench in a clean linen gown can attract attention from novelty, the region must indeed be remote, and the place savage enough: you are though little nearer to London I believe than you would be among the mountains of Savoy.

I think

I think mighty well of your discretion in not scrambling up every rock ; there is little to be gained, except a sprained ankle, by climbing heights, in a country which affords no prospects ; but the general hardship of your journey disturbs me ; only now and then, when I think on the possibility of illness. 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 ; and this journey may do more good than at first was hoped for.

When you sigh for an island of your own, remember that Raffles could never settle the limits of his imaginary dominion, but when I am grown rich, we will buy Bardsey for you ; perhaps a sight of Wales in the mean time may not be amiss. 'Tis long since I saw my own country, but there are untrodden paths in it which may perhaps be as curious as any in Scotland. Barefooted girls too in plenty as I remember, to whom Cocker's arithmetick may be entertaining as a subject of speculation, but useless enough, for there is little money to count.

A-propos

A-propos to money matters, G—— confesses bankruptcy, and we shall lose two thousand pounds, which will not contribute to accelerate our purchase of Bardsey; Mr. Thrale is very merciful to him however. You may extol your savage chieftains how you will, and praise feudal times and feudal notions, but true liberality will not be found where commerce, the humanizer of hearts, is a stranger. Gothic and barbarous rulers will rarely be inhospitable to those who seek, or cruel to those who rely upon them; as the lion is said to refuse tearing in pieces the wretch who lies down inadvertently to sleep in his den; but 'tis from the dog and elephant that we expect generosity; their companionship with man, and elevation through his favour, the one in European, the other in Asiatick life, gives them a tenderness for distress which the king of beasts can never feel. The London merchant, on some such principle perhaps, is compassionate to poverty, and charitable to want; his own familiarity with money too takes off from his respect for it. He knows that

——'Twas mine, 'tis his,
And may be slave to thousands;

while the infrequency of such objects as two
thousand

thousand pounds in a heap would make a true baron of an aristocratick state miserably afraid to part with it,—and perfectly steel his heart against the man who should wrong him of what he esteems so highly.

Our old friend B——, by the way, has found a vein of lead ore on his estate, and I feel very glad to hear it somehow. You use to hate that poor fellow, because he could not wait for his dinner till four o'clock, but he may have it now to a minute, and I doubt not but the wild fowl will be done to a *turn*. No one so nice about the eating science and ceremony as a bachelor bred in London and retired to the country, about sixty years old, having passed his youth in business, and the hopes of an elegant dish or two after counting house was shut; the disappointments he then suffered from his wife's thinking more of Mrs. Pritchard's acting than her own account book, shall be all remedied, now that he has to chuse his retreat in a grazing country, for plenty's sake, with the sea about seven miles off, and a fine trout stream running through his grounds;—his wife dead, and his sons carrying on the business, while he and the old housekeeper ring the changes on every dish, and the dressing of it, till invention fail.

Will

Will you never be tired of that * * * * *?
 I wish he would live in the south, where he is
 liked exceedingly. We danced together once
 at Brighthelmstone I remember ; his manners
 were eminently pleasing there, and his per-
 formance much applauded.

Harry's life *is* put in the lease ; may he
 hold it as my father's mother did, for seventy-
 three years !

What a letter is this ! but you would be
 angry were it shorter. I work hard at the
 carpet ; and teach the children. You have no
 great reverence I know for either of those em-
 ployments ; but then you have no reverence
 for any employment except the noblest ; and
 who can pass their whole life in that ? The
 gloomy reflections made on your birth-day
 are a proof that the best men never please
 themselves, and the bad never please any *but*
 themselves. I know your horror of presump-
 tion, and your idea that the fearing Christian
 is most in the favour of Heaven ; but recol-
 lect that Honest and Hopeful got over the
 river better than Christian and Muchafraid in
 the Pilgrim's Progress ; and our children say,
 they don't perceive that the others were better
 received when they had crossed the river.

Be merry and cheerful, Dear Sir, and see
 fights, and tell tales, and continue to love our
 master, and his brats, and

Your ever faithful,

H. L. THRALE.

Learn of me to be happy.—*You know* the
 reasons I have to be otherwise;—yet I don't
 grumble,—do I?

L E T T E R X C.

To Mrs. THRALE.

HONOURED MISTRESS, Auchenleck, Nov. 3, 1773.

AT Glasgow I received six letters, of which
 the first was written August 23d. I am
 now at leisure to answer them in order.

August 23d. Mrs. B—— 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, 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 wife.

Your letter brought us the first certain intelligence of Dr. Beattie's pension. He will now be a great man at Aberdeen, where every one speaks well of him.

August 25th. I am obliged to dear Queeney for her letter, and am sorry that I have not been able to collect more for her cabinet, but I shall bring her something.

What should * * * and his wife do at the wrong end of the town, whither they can carry nothing that will not raise contempt, and from which they can bring nothing that will not excite aversion. He is not to be either wit or statesman; his genius, if he follow his direction, will bid him live in Lothbury, and measure brandy.

Sept. 8th. I first saw the account of Lord Littelton's death in the isle of Raarfa, and suspected that it had been hastened by the vexation which his son has given him. We shall now see what the young man will do, when he is left to himself.

I am at a loss what to judge of Sir * * * *. To doubt whether six thousand pounds have or have not been paid, as was directed, is absurd and childish; he to whom they were due can answer the question; and he by whom they were remitted can confirm or confute the answer. You should surely write to Mr. B——.

Of Sir * * * * you had not left me any high notions; but I supposed him to be at least commercially honest, and incapable of eluding his own bond by fraudulent practices, yet I think Mr. T——'s suspicion not to be slighted. Principles can only be strong by the strength of understanding, or the cogency of religion.

I do not see how you can much offend by putting Harry's life into the lease, it puts no life out, and therefore does not lessen Sir * * * * 's interest. I believe, however, you may depend better for peace upon the indifference of his indolence, than the approbation of his judgment. I think it should not be neglected.

Sept. 14th. I take great delight in your fifteen thousand trees; the greater, for having
been

been so long in a country where trees and diamonds are equal rarities.

Poor V——! There are not so many many reasons as he thinks why he should envy me, but there are some; he wants what I have, a kind and careful mistress; and wants likewise what I shall want at my return. He is a good man; and, when his mind is composed, a man of parts.

Sept. 28th. When I wrote an account of my intention to return, I little thought that I should be so long the plaything of the wind. Of the various accidents of our voyage I have been careful to give you an account, and hope you have received it. My deafness went away by degrees. Miss Macleod made me a great flannel night-cap, which perhaps helped to set me right.

If Sir * * * * goes to Bath, it may deserve consideration whether you should not follow him. If you go, take two footmen, and dress in such a manner as he may be proud to see. The money that you stake is no great venture, nor will the want of it be felt, whether you gain or lose the purpose of your journey.

My poor little Lucy is, I hope, now quite recovered ; for I have brought no little maiden from the Highlands, though I might perhaps have had one of the princesses of Raarfa, who are very pretty people, and in that wilderness of life put me in mind of your little tribe, by the propriety of their behaviour.

Oct. 7th. This is the last letter. 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 Welch journey. I had rather have Bardsey than 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

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 wish B—— success in his new mine, and hope that the vein will be as rich as his wants prompt him to wish it. I congratulate you likewise on the rising reputation of the brewery; and hope that the sweets of doing right will so much engage us, that we shall never more allow ourselves to do wrong. Forty shillings is a frightful price for malt, but we must brew on, and brew well, and hold out to better times.

Thus, Dear Madam, I have answered your six letters, in part too late to be of any use. The regard which you are pleased to express, and the kindness which you always show, I do not pretend to return otherwise than by warm wishes for your happiness.

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 Loudon, 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.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 201

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.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XCI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, Edinburgh, Nov. 12, 1773.

AMONG the possibilities of evil which my imagination suggested at this distance, I missed that which has really happened. I never had much hope of a will in your favour, but was willing to believe that no will would have been made. The event is now irrevocable, it remains only to bear it. Not to wish it had been different is impossible; but as the wish is painful without use, it is not prudent, perhaps not lawful, to indulge it. As life, and vigour of mind, and sprightliness of
imagi-

imagination, and flexibility of attention, are given us for valuable and useful purposes, we must not think ourselves at liberty to squander life, to enervate intellectual strength, to cloud our thoughts, or fix our attention, when by all this expence we know that no good can be produced. Be alone as little as you can; when you are alone, do not suffer your thoughts to dwell on what you might have done, to prevent this disappointment. You perhaps could not have done what you imagine, or might have done it without effect. But even to think in the most reasonable manner, is for the present not so useful as not to think. Remit yourself solemnly into the hands of God, and then turn your mind upon the business and amusements which lie before you. "All is best," says Chene, "as it has been, excepting the errors of our own free will." Burton concludes his long book upon melancholy with this important precept, "Be not solitary; be not idle." Remember Chene's position and observe Burton's precept.

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

gratulate our return as if we had been with Phipps or Banks ; I am ashamed of their salutations.

I have been able to collect very little for Queeney's cabinet ; but she will not want toys now, she is so well employed. I wish her success ; and am not without some thought of becoming her school-fellow. I have got an Italian Raffles.

Surely my dear Lucy will recover ; I wish I could do her good. I love her very much ; and should love another godchild, if I might have the honour of standing to the next baby.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XCII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Nov. 20, 1773.

WHEN things are so *very* bad, as they are now with me, the best comforters are those who acknowledge them to be very bad. Your last letter says, very properly, that
among

among all the possibilities of evil which your imagination could suggest, losing my uncle's estate was the most unlikely. Had you known his excessive tenderness for me when a girl, the surprize would not have been lessened.— You *do* know that I married, to please him, a man of his own choice, and deserving of every body's esteem,—indeed possessing it. You know I have scarce seen him since; and certainly never disobliged him: and you know he had no other relation, except at a very great distance. You now know he has willed away his estate. I should think on this sorrow more, however, had I not other sorrows, perhaps providentially sent to hold my heart fixed on my husband and his concerns. Lucy's unaccountable illness; my own present situation, having brought a second son, who appears to have suffered something, though I know not what, from my late accumulation of misery;—and Mr. Thrale's health, which has been shook by these confusions as well as my own, occupy all the thoughts I have in the world; and you can scarce believe how full my mind is, without a word of my uncle. Our generous master is not angry at *that* disappointment, though he has a right to be sorry; for he doubtless married
me

me with hopes and promises of the Hertfordshire estate.

We will do as well as we can; and hope for comfort from you at your return; meantime, depend upon my not giving Mr. Thrall additional pain by my dejection: I will try to be cheerful, though I am not happy; and to be merry, though I do not even *beguile myself*, as Desdemona says,—to fancy I shall ever more be unaffectedly so. I will learn to be as gaily miserable, and as airily discontented as I can; and hope that no one who is left me shall be made unhappy by the vexations which gnaw the heart of

Your faithful servant.

I cannot say with Shylock, *no sighs but of my breathing, no tears but of my shedding*, however. Here is * * * * just come in, whose sufferings from the bankruptcy of * * * * have been attended with terrible consequences indeed, and twenty years added to his looks at least; yet neither he nor I would change, except in a peevish moment I suppose, with an Hebridian laird.—Fools if we would! when all has been taken from us (and we have yet much left) we are surely better off than they.

I read him a passage or two of your letter, dated Sept. 30th, and made that my comment. He was fullen enough, poor fellow, but as the rake in Clarissa says, when he had talked nonsense for half an hour to a man made desperate by grief,—*'Twas so that I comforted and advised him.*

Farewel, the postscript is longer than the letter, let's end it.

This will meet you in London, where I hope all will be found pretty well.

L E T T E R X C I I I .

To M r s . T H R A L E .

Edinburgh, Nov. 18, 1773.

MY DEAREST MISTRESS,

THIS is the last letter that I shall write; while you are reading it, I shall be coming home.

I congratulate you upon your boy; but you must not think that I will love him all at once as well as I love Harry, for Harry you know is so rational. I shall love him by degrees.

Poor,

Poor, pretty, dear Lucy! Can nothing do her good? I am sorry to lose her. But if she must be taken from us, let us resign her with confidence into the hands of Him who knows, and who only knows, what is best both for us and her.

Do not suffer yourself to be dejected. Resolution and diligence will supply all that is wanting, and all that is lost. But if your health should be impaired, I know not where to find a substitute. I shall have no mistress; Mr. Thrale will have no wife; and the little flock will have no mother.

I long to be home, and have taken a place in the coach for Monday; I hope therefore to be in London on Friday the 26th, in the evening. Please to let Mrs. Williams know.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R X C I V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

March 11, 1774.

OUR master is a very good man, and contrives well for me. I have now a reason for doing on Monday what I might have been persuaded against my will to have delayed till Tuesday. I hope on Monday to be your slave in the morning, and Mrs. Smith's in the evening, and then fall again to my true mistress, and be the rest of the week,

M A D A M ,

Your most obedient.

L E T T E R X C V .

T O M r s . T H R A L E .

M A D A M ,

T h u r s d a y .

MASTER is very kind in being very angry; but he may spare his anger this time. I have done exactly as Dr. Lawrence ordered, and am much better at the expence of about thirty-six ounces of blood. Nothing in the world! For a good cause I have six-and-thirty more. I long though to come to Streatam, and you shall give me no solid flesh for a week; and I am to take phyfick. And hey boys, up go we. I was in bed all last night, only a little sitting up. The box goes to *Calcutta*. I am,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

Let me come to you to-morrow.

L E T T E R XCVI.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

June 2, 1775.

I HAVE taken the liberty of enclosing a letter, which contains a request of which I cannot know the propriety. Nothing, I suppose, can be done till the present master of the tap* has given notice of his resignation; and whether even then it is fit for you to recommend, there may be reason to doubt. I shall tell Heely, that I have laid his letter before you, and that he must inform you when he is certain of the intended resignation. You will then act as you judge best. There seems to be nothing unreasonable in Heely's desire. He seems to have a genius for an alehouse, and if he can get this establishment, may thank his friend that sent him to the Marshalsea.

This, I know, is a happy week; you will revel with your constituents in plenty and

* At Ranelagh-house.

merri-

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merriment; I must be kept at home by my wicked mistress, out of the way of so much happiness. You shall however have my good wishes. I hope every man will go from your table more a friend than he came.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XCVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM,

February 3, 1775.

SO many demands are made upon me, that if you give leave I will stay here till Tuesday. My pamphlet has not gone on at all. Please to send by the bearer the papers on my table; and give my love to my *brother* and *sisters*.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R XCVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, University College, March 3, 1775.

I AM afraid that something has happened to occupy your mind disagreeably, and hinder you from writing to me, or thinking about me.

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.

The imperfection of our post makes it uncertain whether we shall receive letters, sooner
than

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 213

than we must send them; this is therefore written while I yet do not know whether you have favoured me or no. I was sufficiently discontented that I heard nothing yesterday. But sure all is well. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XCIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

April 1, 1775.

I HAD mistaken the day on which I was to dine with Mr. Bruce, and hear of Abifinia, and therefore am to dine this day with Mr. Hamilton.

The news from Oxford is, that no tennis-court can be hired at any price; 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 * * * ! do not tell him,

P 3

The

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 very like your praises. I wonder whether I shall ever shew 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 brewhouse; 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*.

Sic nunquam rediturus labitur annus.

I am, &c,

Poor Mrs. Williams is very bad, worse than I ever saw her.

* The Tower was a separate room at Streatham, where Dr. Johnson slept.

L E T T E R C.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

May 12, 1775.

AND so, my dearest Mistress, you lie a bed hatching suspicions. I did not mean to reproach you, nor meant any thing but respect, and impatience to know how you did.

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. Southwells, and called on Congreve. 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. Falkner.

Mr. M—— is so ill that the Lady is not visible; but yesterday I had I know not how much kifs of Mrs. Abington, and very good looks from Miss * * * * * 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 knew 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 purchase.

I have offended ; and, what is stranger, have justly offended the nation of Rascals. If they could come hither, they would be as fierce as the Americans. Rascals has written to Boswell an account of the injury done him, by representing his house as subordinate to that of Dunvegan. Boswell has his letter, and I believe

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.

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. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C I.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 20, 1775.

I WILL try not to be fullen, and yet when I leave you how shall I help it. Bos. goes away on Monday; I go in a day or two after him, and will try to be well, and to be as you would have me. But I hope that when I come back you will teach me the value of liberty.

Nurse tells me that you are all well, and she hopes all growing better. Ralph, like other young gentlemen, will travel for improvement.

I have sent you six guineas and an half; so you may laugh at neglect and parsimony. It is a fine thing to have money. Peyton and Macbean* are both starving, and I cannot keep them.

Must

* Peyton and Macbean were amanuenses of Dr. Johnson. Macbean was a man of great learning, with little power

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Must we mourn for the Queen of Denmark?
How shall I do for my black cloaths which
you have in the chest?

Make my compliments to every body.

I am, &c.

I dined in a large company at a dissenting
bookseller's yesterday, and disputed against to-
leration with one Doctor Meyer.

L E T T E R CII,

To Mrs. T H R A L E,

DEAREST LADY,

May 22, 1775.

ONE thing or other still hinders me, besides
what is perhaps the great hindrance, that
I have no great mind to go. Boswell went
away at two this morning. L—— I suppose
goes this week. B—— got two-and-forty
guineas in fees while he was here. He has,

power of bringing it into play.—He had read before he
died the Hebrew Bible eleven times over. Peyton knew
many modern languages, but was kept from rising in the
world by domestic miseries,

by

by his wife's persuasion and mine, taken down a present for his mother-in-law.

Pray let me know how the breath does. I hope there is no lasting evil to be feared. Take great care of yourself. Why did you take cold? Did you pump into your shoes?

I am not sorry that you read Boswell's journal. Is it not a merry piece? There is much in it about poor me. Miss, I hear, mentions me sometimes in *her* memoirs.

I shall try at Oxford what can be done for * * * * *. What can be done for his daughter it is not easy to tell. Does her mother know her own distress, or is she out of her wits with pride, or does * * * a little exaggerate? It is strange behaviour.

The mourning it seems is general. I must desire that you will let somebody take my best black cloaths out of the chest, and send them. There is nothing in the chest but what may be tumbled. The key is the newest of those two that have the wards channelled. When they are at the Borough, my man can fetch them.

But all this while, dear and dear lady, take great care of yourself.

Do

Do not buy C——'s travels, they are duller than T——'s. W—— is too fond of words, but you may read him. I shall take care that Adair's account of America may be sent you, for I shall have it of my own.

Beattie has called once to see me. He lives grand at the Archbishop's.

Dear lady, do not be careless, nor heedless, nor rash, nor giddy; but take care of your health. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

Dr. Talbot, which I think I never told you, has given five hundred pounds to the future infirmary.

L E T T E R C I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAREST LADY,

May 25, 1775.

THE fit was a sudden faintness, such as I have had I know not how often; no harm came of it, and all is well. I cannot go till Saturday; and then go I will, if I can. My cloaths, Mr. Thrale says, must be made like other people's, and they are gone to the taylor. If I do not go, you know how shall I come back again?

I told you, I fancy, yesterday, that I was well, but I thought so little of the disorder, that I know not whether I said any thing about it.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C I V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

June 1, 1775.

I KNOW well enough what you think, but I am out of your reach. I did not make the epitaph before last night and this morning; I have found it too long. I send you it as it is to pacify you, and will make it shorter. It is too long by near half. Tell me what you would be most willing to spare.

Dr. Wetherell went with me to the Vice Chancellor, to whom we told the transaction with my Lord of Chester, and the Vice Chancellor promised to write to the Archbishop. I told him that he needed have no scruples; he was asking nothing for himself; nothing that would make him richer, or them poorer; and that he acted only as a magistrate, and one concerned for the interest of the University. Dr. Wetherell promises to stimulate him.

Don't suppose that I live here as we live at Streatham. I went this morning to the chapel
at

at six, and if I was to stay would try to conform to all wholesome rules. Pray let Harry have the penny which I owe him for the last morning.

Mr. Colson is well, and still willing to keep me, but I delight not in being long here. Mr. Smollet of Lochlomond and his Lady have been here. We were very glad to meet.

Pray let me know how you do, and play no more tricks; if you do, I can yet come back and watch you.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C V .

To Mr. T H R A L E .

DEAR SIR,

I BEG that you will be pleased to send me an attestation to Mr. Carter's merit. I am going to-morrow; and shall leave the pamphlet * to shift for itself.

You need only say, that you have sufficient knowledge of Mr. Carter to testify that he is

* Taxation no Tyranny.

eminently

eminently skilful in the art which he professes, and that he is a man of such decency and regularity of manners, that there will be no danger from his example to the youth of the colleges; and that therefore you shall consider it as a favour if leave may be obtained for him to profess horsemanship in the University.

I am, &c.

Please to free this letter to Miss Lucy Porter
in Lichfield.

L E T T E R CVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAME,

June 5, 1775.

TROIS jours sont passés sans que je reçoive une lettre; point de nouvelles, point d'amitié, point de querelles. Un silence si rare, que veut-il? je vous ai envoyé l'épitaphe, trop longue à la vérité, mais on la raccourcira sans beaucoup de peine. Vous n'en avez pas dit un mot. Peut-être que je ferai plus heureux ce soir.

VOL. I.

Q

J'ai

J'ai epuifé ce lieu, ou je n'étudie pas, et ou fi on ôte l'étude, il n'y a rien, et je ne trouve guere moyen d'echaper. Les voitures qui paffent par cy, paffent dans la nuit ; les chaifes de poste me couteront beaucoup. J'envoye querir un paffage plus commode.

Je dinerai demain chez le Vice Chancelier, j'efpere de trouver des chofes un peu favorables à nôtre ami infortuné, mais je n'ai nulle confiance. Je fuis,

MADAME,

Votre tres obeiffant ferviteur.

L E T T E R C V I I I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

MADAM,

June 6, 1775.

SUCH is the uncertainty of all human things, that Mr. C—— has quarrelled with me. He fays, I raife the laugh upon him, and he is an independent man, and all he has is his own, and he is not ufed to fuch things. And fo I fhall have no more good of C——, of whom I never had any good but flattery, which

which my dear mistress knows I can have at home.

That I had no letters yesterday I do not wonder; for yesterday we had no post. I hope something will come to-day. Our post is so ill-regulated that we cannot receive letters and answer them the same day.

Here I am, and how to get away I do not see; for the power of departure otherwise than in a post-chaise depends upon accidental vacancies in passing coaches, of which all but one in a week pass through this place at three in the morning. After that one I have sent, but with little hope; yet I shall be very unwilling to stay here another week.

I supped two nights ago with Mr. Bright, who enquired after Harry and Queeney, to whom I likewise desire to be remembered.

Suppose I should grow like my mistress, and when I am to go forward, think eagerly how and when I shall come back, would that be a strange thing? Love and reverence have always had some tendency to produce conformity.

Where is Mr. Baretto? Are he and Queeney plague and darling as they are used to be? I

Q 2

hope

hope my sweet Queeney will write me a long letter, when I am so settled that she knows how to direct to me, and if I can find any thing for her cabinet, I shall be glad to bring it.

What the Vice Chancellor says respecting Mr. Carter, if he says any thing, you shall know to-morrow, for I shall probably leave him too late for this day's post.

If I have not a little something from you to-day, I shall think something very calamitous has befallen us. This is the natural effect of punctuality. Every intermission alarms. Dearest dear Lady, take care of yourself. You connect us, and rule us, and vex us, and please us. We have all a deep interest in your health and prosperity.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C I X.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY, June 7, 1775.

YOUR letter which ought to have come on Tuesday came not till Wednesday. Well, now I know that there is no harm, I will take a chaise and march away towards my own country.

You are but a goose at last. Wilton told you, that there is room for three hundred and fifty letters, which are equivalent to twelve lines. If you reckon by lines, the inscription has seventeen: if by letters, five hundred and seventy-nine; so that one way you must expel five lines, the other two hundred and twenty-nine letters. This will perplex us; there is little that by my own choice I should like to spare; but we must comply with the stone.

C—— and I are pretty well again. I grudge the cost of going to Lichfield, Frank and I in a post-chaise; yet I think of thundering away to-morrow; so you will write your next dear letter to Lichfield.

Q 3

This

This letter is written on Wednesday after the receipt of yours, but will not be delivered to the post till to-morrow. I wish Ralph better, and my master and his boys well. I have pretty good nights.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C X.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 10, 1775.

ON Thursday morning I took a post-chaise, and intended to have passed a day or two at Birmingham, but Hector had company in his house, and I went on to Lichfield, where I know not yet how long I shall stay, but think of going forward to Ashbourne in a short time.

Neither your letters nor mine seem to have kept due time; if you see the date of the letter in which the epitaph was inclosed, you will find that it has been delayed. I shall adjust the epitaph some way or other. Send me your advice.

Poor

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Poor Miss Porter has been bad with the gout in her hand. She cannot yet dress herself.

I am glad that Ralph is gone; a new air may do him good. I hope little Miss promises well.

I will write you a longer letter on Monday, being just now called out according to an appointment which I had forgotten.

I am, &c.

LETTER CXI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY,

June 11, 1775.

I AM sorry that my master has undertaken an impracticable interest; but it will be forgotten before the next election. I suppose he was asked at some time when he could not well refuse.

Lady Smith is settled at last here, and sees company at her new house.—I went on Saturday. Poor Lucy Porter has her hand in a
Q 4 bag,

bag, so disabled by the gout that she cannot dress herself. She does not go out. All your other friends are well.

I go every day to Stowhill : both the sisters are now at home. I sent Mrs. Aston a *Taxation*, and sent it nobody else, and Lucy borrowed it. Mrs. Aston since that enquired by a messenger when I was expected. I can tell nothing about it, answered Lucy ; when he is to be here I suppose she'll know.

Every body remembers you all. You left a good impression behind you. I hope you will do the same at * * * * *. Do not make them speeches. Unusual compliments, to which there is no stated and prescriptive answer, embarrass the feeble, who know not what to say, and disgust the wise, who knowing them to be false, suspect them to be hypocritical. Did I think when I sat down to this paper that I should write a lesson to my mistress, of whom I think with so much admiration ?

As to Mr. Carter, I am inclined to think that our project will succeed. The Vice-Chancellor is really in earnest. He remarked to me how necessary it must be to provide in places of education a sufficient variety of innocent

nocent amusements, to keep the young men from pernicious pleasures.

When I did not hear from you, I thought whether it would not be proper to come back and look for you. I knew not what might have happened.

Consider the epitaph, which, you know, must be shortened, and tell what part you can best spare. Part of it, which tells the birth and marriage, is formulary, and can be expressed only one way; the character we can make longer or shorter; and since it is too long, may choose what we shall take away. You must get the dates for which you see spaces left.

You never told me, and I omitted to enquire, 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. Folks want me to go to Italy, but I say you are not for it. However write often to, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY, Lichfield, June 13, 1775.

I NOW write at Mr. Cobb's, where I have dined and had custard. She and Miss Adey send their compliments. Nothing considerable has happened since I wrote, only I am sorry to see Miss Porter so bad; and I am not well pleased to find that after a very comfortable intermission, the old flatulence distressed me again last night. The world is full of ups and downs, as I think I once told you before.

Lichfield is full of box-clubs. The ladies have one for their own sex. They have incorporated themselves under the appellation of the Amicable Society; and pay each twopence a week to the box. Any woman who can produce the weekly twopence is admitted to the society; and when any of the poor subscribers is in want, she has six shillings a week; and I think when she dies five pounds are

are given to her children. Lucy is not one, nor Mrs. Cobb. The subscribers are always quarrelling; and every now and then a lady in a fume withdraws her name; but they are an hundred pounds before hand.

Mr. Green has got a cast of Shakespeare, which he holds to be a very exact resemblance.

There is great lamentation here for the death of Coll. Lucy is of opinion that he was wonderfully handsome.

Boswell is a favourite, but he has lost ground since I told them that he is married, and all hope is over.

Be so kind as to let me know when you go to Lewes, and when you come back, that I may not fret for want of a letter, as I fretted at Oxford. Pay my respects to my dear master.

I am, &c,

L E T T E R CXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, June 17, 1775.

WRITE to me something every post, for on the stated day my head runs upon a letter. I will answer Queeney. Bad nights came again; but I took mercury, and hope to find good effects. I am distressfully and frightfully deaf. *Querelis jam satis datum.*

So we shall have a fine house in the winter, as we already have in the summer. I am not sorry for the appearance of a little superfluous expence. I have not yet been at Ashbourne, and yet I would fain flatter myself that you begin to wish me home; but do not tell me so, if it be not true, for I am very well at Stowhill.

Mrs. Porter will be glad of a memorial from you, and will keep the work-bag carefully, but has no great use for it; her present qualifications for the niceties of needle-work being dim eyes and lame fingers.

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Of the harvest about us it is said that much is expected from the wheat, more indeed than can be easily remembered. The barley is promising enough, but not uncommonly exuberant. But this is of itself a very good account, for no grain is ever dear, when wheat is cheap. I hope therefore that my master may without fear or danger build this year, and dig the next. I do not find that in this part of the country rain has been much wanted.

If you go with Mrs. D——, do not forget me amidst the luxuries of absolute dominion, but let me have kind letters full of yourself, of your own hopes, and your own fears, and your own thoughts, and then go where you will. You will find your journey however but a barren business; it is dull to live neither scolding nor scolded, neither governing nor governed. Now try.

I expected that when the interest of the county had been divided, Mawbey would have had very little difficulty, and am glad to find that Norton opposes him with so much efficacy; pray send me the result.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, June 19, 1775.

I HOPE it is very true that Ralph mends, and wish you were gone to see him, that you might come back again.

Queeney revenges her long task upon Mr. Baretti's hen, who must sit on duck eggs a week longer than on her own. I hope she takes great care of my hen, and the Guinea hen, and her pretty little brood.

I was afraid Mawbey would succeed, and have little hope from the scrutiny. Did you ever know a scrutiny change the account?

Miss A—— does not run after me, but I do not want her, here are other ladies.

Invenies alium, si te hic fastidit Alexis.

Miss * * * * grows old, and Miss Vyfe has been ill, but I believe she came to me as soon as she got out. And I can always go to
Stow-

Stowhill. So never grieve about me. Only flatulencies are come again.

Your dissertation upon Queeney is very deep. I know not what to say to the chief question. Nature probably has some part in human characters, and accident has some part; which has most we will try to settle when we meet.

Small letters will undoubtedly gain room for more words, but words are useless if they cannot be read. The lines need not all be kept distinct, and some words I shall wish to leave out, though very few. It must be revised before it is engraved. I always told you that Mr. Thrale was a man, take him for all in all, you ne'er will look upon his like; but you never mind him nor me, till time forces conviction into your steely bosom. You will, perhaps, find all right about the house and the windows.

Pray always suppose that I send my respects to Master, and Queeney, and Harry, and Sussey, and Sophy.

Poor Lucy mends very slowly, but she is very good-humoured, while I do just as she would have me.

Lady Smith has got a new post-chaise, which is not nothing to talk on at Lichfield. Little things here serve for conversation. Mrs. Aston's parrot pecked my leg, and I heard of it some time after at Mrs. Cobb's.

—We deal in nicer things
Than routing armies and dethroning kings.

A week ago Mrs. Cobb gave me sweetmeats to breakfast, and I heard of it last night at Stowhill.

If you are for small talk :

—Come on, and do the best you can,
I fear not you, nor yet a better man.

I could tell you about Lucy's two cats, and Brill her brother's old dog, who is gone deaf; but the day would fail me. *Suadentque cadentia sidera somnum.* So said Æneas. But I have not yet had my dinner. I have begun early, for what would become of the nation if a letter of this importance should miss the post? Pray write to, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, June 21, 1775.

NOW I hope you are thinking, shall I have a letter to-day from Lichfield? Something of a letter you will have; how else can I expect that you should write? and the morning on which I should miss a letter would be a morning of uneasiness, notwithstanding all that would be said or done by the sisters of Stowhill, who do and say whatever good they can. They give me good words, and cherries, and strawberries. Lady * * * * and her mother and sister were visiting there yesterday, and Lady * * * * took her tea before her mother.

Mrs. Cobb is to come to Miss Porter's this afternoon. Miss A—— comes little near me. Mr. Langley of Ashbourne was here to-day, in his way to Birmingham, and every body talks of you.

The ladies of the Amicable Society are to walk, in a few days, from the town-hall to the cathedral in procession to hear a sermon. They walk in linen gowns, and each has a stick with an acorn, but for the acorn they could give no reason, till I told them of the civick crown.

I have just had your sweet letter, and am glad that you are to be at the regatta. You know how little I love to have you left out of any shining part of life. You have every right to distinction, and should therefore be distinguished. You will see a show with philosophick superiority, and therefore may see it safely. It is easy to talk of sitting at home contented, when others are seeing or making shows. But not to have been where it is supposed, and seldom supposed falsely, that all would go if they could; to be able to say nothing when every one is talking; to have no opinion when every one is judging; to hear exclamations of rapture without power to depress; to listen to falsehoods without right to contradict, is, after all, a state of temporary inferiority, in which the mind is rather hardened by stubbornness, than supported by fortitude. If the world be worth winning, let us enjoy it; if it is to be despised, let us despise

spise it by conviction. But the world is not to be despised but as it is compared with something better. Company is in itself better than solitude, and pleasure better than indolence. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, says the moral as well as natural philosopher. By doing nothing and by knowing nothing no power of doing good can be obtained. He must mingle with the world that desires to be useful. Every new scene impresses new ideas, enriches the imagination, and enlarges the power of reason, by new topicks of comparison. You that have seen the regatta will have images which we who miss it must want, and no intellectual images are without use. But when you are in this scene of splendour and gayety, do not let one of your fits of negligence steal upon you. *Hoc age*, is the great rule whether you are serious or merry; whether you are stating the expences of your family, learning science or duty from a folio, or floating on the Thames in a fancied dress. Of the whole entertainment let me not hear so copious nor so true an account from any body as from you.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 23, 1775.

SO now you have been at the regatta, for I hope you got tickets somewhere, else you wanted me, and I shall not be sorry, because you fancy you can do so well without me; but however I hope you got tickets, and were dressed fine and fanciful, and made a fine part of the fine show, and heard musick, and said good things, and staid on the water four hours after midnight, and came well home, and slept, and dreamed of the regatta, and waked, and found yourself in bed, and thought now it is all over, only I must write about it to Lichfield.

We make a hard shift here to live on without a regatta. The cherries are ripe at Stowhill, and the currants are ripening, and the ladies are very kind to me. I wish, however, you would go to Surry, and come back, though
I think

I think it wiser to stay till the improvement in Ralph may become perceptible, else you will be apt to judge by your wishes and your imagination. Let us in the mean time hope the best. Let me but know when you go, and when you come back again.

If you or Mr. Thrale would write to Dr. Wetherell about Mr. Carter, it will please Wetherell, and keep the business in motion. They know not otherwise how to communicate news if they have it.

As to my hopes and my wishes, I can keep them to myself. They will perhaps grow less if they are laughed at. I needed not tell them, but that I have little else to write, and I needed not write, but that I do not like to be without hearing from you, because I love the Thrales and the Thralites.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXVII.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Streatham, June 24, 1775.

YOUR letters are very kind and very pleasing: the last came just as I was setting out for the regatta, of which you have a right to the best description I can give; but first let us talk of ourselves, each other, and our friends. I am glad the Miss Astons treat you with such good things, but would not have the currants of Stowhill preferred to the grapes of Streatham, for that is mere *partiality*, a word you never use, so you are bound to scorn the *thing*. Why does Miss * * * * never find a place in the letters from Lichfield. I thought her a mighty elegant amiable country lady.

Mr. * * * * is pedantic enough; a good man however you say, and has a strong desire of being agreeable. 'Tis very flattering to me when people make my talents the subject of their praises, in order to obtain your favour.

Lady * * * should not have taken the tea before her mother, that's certain, as her husband is dead, and all pretence of supporting the rank he had given her is past, so not only natural but artificial propriety was violated, and I can find no excuse for her conduct, except too attentive an observation to dear Mr. Johnson's odd speeches against parental authority.

Now for the regatta, of which, Baretta says, the first notion was taken from Venice, where the gondoliers practise rowing against each other perpetually, and I dare say 'tis good diversion where the weather invites, and the water seduces to such entertainments;—here, however, it was not likely to answer; and I think nobody was pleased.

Well! Croesus promised a reward, you remember, for him who should produce a new delight; but the prize was never obtained, for nothing that was new proved delightful; and Dr. Goldsmith, three thousand years afterwards, found out, that whoever did a new thing did a bad thing, and whoever said a new thing said a false thing.—So yesternorning a flag flying from some conspicuous steeple in Westminster gave notice of the approaching

festival, and at noon the managers determined to hold it on that day. In about two hours the wind rose very high, and the river was exceedingly rough; but the lot was cast, and the ladies went on with their dresses. It had been agreed that all should wear white; but the ornaments were left to our own choice. I was afraid of not being fine enough; so I trimmed my white lutestring with silver gauze, and wore black ribbons intermixed. We had obtained more tickets than I hoped for, though Sir Thomas Robinson gave us none at last; but he gives one such a profusion of words, and bows, and compliments, that I suppose he thinks every thing else superfluous.—Mr. Cator was the man for a real favour at last, whose character is directly opposite, as you know; but if both are actuated by the spirit of kindness, let us *try* at least to love them both,—yet still——

Prefer the stronger effort of its pow'r,
And justly set the gem above the flow'r.

He wished Hester to go, and she wished it too, and her father wished it, so I would not stand out, though my fears for her health and safety lessened the pleasure her company always gives.—The D'Avenants then, Mr.
Cator,

Cator, Mr. Evans, Mr. Seward, and ourselves set about being happy with all our might—and tried for a barge to flutter in all together. The barges however were already full, and we were to be divided and put into separate boats. The water was rough, even seriously so; the time glided away in deliberation of what was to be done; and we resolved at last to run to the house of a gentleman in the Temple, of whom we knew nothing but that he was D'Avenant's friend, and look at the race from his windows—then drive away for Ranelagh in time to see the barges drawn up, and the company disembark. Of the race, however, scarce any thing could be seen, for clouds of dust that intercepted one's sight; and we have no balconies to see shows from, as are provided in countries where processions make much of the means of entertainment; so we discomposed our head-dresses against each other, by struggling for places in an open window, and then begged pardon with curtsies, which exposed our trains to be trod on, and made us still more out of humour. It was however a real pleasure to look at the crowd of spectators. Every shop was shut; every street deserted; and the tops of all such houses as had any catch of the river swarmed with

with people like bees fettling on a branch. Here is no exaggeration, upon my honour; even the lamp-irons on Westminster bridge were converted into seats, while every lighter lying in the Thames bore men up to the top-mast head. This was the true wonder of the day. Baretti says, he will shew us finer sights when we go to Italy; I believe him; but shall we ever see so populous a city as London? So rich a city? So happy a city? I fancy not.

Let bear or elephant be e'er so white,
The people sure, the people are the fight.

They could not indeed be very attentive to the games like those Horace talks of; for here was neither panther nor camel; no pretence to draw us together, as I could find;—yet they sat so thick upon the flating of Whitehall, that nobody could persuade me for a long while out of the notion that it was covered with black, till through a telescope we spied the *animals in motion*, like magnified mites in a bit of old cheese. Well! from this house in the Temple we hasted away to Ranelagh, happy in having at least convinced a hundred folks we never saw before and perhaps never shall see again, that we had tickets for the regatta, and fine clothes to spoil with the rain, and that we were not
come

come thither like the vulgar—in good time! only to see the boat-race. And now, without one image of Cleopatra's galley, or Virgil's games, or one pretext to say how it put us in mind of either, we drove to Ranelagh, and told each other all the way how pretty it would be to look at the ladies disembarking to musick, and walking in procession up to the rotunda. But the night came on; the wind roared; the rain fell; and the barges missing their way, many came up to the wrong stairs; the managers endeavoured to rectify the mistake, and drive them back, that some order might be kept, and some appearance of regularity might be made; but the women were weary and wet, and in no disposition to try for further felicity out of the old common road, so the procession was spoiled, and as to musick we heard none but screams of the frightened company as they were tossed about at the moment of getting to shore. Once more then all were turned loose to look for pleasure where it could be found: the rotunda was not to be opened till twelve o'clock, when the bell was to call us to sup there; the temporary building was not finished, and the rain would not permit walking in the garden.—Calamity however vanishes often upon a near approach,
does

does not it? as well as happiness. We all crowded into the new building, from whence we drove the carpenters, and called for cards, without the help of which, by some fatality, no day dedicated to amusement is ever able to end.

Queeney said there was no loss of the ornaments intended to decorate Neptune's hall; for she saw no attempt at embellishment, except a few fluttering rags like those which dangle from a dyer's pole into the street, and in that room we sat telling opinions, adventures, &c. till supper was served, which the men said was an execrable one, and I thought should have been finer. Was nothing good then? you begin to exclaim; here is desire of saying something where little is to be said, and lamentations are the readiest nonsense my mistress can find to fill her letter with. No, no; I would commend the concert and the catch-fingers for an hour if you would hear me; the music was well selected, and admirably executed; nor did the company look much amiss when all the dismal was over, and we walked round Ranelagh a little in the old way; every body being dressed in white was no advantage indeed to the general appearance. Lord Bacon, who knows every
thing

thing small and great better than any one else, very judiciously recommends full colours and loud musick for a midnight show; the pale pinks and pea-greens make a mean figure by candle light, says he, and if they look pitiful, how much more so does white look? the truth is, one has always an idea of privation conveyed to one's mind by it, which inspires me with melancholy; and perhaps the consciousness that it implies weakness may be the latent reason—for I really never did hear of a white horse winning a race (we don't talk of grey); and I well remember the difficulty of raising white fawns among the deer when I was a child; the *blancke rose* has a scent less powerful than the red one; and you always chuse to eat black grapes. Under the pole every creature becomes white we know, for no very creditable reason; and in a few years my hair will probably confirm my argument.—In the mean time we will finish the regatta, which ended with country-dances.—But I think the rakes and courtezans had that part of the diversion to themselves. There were a vast many of our common acquaintance among the company. You will be told that I was too fine, and 'tis partly true, but the other extreme would have been worse,

worse, and Mr. Thrale chose my dress himself.

We returned safe home about five or six o'clock; a new scene to Hester, who behaved sweetly, and had no fears in the crowd, but prodigious surprize in finding it broad day when we came out. I might have wondered too, for few people have frequented publick places less than myself, and for the first six years after my marriage, as you know, I never set my foot in any theatre or place of entertainment at all. What most amazed me about this regatta, however, was the mixture of company, when tickets were so difficult to obtain. Some body talked at Ranelagh of two ladies that were drowned, but I have no doubt that was a dream.

Will this account serve to divert Miss Lucy Porter and your other Lichfield ladies? If it will, the hour has been happily spent that wrote the *immortal letter of the regatta*. Of the next frolick we engage in I hope you will be yourself *pars magna*, or at worst I hope you will hear it from the lips of

Your ever faithful,
and obedient servant.

P. S. I will lose as little of the epitaph as 'tis possible, nay I will lose none, for the reduction of the character will accommodate matters to the stone, and the words are not useless, because they are not large.—My mother's character will bear the *nearest approach* in every sense; and your writing is worth more I hope than walking five steps to read it, so pray leave nothing out: she cannot be praised too much; and if I did not think that compression added force, I should not find her panegyrick half long enough even now.

L E T T E R CXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 26, 1775.

T H A T the regatta disappointed you is neither wonderful nor new; all pleasure preconceived and preconcerted ends in disappointment; but disappointment, when it involves neither shame nor loss, is as good as success; for it supplies as many images to the mind, and as many topics to the tongue. I am glad it failed for another reason, which looks more sage than my reasons commonly
try

try to look; this, I think, is Queeney's first excursion into the regions of pleasure, and I should not wish to have her too much pleased. It is as well for her to find that pleasures have their pains; and that bigger misses who are at Ranelagh when she is in bed, are not so much to be envied as they would wish to be, or as they may be represented.

So you left out the * * * *s, and I suppose they did not go. It will be a common place for you and Queeney fourscore years hence; and my master and you may have recourse to it sometimes. But I can only listen. I am glad that you were among the finest.

Nothing was the matter between me and Miss * * * *. We are all well enough now. Miss Porter went yesterday to church, from which she has been kept a long time. I fancy that I shall go on Thursday to Ashbourne, but do not think that I shall stay very long. I wish you were gone to Surry and come well back again, and yet I would not have you go too soon. Perhaps I do not very well know what I would have; it is a case not extremely rare. But I know I would hear from you by every post, and therefore I take care that you should every post day hear from me.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 1, 1775.

ON Thursday I came to Dr. Taylor's, where I live as I am used to do, and as you know. He has gotten nothing new, but a very fine looking glafs, and a bull-bitch. The lefs bull is now grown the bigger. But I forgot; he has bought old Shakespeare, the race-horse, for a stallion. He has likewise some fine iron gates which he will set up somewhere. I have not yet seen the old horse.

You are very much enquired after, as well here as at Lichfield.

This I suppose will go after you to Suffex, where I hope you will find every thing either well or mending. You never told me whether you took Queeney with you; nor ever so much as told me the name of the little one. May be you think I don't care about you.

I behaved myself so well at Lichfield, that Lucy says I am grown better; and the ladies

at Stowhill expect I should come back thither before I go to London, and offer to entertain me if Lucy refuses.

I have this morning received a letter from Mrs. Chambers of Calcutta. The Judge has a sore eye, and could not write. She represents all as going on very well, only Chambers does not now flatter himself that he shall do much good.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C X X .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

NOW, thinks my dearest Mistress to herself, sure I am at last gone too far to be pestered every post with a letter: he knows that people go into the country to be at quiet; he knows too that when I have once told the story of Ralph, the place where I am affords me nothing that I shall delight to tell, or he will wish to be told; he knows how troublesome it is to write letters about nothing; and he

he knows that he does not love trouble himself, and therefore ought not to force it upon others.

But, dearest Lady, you may see once more how little knowledge influences practice, notwithstanding all this knowledge, you see, here is a letter.

Every body says the prospect of harvest is uncommonly delightful; but this has been so long the Summer talk, and has been so often contradicted by Autumn, that I do not suffer it to lay much hold on my mind. Our gay prospects have now for many years together ended in melancholy retrospects. Yet I am of opinion that there is much corn upon the ground. Every dear year encourages the farmer to sow more and more, and favourable seasons will be sent at last. Let us hope that they will be sent now.

The Doctor and Frank are gone to see the hay. It was cut on Saturday, and yesterday was well wetted; but to day has its fill of sunshine. I hope the hay at Streatham was plentiful, and had good weather.

Our lawn is as you left it, only the pool is so full of mud that the water-fowl have left it.

Here are many calves, who, I suppose, all expect to be great bulls and cows.

Yesterday I saw Mrs. Diot at church, and shall drink tea with her some afternoon.

I cannot get free from this vexatious flatulence, and therefore have troublesome nights, but otherwise I am not very ill. Now and then a fit; and not violent. I am not afraid of the waterfall. I now and then take physick; and suspect that you were not quite right in omitting to let blood before I came away. But I do not intend to do it here.

You will now find the advantage of having made one at the regatta. You will carry with you the importance of a publick personage, and enjoy a superiority which, having been only local and accidental, will not be regarded with malignity. You have a subject by which you can gratify general curiosity, and amuse your company without bewildering them. You can keep the vocal machine in motion, without those seeming paradoxes that are sure to disgust; without that temerity of censure which is sure to provoke enemies; and that exuberance of flattery which experience has found to make no friends. It is
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the good of publick life that it supplies agreeable topicks and general conversation. Therefore wherever you are, and whatever you see, talk not of the Punick war; nor of the depravity of human nature; nor of the slender motives of human actions; nor of the difficulty of finding employment or pleasure; but talk, and talk, and talk of the regatta, and keep the rest for, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 6, 1775.

DR. TAYLOR says he shall be very glad to see you all here again, if you have a mind of retirement. But I told him that he must not expect you this summer; and he wants to know why?

I am glad you have read Boswell's journal, because it is something for us to talk about, and that you have seen the Hornecks, because that is a publick theme. I would have you

S 3

see,

see, and read, and hear, and talk it all, as occasion offers.

Pray thank Queeney for her letter. I still hope good of poor Ralph; but sure never poor rogue was so troubled with his teeth. I hope occasional bathing, and keeping him about two minutes with his body immersed, may promote the discharge from his head, and set his little brain at liberty. Pray give my service to my dear friend Harry, and tell him that Mr. Murphy does not love him better than I do,

I am inclined to be of Mr. Thrale's mind about the changes in the state. A dissolution of the Parliament would, in my opinion, be little less than a dissolution of the government, by the encouragement which it would give to every future faction to disturb the public tranquillity. Who would ever want places and power if perseverance in falsehood and violence of outrage were found to be certain and infallible means of procuring them? yet I have so little confidence in our present statesmen, that I know not whether any thing is less likely, for being either absurd or dangerous. I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM, July 7, 1775.

WHAT can be the reason that I hear nothing from you or from your house? Are you well? Yet while I am asking the question, I know not when I shall be able to receive your answer, for I am waiting for the chance of a place in a coach which will probably be come and gone in an hour.

Yesterday the Vice-Chancellor told me, that he has written to the Archbishop of York. His letter, as he represented it to me, was very proper and persuasive. I believe we shall establish Mr. Carter the riding master of Oxford.

Still I cannot think why I hear nothing from you.

The coach is full. I am therefore at full leisure to continue my letter; but I have nothing more to say of business, but that the Vice-Chancellor is for adding to the riding-

school a house and stable for the master. Nor of myself but that I grieve and wonder, and hope and fear about my dear friends at Streattham. But I may have a letter this afternoon—Sure it will bring me no bad news. You never neglected writing so before. If I have a letter to-day I will go away as soon as I can; if I have none, I will stay till this may be answered, if I do not come back to town.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne.

I AM sure I write and write, and every letter that comes from you charges me with not writing. Since I wrote to Queeney I have written twice to you, on the 6th and the 9th, be pleased to let me know whether you have them or have them not. That of the 6th you should regularly have had on the 8th, yet your letter of the 9th seems not to mention it; all this puzzles me.

Poor

Poor dear * * * *! He only grows dull because he is fickly; age has not yet begun to impair him; nor is he such a chameleon as to take immediately the colour of his company. When you see him again, you will find him reanimated. Most men have their bright and their cloudy days, at least they have days when they put their powers into act, and days when they suffer them to repose.

Fourteen thousand pounds make a sum sufficient for the establishment of a family, and which, in whatever flow of riches or confidence of prosperity, deserves to be very seriously considered. I hope a great part of it has paid debts, and no small part bought land. As for gravelling and walling and digging, though I am not much delighted with them, yet something, indeed much, must be allowed to every man's taste. He that is growing rich has a right to enjoy part of the growth his own way. I hope to range in the walk, and row upon the water, and devour fruit from the wall.

Dr. Taylor wants to be gardening. He means to buy a piece of ground in the neighbourhood, and surround it with a wall, and build a gardener's house upon it, and have
fruit,

fruit, and be happy. Much happiness it will not bring him; but what can he do better? If I had money enough, what would I do? Perhaps, if you and master did not hold me, I might go to Cairo, and down the Red Sea to Bengal, and take a ramble in India. Would this be better than building and planting? It would surely give more variety to the eye, and more amplitude to the mind. Half fourteen thousand would send me out to see other forms of existence, and bring me back to describe them.

I answer this the day on which I had yours of the 9th, that is on the 11th. Let me know when it comes.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

Ashbourne, Wednesday, July 12, 1775.

DEAR MADAM,

ON Monday I was not well, but I grew better at night, and before morning was, as the doctors say, out of danger.

We

We have no news here, except that on Saturday Lord Scarfsdale dined with the Doctor. He is a very gentlemanlike man. On Sunday Mr. * * * * paid a visit from Lichfield, and having nothing to say, said nothing, and went away.

Our great cattle, I believe, go on well, but our deer have died; all but five does and the poor buck. We think the ground too wet for them.

I have enclosed a letter from Mrs. Chambers, partly, perhaps wholly, for Mr. Baretti's amusement and gratification, though he has probably a much longer letter of his own, which he takes no care to send me.

Mr. L—— and the Doctor still continue at variance; and the Doctor is afraid, and Mr. L—— not desirous of a reconciliation. I therefore step over at by-times, and of by-times I have enough.

Mrs. Dale has been ill, and, at fourscore, has recovered. She is much extenuated, but having the summer to favour her, will, I think, renew her hold on life.

To the Diots I yet owe a visit. Mr. Gell is now rejoicing, at fifty-seven, for the birth
of

of an heir-male. I hope here is news. Mr, * * * and * * * * seem to be making preparations for war,

Now I flatter myself that you want to know something about me. My spirits are now and then in an uneasy flutter, but upon the whole not very bad.

We have here a great deal of rain ; but this is a very rainy region. I hear nothing but good of the harvest ; but the expectation is higher of the wheat than of the barley, but I hope there will be barley enough for us, and Mr. S——, and Lady L——, and something still to spare. I am, dearest sweetest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C X X V,

Mrs. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON,

DEAR SIR,

THE letters are all come ; and very kind letters they are ; and I always wish them longer and less frequent ; for when you once turn the page I am sure of a disquisition, or
an

an observation, or a little scold, or something. — When you write less than twenty lines at once, 'tis only a scrap rent from the next week's chat, for what shall we have to talk if all the facts are sent flying so between Ashbourne and Streatham? I will keep the story of the fourteen thousand pounds till we meet; so I will all family concerns, unless little Queeney sends her *country post*, as usual, to give information of a new *sail of ducks*, or some such important intelligence, which will not greatly interfere with my project. At present the last paragraph of your last long letter is much in my head; and Mr. Thrall said, when we read it together, that you should not travel alone, if he could once see this dear little boy quite well, or see me well persuaded (as many are) that nothing ails him.

Why, what an uncomfortable reflection it is at last, that those who are best qualified to travel, and tell what they have seen at their return, should be almost always obliged, for one reason or another, to stay at home. *My* great delight, like yours, would be to see how life is carried on in other countries, how various climates produce various effects, and how different notions of religion and government operate upon the human manners and the

human mind; for 'tis they at last which cause all the distinction between national characters, as the method in which our bones and fibres are disposed creates all the variety observed in the human figure; yet I do not commend those voyagers who teize one with too much of such stuff to shew their own profundity, any more than I like a painter who exhibits none but anatomical figures: I think, however, we have had little to lament on that side lately, as counting pictures and describing ruins seems to have been the sole business of modern travellers—but when *we* go to *Cairo*, one shall take one department, another shall take another, and so a pretty book may be made out amongst us, that shall be commended, and censured, and cuffed about the town for a twelvemonth, if no new tub takes the whale's attention.

Well! now all this is nonsense, and fancy, and flight, you know, for my master has his great casks to mind, and I have my little children, but he has really half a mind to cross the water for half a year's frisk to Italy, or France, if we could leave matters so that we might not be frightened or called back to any vexation. For digging, walling, or planting,

we should be better qualified at our return, and we would shake off our superflux of science to dear Dr. Taylor—to whom make in the mean time our best compliments, with love to his Jigg and Jeffamy—I should not expect to see their superiors in any country, but the foreign a/s we admired at Blenheim might measure against either of them as well as I remember.

You account very tenderly for * * * *s dullness, it was perhaps only accidental; but if a man will never add to his original stock by reading, and keep on living away upon what he set out with, dullness in conversation must finally ensue. A besieged town is always obliged to capitulate at last, if strongly invested, and all foreign supplies cut off, however well stored with provision when the blockade begun. Mr. Thrale said he was more agreeable this afternoon, but I told him starving produced a fever always in the last stage of a life losing by famine, and his friend's warmth in conversation was occasioned by nothing better.

Would it not be wiser to talk of the regatta than make such Welch speeches as these?—but nobody was by.

I said

I said I would write nothing of family matters, but here is a letter from Suffex come, that will make me write of nothing else. The child is very bad I am sure, but I had better go and see, for the suspense is terrible, and these nasty posts !

The illness of this boy frights me for all the rest ; if any of them have a headach it puts me in an agony, a broken leg would less affect my peace.—So many to have the same disorder is dreadful. What can be the meaning of it ?.

Sophy complained yesterday, but I hope it was on purpose to fright me.

Send me some comfortable words ; do, dear Sir ; and believe me ever

Your obliged and faithful servant.

L E T T E R CXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July, 1775.

I AM sorry that my poor little friend Ralph goes on no better. We must see what time will do for him.

I hope Harry is well. I had a very pretty letter from Queeney; and hope she will be kind to my hen and her ten chickens, and mind her book.

I forget whether I tell some things, and may perhaps tell them twice, but the matter is not great, only, as you observe, the more we write the less we shall have to say when we meet.

Are we to go all to Brighthelmstone in the Autumn, or have you fatiated yourself with this visit? I have only one reason for wishing you to go, and that reason is far enough from amounting to necessity.

That * * * *'s simplicity should be forgiven, for his benevolence is very just; and I will not now say any thing in opposition to

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your

your kind resolution. It is pity that any good man should ever seem, or ever be ridiculous.

This letter will be short, for I am so much disordered by indigestion, of which I can give no account, that it is difficult to write more than that I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

July 13, 1775.

IN return for your three letters I do not find myself able to send you more than two; but if I had the prolixity of an emperour, it should be all at your service.

Poor Ralph! I think what they purpose to do for his relief is right, but that it will be efficacious I cannot promise.

Your anxiety about your other babies is, I hope, superfluous. Miss and Harry are as safe as ourselves; they have outlived the age of weakness; their fibres are now elastick, and their headachs, when they have them, are from accidental causes, heat or indigestion.

If

If Sufy had been at all disposed to this horrid malady, it would have laid hold on her in her early state of laxity and feebleness. That native vigour which has carried her happily through so many obstructions to life and growth, will, I think, certainly preserve her from a disease most likely to fall only on the weak.

Of the two small ladies it can only be said, that there is no present appearance of danger; and of fearing evils merely possible there is no end. We are told by the Lord of Nature, that "for the day its own evil is sufficient."

Now to lighter things, and those of weight enough to another. I am still of opinion, that we shall bring the Oxford riding-school to bear. * * * * * is indeed *un esprit foible*, and perhaps too easily repressed, but Dr. Wetherell is in earnest. I would come back through Oxford, but that at this time there is nobody there. But I will not desist. I think to visit them next term.

Do not let poor Lizard be degraded for five pounds. I sent you word that I would spend something upon him; and indeed for the money which it would cost to take him to

Taylor or Langton and fetch him back, he may be kept, while he stands idle, a long time in the stable.

Mrs. Williams has been very ill, and it would do her good if you would send a message of enquiry, and a few strawberries or currants.

Mr. Flint's little girl is alive and well, and prating, as I hope yours, my dear Lady, will long continue.

The hay harvest is here very much incommoded by daily showers, which, however, seem not violent enough to beat down the corn.

I cannot yet fix the time of coming home. Dr. Taylor and I spend little time together, yet he will not yet be persuaded to hear of parting. I am,

Dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, July 15, 1775.

YOU are so kind every post, that I now regularly expect your favours. You have indeed more materials for writing than I. Here are only I and the Doctor, and of him I see not much. You have Master, and young Master, and Misses, besides geese, and turkies, and ducks, and hens.

The Doctor says, that if Mr. Thrale comes so near as Derby without seeing us, it will be a sorry trick. I wish, for my part, that he may return soon, and rescue the fair captives from the tyranny of B——i. Poor B——i! do not quarrel with him; to neglect him a little will be sufficient. He means only to be frank, and manly, and independent, and perhaps, as you say, a little wise. To be frank he thinks is to be cynical, and to be independent is to be rude. Forgive him, dearest Lady, the rather, because of his misbehaviour,

T 3

I am

I am afraid he learned part of me. I hope to set him hereafter a better example.

Your concern for poor Ralph, and your resolution to visit him again, is too parental to be blamed. You may perhaps do good; you do at least your duty, and with that we must be contented; with that indeed, if we attained it, we ought to be happy: but who ever attained it?

You have perceived, by my letters, that without knowing more than that the *estate* was unsettled, I was inclined to a settlement. I am likewise for an entail. But we will consult men of experience, for that which is to hinder my dear Harry from mischief when he comes to age may be done with mature deliberation.

You have not all the misery in the world to yourself; I was last night almost convulsed with flatulence, after having gone to bed I thought so well—but it does not much trouble me when I am out of bed. To your anxiety about your children I wrote lately what I had to say. I blame it so little, that I think you should add a small particle of anxiety about me; for I am, dearest Madam,

L E T T E R CXXIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

July 17, 1775.

THE post is come without a letter; how could I be so fullen—but *he must be humble who would please*. Perhaps you are gone to Brighthelmstone, and so could not write; however it be, this I feel, that I have no letter; but then I have sometimes had two, and if I have as many letters as there come posts nobody will pity me if I were to complain.

How was your hay made? The Doctor has had one part well hous'd, another wetted and dried till it is hardly worth the carriage; and now many acres newly mown, that have hitherto had good weather. This may be considered as a foreign article; the domestick news is, that our bull-bitch has puppies, and that our six calves are no longer to be fed by hand, but to live on grafs.

Mr. Langley has made some improvements in his garden. A rich man might do more; but what he has done is well.

T 4

You

You have never in all your letters touched but once upon my master's Summer projects, Is he towering into the air, and tending to the centre? Is he excavating the earth, or covering its surface with edifices? Something he certainly is doing, and something he is spending. A genius never can be quite still. I do not murmur at his expences; a good harvest will supply them.

We talk here of Polish oats, and Siberian barley, of which both are said to be more productive, to ripen in less time, and to afford better grain than the English. I intend to procure specimens of both, which we will try in some spots of our own ground.

The Doctor has no great mind to let me go. Shall I teaze him, and plague him till he is weary of me? I am, I hope, pretty well, and fit to come home. I shall be expected by all my ladies to return through Lichfield, and to stay there a while; but if I thought you wanted me, I hope you know what would be done by,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXX,

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, July 20, 1775.

POOOR Ralph! he is gone; and nothing remains but that you comfort yourself with having done your best. The first wish was, that he might live long to be happy and useful; the next, that he might not suffer long pain. The second wish has been granted. Think now only on those which are left you. I am glad that you went to Brighthelmstone, for your journey is a standing proof to you of your affection and diligence. We can hardly be confident of the state of our own minds, but as it stands attested by some external action; we are seldom sure that we sincerely meant what we omitted to do.

Dr. Taylor says, that Mr. Thrale has not used us well, in coming so near without coming nearer. I know not what he can say for himself, but I know that he can take shelter in fullen silence.

There

There is, I think, still the same prospect of a plentiful harvest. We have in this part of the kingdom had rain to swell the grain, and sunshine to ripen it. I was yesterday to see the Doctor's Poland oats. They grow, for a great part, four feet high, with a stalk equal in bulk and strength to wheaten straw. We were of opinion that they must be reaped, as the lower joints would be too hard for fodder. We will try them.

Susy was always my little girl. See what she is come to; you must keep her in mind of me, who was always on her side. Of Mrs. Fanny I have no knowledge.

You have two or three of my letters to answer, and I hope you will be copious and distinct, and tell me a great deal of your mind; a dear little mind it is; and I hope always to love it better as I know it more.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR LADY, *Ashbourne, July 21, 1775.*

WHEN you write next direct to Lichfield, for I think to move that way on Tuesday, and in no long time to move homewards, when we will have a serious consultation, and try to do every thing for the best.

I shall be glad of a letter from dear Queeney, and am not sorry that she wishes for me. When I come we will enter into an alliance defensive at least.

Mr. B——i very elegantly sent his pupil's letter to Mrs. Williams without a cover, in such a manner that she knows not whence it was transmitted.

I do not mean to bleed but with your concurrence, though I am troubled with eruptions, which I cannot suppress by frequent physick.

As my master staid only one day, we must forgive him, yet he knows he staid only one day, because he thought it not worth his while to stay two.

You

You and B——i are friends again. My dear mistress has the quality of being easily reconciled, and not easily offended. Kindness is a good thing in itself; and there are few things that are worthy of anger, and still fewer that can justify malignity.

Nothing remains for the present, but that you sit down placid and content, disposed to enjoy the present, and planning the proper use of the future liberalities of Providence. You have really much to enjoy, and, without any wild indulgence of imagination, much to expect. In the mean time, however, life is gliding away, and another state is hastening forwards. You were but five-and-twenty when I knew you first. What I shall be next September I confess I have *laceté* enough to turn aside from thinking.

I am glad you read Boswell's journal; you are now sufficiently informed of the whole transaction, and need not regret that you did not make the tour of the Hebrides.

You have done me honour in naming me your trustee, and have very judiciously chosen Cator. I believe our fidelity will not be exposed to any strong temptations.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

July 24, 1775.

BE pleased to return my thanks to Queeney for her pretty little letter. I hope the peacock will recover. It is pity we cannot catch the fellow; we would make him drink at the pump. The victory over the poor wild cat delights me but little. I had rather he had taken a chicken than lost his life.

To-morrow I go to Lichfield. My company would not any longer make the Doctor happy. He wants to be rambling with his Ashbourne friends. And it is perhaps time for me to think of coming home. Which way I shall take I do not know.

Miss says, that you have recovered your spirits, and that you all are well. Pray do not grudge the trouble of telling me so your ownself; for I do not find my attention to you and your sensations at all lessened by this time of absence, which always appears to
my

my imagination much longer than when I count it.

Now to-morrow I expect to see Lucy Porter and Mrs. Adey, and to hear how they have gone on at Lichfield; and then for a little I shall wander about as the birds of passage circle and flutter before they set out on the main flight.

I have been generally without any violent disorder of either mind or body, but every now and then ailing, but so that I could keep it to myself.

Are we to go to Brighthelmstone this Autumn? I do not enquire with any great solicitude. You know one reason, and it will not be easy to find another, except that which brings all thither that go, unwillingness to stay at home, and want of power to supply with either business or amusement the cravings of the day. From this distress all that know either you or me, will suppose that we might rescue ourselves, if we would, without the help of a bath in the morning and an assembly at night.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, July 26, 1775.

YESTERDAY I came hither. After dinner I went to Stowhill; there I was pampered, and had an uneasy night. Phyfick to day put me out of order; and for some time I forgot that this is poft night.

Nothing very extraordinary has happened at Lichfield fince I went away. Lucy Porter is better, and has got her lame hand out of the bag. The reft of your friends I have not feen.

Having ftaid long enough at Afhbourne, I was notorry to leave it. I hindered fome of Taylor's diverfions, and he fupplied me with very little. Having feen the neighbouring places, I had no curiofity to gratify; and having few new things, we had little new talk.

When I came I found Lucy at her book. She had Hammond's Commentary on the Pfalms

Psalms before her. He is very learned, she says, but there is enough that any body may understand.

Now I am here I think myself a great deal nearer London than before, for though the distance is not very different, I am here in the way of carriages, and can easily get to Birmingham, and so to Oxford; but I know not which way I shall take, but some way or other I hope to find, that may bring me back again to Streatham; and then I shall see what have been my master's goings on, and will try whether I shall know the old places.

As I lift up my head from the paper, I can look into Lucy's garden. Her walls have all failed. I believe she has had hardly any fruit but gooseberries; but so much verdure looks pretty in a town.

When you read my letters I suppose you are very proud to think how much you excel in the correspondence; but you must remember that your materials are better. You have a family, and friends, and hopes, and fears, and wishes, and aversions, and all the ingredients that are necessary to the composition of a letter. Here sit poor I, with nothing but my own solitary individuality; doing little, and
suffering

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suffering no more than I have often suffered ; hearing nothing that I can repeat ; seeing nothing that I can relate ; talking, when I do talk, to those whom you cannot regard ; and at this moment hearing the curfew, which you cannot hear. I am,

Dearest, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, July.

DO not say that I never write to you, and do not think that I expected to find any friends here that could make me wish to prolong my stay. For your strawberries, however, I have no care. Mrs. Cobb has strawberries, and will give me as long as they last ; and she has cherries too. Of the strawberries at Streatham I consign my part to Miss and Harry. I hope Susy grows, and Lucy begins to walk. Though this rainy weather confines us

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all

all in the house, I have neither frolicked nor fretted.

In the tumult, whatever it was, at your house, I hope my countrywomen either had no part, or behaved well. I told Mr. Heartwell about three days ago, how well Warren was liked in her place.

I have passed one day at Birmingham with my old friend Hector—there's a name—and his sister, an old love. My mistress is grown much older than my friend.

—O, quid habes illius, illius
 Quæ spirabat amores
 Quæ me furpuerat mihi.

Time will impair the body, and uses us well
 if it spares the mind.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

July 29, 1775.

THE rain caught me at Stowhill, and kept me till it is very late; I must however write, for I am enjoined to tell you how much Mrs. Lucy was pleased with your present, and to entreat you to excuse her from writing, because her hand is not yet recovered. She is very glad of your notice, and very thankful.

I am very desirous that Mr. * * * should be sent for a few weeks to Brighthelmstone. Air, and vacancy, and novelty, and the consciousness of his own value, and the pride of such distinction and delight in Mr. Thrale's kindness, would, as Cheney phrases it, afford all the relief that human art can give, or human nature receive. Do not read this slightly, you may prolong a very useful life.

Whether the pine-apples be ripe or rotten, whether the Duke's venison be baked or roasted, I begin to think it time I were at home. I have staid till perhaps nobody wishes me to stay longer, except the ladies on the hill, who offer me a lodging, and though not ill, am unsettled enough to wish for change of place, even though that change were not to bring me to Streatham; but thither I hope I shall quickly come, and find you all well, and gay, and happy, and catch a little gaiety, and health, and happiness among you.

I am, Dearest of all dear Ladies,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C X X X V I .

To M r s . T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

August 1, 1775.

I W O N D E R how it could happen. I forgot that the post went out yesternight, and so omitted to write; I therefore put this by the by-post, and hope it will come, that I may not lose my regular letter.

This

This was to have been my last letter from this place, but Lucy says I must not go this week. Fits of tenderness with Mrs. Lucy are not common; but she seems now to have a little paroxysm, and I was not willing to counteract it. When I am to go I shall take care to inform you. The lady at Stowhill says, how comes Lucy to be such a sovereign, all the town besides could not have kept you.

America now fills every mouth, and some heads, and a little of it shall come into my letter. I do not much like the news. Our troops have indeed the superiority; five-and-twenty hundred have driven five thousand from their intrenchment; but the Americans fought skilfully; had coolness enough in the battle to carry off their men; and seem to have retreated orderly, for they were not pursued. They want nothing but confidence in their leaders, and familiarity with danger. Our business is to pursue their main army, and disperse it by a decisive battle; and then waste the country till they sue for peace. If we make war by parties and detachments, dislodge them from one place, and exclude them from another, we shall by a local, gradual, and ineffectual war, teach them our own knowledge, harden their obstinacy, and strengthen

their confidence, and at last come to fight on equal terms of skill and bravery, without equal numbers.

Mrs. Williams wrote me word, that you had honoured her with a visit, and *behaved lovely*.

Mr. Thrale left off digging his pool, I suppose, for want of water. The first thing to be done is by digging in three or four places, to try how near the springs will rise to the surface; for though we cannot hope to be always full, we must be sure never to be dry.

Poor * * * * ! I am sorry for him. It is sad to give a family of children no pleasure but by dying. It was said of Otho: *Hoc tantum fecit nobile quod periit*. It may be changed to * * * *: *Hoc tantum fecit utile*.

If I could do Mr. Carter any good at Oxford, I could easily stop there; for through it, if I go by Birmingham, I am likely to pass; but the place is now a fullen solitude. Whatever can be done I am ready to do; but our operations must for the present be at London.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MADAM, Lichfield, August 2, 1775.

I DINED to-day at Stowhill, and am come away to write my letter. Never surely was I such a writer before. Do you keep my letters? I am not of your opinion that I shall not like to read them hereafter; for though there is in them not much history of mind, or any thing else, they will, I hope, always be in some degree the records of a pure and blameless friendship, and in some hours of languour and sadness may revive the memory of more cheerful times.

Why you should suppose yourself not desirous hereafter to read the history of your own mind, I do not see. Twelve years, on which you now look as on a vast expanse of life, will probably be passed over uniformly and smoothly, with very little perception of your progress, and with very few remarks
U 4 upon

upon the way. That accumulation of knowledge which you promise to yourself, by which the future is to look back upon the present, with the superiority of manhood to infancy, will perhaps never be attempted, or never will be made ; and you will find, as millions have found before you, that forty-five has made little sensible addition to thirty-three.

As the body after a certain time gains no increase of height, and little of strength, there is likewise a period, though more variable by external causes, when the mind commonly attains its stationary point, and very little advances its powers of reflection, judgment, and ratiocination. The body may acquire new modes of motion, or new dexterities of mechanick operations, but its original strength receives not improvement ; the mind may be stored with new languages, or new sciences, but its power of thinking remains nearly the same, and unless it attains new subjects of meditation, it commonly produces thoughts of the same force and the same extent, at very distant intervals of life, as the tree, unless a foreign fruit be ingrafted, gives year after year productions of the same form and the same flavour.

By

By intellectual force or strength of thought is meant the degree of power which the mind possesses of surveying the subject of meditation, with its circuit of concomitants, and its train of dependence.

Of this power, which all observe to be very different in different minds, part seems the gift of nature, and part the acquisition of experience. When the powers of nature have attained their intended energy, they can be no more advanced. The shrub can never become a tree. And it is not unreasonable to suppose, that they are before the middle of life in their full vigour.

Nothing then remains but practice and experience; and perhaps why they do so little, may be worth enquiry.

But I have just now looked, and find it so late, that I will enquire against the next post-night.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, August 5, 1775.

I NSTEAD of forty reasons for my return, one is sufficient,—that you wish for my company. I purpose to write no more till you see me. The ladies at Stowhill and Greenhill are unanimously of opinion, that it will be best to take a post-chaise, and not to be troubled with the vexations of a common carriage. I will venture to suppose the ladies at Streatham to be of the same mind.

You will now expect to be told why you will not be so much wiser as you expect, when you have lived twelve years longer.

It is said, and said truly, that experience is the best teacher; and it is supposed, that as life is lengthened experience is encreased. But a closer inspection of human life will discover that time often passes without any incident which can much enlarge knowledge or ratify

judgment. When we are young we learn much, because we are universally ignorant; we observe every thing, because every thing is new. But after some years, the occurrences of daily life are exhausted; one day passes like another, in the same scene of appearances, in the same course of transactions; we have to do what we have often done, and what we do not try, because we do not wish to do much better; we are told what we already know, and therefore what repetition cannot make us know with greater certainty.

He that has early learned much, perhaps seldom makes, with regard to life and manners, much addition to his knowledge; not only because as more is known there is less to learn, but because a mind stored with images and principles turns inwards for its own entertainment, and is employed in settling those ideas which run into confusion, and in recollecting those which are stealing away; practices by which wisdom may be kept but not gained. The merchant who was at first busy in acquiring money, ceases to grow richer, from the time when he makes it his business only to count it.

Those

Those who have families or employments are engaged in business of little difficulty, but of great importance, requiring rather assiduity of practice than subtilty of speculation, occupying the attention with images too bulky for refinement, and too obvious for research. The right is already known, what remains is only to follow it. Daily business adds no more to wisdom, than daily lesson to the learning of the teacher. But of how few lives does not stated duty claim the greater part.

Far the greater part of human minds never endeavour their own improvement. Opinions once received from instruction, or settled by whatever accident, are seldom recalled to examination; having been once supposed to be right, they are never discovered to be erroneous, for no application is made of any thing that time may present, either to shake or to confirm them. From this acquiescence in preconceptions none are wholly free; between fear of uncertainty, and dislike of labour, every one rests while he might yet go forward; and they that were wise at thirty-three, are very little wiser at forty-five.

Of this speculation you are perhaps tired, and would rather hear of Sophy. I hope
before

before this comes, that her head will be easier, and your head less filled with fears and troubles, which you know are to be indulged only to prevent evil, not to encrease it.

Your uneasiness about Sophy is probably unnecessary, and at worst your other children are healthful, and your affairs prosperous. Unmingled good cannot be expected; but as we may lawfully gather all the good within our reach, we may be allowed to lament after that which we lose. I hope your losses are at an end, and that as far as the condition of our present existence permits, your remaining life will be happy.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXXXIX.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

August 9, 1775.

YOU ask, dear Sir, if I keep your letters—
to be sure I do; for though I would not
serve you as you said you would serve Lady
——, were you married to her,—live a
hundred miles off, and make her write once
o'week (was not it)? because her conversa-
tion

tion and manners were coarse, but her letters elegant: yet I have always found the best supplement for talk was writing, and yours particularly so. My only reason to suppose that we should dislike looking over the correspondence twelve or twenty years hence, was because the sight of it would *not* revive the memory of cheerful times at all. God forbid that I should be less happy then than now, when I am perpetually bringing or losing babies, both very dreadful operations to me, and which tear mind and body both in pieces very cruelly. Sophy is at this very instant beginning to droop, or I dream so; and how is it likely one should ever have comfort in revising the annals of vexation?

You say too, that I shall not grow wiser in twelve years, which is a bad account of futurity; but if I grow happier I shall grow wiser, for being less chained down to surrounding circumstances, what power of thinking my mind naturally possesses will have fair play at least. The mother or mistress of a large family is in the case of a tethered nag, always treading and subsisting on the same spot; she hears and repeats the same unregarded precepts; frets over that which no fretting can diminish; and hopes on, in very spite of experience,

perience, for what death does not ever suffer her to enjoy. With regard to mental improvement, Perkins might as well expect to grow rich by repeating the Multiplication Table, as I to grow wise by holding Watt's Art of Reading before my eyes. A finger-post, though it directs others on the road, cannot advance itself; was it once cut into coach wheels, who knows how far it might travel?

When Fergufon made himself an astronomer, the other lads of the village were loading corn and pitching hay,—though with the same degree of leisure they might perhaps have attained the same degree of excellence; but they were *doing* while he was *thinking* you see, and when leisure is obtained, incidents, however trifling, may be used to advantage; besides that 'tis better, as Shakespeare says, to be eaten up with a rust,

Than scour'd to nothing with perpetual motion.

So if ever I get quiet I shall get happy; and if I get happy I shall have a chance to get wise. Why, wisdom itself stands still, says Mr. Johnson, and then how will you advance? It will be an advancement to me to trace that very argument, and examine whether it has advanced or no. Was not it your friend M——I
who

who first said, that next to winning at cards, the greatest happiness was losing at cards? I should feel the second degree of delight in assuring myself that there was no wisdom to be obtained. Baker's Reflections on Learning was always a favourite book with me, and he says, you have all been trotting in a circle these two or three thousand years—but let us join the team at least, and not stand gaping while others trot. The tethered horse we talked of just now, would beg to work in our mill, if he could speak; and an old captain of a ship told me, that when he set the marine society boys to run round the hoop for a pudding in fine weather, to divert the officers, those who were hardest lashed seldom lamented; but all cried, ready to break their hearts, who were left out of the game. Here is enough of this I believe.

We are all pleased that you intend to come home in a chaise. Who should you save sixteen shillings for? and how much richer would your heirs be for those sixteen shillings? Calculation is perpetually opposed to the spend-thrift; but if misers would learn to count, they would be misers no longer: for how many years must a man live to save out of a
small

small income one hundred pounds, even if he adopted every possible method? besides the ill-will of the world, which pursues avarice more closely, and watches it more narrowly than any other vice.

I have indeed often wondered that the bulk of mankind should look on a person who gains money unjustly with less detestation than they survey the petty savings of him who lives penuriously;—for the first is in every body's way, and if he excited every body's hatred, who need wonder? while a hoarder injures no one but himself—yet even his heirs abhor him.

There is, however, little call I believe to make sermons against covetousness for the use of dear Mr. Johnson, or of his

Faithful and obedient servant,

H. L. THRALE.

Sophy is very sick, and we all wish you would come home.

L E T T E R C X L .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

MADAM,

August 29, 1775.

HERE is a rout and bustle; and a bustle and a rout; as if nobody had ever before forgotten where a thing was laid. At last there is no great harm done; both Colson and Scot have copies; and real haste there is none. You will find it some day this week, and any day will serve, or perhaps we can recollect it between us.

About your memory we will, if you please, have some serious talk. I fret at your forgetfulness, as I do at my own. We will try to mend both; yours at least is I should hope remediable. But, however it happens, we are of late never together.

Am I to come to-morrow to the Borough, or will any one call on me? This sorry foot! and this sorry Dr. Lawrence, who says it is the gout! but then he thinks every thing the gout; and so I will try not to believe him.

Into

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 307

Into the sea I suppose you will send it, and into the sea I design it shall go.—Can you remember, dear Madam, that I have a lame foot? I am sure I cannot forget it; if you had one so painful, you would *so* remember it. Pain is good for the memory.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C X L I .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, March 25, 1776.

THIS letter will not, I hope, reach you many days before me; in a distress which can be so little relieved, nothing remains for a friend but to come and partake it.

Poor dear sweet little boy! When I read the letter this day to Mrs. Aston, she said, "Such a death is the next to translation." Yet however I may convince myself of this, the tears are in my eyes, and yet I could not love him as you loved him, nor reckon upon him for a future comfort as you and his father reckoned upon him.

X 2

He

He is gone, and we are going! We could not have enjoyed him long, and shall not long be separated from him. He has probably escaped many such pangs as you are now feeling.

Nothing remains, but that with humble confidence we resign ourselves to Almighty Goodness, and fall down, without irreverent murmurs, before the Sovereign Distributer of good and evil, with hope that though sorrow endureth for a night yet joy may come in the morning.

I have known you, Madam, too long to think that you want any arguments for submission to the Supreme Will; nor can my consolation have any effect but that of shewing that I wish to comfort you. What can be done you must do for yourself. Remember first, that your child is happy; and then, that he is safe, not only from the ills of this world, but from those more formidable dangers which extend their mischief to eternity. You have brought into the world a rational being; have seen him happy during the little life that has been granted him; and can have no doubt but that his happiness is now permanent and immutable.

When

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 309

When you have obtained by prayer such tranquillity as nature will admit, force your attention, as you can, upon your accustomed duties and accustomed entertainments. You can do no more for our dear boy, but you must not therefore think less on those whom your attention may make fitter for the place to which he is gone. I am,

Dearest, dearest Madam,

Your most affectionate humble servant.

L E T T E R CXLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

March 30, 1776.

SINCE, as Mr. Baretto informs us, our dear Queeney is grown better, I hope you will by degrees recover your tranquillity. Only by degrees, and those perhaps sufficiently slow, can the pain of an affliction like yours be abated. But though effects are not wholly in our power, yet Providence always gives us something to do. Many of the operations of nature may by human diligence be accelerated

X 3

or

or retarded. Do not indulge your sorrow; try to drive it away by either pleasure or pain; for, opposed to what you are feeling, many pains will become pleasures. Remember the great precept; *Be not solitary; be not idle.*

But above all, resign yourself and your children to the Universal Father, the Author of Existence, and Governor of the Universe, who only knows what is best for all, and without whose regard not a sparrow falls to the ground.

That I feel what friendship can feel, I hope I need not tell you. I loved him as I never expect to love any other little boy; but I could not love him as a parent. I know that such a loss is a laceration of the mind. I know that a whole system of hopes, and designs, and expectations, is swept away at once, and nothing left but bottomless vacuity. What you feel I have felt, and hope that your disquiet will be shorter than mine.

Mr. Thrall sent me a letter from Mr. Boswell, I suppose to be inclosed. I was this day with Mrs. Montague, who, with every body else, laments your misfortune. I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 318

L E T T E R CXLIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 1, 1776.

WHEN you were gone, Mr. Thrale soon sent me away. I came next day, and was made to understand that when I was wanted I should be sent for; and therefore I have not gone yesterday or to-day, but I will soon go again whether invited or not.

You begin now I hope to be able to consider, that what has happened might have had great aggravations. Had you been followed in your intended travels by an account of this afflictive deprivation, where could have been the end of doubt, and surmise, and suspicion, and self-condemnation? You could not easily have been reconciled to those whom you left behind, or those who had persuaded you to go. You would have believed that he died by neglect, and that your presence would have saved him. I was glad of your letter from Marlborough, and hope you will try to force

X 4

your-

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yourself to write. If grief either caused or aggravated poor Queeney's illness, you have taken the proper method for relieving it. Young minds easily receive new impressions.

Poor Peyton expired this morning. He probably during many years, for which he sat starving by the bed of a wife, not only useless 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 was on Saturday at Mrs. Montague's, who expressed great sensibility of your loss;
and

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 313

and have this day received an invitation to a supper and a ball; but I returned my acknowledgment to the ladies, and let them know that I thought I should like the ball better another week. I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXLIV.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

April 4, 1776.

I AM glad to hear of pretty Queeney's recovery, and your returning tranquillity. What we have suffered ought to make us remember what we have escaped. You might at as short a warning have been taken from your children, or Mr. Thrale might have been taken from us all.

Mr. Thrale, when he dismissed me, promised to call on me; he has never called, and I have never seen him. He said that he would go to the house, and I hope he has found something that laid hold on his attention.

I do not wish you to return, while the novelty of the place does any good either to you
or

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or Queeney, and longer I know you will not stay; there is therefore no need of soliciting your return. What qualification can be extracted from so sad an event, I derive from observing that Mr. Thrale's behaviour has united you to him by additional endearments. Every evil will be more easily borne while you fondly love one another; and every good will be enjoyed with encrease of delight *past compute*, to use the phrase of Cumberland. May your care of each other always encrease! I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CXLV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

April 9, 1776.

MR. THRALE's alteration of purpose is not weakness of resolution; it is a wise man's compliance with the change of things, and with the new duties which the change produces. Whoever expects me to be angry, will be disappointed. I do not even grieve at the effect, I grieve only at the cause.

Your

Your business for the present is to seek for ease, and to go where you think it most likely to be found. There cannot yet be any place in your mind for mere curiosity. Whenever I can contribute to your tranquillity, I shall readily attend, and hope never to add to the evils that may oppress you. I will go with you to Bath, or stay with you at home.

I am very little disappointed. I was glad to go to places of so much celebrity, but had promised to myself no raptures, nor much improvement: nor is there any thing to be expected worth such a sacrifice as you might make.

Keep yourself busy, and you will in time grow cheerful. New prospects may open, and new enjoyments may come within your reach. I surely cannot but wish all evil removed from a house which has afforded my miseries all the succour which attention and benevolence could give. I am sorry not to owe so much, but to repay so little. What I can do, you may with great reason expect from, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CXLVI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Bath, May 3, 1776.

THIS month, which finds or makes every body else inclined to be cheerful, finds me with hope depressed, sorrow renewed, and affliction budding out where pleasure only should vegetate. This little girl's state of health hinders me from recovering the loss I sustained in her brother.—What *can* ail her? I would have persuaded Mr. Thrale to persist in his intentions of travelling, had I not thought it dangerous to *her*; it would perhaps have been better for *us*; I mean for our health, not for our improvement, because going abroad to see objects with a pre-occupied mind is mere loss of time;—one remembers nothing one either sees or hears when in a state of affliction. Poor people have always bad memories, you may observe;—how should they have good ones? their hearts are full,
 poor

poor dears, no room for observation and attention, the two parents of memory; and indeed the happiest people, as far as my acquaintance has gone, have had the retentive powers of mind in much the greatest perfection. Baretti said, you would be very angry because this dreadful event made us put off our Italian journey, but I knew you better. Who knows even now that 'tis deferred for ever? Mr. Thrale says, he shall not die in peace without seeing Rome, and I am sure he will go no-where that he can help without you.

Let us try to heal our hearts first;—mine is always cracking again though, as soon as it begins to skin over; and Dr. Woodward gave me a very interesting and rational account of the effect grief has upon the heart this very morning. When your mind is firmly fixed to one subject, said he, you forbear to draw your breath for several moments, and then repair the suspension by a long and deep sigh; this long continued checks the blood's course through the pulmonary artery, and gives the variation of the pulse which attends agitated and distressed minds; a cough succeeds, in consequence of the lungs being affected, while

the heart gets concretions or collections of water in its pericardium—the bag which surrounds it, as I understand ; so that our vulgar expression of sorrow breaking one's heart is founded on fact and nature. He told me too, that numberless patients die ultimately of grief—their exit being attributed to the immediate cause only, instead of the remote one. He has ordered my poor master and me to jump every morning into a cold bath ; we have here a remarkably fine one. Meantime do not suspect me for being likely to provoke Heaven's judgments on my daughters, by fretting unnecessarily for the loss of my son. I feel ten times sonder of them than ever I felt before, and am desirous to live for their sake and their father's.

Pray bring or send us your cluster of political writings, for I love them dearly—not as political writings, but as vehicles for truth and sentiment on twenty, ay fifty subjects with which politicks have nothing to do.

Should you write about Streatham and Croydon, the book would be as good to me as a journey to Rome, exactly ; for 'tis Johnson, not Falkland's islands, that interests us, and
your

your style is invariably the same. The fight of Rome might have excited more reflections indeed than the fight of the Hebrides, and so the book might be bigger, but it would not be better a jot.

How does Dr. Taylor do? He was very kind I remember when my thunder-storm came first on, so was Count Manucci, so was Mrs. Montague, so was every body. The world is not guilty of much general harshness, nor inclined I believe to increase pain which they do not perceive to be deserved.—Baretti alone tried to irritate a wound so very deeply inflicted, and he will find few to approve his cruelty. Your friendship is our best cordial; continue it to us, dear Sir, and write very soon to

Your obliged and faithful servant,

L E T T E R CXLVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST MADAM,

May 6, 1776.

ON Friday night, as you know, I left you about eleven o'clock. The moon shone, but I did not see much of the way, for I think I slept better than I commonly do in bed. My companions were civil men, and we dispatched our journey very peaceably. I came home at about seven on Saturday very little fatigued.

To-day I have been at home. To-morrow I am to dine, as I did yesterday, with Dr. Taylor. On Wednesday I am to dine with Oglethorpe; and on Thursday with Paoli. He that sees before him to his third dinner, has a long prospect.

My political tracts are printed, and I bring Mr. Thrale a copy when I come. They make but a little book.

Count

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 321

Count Manucci is in such haste to come, that I believe he will not stay for me; if he would, I should like to hear his remarks on the road.

Mr. Baretta has a cold and hoarseness, and Mrs. Williams says that I have caught a cold this afternoon.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXLVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 11, 1776.

THAT you may have no superfluous uneasiness, I went this afternoon to visit the two babies at Kenfington, and found them indeed a little spotted with their disorder, but as brisk and gay as health and youth can make them. I took a paper of sweetmeats, and spread them on the table. They took great delight to shew their governess the various animals that were made of sugar; and when they had eaten as much as was fit, the rest were laid up for to-morrow.

VOL. I.

Y

Susy

Sufy fends her duty and love with great propriety. Sophy fends her duty to you, and her love to Queeney and Papa. Mr. Evans came in after me. You may fet your heart quite at rest, no babies can be better than they appear to be. Dr. Taylor went with me, and we staid a good while. He likes them very much. Sufy said her creed in French.

Dr. Taylor says, I must not come back till his business is adjusted; and indeed it would not be wise to come away without doing what I came hither only to do. However, I expect to be dismissed in a few days, and shall bring Manucci with me.

I dined yesterday with * * * * *. His three children are very lovely. * * * * * longs to teach him a little economy. I know not how his money goes, for I do not think that Mrs. Williams and I had our due share of the nine guineas.

He begins to reproach himself with neglect of * * * * *'s education, and censures that idleness, or that deviation, by the indulgence of which he has left uncultivated such a fertile mind. I advised him to let the child alone; and told him that the matter was not great,

whether he could read at the end of four years or of five, and that I thought it not proper to harass a tender mind with the violence of painful attention. I may perhaps procure both father and son a year of quiet; and surely I may rate myself among their benefactors.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CXLIX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR LADY,

May 14, 1776.

SINCE my visit to the younglings, nothing has happened but a little disappointment in Dr. Taylor's affairs, which, he says, must keep me here a while longer. Mr. Wedderburn has given his opinion to-day directly against us. He thinks of the claim much as I think. We sent this afternoon for a solicitor, another Scrase, who gave the same sentence with Wedderburn, and with less delicacy. The Doctor tried to talk him into better notions, but to little purpose, for a man is not much believed in his own cause. At last, finding the Doctor somewhat moody, I bid

Y 2

him

him not be disturbed, for he could not be injured till the death of Mrs. Rudd, and her life was better than his. So I *comforted and advised him*.

I know not how you intend to serve me, but I expect a letter to-morrow, and I do not see why Queeney should forget me.

Manucci must, I believe, come down without me. I am ashamed of having delayed him so long, without being able to fix a day; but you know, and must make him know, that the fault is not mine.

* * * * * goes away on Thursday, very well satisfied with his journey. Some great men have promised to obtain him a place, and then a fig for my father and his new wife.

I have not yet been at the Borough, nor know when I shall go, unless you send me. There is in the exhibition of Exeter Exchange, a picture of the house at Streatham, by one Laurence, I think, of the Borough. This is something, or something like.

Mr. Welch sets out for France to-morrow, with his younger daughter. He has leave of absence for a year, and seems very much delighted with the thought of travelling, and the hope of health.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R C L.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 16, 1776.

THIS is my third letter. Well, sure I shall have something to-morrow. Our business stands still. The Doctor says I must not go; and yet my stay does him no good. His solicitor says he is sick, but I suspect he is fullen. The Doctor, in the mean time, has his head as full as yours at an election. Livings and preferments, as if he were in want with twenty children, run in his head. But a man must have his head on something, small or great.

For my part, I begin to fettle and keep company with grave aldermen. I dined yesterday in the Poultry with Mr. Alderman Wilkes, and Mr. Alderman Lee, and Counsellor Lee, his brother. There sat you the while, so sober, with your W——s and your H——s, and my aunt and her turnspit; and when they are gone, you think by chance on Johnson, what is he doing? What should he be doing?

Y 3

doing? He is breaking jokes with Jack Wilkes upon the Scots. Such, Madam, are the vicissitudes of things. And there was Mrs. Knowles, the Quaker, that works the futile pictures, who is a great admirer of your conversation. She saw you at Mr. Shaw's, at the election time. She is a Staffordshire woman, and I am to go and see her. Staffordshire is the nursery of art, here they grow up till they are transplanted to London.

Yet it is strange that I hear nothing from you; I hope you are not angry, or sick. Perhaps you are gone without me for spite to see places. That is natural enough, for evil is very natural, but I shall vex, unless it does you good.

Stevens seems to be connected with Tyrwhitt in publishing Chatterton's poems; he came very anxiously to know the result of our enquiries, and though he says he always thought them forged, is not well pleased to find us so fully convinced.

I have written to Manucci to find his own way, for the *law's delay* makes it difficult for me to guess when I shall be able to be, otherwise than by my inclination, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C L I.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Bath, May 16, 1776.

I HAD no notion of your staying away from us so long, or you should not surely have wanted a letter; you might reasonably expect, and claim indeed my best thanks for the sweet visit paid five days ago to my babies: a most friendly action in you, and a most polite one in dear Dr. Taylor, and what I had never been hoping for. All unexpected pleasures are doubly precious.

Grata superveniet quæ non sperabitur hora.

When one has worn out one's fancy in anticipation of any event, the impression it makes must necessarily be weaker I suppose, and those pains, however piercing, for which we have time to prepare ourselves, do not break the constitution in pieces like a sudden shock that comes upon us unawares. I ought above all people to understand these matters from harsh experience of the severest sorrow. My

Y 4

mind,

mind, by the death of fuch a mother and of fuch a fon, refembles a nation wafed by famine for three years together, and then fhattered to final confufion by an earthquake.

Of pafit afflictions, however, we will now talk no longer. Mr. Thrale is recovering from his fhare of the diftrefs, and it is my duty to accelerate, not retard, his return to cheerfulness and good-humour,

Dr. Taylor fhall carry his caufe. I *will have* him carry it. 'Tis a good caufe probably; and if it is not, women (you tell me) never flop at integrity;—and as I underftand the laws of friendfhip much better than I do the laws of Great Britain, will decide in a truly female manner, that he fhall carry his caufe—for this truly female reafon—it was fo very fweet in him to go and fee my little girls.

Count Manucci would wait feven years to come with you; fo do not difappoint the man, but bring him along with you. His delight in your company is like Boniface's exultation, when the 'fquire fpeaks Latin; for underftand you he certainly cannot. No flattery perhaps is more delicate however, or more pleafing than that of exciting admiration where one is not able to gratify curiofity; and all
this

this nobleman desires is to count Johnson among his English friends when he returns to Florence, where I am told he stands very high for literature as well as birth.

We have a flashy friend here 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 could clean shoes for you; that he could shed his blood for you; with twenty more extravagant flights——And you say, *I flatter!* *Upon my honour, Sir, and indeed now,* as Dr. C——l's phrase is, *I am but a twitter to him.*

Well! you hate Bath; and will be very uncomfortable when you come this time I believe; for, after all, I *must* be civil to my aunt, who is exceedingly kind to me; and I must dress and go out, and do like other people, or you will be first to censure and condemn me; more than that, our dear master, who cannot be quiet without you for a week, will be always infallibly on your side, and encourage

rage long lectures about the fit of a cap, which you will not give me a minute to put on as it should be—So I see my fate before it arrives.—Come to Bath though, and at least convince yourself that we are not rioting in felicities from whence you are cruelly excluded. Surely, since we have known each other, I have been no proper object of envy.

Se a ciascun l'interno affanno
 'Se leggesse in fronte scritto,
 Quanti mai ch'invidia fanno,
 Ci farebbono pietâ!

And Dr. Young says what Metastasio sings you know, when he observes, that were the real feelings of every man exposed to the examination of his neighbours, one vice would be immediately eradicated, for envy then could be no longer found among the human race.

Do you recollect complaining once to me of flatulence, when I could really with difficulty fit to hear you for very agony both of body and soul.—I'm sure I recollect your kind recantation, when you confessed that it was like lamenting a scratched finger in his chamber, who, the day before, had broken both his legs.

Mr.

Mr. Thrale, thank God, is very comfortably set up again. The last hard gale blew him almost down though; and I hardly hoped Bath would have been able to do so much; but he scorns the *black dog* now: he will swing him round and round soon as Smollet's heroes do, who in every alliterated novel, Roderick Random or Peregrine Pickle, are always employed by their author to kill a dog, when he means that they should strike the reader's fancy, and win his heart with their prowess. That man hated dogs I imagine, and certainly understood little about them, for he talks of a spaniel, *Sweetlips*, which is not a spaniel's name ever, but a hound's; she is so called from the music of her tongue in the chase; not Sweetlips for fondness, and because her master delights in kissing her, as he seems to think—I never heard so foolish a notion in my life.

Here is a long letter about nothing—Just such a one as you wanted I hope. Those which begin *Great Sir* have not been wanting, I'll answer for them. Did not some notion wander about the world lately of taking beggar's letters under consideration? We should produce a good number between your house and ours.

A-propos,

A-propos, poor * * * * * does not to be sure excel in oratory, but in gratitude few exceed him. 'Tis such a dolorous dog, says my master, or I would buy some of his trumpery myself. Poor, poor creature! his disappointed hopes, present fears, and earnest of future misery, are too melancholy to be dwelt upon; but you and I have done our best for him, and there seems a fate on all he undertakes: yet when we saw him sit down in his own wretched apartment, possessed of one broken chair with arms to it,—and try to look magnificent—could one refrain from laughing? though we agreed too, that in the sight of superior beings he was not more ridiculous than a king upon his throne. One mite is like another mite to him that looks at both through a microscope.

Farewel, dear Sir, and expect a long letter from Queeney, though not quite as long as this from

Your ever faithful servant.

I'll make Mr. Thrale frank this letter *himself* for a fancy.

L E T T E R CLII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 18, 1776.

T H E N you are neither sick nor angry. Don't let me be defrauded of Queeney's letter. Yesterday Seward was with me, and told me what he knew of you. All good. To-day I went to look into my places at the Borough. I called on Mr. Perkins in the counting-house. He crows and triumphs, as we go on we shall double our business. The best brown malt he can have laid in at thirty and sixpence, and great stores he purposes to buy. Dr. Taylor's business stagnates, but he resolves not to wait on it much longer. Surely I shall get down to you next week.

B—— went away on Thursday night, with no great inclination to travel northward; but who can contend with destiny? He says, he has had a very pleasant journey. He paid another visit, I think, to * * * * *, before he went home. He carries with him two or

three good resolutions; I hope they will not mould upon the road. Who can be this new friend of mine? The letter you sent me was from Mr. Twisse, and the book, if any come, is Twisse's travels to Ireland, which you will, I hope, unty and read.

I enclose some of the powders, lest you should lose your patient by delay.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CLIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

May 22, 1776.

ON Friday and Saturday I dined with Dr. Taylor, who is in discontent, but resolved not to stay much longer to hear the opinions of lawyers who are all against him. Who can blame him for being weary of them?

On Sunday I dined at Sir Joshua's house on the hill, with the Bishop of St. Asaph. The dinner was good, and the Bishop is knowing and conversible. Yesterday at the
 Doctor's

Doctor's again—very little better.—In the evening came in Dr. Crane, who enquired after you.

All this while * * * * * is hurt only in his vanity. He thought he had supplanted Mrs. W——, and Mrs. W—— has found the means of defeating him. He really wanted nothing more than to have the power of bequeathing a reversion to Mr. G——'s son, who is very nearly related to W——. This purity of intention however he cannot prove; and the transaction in itself seems *pactum iniquum*. I do not think that he can, or indeed that he ought to prevail.

Woodward, I hear, is gone to Bristol, in deep dudgeon at Barret's declaration against Chatterton's productions. You have now only H——, whom you can only make a silent admirer. I hope my friend buzzes a little about you to keep me in your head, though I think I do my part pretty well myself; there are very few writers of more punctuality.

I wish Queeney joy of her new watch; and next time I write, intend myself the honour of directing my letter to her. Her hand is now very exact, and when use has made it free, may be very beautiful.

I am

I am glad of Mr. Thrale's resolution to take up his *restes* * in person. He is wise in keeping the trade in his own hands, and appearing on proper occasions as the principal agent. Every man has those about him who wish to sooth him into inactivity and delitescence, nor is there any semblance of kindness more vigorously to be repelled than that which voluntarily offers a vicarious performance of the tasks of life, and conspires with the natural love of ease against diligence and perseverance.

While I was holding my pen over the last period, I was called down to Father Wilks the Benedictine, and Father Brewer a Doctor of the Sorbon, who are come to England, and are now wandering over London. I have invited them to dine with me to-morrow. Father Cowley is well; and Mrs. Strickland is at Paris. More than this I have not yet learned. They stay, I think, here but a little time.

I have sent your last parcel of powders, and hope soon to come myself.

I am, &c.

* When the master brewer goes round to his victualers once a year, in order to examine the state of the trade, and the stock left on the hands of the alehouse-keeper, the expression used in the profession is, *that he takes up his restes*; a word borrowed from the French, and means the remainder—*les restes*.

L E T T E R CLIV.

To Mr. T H R A L E.

DEAR SIR,

June 3, 1776.

YOU are all, I suppose, now either at one home or the other, and all I hope well. My mistress writes as if she was afraid I should make too much haste to see her. Pray tell her that there is no danger. The lameness, of which I made mention in one of my notes, has improved to a very serious and troublesome fit of the gout. I creep about and hang by both hands. Johnny Wilcocks might be my running footman. I enjoy all the dignity of lameness. I receive ladies and dismiss them sitting. *Painful pre-eminence.*

Baretti is at last mentioned in one of the Reviews, but in a manner that will not give him much delight. They are neither angry nor civil.

Catcot has been convinced by Barret, and has written his recantation to Tyrwhitt, who

still persists in his edition of the poems, and perhaps is not much pleased to find himself mistaken.

You are now, I suppose, busy about your *restes*; I heartily wish you, dear Sir, a happy perambulation, and a good account of the trade; and hope that you and my mistress, as you come by, will call upon, Sir,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C L V .

To Mrs. T H R A L E .

DEAR MADAM,

June 4, at night.

THE world is indeed full of troubles, and we must not chuse for ourselves. But I am not sincerely sorry that in your present state of mind you are going to be immediately a mother. Compose your thoughts, diversify your attention, and attend your health.

If I can be of any use, send for me; I think I can creep to the end of the court, and climb into a coach, though perhaps not very easily;

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 339

but if you call me, very willingly. If you do not fend for me, let me, pray let me know as oft as you can how you do.

I am glad that my master is at his *restes*, they will help to fill up his mind.

Pray let me know often how you do.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAREST LADY,

June 5, 1776.

YOU will have a note which I wrote last night. I was thinking, as I lay awake, that you might be worfe; but I hope you will be every moment better and better. I have never had any overpowering pain, nor been kept more awake than is usual to me; but I am a very poor creeper upon the earth, catching at any thing with my hands to spare my feet. In a day or two I hope to be as fit for

Z 2

Streatham

Streatham as for any other place. Mr. Thrale it seems called last night when I was in bed, and yet I was not in bed till near twelve, for I sit up lest I should not sleep. He must keep well, for he is the pillar of the house; and you must get well, or the house will hardly be worth propping.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

MY DEAR LADY,

June 6.

HOW could you so mistake me? I am very desirous that the whole business should be as you would have it, only cheerfulness at that time is reckoned a good thing.

My feet grow better, and I hope, if you send a carriage, to mount it on Monday. This gout has a little depressed me, not that I have suffered any great pain; I have been teized rather than tormented; but the tediousness
and

and the imbecillity have been unpleasant. However I now recover strength, and do not yet despair of kicking the moon.

Could not you send me something out of your garden? Things have been growing, and you have not been consuming them. I wish I had a great bunch of asparagus for Sunday.

Take great care of our Queeney, and of yourself, and encourage yourself in bustle, and variety, and cheerfulness. I will be ready to come as soon as I can, but the pain is now twinging me. Let me know, my sweetest lady, very often how you do. I thought it late before I heard to-day.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLVIII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM,

June 8.

MY feet disappointed me last night; I thought they would have given me no disturbance, but going up stairs I fancy fretted them, and they would not let me be easy. On Monday I am afraid I shall be a poor walker, but well enough to talk, and to hear you talk. And then, you know, what care we?

Mr. Norton called on me yesterday. He is at Sayer's print-shop in Fleet-street; and would take an invitation to dinner very kindly.

Poor Mr. Levet has fallen down, and hurt himself dangerously.

Of the monks I can give no account. I had them to dinner, and gave each of them the *Political Tracts*, and furnished Wilkes with letters, which will, I believe, procure him a proper reception at Oxford.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLIX.

TO Mrs. THRALE.

Wednesday, Jan. 15, one in the morning, 1777.

OMNIUM rerum vicissitudo. The night after last Thursday was so bad, that I took ipecacuanha the next day. The next night was no better. On Saturday I dined with Sir Joshua. The night was such as I was forced to rise and pass some hours in a chair, with great labour of respiration. I found it now time to do something, and went to Dr. Lawrence, and told him I would do what he should order, without reading the prescription. He sent for a chirurgeon and took about twelve ounces of blood, and in the afternoon I got sleep in a chair.

At night, when I came to lie down after trial of an hour or two, I found sleep impracticable, and therefore did what the Doctor permitted in a case of distress; I rose, and opening the orifice, let out about ten ounces more. Frank and I were but awkward; but, with Mr. Le-

vet's help, we stopped the stream, and I lay down again, though to little purpose; the difficulty of breathing allowed no rest. I slept again in the day-time, in an erect posture. The Doctor has ordered me a second bleeding, which I hope will set my breath at liberty. Last night I could lie but a little at a time.

Yet I do not make it a matter of much form. I was to-day at Mrs. Gardiner's. When I have bled to-morrow, I will not give up Langton, nor Paradise. But I beg that you will fetch me away on Friday. I do not know but clearer air may do me good; but whether the air be clear or dark, let me come to you.

I am, &c.

To sleep, or not to sleep—

L E T T E R CLX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

March 19, 1777.

BE pleased to procure the bearer credit for a linen gown, and let her bring the bill to me.

Did you stay all night at Sir Joshua's? and keep Miss up again? Miss Owen had a fight—all the Burkes—the Harris's—Miss Reynolds—what has she to see more? and Mrs. Horneck, and Miss.

You are all young, and gay, and easy; but I have miserable nights, and know not how to make them better; but I shift pretty well a-days, and so have at you all at Dr. Burney's to-morrow.

I never thought of meeting you at Sir Joshua's, nor knew that it was a great day. But things, as sages have observed, happen unexpectedly; and you thought little of seeing me this fortnight except to-morrow. But go where you will, and see if I do not catch you.

When

When I am away, every body runs away with you, and carries you among the grifettes, or whither they will. I hope you will find the want of me twenty times before you see me.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXI.

To Mr. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

April 9, 1777.

THIS is a letter of pure congratulation. I congratulate you,

1. That you are alive.
2. That you have got my mistress fixed again after her excentricities.
3. That my mistress has added to her conquests the Prince of Castiglione.
4. That you will not be troubled with me till to-morrow, when I shall come with * * * *.
5. That * * * * * will go away in the evening.

I am, &c.

L E T T E R CLXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

M A D A M,

May 19, 1777.

I HAVE written to Dr. Taylor, you may be sure, but the business is pretty much out of the Doctor's way. His acquaintance with the Lord Cavendishes, he barely knows the young Duke and Duchefs. He will be proud to shew that he can do it; but he will hardly try, if he suspects any danger of refusal.

You will become such a gadder, that you will not care a penny for me. However, you are wise in wishing to know what life is made of; to try what are the pleasures which are so eagerly sought, and so dearly purchased. We must know pleasure before we can rationally despise it. And it is not desirable that when you are, with matronal authority, talking down juvenile hopes and maiden passions, your hearers should tell you, like Miss P——, “ You never saw a *fête*.”

That you may see this shew I have written, because I am, Madam,

Your most humble servant.

LETTER CLXIII.

To Mr. THRALE.

DEAR SIR,

July 31, 1777.

I CAME hither on Monday, and find every thing much as I expected. I shall not stay long, but if you send any letters to me on Saturday, to University College, I shall receive them. Please to make my compliments to my mistress and Queeney. I have picked up some little information for my Lives at the library. I know not whether I shall go forward without some regret. I cannot break my promise to Boswell and the rest; but I have a good mind to come back again.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

August 4, 1777.

I DID not mean to express much discontent nor any ill-humour in my letter. When I went away I knew that I went partly because I had talked of going, and because I was a little restless. I have been searching the library for materials for my Lives, and a little I have got.

Things have not gone quite well with poor Gwynne. His work was finished so ill that he has been condemned to pay three hundred pounds for damages, and the sentence is considered as very mild. He has however not lost his friends, and is still in the best houses, and at the best tables.

I shall enquire about the harvest when I come into a region where any thing necessary to life is understood. I do not believe that there is yet any great harm, if the weather should

should now mend. Reaping time will only be a little later than is usual.

Dr. Wetherell is abroad, I think at London; Mr. Coulson is here, and well. Every body that knows you, enquires after you.

Boswell's project is disconcerted, by a visit from a relation of Yorkshire, whom he mentions as the head of his clan. Boszy, you know, makes a huge bustle about all his own motions, and all mine. I have inclosed a letter to pacify him, and reconcile him to the uncertainties of human life.

I believe it was after I left your house, that I received a pot of orange marmalade from Mrs. Boswell. We have now, I hope, made it up. I have not opened my pot.

I have determined to leave Oxford to-morrow, and on Thursday hope to see Lichfield, where I mean to rest till Dr. Taylor fetches me to Ashbourne, and there I am likely enough to stay till you bid me come back to London.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXV.

TO Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, August 7, 1777.

ON Tuesday I left Oxford, and came to Birmingham. Mr. Hector is well; Mrs. Careless was not at home. Yesterday I came hither. Mrs. Porter is well. Mrs. Aston, to whom I walked before I sat down, is very ill, but better. Whether she will recover I know not. If she dies I have a great loss. Mr. Green is well, and Mrs. Adey; more I have not yet seen. At Birmingham I heard of the death of an old friend, and at Lichfield of the death of another. *Anni prædantur euntes*. One was a little older, the other a little younger than myself.

But amidst these privations the present must still be thought on, we must act as if we were to live. My barber, a man not unintelligent, speaks magnificently of the harvest; and Frank, whom I ordered to make his observations,

tions, noted fields of very fine shew as we passed along.

Lucy thinks nothing of my prologue for Kelly, and says she has always disowned it. I have not let her know my transactions with Dr. Dodd. She says, she takes Miss's correspondence very kindly.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXVI.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Lichfield, August 9, 1777.

NO great matter has happened since I wrote, but this place grows more and more barren of entertainment. Two whom I hoped to have seen are dead. I think that I am much more unwieldy and inert than when I was here last; my nights are very tedious. But a light heart, &c.

Lucy said, "When I read Dr. Dodd's sermon to the prisoners I said, Dr. Johnson could not make a better."

One

One of Lucy's maids is dreadfully tormented by the tænia, or long-worm. She has taken many medicines without effect, and it is much wished that she could have the Knightbridge powder. I will pay for it, if you, dear Madam, will be so kind as to procure it, and send it with directions. Can it be franked? If it cannot, the best way will be to unite it with something of greater bulk. I have promised Lucy to give her Cook's last voyage, for she loves prints; but the last voyage cannot be well understood without some knowledge of the former. If you will lend us Hawkefworth's books, they shall be carefully returned. If you will do this for us, the powders may be easily put up with the books.

Please to make my compliments to Master, and to Queeney.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXVII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, August 13, 1777.

SUCH tattle as filled your last sweet letter prevents one great inconvenience of absence, that of returning home a stranger and an enquirer. The variations of life consist of little things. Important innovations are soon heard, and easily understood. Men that meet to talk of physicks or metaphysicks, or law or history, may be immediately acquainted. We look at each other in silence, only for want of petty talk upon slight occurrences. Continue therefore to write all that you would say.

You have Lord Westcote and every body when I am away, and you go to Mr. Cator's, and you are so happy.

Miss Turton and Harry Jackson are dead. Mrs. Aston is, I am afraid, in great danger. Mr. Green, Mr. Garrick, and Mr. Newton are all well. I have been very faint and breathless since I came hither, but fancy myself

self better this day. I hope Master's walk will be finished when I come back, and I shall perambulate it very often.

There seems to be in this country scarcely any fruit, there never indeed was much; but great things have been said of the harvest, and the only fear is of the weather. It rains here almost every day.

I dined yesterday with the corporation, and talked against a workhouse which they have in *contemplation*—there's the word now. I do not know that they minded me, for they said nothing to me.

I have had so little inclination to motion that I have always gone the shortest way to Stowhill, and hardly any where else, so that I can tell you nothing new of Green's museum, but I design to visit him, and all friends.

I hope for a letter to-morrow, for you must not forget that I am, Madam,

Your most humble servant.

P. S. Why cannot Queeney write?

LETTER CLXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, August 23, 1777.

AT Lichfield? Yes; but not well. I have been trying a great experiment with ipecacuanha, which Akenfyde had inclined me to consider as a remedy for all constrictions of the breast. Lawrence indeed told me that he did not credit him, and no credit can I find him to deserve. One night I thought myself the better for it, but there is no certainty. On Wednesday night I took ten grains; the night was restless. On Thursday morning I took ten grains; the night again was restless. On Friday night I took twenty grains, which Akenfyde mentions as the utmost that on these occasions he has *ventured* to give; the night was perhaps rather worse. I shall therefore take truce with ipecacuanha. Tell me, if you can, what I shall do next.

Mr. Thrale's heart may be at rest. It is not fine Mrs. Anne that has been caught by
the

tænia, but Mrs. Anne tumbled down stairs last night, and bruised her face. Both maid and mistress are very grateful to you for the kindness with which you procured the powders, and directed their use. They have not yet been tried. It has been washing week; and I suppose every body shrinks a little from such rough remedies, of which at last the success is doubtful. However it will, I think, be tried in all its formalities.

My master may plant and dig till his pond is an ocean, if he can find water, and his parterre a down. I have no doubt of a most abundant harvest; and it is said that the produce of barley is particularly great. We are not far from the great year of a hundred thousand barrels, which, if three shillings be gained upon each barrel, will bring us fifteen thousand pounds a-year. * * * * * never pretended to more than thirty pounds a-day, which is not eleven thousand a-year. But suppose we shall get but two shillings a barrel, that is ten thousand a-year. I hope we still have the advantage. Would you for the other thousand have my master such a man as * * * * * ?

A a 3

I showed

I showed dear Queeney's letter to Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Porter, they both took her remembrance of them very kindly.

It was 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.

The races are next week. People seem to be weary of them, for many go out of town I suppose to escape the cost of entertaining company. Dr. Taylor will probably come, and probably take me away; and I shall leave Mrs. Aston.

Do not you lose, nor let Master lose, the kindness that you have for me. Nobody will ever love you both better than, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXIX.

TO Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, August 27, 1777.

OUR correspondence is not so vigorous as it used to be ; but now you know the people at Lichfield, it is vain to describe them, and as no revolutions have happened, there is nothing to be said about them. We have a new Dean, whose name is Proby ; he has the manners of a gentleman, and some spirit of discipline, which brings the cathedral into better method. He has a lady that talks about Mrs. Montague and Mrs. Carter.

On next Saturday I go to Ashbourne, and thither must my letters be sent, if you are pleased ever to write to me.

When I came hither I could hardly walk, but I have got better breath, and more agility. I intend to perambulate Master's dominions every day at least once. But I have miserable,

A a 4

distress-

distressful, tedious nights; do you think they will mend at Brighthelmstone?

When I come to Ashbourne I will send my dear Queeney an account how I find things, for I hope she takes an interest in Dr. Taylor's prosperity.

This is race week; but Mrs. Aston, Mrs. Porter, and myself have no part in the course, or at the ball. We all sit at home, and perhaps pretend to wonder that others go, though I cannot charge any of us with much of that folly. Mrs. Gastrel, who wraps her head in a towel, is very angry at the present mode of dress and feathers.

But amidst all these little things, there is one great thing. The harvest is abundant, and the weather *a la merveille*. No season ever was finer. Barley, malt, beer, and money. There is the series of ideas. The deep logicians call it a *forites*. I hope my master will no longer endure the reproach of not keeping me a horse.

The puppies played us a vile trick when they tore my letter, but I hope my loss will be repaired to-morrow. You are in the way of business and intelligence, and have something

thing to write. I am here in unactive obscurity, and have little other pleasure than to perceive that the poor languishing lady is glad to see me. I hope, dearest Lady, you will be glad to see me too; and that it will be long before disease lays hold upon you.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAREST LADY, Sept. 6, 1777.

IT is true that I have loitered, and what is worse, loitered with very little pleasure. The time has run away, as most time runs, without account, without use, and without memorial. But to say this of a few weeks, though not pleasing, might be borne, but what ought to be the regret of him who, in a few days, will have so nearly the same to say of sixty-eight years? But complaint is vain.

If

If you have nothing to say from the neighbourhood of the metropolis, what can occur to me in little cities and petty towns; in places which we have both seen, and of which no description is wanted? I have left part of the company with which you dined here, to come and write this letter; in which I have nothing to tell, but that my nights are very tedious. I cannot persuade myself to forbear trying something.

As you have now little to do, I suppose you are pretty diligent at the Thraliana, and a very curious collection posterity will find it. Do not remit the practice of writing down occurrences as they arise, of whatever kind, and be very punctual in annexing the dates. Chronology you know is the eye of history; and every man's life is of importance to himself. Do not omit painful casualties, or unpleasing passages, they make the variegation of existence; and there are many transactions, of which I will not promise with *Æneas, et hæc olim meminisse juvabit*. Yet that remembrance which is not pleasant may be useful. There is however an intemperate attention to slight circumstances which is to be avoided, lest a great part of life
be

be spent in writing the history of the rest. Every day perhaps has something to be noted, but in a settled and uniform course few days can have much.

Why do I write all this, which I had no thought of when I began? The Thraliana drove it all into my head. It deserves however an hour's reflection, to consider how, with the least loss of time, the loss of what we wish to retain may be prevented.

Do not neglect to write to me, for when a post comes empty, I am really disappointed.

Boswell, I believe, will meet me here.

I am, dearest Lady,

Your, &c.

LETTER CLXXI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Sept. 8, 1777.

SURELY the same vexatious interruption of our correspondence happens now that happened once when I was at Oxford. I write often, yet you seem not to have my letters. I charged Frank with trusting some other hand to the post-office, this he denies; and indeed I have answers to other letters.

I came hither on Saturday, August 30th. The books were not then come; but I suppose, according to Davies's letter, they came that evening. Of the receipt of the powders I wrote word, and told that the girl delayed a little while to take them. From this place I wrote to Miss last Thursday, and to you last Saturday. Nothing has been mentioned by you of which I have not taken proper notice, except that I have said nothing of * * * * *. Many instances there are of the vanity of human solicitude, and it is not strange to find another.

We were all planning out for him some mode of life, and disease was hovering over him. If he dies, his mother will lose what has engaged her care, and incited her vanity. The son and the estate go away together. But life occupies us all too much to leave us room for any care of others beyond what duty enjoins; and no duty enjoins sorrow or anxiety that is at once troublesome and useless. I would readily help the poor lady, but if I cannot do her good by assisting her, I shall not disturb myself by lamenting her: yet I suppose his death will be as hard a blow as is commonly felt. Let me know if you hear how he goes on. I go on but uneasily.

I am in hopes of seeing Mr. Boswell, and then he may perhaps tell me something to write, for this is but a barren place. Not a mouse stirring.

I am, &c.

LETTER CLXXII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Sept. 13, 1777.

NOW I write again, having just received your letter dated the 10th.

You must not let foolish fancies take hold on your imagination. If Queeney grows tall, she is sufficiently bulky, and as much out of danger of a consumption as nature allows a young maiden to be. Of real evils the number is great, of possible evils there is no end. * * * * * is really to be pitied. Her son in danger; the estate likely to pass not only from her, but to those on whom, I suppose, she would least wish it bestowed, and her system of life broken, are very heavy blows. But she will at last be rich, and will have much gratification in her power, both rational and sensual.

Boswell, I believe, is coming. He talks of being here to-day. I shall be glad to see him.

But he shrinks from the Baltick expedition, which I think is the best scheme in our power. What we shall substitute, I know not. He wants to see Wales, but except the woods of Bachycraigh what is there in Wales? What that can fill the hunger of ignorance, or quench the thirst of curiosity? We may perhaps form some scheme or other, but, in the phrase of Hockley in the Hole, it is pity he has not a better bottom.

Tell my young mistress that this day's letter is too short, and it brings me no news either foreign or domestick.

I am going to dine with Mr. Dyot, and Frank tells sternly, that it is past two o'clock.

I am, dearest Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R C L X X I I I .

T O M r s . T H R A L E .

D E A R M A D A M ,

S e p t . 1 5 , 1 7 7 7 .

DO you call this punctual correspondence? There was poor I writing, and writing, and writing, on the 8th, on the 11th, on the 13th; and on the 15th I looked for a letter, but I may look and look. Instead of writing to me you are writing the Thraliana. But—*he must be humble who would please.*

Last night came Boswell. I am glad that he is come. He seems to be very brisk and lively, and laughs a little at * * * * *. I told him something of the scene at Richmond. You find, now you have seen the *progenies Langtoniana*, that I did not praise them without reason; yet the second girl is my favourite.

You talk of pine-apples and venison. Pine-apples it is sure we have none; but venison, no forester that lived under the green-wood-tree
ever

ever had more frequently upon his table. We fry, and roast, and bake, and devour in every form.

We have at last fair weather in Derbyshire, and every where the crops are spoken of as uncommonly exuberant. Let us now get money and save it. All that is paid is saved, and all that is laid out in land or malt. But I long to see twenty thousand pounds in the bank, and to see my master visiting this estate and that, as purchases are advertised. But perhaps all this may be when Colin's forgotten and gone. Do not let me be forgotten before I am gone, for you will never have such another, as,

Dearest dear Madam,

Your most humble servant.

LETTER CLXXIV.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Sept. 13, 1777.

HERE is another birth-day. They come very fast. I am now sixty-eight. To lament the past is vain; what remains is to look for hope in futurity. Queeney has now passed another year. I hope every year will bring her happiness.

Boswell is with us in good-humour; and plays his part with his usual vivacity. We are to go in the Doctor's vehicle and dine at Derby to-morrow.

Do you know any thing of Bolt-court? Invite Mr. Levet to dinner, and make enquiry what family he has, and how they proceed. I had a letter lately from Mrs. Williams. Dr. Lewis visits her, and has added ipecacuanha to her bark: but I do not hear much of her amendment. Age is a very stubborn disease.

Yet

Yet Levet sleeps found every night. I am sorry for poor Seward's pain; but he may live to be better.

Mr. * * * * * '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.

Does nobody tell * * * * * that a warmer climate and a clearer air is likely to help her son, and that it may be convenient to run away from an English winter, before he becomes too weak for travel? It appears to me not improbable that change of air, and the amusement and exercise of easy journeys, might enable one so young to overcome his disease.

Dr. Taylor has another buck. You must not talk to us of venison. Fruit indeed we have little, and that little not very good; but what there is has been very liberally bestowed.

Mr. L — and the Doctor still live on different sides of the street.

We have had, for some time past, such harvest weather as a Derbyshire farmer dares scarcely hope. The harvest has this year been every where a month backward, but so far as I can hear, has recompensed the delay by uncommon plenty. Next year will, I hope, complete Mr. Thraie's wish of an hundred thousand barrels. Ambition is then to have an end, and he must remember, that *non minor est virtus quam quærere, parta tuere*. When he has climbed so high, his care must be to keep himself from falling.

I am, dear Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLXXV.

Mrs. THRALE to DR. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

Sept. 18.

I HAVE got some news that will please you now. Here is an agreeable friend come from Paris, whom you were very fond of when we were there—the Prior of our English Benedictine Convent, Mr. Cowley. I did not know him again; so much was he altered by the change of drefs. How capricious and absurd one is always! I feel longing to call him *Father* Prior now; and upon the continent my scruple hindered me from using an appellation clearly and absolutely prohibited by our Saviour's own words in the gospel. The same objection however would again return if I was out of England again; but here, where one knows such words carry no meaning of more serious import, I long to call him *Father* Prior for fondness. He enquires much for you; and says, Wilkes is very well, N^o 45. as they call him in the Convent. A cell is always kept

B b 3

ready

ready for your use, he tells me ; so when your cruel mistress turns you out, no harm will come of it ; and when Mr. Thrale dismisses me, I am to take refuge among the Austin Nuns, and study Virgil with dear Miss Canning.

Mr. Cowley is as pleasant company as ever. We asked Lord Mulgrave to meet him, and *he* said a thing so like a thing of your saying, that I will repeat it directly. We talked of England and France—The beds are softer there than here, quoth my master. Softer, if you will, but not so clean, Sir, replied the Prior.—No, no, dirty enough to be sure, confessed Mr. Thrale, but exceeding soft. Why then, interrupts Lord Mulgrave, one may infer, that a hog in England lives just like a gentleman in France I find——so there let the parallel rest. Now was not that speech quite in the spirit of our dear Mr. Johnson?—I think it will be carried about the town for yours sometime.

My husband bids me tell you that he examined the register, and that Levet is only seventy-two years old.

I hope your illness was but slight ; I heard of it by mere accident, and believed but little ;
you

you have much of my incredulity to answer for, by perpetually detecting every body in falsehood so. Let this report, however, though not true, introduce a lecture on general caution; and a request that you will not strive to torture that iron constitution of yours quite to ruin, because you have nothing else to do. It were better bind books again, as you did one year in our thatched summer-house, than weigh out doses of mercury and opium which are not wanted, and then complain that you are *hermetically sealed*. Very comical you are sure enough; but 'tis better play droll tricks with any thing else than with one's health. Were we not all justly enraged at that wretched fellow for trying experiments on our business? and now you will have a stroke at the next valuable possession we have.

Something always happens when you go to Lichfield; and our sitting down thirteen to table yesterday made my fool's nerves flutter for Queeney. Her father and I were of no consequence one would think, or I might have thought of ourselves, but Mr. Murphy said, she had a hectic colour, and her first cousin * * * * * is now absolutely dying of a consumption, and I can't quiet my fears somehow, though I know them to be ground-

less.—*Can you tell how to controul thick-coming fancies?* Ah! dear Sir, do pray try to govern your own, and do not take physick for *fun*.

Well! we will have no more superstition *just now* if you please, because if one escapes this birth-day time, the rest of the year is less dangerous; we are on the watch always about this week of September—you for yourself, and I for Hester. Superstition is that which *superstet*, is not it? and then I do think we have all due claim to the honour of being very superstitious, for we make much more ado than is necessary sure,

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 these 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

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.

I am glad the Richmond scene diverted you; my master laughed when I read it over to him; but here is now nothing to tell but what has been often repeated. Our Paris friends are melancholy I hear, and Madame de Bocages laments her state of low spirits; is there any foundation for the idea prevalent among us, that we are the only nation where hypocondriac diseases are frequent, and that
the

the French are almost wholly free? You are not willing to believe with the herd in that particular I dare say; yet when a man is sick, you are always sending him to the continent,—I never can think for what;—he had better die at home; and the foreigners only get a notion of England's being unwholesome by seeing such consumptive looking creatures come out of it as flock to Nice, Montpellier, &c. I dare say they think we are all so; and you may remember the French ladies wondering at my healthy looks—which I shall never get again.

So adieu, dear Sir, and be content with this long volume of a letter from

Your truly faithful servant,

H. L. THRALE.

How could I write so much? and from Streatham? I admire at my own skill in spinning out so. Mr. Thrale is cured of his passion for Lady R—— already.

LETTER CLXXVI.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Sept. 20, 1777.

I DO not remember what has happened that you write on mourning paper, and use black wax.

B—— liked S—— better as he knew him more, and seems well pleased to be remembered by him and my master.

Pretty dear Queeney! I wish her many and many happy birth-days. I hope you will never lose her, though I should go to Lichfield, and though she should sit the thirteenth in many a company.

You have nothing to say because you live at Streatham, and expect me to say much when I return from Lichfield and Ashbourne, places to be considered as abounding in novelty, and supplying every hour materials for history. It is as much as I can do to furnish every post with a letter; I keep nothing behind for oral communication.

I took

I took Boswell yesterday to see Keddlestone, and the silk mills, and the china work at Derby; he was pleased with all. The Derby china is very pretty, but I think the gilding is all superficial; and the finer pieces are so dear, that perhaps silver vessels of the same capacity may be sometimes bought at the same price; and I am not yet so infected with the contagion of china-fancy, as to like any thing at that rate which can so easily be broken.

Master is very inconstant to Lady R——. Did he not hold out against forty such repellents from Mrs. P——? He grows nice I find; let him try whether nicety will make him happy.

Boswell has spent more money than he expected, and I must supply him with part of his expences home. I have not much with me, and beg Master to send me by the next post a note of ten pounds, which I will punctually return, not in opportunities of beneficence, though the noblest payment in the world, but in money, or bank-paper. Do not let him forget me.

Do not suppose that I wrote this letter on purpose to borrow. *My soul disdains it.* I did not think on it when I began to write.

When I miss a post, I consider myself as deviating from the true rule of action. Seeing things in *this light*, I consider every letter as something in *the line* of duty; upon *this foot* I make my arrangement, and *under whatever circumstances* of difficulty, endeavour to carry them into execution; for having in some degree *pledged myself* for the performance, I think the resolution both of my head and my heart engaged, and *reprobate* every thought of desisting from the undertaking.

Howel tells of a few words in Spanish, the true utterance of which will denominate the speaker *bueno Romanciadore*, the last sentence will *un bueno politico*. He that can rattle those words well together may say all that political controversy generally produces.

I am, &c.

P. S. Nay, but do enquire after Bolt-court.

LETTER CLXXVII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Sept. 22, 1777.

NOW to sit down to tell me a long newspaper story about Lord Harcourt and his dog.—I hoped when you had seen Levet you would have learned something that concerned me.

I hope Master has been so kind as to send me the ten pounds, else I shall be forced to borrow at Ashbourne or Lichfield.

Boswell has been this morning with me to see Ham Garden. He talks of going away this week, and I shall not think of staying here much longer, though the wind whistles very prettily. My nights are still such as I do not like; but complaint will not mend them.

If * * * * holds life to one-and-twenty, he will probably live on; for his constitution, if it does not grow weaker, will become firmer.

The

The harvest in Staffordshire has been such for plenty, and so well gathered, as to be mentioned with admiration. Make your most of these golden years, and buy liberally what will now be liberally allowed. I hope to partake a little of the general abundance—But I am now sixty-eight. Make good use, my dear Lady, of your days of health and sprightliness. Sixty-eight is coming fast upon you;—let it not find you wondering what has become of all the past.

If Aunt comes now, she can do but little harm, for she will hardly go with you to Brighthelmstone, and she cannot long trouble you at Streatham.

I hope soon to come to Lichfield, and from Lichfield to London.

Taylor and Bos. send their compliments with those of, Madam,

Your most humble servant.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM,

Ashbourne, Sept. 25, 1777.

BOSWELL is gone; and is, I hope, pleased that he has been here; though to look on any thing with pleasure is not very common. He has been gay and good-humoured in his usual way, but we have not agreed upon any other expedition. He had spent more money than he intended, and I supplied him; my deficiencies are again made up by Mr. Thrale's bill, for which I thank him.

I will send directions to the taylor to make me some cloaths according to Mr. Thrale's direction, though I cannot go with you to Brighthelmstone, having loitered away the time I know not how; but if you would have me, I will endeavour to follow you, which upon the whole may perhaps be as well. I am here now on the 25th, and am obliged by promise to take Lichfield in my way, so that the 30th will come upon me too soon.

The

The Levet that has been found in the register must be some other Levet; I dare say our friend does not in his heart believe that it is he.

I am glad that the Benedictines found you at last. Father Wilkes, when he was amongst us, took Oxford in his way. I recommended him to Dr. Adams, on whom he impressed a high opinion of his learning. I am glad that my cell is reserved. I may perhaps some time or other visit it, though I cannot easily tell why one should go to Paris twice. Our own beds are soft enough. Yet my master will tell you, that one wants to be doing something. I have something like a longing to see my master's performances; a pleasure which I shall hardly have till he returns from Brighthelmstone. I beg that before you go, you will send the *Bibliographia Britannica* to my habitation.

I am, &c.

P. S. Let your next be sent to Lichfield.

LETTER CLXXIX.

To Mrs. THRALE.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Sept. 27, 1777.

I THINK I have already told you that Boswell is gone. The day before he went, we met the Duke and Duchess of Argyle in the street, and went to speak to them while they changed horses; and in the afternoon Mrs. Langton and Juliet stopped in their way to London, and sent for me; I went to them, and sent for Boswell, whom Mrs. Langton had never seen.

And so, here is this post without a letter. I am old, I am old, says Sir John Falstaff. "Take heed, my dear, youth flies apace." You will be wanting a letter sometime. I wish I were with you, but I cannot come yet.

———Nives et frigora Rheni
 Me sine sola vides: Ah, ne te frigora lædant!
 Ah, tibi ne teneras glacies fecet aspera plantas!
 ECL. X.

I wish

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON. 387

I wish you well ; B—— and all ; and shall be glad to know your adventures. Do not however think wholly to escape me ; you will, I hope, see me at Brighthelmstone. Dare you answer me, as Brutus answered his evil genius ?

I know not when I shall write again, now you are going to the world's end. *Extra anni solisque vias*, where the post will be a long time in reaching you. I shall, notwithstanding all distance, continue to think on you, and to please myself with the hope of being once again,

M A D A M,

Your most humble servant.

LETTER CLXXX.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Ashbourne, Michaelmas day, 1777.

AND so because you hear that Mrs. Desmoulines has written, you hold it not necessary to write; as if she could write like you, or I were equally content with hearing from her.—Call you this, backing your friends? She did write, and I remember nothing in her letter, but that she was discontented that I wrote only Madam to her, and Dear Madam to Mrs. Williams. Without any great dearnefs in the comparifon, Williams is, I think, the dearer of the two. I am glad that she mends, but I am afraid she cannot get the ftart of the feafon, and Winter will come before she is prepared for it.

But at Streatham there are dears and dears, who before this letter reaches them will be at Brighthelmftone. Wherever they be, may they have no uneafinefs but for want of me.

Now

Now you are gone, I wonder how long you design to stay; pray let me know when you write to Lichfield, for I have not lost hope of coming to you, yet that purpose may chance to fail. But my comfort is, that you cannot charge me with forgetting you when I am away. You perhaps do not think how eagerly I expect the post.

Mrs. * * * * * grows old, and has lost much of her undulation and mobility. Her voice likewise is spoiled; she can come upon the stage now only for her own benefit. But Juliet is airy and cheerful, and has I hope done lamenting the inconstancy of man. My mistress is represented as unable to bear them company. There was not time for many questions, and no opportunity of winding and unwinding them, as Mr. Richardson has it, so as to get truth out without questions. I do not indeed know that I am any great winder. I suspect a winder to be always a man vacant, and commonly little-minded. I think my dear little mistress no great proficient at winding, though she could wind if she would, *contemnit potius quam nescit*.

Dr. Taylor desires always to have his compliments sent. He is, in his usual way, very
C c 3 busy;

buffy ; getting a bull to his cows, and a dog to his bitches. His waterfall runs very well. Old Shakespeare is dead, and he wants to buy another horse for his mares. He is one of those who finds every hour *something new to wish or to enjoy*.

Boswell while he was here saw Keddlestone and the silk mills, and took Chatsworth in his way home. He says, his wife does not love me quite well yet, though we have made a formal peace. He kept his journal very diligently ; but then what was there to journalize. I should be glad to see what he says of * * * * *. I think I told you that I took him to Ham.

Why should you suspect me of forgetting lilly lolly ? Now you will see the Shellys, and perhaps hear something about the Cottons ; and you will bathe, and walk, and dress, and dance, and who knows how little you will think on, Madam,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R CLXXXI.

Mrs. THRALE to Dr. JOHNSON.

DEAR SIR,

October 1, 1777.

IT was because you teized me so about Bolt-court intelligence, that I fancied Mrs. Desmoulines' letter would be as good, or better than mine; she was certainly more qualified than I could be, to write upon the subject. Her discontent is no new thing; if it proceeds from no new cause, she must bear without complaining, that which probably does not mend while she says nothing of the matter; but people will not endure to be teized for ever with fruitless lamentations for evils they cannot remove.

In some letter lately you wonder at my using black wax—for the paper was only not gilt—as if you had forgotten my numberless reasons for *mourning*, because you are not perpetually hearing me recall them to your memory. Affliction however is very good

C c 4

for

for us all I doubt not, or it would hardly be bestowed so liberally. The flower of an aloe tree is, I am told, so peculiarly sweet, that bees, best judges in such a case, seek it from an immense distance; we know how bitter the stem is, and how rarely we are indulged with the blossom. If a good parallel may be drawn from this reflection to human life, let us add another: a turnip is sweet to the taste, but gives a rancid and unpleasant flavour to every animal that feeds upon it. A life of peace and pleasure would probably have as bad an effect upon the mind of man. And now I think you will run to Mrs. Desmoulines, or any other Mistress, as a refuge from your *true* Mistress's pedantry. Does that word remind me of Lord * * * *? I hope not: he has seen much, read much, and travelled much; he talks a great deal, and from a very fashionably furnished mind.—When we saw him last, he bid me ask you whether there are three volumes, or only two, of Parker's History, or Parker's Memoirs, or some such thing. It was in Latin, and very fine Latin too he said. I knew not from beginning to end what he meant; and my ignorance reminded me of the maid servant Mr.

Pepys tells of, who let her master know one morning that a gentleman had called when he was out the evening before, and begged he would lend him *three oxen and a hog'shead*. You won't understand me, child, added he, but your master will; it was *Theocritus and Horace's* works that were wanted; and I am much in the girl's case, for I comprehend not a syllable of * * * *s request—and perhaps have transmitted it as wildly.

We have seen nothing but Mrs. * * * * here. She says all * * * *s faults should be charged upon his mother, but then she is nobody's mother herself. How dreadful, instead of delightful, would it be, to contemplate one's house full of children, if all the future errors of each were to go to the mother's account! Yet would not my lot be heavy even *then*, for better babies breathe not—could I *but* keep them! than mine. Queeney shall send you a *proof-sheet* of her excellence to-morrow.

Poor S——y B——w is dying, they tell me; you liked her vastly that summer we were so much together with her at this place;—how happy Mr. Beauclerc is got better!—he is a prodigious favourite I know; but when
you

you were sorry for poor old Dr. F—zp——k it was mere virtue, as I think I never saw a stronger antipathy. Shall we write an epitaph upon him, and say, *He sat well at a table?*—for that was the highest praise we could ever get you to allow him, even with Murphy's help. Saint Pavin's inscription would not be amiss for Fitzpatrick; and there is a stroke in their lives too not very dissimilar.

Fitzpatrick's dead—wert thou his friend;
 With tears lament thy lot:
 Did fortune no such favour lend?
 Lament that thou wert not.

*Sous ce tombeau gît Saint Pavin,
 Donne des larmes à sa fin;
 Tu fus de ses amis peut être?
 Pleure ton sort, pleure le sien;
 Tu n'en fus pas? pleure le tien,
 Passant, d'avoir-manqué d'en être.*

I cannot guess how long we are to stay here; Mr. Thrale does not tell me, and I am, as you say, no good *winder*. Cardinal Alberoni was said to be so ingenious, that no
 concealed

concealed intentions of another could escape him ; but Jean Rouffet, who writes his life, describes him as a rattling man too, that talked at all rates. Flashy, light, and loud conversation is often a cloke for cunning, I believe ; as showy life, and a gay outside spreads now and then a thin covering over avarice or poverty. The companion who rattles resembles a juggler, who, while your attention is fixed upon his talk, changes your gold into counters. This, however, I have no higher authority for, than Alberoni's character—Richardson's way of winding was more cold and fly.

I have picked up some agreeable young folks, just come from school somewhere on the continent, who are going to London for the first time—with clear complexions, and hearts apparently as clear. We were saying how soon they would be altered. A capital city will, by even a short residence in it, change the whole mass. How florid, bright, and transparent is the arterial blood, before it has passed through the heart—metropolis of our human frame—for example ; and how muddy, gross and heavy in comparison is that which we draw from the veins in its return.

But

But I must say no more—you would rather be sick in London, I remember, than well in the country.

When are we likely to meet?—If the Doctor's waterfall roars happily, I think there is little chance, for a month, of your quitting Ashbourne, except to shew its environs to Mr. Boswell. Derbyshire is a glorious county, and affords much matter for speculation; besides that, he will write down all you say, and all he says to you about every thing. Luckily for us his adorers, our dear Dr. Johnson wants very little *winding*; we may all know your opinions by asking them the straightest way; and mines are always best in a mountain where adits can most commodiously be made for bringing out the ore, you know.

Farewel, dear Sir, and love my husband, and like my letters; and pray be jealous of the S——'s and C——'s, they are so very likely to supply your loss to

Your most faithful humble servant,

H. L. THRALE.

P. S. I

P. S. I am afraid you will be shocked at this story of Foote ; and what will Mr. Murphy say?—I think he will feel very sorry. You must go to work hard about the Lives, and not let your fancy dwell upon it. These are just the things which business prevents from impressing one ; it has no power at all, though so gravely recommended, over serious grief or real loss.

LETTER CLXXXII.

To Mrs. T H R A L E.

DEAR MADAM, Lichfield, October 3, 1777.

THIS is the last time that I shall write, in this excursion, from this place. Tomorrow I shall be, I hope, at Birmingham; from which place I shall do my best to find the nearest way home. I come home, I think, worse than I went; and do not like the state of my health. But, *vive bodie*, make the most of life. I hope to get better, and—sweep the cobwebs. But I have sad nights. Mrs. Aston has sent me to Mr. Green to be cured.

Did you see Foote at Brighthelmstone?—Did you think he would so soon be gone?—Life, says Falstaff, is a shuttle. He was a fine fellow in his way; and the world is really impoverished by his sinking glories. Murphy ought to write his life, at least to give the world a Footeana. Now, will any of his contemporaries

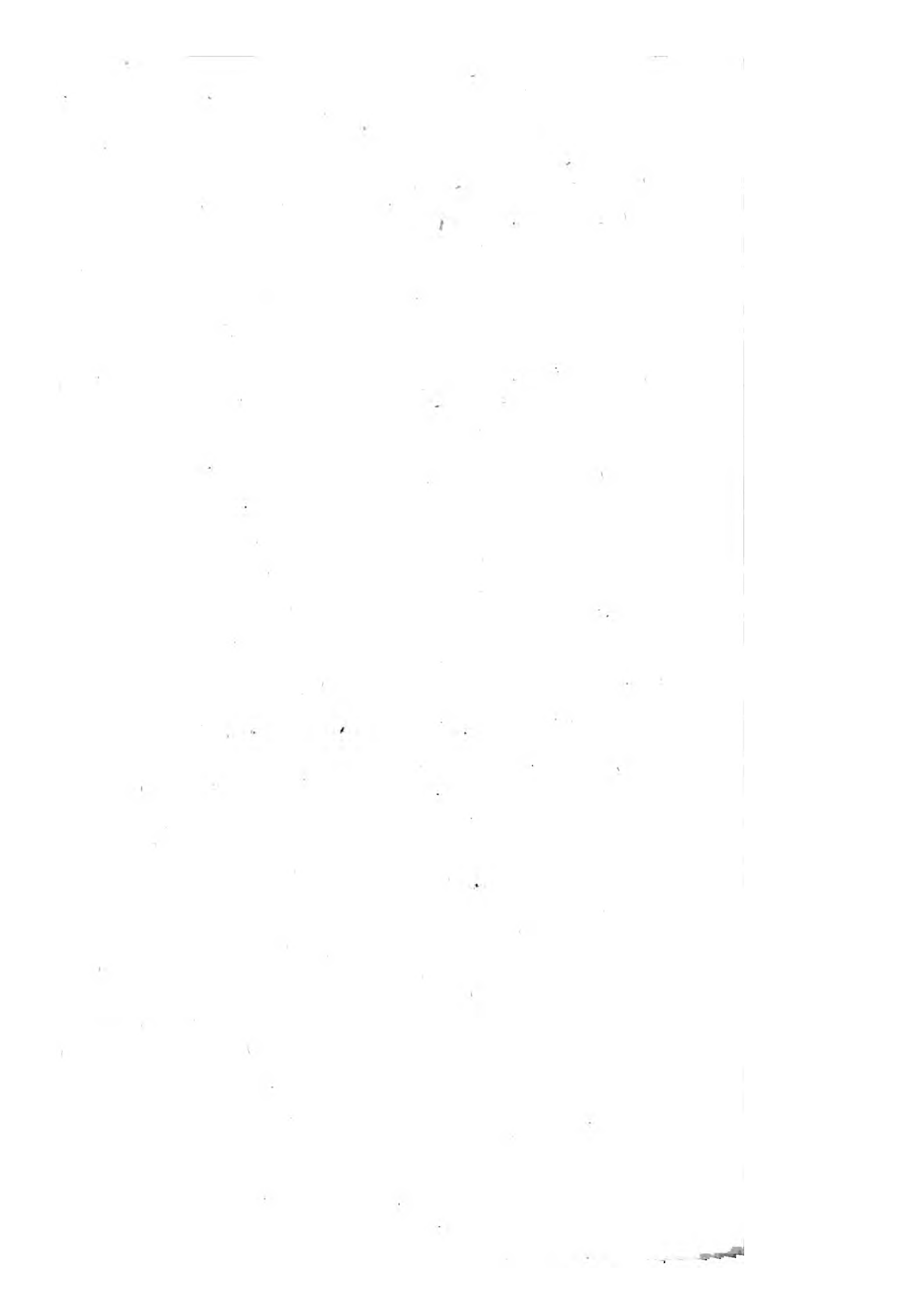
temporaries bewail him? Will Genius change *his sex* to weep? I would really have his life written with diligence.

It will be proper for me to work pretty diligently now for some time. I hope to get through, though so many weeks have passed. Little lives and little criticisms may serve.

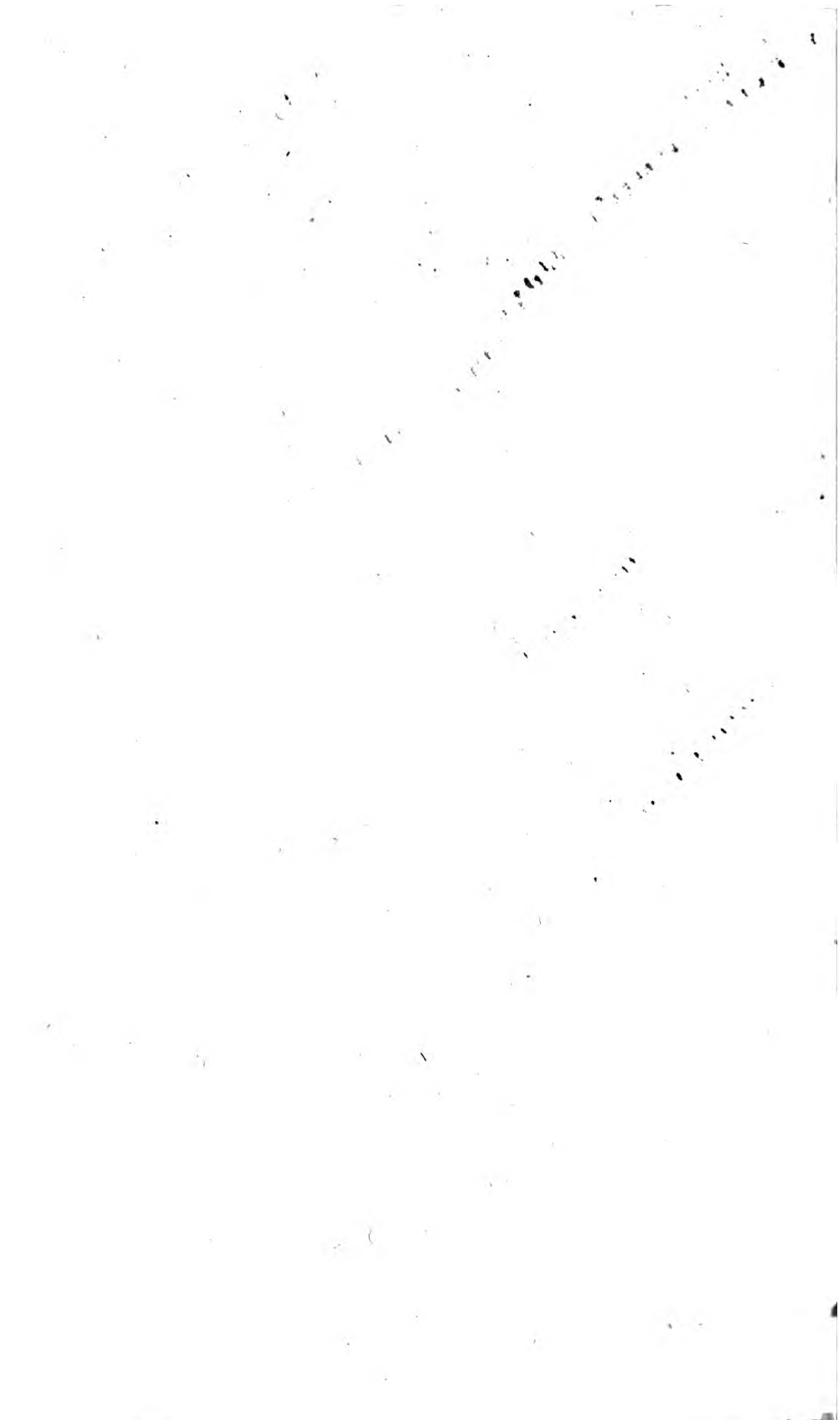
Having been in the country so long, with very little to detain me, I am rather glad to look homewards.

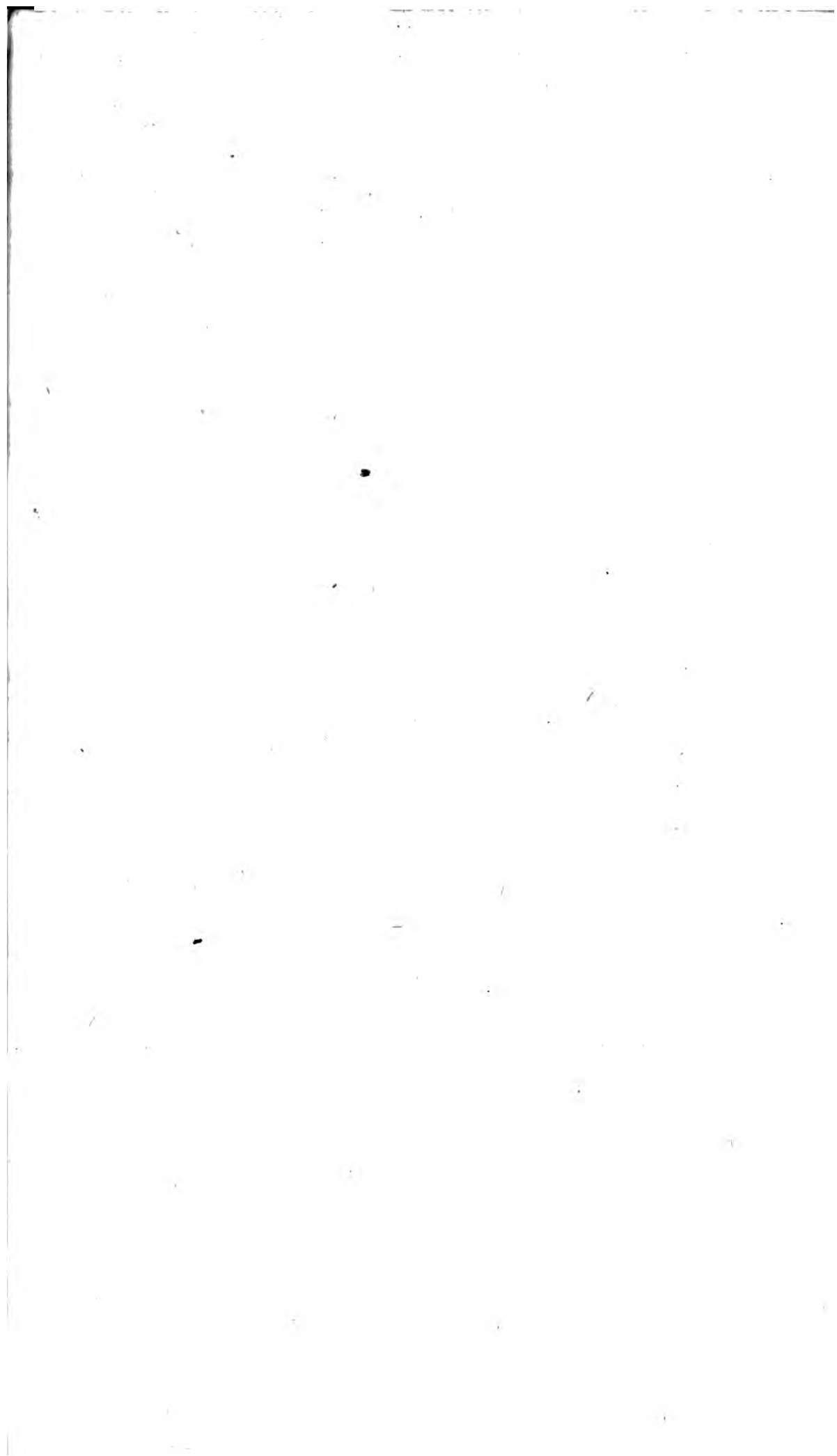
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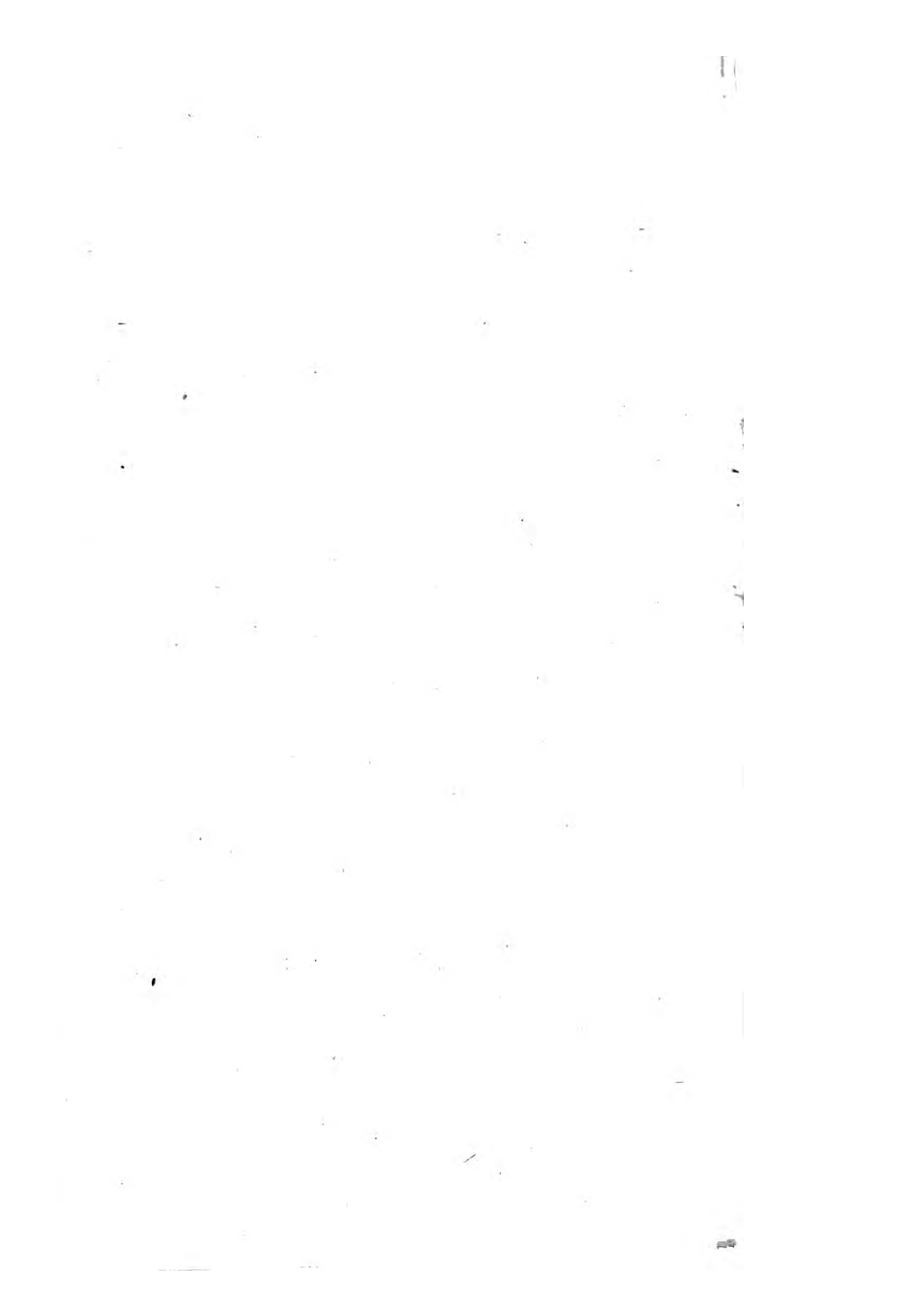
END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.













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