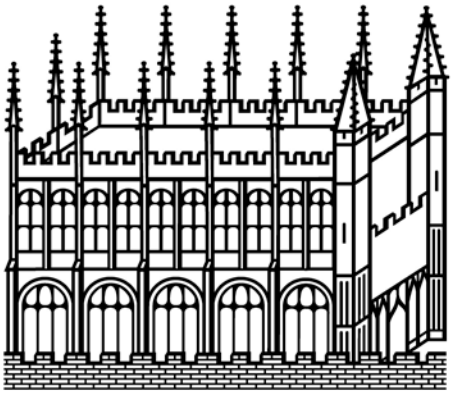

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by
[John Toughorne.]

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LETTERS

BETWEEN

M. DE ST. EVREMOND

AND

MR. WALLER.

LETTERS

Suppoſed to have paſſed

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M. DE ST. EVREMOND

AND

MR. WALLER.

Now firſt Collected and Publiſhed.

CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

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LETTERS

BETWEEN

M. DE ST. EVREMOND, &c.

LETTER I.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

GRAMONT once told Rocheſter, that if he could by any means diveſt himſelf of one half of his wit, the other half would make him the moſt agreeable man in the world. This obſervation of the count's did not ſtrike me much when I heard it, but I have often remarked the propriety of it ſince. Laſt night I ſupped at lord Rocheſter's,

with a ſelect party.— On ſuch occaſions he is not ambitious of ſhining.— He is rather pleaſant than arch. — He is, comparatively, reſerved; but you find ſomething in that reſtraint which is more agreeable than the utmoſt exertion of talents in others. The reſerve of Rocheſter gives you the idea of a copious river, that fills its chanel, and ſeems as if it could eaſily overflow its banks, but is unwilling to ſpoil the beauty and verdure of the plains. The moſt perfect good-humour was ſupported through the whole evening, nor was it in the leaſt diſturbed, when, unexpectedly, towards the end of it, the king came in *. Something has vexed him, ſaid Rocheſter; he never does me this honour but when is in an ill humour. The following dialogue, or ſomething very like it, enſued.

The KING.

How the d—l have I got here? The knaves have ſold every cloak in the wardrobe.

ROCHESTER.

Thoſe knaves are fools. That is a part of

* No unuſual thing with Charles II.

dreſs which, for their own ſakes, your majeſty ought never to be without.

The KING.

Pſhaw! I am vexed.

ROCHESTER.

I am glad of it. I hate ſtill life. Your majeſty is never ſo entertaining as when ——

The KING.

Ridiculous! — I believe the Engliſh are the moſt untractable people upon earth.

ROCHESTER.

I muſt humbly beg your majeſty's pardon, if I preſume, in that reſpect —

The KING.

You would find them ſo, were you in my place, and obliged to govern.

ROCHESTER.

Were I in your majeſty's place, I would not govern at all.

The KING.

How then?

ROCHESTERE.

I would ſend for my lord of Rocheſter, and command him to govern.

The KING.

O! but the ſingular modeſty of that nobleman! ———

ROCHESTER.

He would certainly conform himſelf to your majeſty's bright example. — How glorioufly would the two grand ſocial virtues flouriſh under his auſpices!

The KING.

O priſca fides! What can thoſe be?

ROCHESTER.

The love of wine and women.

The KING.

God bleſs your majeſty!

ROCHESTER.

Thoſe attachments keep the world in good humour; and, therefore, I ſay they are ſocial virtues. — Let the biſhop of Saliſbury deny it if he can.

The KING.

He died laſt night — Have you a mind to ſucceed him?

ROCHESTER.

On condition that I ſhall neither be called upon to preach on the thirtieth of January, nor on the twenty-ninth of May.

The KING.

Thoſe conditions are curious — You object to the firſt, I ſuppoſe, becauſe it would be a melancholy ſubject; but the other —

ROCHESTER.

Would be a melancholy ſubject, too.

The KING.

That is too much ——

ROCHESTER.

Nay, I only mean that the buſineſs would be a little too grave for the day. Nothing but the indulgence of the two grand ſocial virtues could be a proper teſtimony of my joy on that occaſion.

The KING.

Rocheſter, thou art the happieſt fellow in my dominions—Let me periſh, if I do not envy thee thy impudence!

It is in ſome ſuch ſtrain of converſation generally that this prince paſſes off his chagrin; and he never ſuffers his dignity to ſtand in the way of his humour. If happineſs be the end of wiſdom, I know not who has a right to cenſure his conduct.

LETTER II.

SR. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

PUNISHMENTS are diſtributed ſo very unequally in this world, that I have often thought it would afford a fair argument at leaſt for the probability of retribution, and a more equal diſpenſation of juſtice in the next. The fault, if it may be called ſuch, that forced me into exile, was of a much more favourable complexion than Rocheſter's, in the liberties he took with his king, or even yours in repeating them. Monſieur De Neuville once ſaid to me; that if the French and the Engliſh could make an exchange of monarchs, both the people and the princes would find their advantage in it. It is certain, that the humours of Charles would not ſo much expoſe his dignity in the court of France. He would be ſecure in the ſecreſy, the fidelity and obſequiouſneſs of his courtiers. Even

when he was there in no character at all, he had always more reſpect paid him, than the Engliſh have ſhewn him ſince he was reſtored to his kingdom. I have many times remarked, that the people of England in general treat their kings as they do their wives—Very fond of them at firſt; afterwards they neither love nor reſpect them, yet are violent in the defence of their honour, and will ſuffer none to uſe them ill but themſelves. The matrimonial conduct of Henry the eighth was not unlike the political conduct of the Engliſh under Charles the Firſt. At the firſt they adored him; afterwards they grew jealows: and, to crown all, they cut off his head. The mode of government that followed might not improperly be compared to a ſtate of keeping, wherein the ſelfiſh, ſubtle, and ambitious miſtreſs artfully draws you in to that ſubmiſſion and ſervility that would never have been exacted by the faithful wife. Yet what arts of ingenious blandiſhment were exerted to ſoothe the uſurper, and to ſoften the idea of uſurpation! I remember that the fineſt poet of the age lent his perſuaſive powers to effect theſe purpoſes.

I own, I do not envy the reputation he acquired by it, when I conſider that there are, in the next world, ſuch people as Minos, Rhadamanthus, and Æacus.

LETTER III.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOMD.

THE beſt method of anſwering the ſtrictures contained in the concluding part of your letter, is to begin where you end, in the infernal regions. The hero of the Æneid, you know, in order to ſecure a favourable reception in thoſe quarters, is commanded to gather the golden bough, and preſent it as a douceur to the empreſs of the ſhades. Do not you underſtand this allegory?—You have made a bad uſe, indeed, of your poetical reading. This golden branch, ſo grateful to the ſubterranean Juno, is nothing more than praiſe.

Hoc ſibi pulchra ſuum ferre Proſerpina munus
Inſtituit ———

Obſerve how beautifully the poet ſhadows forth the difficulties that attend this delicate gift! how nicely it lies concealed!

Latet arbore opaca,
Aureus et foliis, et lento vimine ramus.

——— *Hunc tegit omnis*
Lucus, et obſcuris claudunt convallibus umbræ.

The propriety of its being ſacred to the female character!

Junoni Infernæ dictus ſacer ———

But the beauty and conſiſtency of the allegory are peculiarly ſtriking, when the hero is directed in his ſearch by the doves of Venus. Who does not ſee that ſoftneſs and complaiſancy of manners, the ground of pleaſing addreſs, and agreeable flattery, depictured in thoſe doves?

Maternus agnoſcit aves, lætuſque precatur,
Eſte duces ———

But Venus herſelf is to aſſiſt on this occaſion. Softneſs and complaiſance, without elegance

and beauty, will not rightly attain to this perſuaſive compliment. It muſt be

——— *rite repertum,*

and therefore the goddeſs of elegance and beauty is invoked;

— Tuque, O, dubiis, ne defice, rebus,
Diva Parens ———

There is not in any part of Virgil's works, perhaps not in all antiquity, a more beautiful or better-wrought allegory than this.

But has it not its uſe too, as well as its beauty? Has not the poet left us an inſtructive leſſon in what manner we are to deal with difficult men in difficult times? If Pluto, or the wife of Pluto, is to be appeaſed, and rendered acceſſible by this golden branch, I ſhould have but an indifferent opinion of that man's diſcretion who would not go in queſt of it. — For my own part, whenever I am called upon to attend her Elyſian majeſty, I will not fail to carry this along with me, and then, though I may have written forty panegyrics on Cromwell, I ſhall have no occaſion to be afraid of Minos.

LETTER IV.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

WERE it poſſible to prevent gallantry from running into the ſpirit of intrigue, nothing certainly could be more agreeable; but the two ideas are hardly to be ſeparated before that period of life which you and I have attained. Nothing, indeed, can be more inoffenſive than the gallantry of our years. It is the harmleſs offspring of memory and fancy, amuſing itſelf with the ſhadows of pleaſures that are paſt. Let gay youth, and graver age count this ridiculous; if we find the *tædium vitæ* in any degree diverted by it, we have a right to indulge it. The recollection of former enjoyments is all that age has to ſubſiſt upon. To treat with courtlineſs, and contemplate with pleaſure, ſuch objects as once afforded us delight, is the religion of nature — 'Tis a ſacrifice of gratitude — 'Tis a teſtimony of content. — Beſides, I know not

whether by theſe attachments we may not lengthen as well as lighten life.

Waller, qui ne ſent rein des maux de la vieilleſſe,
Dont la vivacité fait honte a jeunes gens,
S'attache à la beauté pour vivre plus long temps,
Et ce qu'on nommeroit dans un autre foibleſſe
Eſt en ce rare eſprit une ſage tendreſſe,
Qui le fait reſiſter a l'injure des ans.

Your friend Rymer has given a better turn to theſe lines:

Vain gallants, look on Waller and deſpair,
He, only he, may boaſt the grand receipt;
Of fourſcore years he never feels the weight;
Still in his element when with the fair;
There gay and freſh, drinks in the roſie air:
There happy, he enjoys his leiſure hours,
Nor thinks of winter whilſt amidſt the flowers.

The gallantry of the preſent times ſeems to be of a genius very different from that which prevailed in our better days. It is fallen back into the original brabariſm of nature. The affair of poor Shrewſbury is a ſhocking inſtance of this. There is nothing extraordinary

in the duel between him and the duke of Buckingham; though it was expected that his well known indifference about lady Shrewſbury's commerce with his grace, would have ſaved him from the folly of thinking his honour concerned in the affair: but in the conduct of that bold and abandoned woman, there was ſomething that forbids one to think of her without deteſtation — You have been informed, that, during the engagement, ſhe held the duke's horſes in the habit of a page. I have lately been told that ſhe had piſtols concealed, and that ſhe had pledged her honour to ſhoot both Shrewſbury and herſelf, if the huſband ſhould prove victorious. It was a weakneſs and want of honour in the duke to expoſe his antagoniſt to ſo unfair, and ſo contemptible a death; but it was ſtill greater weakneſs to be capable of loving a woman, who wanted the characteriſtics of her ſex, tenderneſs and delicacy. The genius of bold and vulgar proſtitution! What a depraved Spirit! what a groveling ſoul muſt he have, who can mix his paſſions with any thing ſo odious! A maſculine woman is my immortal averſion! Maſculine in

perſon, or in ſpirit, ſhe is equally dreadful! Courage in that ſex is to me as diſguſtful as effeminacy in ours. I cannot bear to find even their ſentiments of the male-kind — A female divine, a female lawyer, a female hiſtorian, a female politician, are all inſupportable monſters! Out of ſex! Out of character! Out of nature! Loſt to the very idea of propriety! and always affected to the laſt exceſs of abſurdity!

How different from ſuch is one whom we have had the honour to know, the happineſs to converſe with, — the amiable and gentle HAMILTON! Though nature has given her a capacity equal to the moſt arduous attainments, with what addreſs does ſhe manage her excellent talents, and turn them to that kind of culture only which embliſhes and endears the female character! — But, as a laſt proof of her merit, ſhe has fixed irrevocably the fickle, the volatile, the various Grammont! You know his long attachment to her — At length, he has married her. In this meaſure, however, though he has ſhewn both ſenſe and honour, yet he proceeded on

a principle, of which even you, who know him, will have no idea. And here, too, you will find another inſtance of the pernicious ſpirit of modern gallantry. Though Grammont believed himſelf that he intended abſolutely to eſpouſe the fair Hamilton, yet when every thing ſeemed to be ſettled, and the critical event drew near, the dæmon of gallantry took up his part — He played the character of Hymen, and rendered it ſo inſupportably ridiculous, that Grammont could no longer bear the idea of marriage. The time appointed for the nuptials was at hand — The lover flew upon the wings of the wind to the — coaſt of France. This deſertion was received with a proper indignation. A brother of the fair Hamilton's, a youth about ſixteen or ſeventeen, purſued and overtook him almoſt as ſoon as he had arrived.

" Grammont, ſaid he, you bluſh to ſee me—
" You have reaſon — You know me well —
" Return this moment with me to England,
" and do yourſelf the honour to eſpouſe my
" ſiſter — If that is an honour you chuſe to
" decline, — I am the youngeſt of ſeven bro-

" thers, and if I fall by your hand, know, " that there are ſtill ſix living, whoſe arms " are ſtronger and more experienced than " mine, and who ſcorn, as much as I do, to " ſurvive the honour of a ſiſter." The count ſtood ſilent for a while, and ſmiled upon the beardleſs champion — But it was not a ſmile of contempt. I have heard him ſay, that he never felt the ſenſe of honour ſo ſtrongly as at that moment. The phantom of falſe gallantry diſappeared. " Let us return, ſaid he, " my brave friend — I bluſh to think of my " folly—I deſerve not the honour of being al- " lied to your family; but I will hope to be " indebted for it to your kind interceſſion."

This was certainly very great. It was a return of reaſon; a recovery from a ſtate of inſanity. What is true honour but the exerciſe of right reaſon? All elſe is falſe and frivolous. Is courage honour? What a ſtrange confuſion of ideas! A man of honour would, in that caſe, make a very deſpicable figure, if put in the ſame ſcale with a Ruſſian bear. Young Hamilton behaved with a true ſenſe of honour — His conduct was reaſonable — It had the

protection of a ſiſter for its object. But what ſhould we have thought of Grammont, had he acted a different part? In what light would he have appeared, had he lived to pierce the heart of a woman that he loved, through the hearts of ſeven brothers! — The very idea is horror! — Yet this he certainly muſt have done, at leaſt have attempted, had he placed honour in courage rather than reaſon.

Had Shrewſbury a right ſenſe of honour when he challenged Buckingham? More than half the court will tell you that he had —But, how ridiculous! Is the defection of an infamous woman a diſgrace to the man ſhe forſakes? Far otherwiſe — It is rather a mark of his integrity. The antipathy that vice has to virtue, is a proof of this. It was rank cowardice, puſillanimity itſelf, that provoked Shrewſbury to the challenge. He was afraid that his courage ſhould be doubted, if he omitted it.

Yet how univerſal is this idea of falſe honour! In one of the compaigns I made with the duke D'Enguien, an officer who had loſt his miſtreſs, thought it neceſſary to fight for

her. When he applied to the duke for permiſſion, the latter aſked him whether it was on account of the love he had for her, and whether he wanted, by killing his rival, to recover her. "No, replied the officer; but "if I do not fight, my courage will be doubted." "If that is all, ſaid the duke, you "may be eaſy about the matter. I ſhall give "you an opportunity of putting that out of "queſtion; for, to-morrow, I intend to fight "myſelf."

LETTER V.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

I NOW write to you from the earl of Devonſhire's, where I have been for this fortnight paſt, paying my devotions to the genius of nature. Nothing can be more romantic than this country, except the region of Valois; and nothing can equal this place * in beauty, but the borders of the lake.

It was not, however, ſo much the deſire of ſeeing natural curioſities that drew me down hither. There is a certain moral curioſity under this roof which I had long wiſhed to ſee, and my lord Devonſhire had the goodneſs to indulge me by a very kind invitation.

I need not tell you that I mean the great philoſopher, Mr. Hobbs, ſo diſtinguiſhed for the ſingularity of his ſentiments and his diſpoſition.

* Chatſworth.

I arrived a little before dinner, notwithſtanding which the earl told me he believed I was too late to ſee Mr. Hobbs that day. "As "he does not think like other men, ſaid he, "it is his opinion, that he ſhould not live like "other men. I ſuppoſe he dined about two "hours ago, and he is now ſhut up for the "reſt of the day; your only time to ſee him "is in the morning; but then he walks ſo "faſt up thoſe hills, that, unleſs you are "mounted on one of my ableſt hunters, you "will not keep pace with him."

It was not long, however, before I obtained an audience extraordinary of this literary potentate; whom I found, like Jupiter, involved in clouds of his own raiſing. He was entrenched behind a regular battery of ten or twelve guns, charged with a ſtinking combuſtible called tobacco. Two or three of theſe he had fired off, and replaced them in the ſame order. A fourth he levelled ſo mathematically againſt me, that I was hardly able to maintain my poſt, though I aſſumed the character and dignity of embaſſador from the republic of letters. — 'I am ſorry for your

'republic, ſaid Hobbs; for if they ſend you
'to me in that capacity, they either want me,
'or are afraid of me. Men have but two
'motives for their applications, and thoſe are
'intereſt and fear. But the latter is, in my
'opinion, moſt predominant.' I told him,
'that my commiſſion extended no farther
'than to make him their compliments, and
'to enquire after his health.' 'If that
'be all, replied the philoſopher, 'your repu-
'blic does nothing more than negociate by the
'maxim of other ſtates, that is, by hypocriſy.
'All men are neceſſarily in a ſtate of war;
'but all authors hate each other upon prin-
'ciple. For my part, I am at enmity with
'the corps, from the biſhop of Saliſbury down
'to the bell-man. — Nay, I hate their writ-
'ings as mueh as I do themſelves. There is
'nothing ſo pernicious as reading. It deſtroys
'originality of ſentiment. My lord Devon-
'ſhire has more than ten thouſand volumes in
'his houſe. I intreated his lordſhip to lodge
'me as far as poſſible from that peſtilential
'corner. I have but one book, and that is
'Euclid; but I begin to be tired of him. I

'believe he has done more harm than good— 'He has ſet fools a reaſoning."— "There is 'one thing in Mr. Hobbs's conduct, ſaid lord 'D——, that I am unable to account for — 'He is always railing at books, yet always 'adding to their number." — "I write, my 'lord, anſwered Hobbs, to ſhew the folly of 'writing—Were all the books in the world on 'board one veſſel, I ſhould feel a greater plea-'ſure than that Lucretius ſpeaks of, in ſee-'ing the wreck."— "But ſhould you feel no 'tenderneſs for your own productions?' — 'I care for nothing, added he, but the Levi-'athan, and that might poſſibly eſcape by 'ſwimming.'

As he had poſſibly changed his political principles, I did not think it of conſequence to enquire into his ideas of government. But, in the courſe of converſation, I found that he looked upon the principal engine of adminiſtration to be fear. 'All government, ſaid he, 'is in itſelf an evil. It is nothing but the 'continual impoſition of terror, and inflicti-'on of puniſhment. It muſt be owned, that 'it is an evil which the natural depravity of

'men has rendered neceſſary to the exiſtence 'of ſociety; but ſtill it cannot in itſelf be 'looked upon with any other ſenſations 'than ſuch as are excited by the view of 'its ſeveral inſtruments, the ſcourge, the 'gibbet, and the goal. The ſight of ma-'jeſty inſpires me with no other ideas, than 'ſuch as ariſe when I ſee the loweſt executi-'oner of the civil power.' — 'That is, ſaid 'lord Devonſhire, you have the ſame reſpect 'for the king as for the hangman.' — 'Par-'don me, my lord, (returned Hobbs, recol-'lecting himſelf,) the king is a very worthy 'gentleman—You know I had the honour 'to teach him philoſophy at Paris.' — 'O 'Mr. Hobbs! in that reſpect, replied his 'lordſhip, your royal pupil * does you much 'honour.'

You have known this ſingular man for ſome time. He ſaid little concerning you, but that my lord Devonſhire ſometimes made him angry by telling him that you made better verſes than himſelf. 'Poetry is a fooliſh thing, ſaid Hobbs, 'but I hate to do any thing that is better done 'by others.'

* Charles II.

LETTER VI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

THERE will be ſuch men as Hobbs, ſo long as the world endures, and perhaps it is neceſſary that there ſhould be ſuch. It is for the intereſt of truth that ſceptics and infidels ſhould occaſionally ſtart up and give the alarm to ſociety. Thoſe countries that continue longeſt in the enjoyment of peace, are in the greateſt danger either of loſing their liberties through domeſtic encroachments, or of becoming a prey to the power of foreign invaſion. The reaſon of this is partly the weakneſs and effeminacy which long relaxation brings on all orders of men, and partly the incapacity of defence ariſing from the diſuſe of war.— So it is in the ſtate of moral and religious truth.—While their intereſts are unagitated, they become leſs attended to, leſs underſtood — In proceſs of time, that knowlege which ſhould be general, becomes the

property of a few — Hence arbitrary tenets, and theological prerogative! Hence truth unexerciſed, in darker times, was ſoon ſo covered with the ruſt of ſuperſtition, that ſhe loſt the very principles and ſprings of her being. It is the ſpirit of enquiry that keeps her in a condition of defence, that poliſhes, brightens, and refines her.

Hobbs, therefore, ſo far as he may be conſidered as an oppoſer of truth, is an uſeful member of ſociety. But he is too feeble an enemy to be of much ſervice in the conteſt. The ſyſtem of his philoſophy is purely conſtitutional, calculated for the meridian of his own proper being. Hobbs is naturally deſtitute both of courage and fortitude; and of courſe, he thinks that fear is an univerſal principle of moral action. — With regard to intereſt, which he aſſociates with fear, it can only be conſidered as a modification of that paſſion; for, in his opinion, it conſiſts in nothing more than perſonal eaſe and ſecurity. — His ideas of government are ſtill of leſs conſequence than his opinions of moral principles. The light in which he views it, always chang-

es with the change of his affairs. He is now full of fears that he ſhall ſuffer for the publication of his opinions.—If the people in power are ſo wrong-headed as to puniſh him, it is not the badge of tyranny he ought to give them.— It is the cap of folly.

LETTER VII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

THIS freedom, Waller, is a delightful thing. This ingenuous and unreſtrained expreſſion of one's feelings and opinions, this goal-delivery of the mind is the moſt happy privilege.

Yet, methinks, I cannot enjoy it as I would. — A man who, like St. Evremond, has been accuſtomed to live in courts, where the groſſeſt adulation of inſincerity are ſo neceſſary, acquires an habit of artificial expreſſion—Where nature is no longer left to the force of her own perceptions, to conceal our real ſenti-

ments, and to ſubſtitute others, is ſtudied as a ſcience. Thus long habits of diſſimulation deprive us of the natural love of truth, as thoſe animals we confine for amuſement loſe the deſire of liberty.

In good time, ſure, was I diſmiſſed from thoſe ſcenes of artifice and deluſion, before the ſeeds of native ingenuity were totally corrupted *. I have yet ſome pleaſure in the indulgence of veracity; and it affords me no unreaſonable conſolation, when I reflect, that the ſame attachment to truth, which occaſioned my baniſhment, might have been utterly loſt, if I had ſtill enjoyed my country.

Yet that country, Waller, (I muſt confeſs my weakneſs,) that country ſtill hangs upon my heart, and I never read the

——— *Repetendaque nunquam*
Vale, terra, dixi † ———

of Ovid, without emotions which I know not how to ſubdue— Be it yours, my friend, and

* Yet he was labouring through his whole life to be reſtored to them; but this is no unuſual inconſiſtency.
† Ovid Met. lib. xiii.

courtly philoſopher, to fortify my ſoul againſt theſe painful affections.—You who can apply philoſophy to every thing, and make every thing philoſophy, teach me a little of that happy accommodation. Tell me how I may reconcile inconſiſtencies — how I may love the country I have loſt, and be ſatisfied with another.

Be it yours, likewiſe, to inſtruct me in the cultivation of that ſincerity which, till this moment, has been the object of my thoughts, and let me gain ſomething at laſt by the loſs of place and favour. The ſoil you have to work upon, is, I hope, not abſolutely barren, though it may have been over-run with weeds. the climate will aſſiſt you in your culture, and I cannot wiſh you better ſucceſs, than that he who was St. Evremond in France may become Waller in England.

LETTER VIII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

SINCERITY! Ingenuity of expreſſion!—There are no ſuch things in the world.

Sincerity peculiar to the Engliſh! What a contemptible opinion muſt you have of us! Do you look upon us as in a ſtate of nature? Are we not formed into ſocieties, poliſhed and refined? And what can ſuch a people have to do with ſincerity? It is the ſavage characteriſtic of ſavage life, the natural effect of wild and uncivilized qualities. It may prevail amongſt the hords of Tartary, or the Indians of North America, but in cultivated ſocieties it cannot poſſibly exiſt.

Sincerity! the moſt unſociable of qualities! Of all that is called virtue the moſt unprofitable? Were it abſolutely to take place, man could never be reconciled to man. It is upon the daily ſacrifice of ſincerity that the good-

humour of life ſubſiſts. It is by the exerciſe of a contrary quality that the harmony of ſocial intercourſe is preſerved.

Man is too vain a creature to allow the free commerce of truth. As ſhe approaches, his ſelf-love is alarmed, and meets her as an invader. What, in this caſe, are we to do? Shall we not accommodate ourſelves to the weakneſs of our nature?

Happy are the effects of that complaiſance, which, aſſuming the fair and graceful appearance of truth, rejects her rigid qualities; and, finding an open and eaſy paſſage to the heart, ſcatters flowers along the avenues as ſhe goes!

To what purpoſe is it that ſhe cannot boaſt of her alliance to ſincerity, while ſhe may be allowed to derive her origin from benevolence? While her only end is our ſatisfaction, wherefore ſhould we cenſure the means whereby ſhe effects it?

Miſtake me not, St. Evremond! I would not have thoſe means unlimited. Groſs adulation is a dangerous thing, and is, in its operation, like thoſe poiſons, which, while they

are delicious to the palate, burn up the heart.

* * * * * * * *

I am interrupted. I will ſay more to you to-morrow.

LETTER IX.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

YOU are miſtaken, my good friend! You are not ſo much inclined to ſincerity as you might imagine. Is it poſſible St. Evremond could be ſincere, when he complimented Waller with the taſk of inſtructing him in philoſophy?

As well might fair Carliſle, whoſe conquering [eyes
Pierce to the ſoul, and make the ſoul their prize,
In all her majeſty of charms arrayed,
Bow to the beauties of a village-maid.

But though I ſmile at all this, and at your ſerious obſervations on ſincerity, I cannot,

without compaſſion, hear your complaints. Your exile, I perceive, is ſtill painful to you, and could I help you to a little of that accommodating ſpirit you ſo frankly, aud perhaps archly aſcribe to me, I am perſuaded you would find your account in it.

This ſpirit, however, is not to be obtained while we indulge the influence of certain affections; and to teach you how to love your country, without lamenting the loſs of it, is a taſk beyond my abilities.

But wherefore ſhould we cheriſh thoſe affections that will not let us live in peace? The queſtion is obvious, and not eaſy to be anſwered—You will ſay, perhaps, that ſuch affections as have been implanted by nature, or have taken root in habit, are not to be overcome. You will plead for mechanical influences, and involuntary ſenſations—From my ſoul do I forgive thoſe philoſophers who maintain ſuch doctrines: they contribute to reconcile us to ourſelves, providing us with apologies for a thouſand weakneſſes: but, for my own part, I muſt evermore be of opinion, that by the indulgence of fanciful reflections, by a kind of

mental intemperance, and luxury of imagination, we lay up for ourſelves the greateſt part of our troubleſome attachments and uneaſy deſires.

What reaſonable claim has France to ſuch regard from St. Evremond as ſhould inſpire him with reſtleſs longings, and wear out his peace? Has nature irrevocably implanted this attachment? — But will nature do any thing inconſiſtent with the principles of reaſon? Is it of conſequence either to her general laws, or to her appropriated inſtincts, that we ſhould have an excluſive affection for that particular province, or country, where chance gave us birth—It is to nature we owe our being, but it is where choice or accident direct our parents, that we are born — An attachment to the place, therefore, muſt be the effect of whim or humour, rather than of reaſon, or nature.

But let us ſuppoſe that habit has created what nature did not inſpire. Our attachment to every ſcene and object increaſes in proportion to the continuance of our acquaintance with it — Even things that are at firſt beheld

with diſguſt and averſion find their way into our favour by time; and thoſe affections, which nature herſelf ſeems to have ſhut up for certain objects, are inſenſibly drawn towards them by the influence of cuſtom.

But neither reaſon nor nature have any thing to do in theſe effects; for reaſon continues inſenſible to their whole proceſs and operation, and nature frequently finds her own inſtincts counteracted by them.

The attachments of habit, therefore, have neither merit nor virtue; they have no excellence, either moral or natural; they receive no ſanction from original inſtincts; and they are no effects of rational choice.

Awake, my St. Evremond! my friend! my philoſopher! ſhall dreams delude thee?

——— *Vane Sembianze!*
Imagini del Dì, gueſte e corrotte
Da l'ombre de la notte!

Citizen of the world! Shall dreams delude thee? What elſe is this attachment to France? Vain and irrational as the deſires of capricious infancy! Idle as our morning wiſhes for thoſe

ſcenes that fancy has preſented to us in the night! Citizen of the world, awake! Conſider all the human children of nature gathered into one vaſt ſociety: this portion of the univerſe we call the earth is our common county: it is true, this portion is divided into many ſhares: but ſhall we be ſo childiſh as to hold our own in peculiar eſtimation? Or is there any indeed, that we can properly call our own?—If it was our lot to be born in a country where liberty is not a birth-right, we have, literally ſpeaking, no country. Had St. Evremond been born in Britain, he might have called it his country, becauſe he would have been born to the free enjoyment of its general privileges; but a Frenchman has no country. He is an unfortunate dependent, liable to death or baniſhment, as the capricious inclination, or the ill-informed judgment of his maſter ſhall determine. An Engliſhman muſt be baniſhed by his country; a Frenchman is baniſhed by his king — The former has a country from which he may go into exile, the latter has none.

Grieve not at the thoughts of loſing what you never enjoyed. Rejoice in that protection and freedom, that liberty even of ſentiment, which this iſland will afford you, and in which you ſo juſtly expreſs your ſatisfaction.

When I ſate down to write to you I intended to have ſaid ſomething on that ſubject; but I have been drawn beyond my bounds, and muſt continue indebted to you for all I had to ſay.

LETTER X.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

I AM angry — You have abuſed my country, and I will have my revenge. I will tell you your faults—You are the moſt ſingular of your ſingular nation. It is true, you have more wit and a better underſtanding than half the people in your iſland, and yet it is very ſeldom that you make any valuable uſe of either. The former you throw away upon women, whom you make vain without affection, and upon courtiers, who, while they have ſomething more ſubſtantial in view, hardly envy you the enjoyment of it. The latter can only be compared to a faithful mirror, which reflects every object in the trueſt light, without receiving any impreſſion.

You ſeem not to have any determining principles of conduct — You are carried away by accidental circumſtances — You may commit yourſelf wholly to chance, live without reſo-

lution, and think without choice. What you do to-day you will avoid to-morrow, and repeat it the day following; yet will you not once be at the trouble of giving yourſelf a reaſon either for what you do, or for what you avoid. If you may be allowed to have any motive of action at all, it is merely a temporary inclination, the tranſient offspring of chance, or fancy.

Yet what ſhall I ſay of thee? thou friend of many colours, but beloved and admired in all: ſhall I endeavour to imitate thy indifference, thy happy flexibility, thy undiſſipated diſſipation?

Teach me, dear Waller, like thee, to ſail down the current of life, without fear or diſorder, obedient to every gale, and complying with every tide! Teach me, like thee, on whatever ſhore I am thrown, to make it my *optata arena*. — Horace, and Ariſtippus, and Epicurus, thoſe philoſophers of common ſenſe, ſhall aſſiſt you in the work of converſion.

I believe I have yet life enough left for ſuch an acquiſition. I am not ſo old as Socrates was when he learned to dance, nor near

ſo old as Cato when he learned a language; and certainly the attainments I have in view are of much greater importance than either a poem, or a Pyrrhic dance.

Teach me, then, to be as happy, that is, to be as much at reſt, as you are. Withdraw my heart from every object but yourſelf, and let me not think any thing of ſo much conſequence to my repoſe that it ſhould break it either in the preſervation, or the purſuit of it. Is not ſuch the doctrine I am to learn? If ſuch it be, I deſpair: for I could not, without much ſorrow, loſe even the privilege of this idle correſpondence.

LETTER XI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I SHOULD have a hopeful pupil of you. Firſt you reproach your maſter, then apply for your leſſon. You cenſure me for acting without principles, and you would learn my principles of action. You accuſe me of making no valuable uſe either of my wit or underſtanding; you repreſent me as an example by no means imitable, yet I am to be the pattern of your conduct. Be contented, my ſage St. Evremond, for once to be thought as inconſiſtent as your friend!

Still you will be only like the reſt of the world; for there is no ſuch thing as conſiſtency in human nature. Man is a ductil and a changeable creature. It is rarely that he acts upon ſettled principles. The greateſt part of his life is directed by chance, and he is, for the moſt part, influenced by caſual impulſes,

and accidental circumſtances— I perceive this to be the condition of humanity, and I conform myſelf to it. I am ſenſible that thoſe contingencies, over which we have no power, occaſion ſo many changes, and have ſo much influence over our lives, that the very attempt to live uniformly or ſyſtematically would be as to row againſt the current, when to ſuffer yourſelf to be borne down with it, would convey you as ſafely, and much more eaſily, to the end of your voyage.

The end of all philoſophy is to ſet the heart at eaſe. If I find that compliance and accommodation will anſwer this purpoſe the moſt effectually, they are the very means I ought to adopt. I comply with fortune upon the ſame principles as I would with any other miſtreſs, to keep her in good-humour. If you tell me that fortune is quite as idle as the reſt of my miſtreſſes, then I reply, that it is to keep myſelf in good-humour; and that certainly is no unimportant end.

You ſeem to be of the ſame opinion, when, in your abundant humility, you profeſs yourſelf my diſciple. But you have an extenſive

proceſs to go through, before you can be capable of thoſe doctrines you propoſe to learn. Yet be not alarmed. I do not mean that you ſhould diveſt yourſelf of your warmeſt attachments, or ſacrifice the love of glory, fame, or pleaſure. I think thoſe are falſe philoſophers who, to exempt us from the troubleſome effects of our paſſions, would deprive us of the paſſions themſelves. They are like thoſe deſperate ſurgeons, who for the ſlighteſt wound would have recourſe to amputation. Let love, fame, and glory be ſtill the objects of your purſuit; but remember that every object of human attention is uncertain and evaneſcent. Enjoy the chace while it laſts — If you are thrown out, ſmile at the diſappointment, and ſtart ſome other game.

LETTER XII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

TO be reconciled implicitly to every event, and to paſs through life without anxiety or diſappointment, is certainly a moſt valuable effect of philoſophy, This is the object of your ambition, and this is what you would learn from me — No, no, St. Evremond, do not deceive yourſelf. You would not be without your anxieties; you find a charm in your diſappointments that flatter your vanity, when you conſider the hardſhips of ſuffering merit; and your misfortunes ſerve to ſhew us how elegantly you can complain.

Would you loſe the pleaſure of painting to the ducheſs of Mazarin, in ſuch delicate colours, your mutual misfortunes? Would you be deprived of the honour of being a fellow-ſufferer with ſuch a woman? A ſimiliarity of ſufferings makes people friends. It draws them together, not only becauſe they

expect the mutual privilege of uttering their complaints; but becauſe thoſe complaints are beſt underſtood, and moſt effectually felt. They look upon the world with equal jealouſy. They conſider fortune as their common enemy, and as ſuch they conſpire againſt her. This conſpiracy begets friendſhip, and friendſhip affection.

If I had your wit and brilliant fancy, I would write ſuch an eulogium on your miſfortunes as ſhould perfectly reconcile you to them, without the aſſiſtance of philoſophy. I would ſhew you, how much your fame, your wit, your merit is indebted to them: I would convince you, how much unmerited ſufferings contributed to exalt us in the opinion of the world. I would deſcribe your reputation ſtretching beyond the limits of one nation, and by its increaſing luſtre caſting a ſhade on your diſgrace. I would repreſent the latent ſeeds of fortitude as animated and called forth by this trying event, which, in a ſeries of uninterrupted felicity, might have been totally deſtroyed. I would give its due encomiums to that magnanimity which could ſtill look with

kindneſs on the ſcene of its ſufferings. I would aſcribe the tender paſſions and milder ſentiments, the influence of pity and benevolence, the prevailings of modeſty and diffidence, to the occaſional exerciſes of affliction. The imagination ſhould be found to have profited no leſs than the other faculties. It ſhould appear to be enriched, and to have caught new impreſſions from variety of ſentiments and ſituations; to be ſoftened and ſubdued by affecting ſenſations: laſtly, it ſhould be employed in embelliſhing misfortune itſelf, and pour its harmonious complaints in the ear of ſympathiſing beauty. The ducheſs of M —— ſhould be the object addreſſed, who, being ſomething more than a mere mortal, might well aſſume the character and compaſſion of a guardian angel.

LETTER XIII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

SO kind and yet ſo perplexing, ſo engaging yet ſo volatile a friend have I never found.

From the beginning of your laſt letter I expected nothing leſs than a ſerious lecture in practical philoſophy—But we have hardly got to the end of one ſentence, till the philoſopher, inſtead of inſtructing his friend how to bear with misfortune, writes an encomium on misfortune itſelf.

Indeed, had I reaſon to believe but half of what you have advanced in favour of that *monſtrum horrendum*, I ſhould, at the ſame time, have ſufficient reaſon to acquieſce in it. But, alas! my dear Waller! your colourings are too high. The zeal of friendſhip has overborne your reaſon; has deſtroyed your ſagacity in the diſcernment, and your ingenu-

ity in the expreſſion of truth. Were I certainly either wiſer or better for my misfortunes, they would hardly deſerve that name; but that time which I ſhould have devoted to the acquiſition of knowlege, and the improvement of the mind, has been, for the moſt part, ſpent in uſeleſs regret.

It muſt be confeſſed, notwithſtanding, that what you have charged me with drawing from my diſappointments to ſoothe my vanity, is not far from the truth; but I believe it is chargeable on all mankind. And ſurely nature acted altogether from her wiſdom and benevolence, when ſhe lent us ſelf-love as an antidote to deſpair.

How artfully do you ſoothe and flatter me, when you mention the ducheſs of M —— in ſuch an intereſting and affecting manner! — Oh, Waller! how well you know the heart! For that, I at once forgive you all your levities, your extravagant compliments, and ironical praiſe.

You may ſmile, if you pleaſe; you may enjoy, with complacency, the power of your addreſs; but I muſt confeſs to you, I was ut-

terly unable to reſiſt the inclination of ſhewing your letter to madam Mazarin.

It was imprudent in the laſt degree: my vanity overacted its part. Inſtead of giving me credit for the compliments you paid me, her whole attention was turned from the ſubject to the writer, and I was in danger of finding a rival, where I hoped to have found a friend.

Yet this produced one ageeeable effect. I told her grace you was under an obligation to teach me your accommodating philoſophy. She immediately profeſſed a deſire to become your pupil; and ſhe hereby lays her indiſpenſible commands upon you to furniſh us with your lectures.

LETTER XIV.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

THE charm that bound Proteus, and compelled him to propheſy, could not be more powerful than that you have found out to make me philoſophize. For as Proteus, though, poſſibly, ſomething more of a God, was not, by your account, more volatile than myſelf, nothing leſs than the magic in the name of Mazarin could have fixed me to the ſober point of philoſophy.

You may remember I told you, that you had an extenſive proceſs to go through, before you could arrive at a ſtate of mind which is immediately reconciled to every event. I meant not that you ſhould ſacrifice your paſſions, or diſmiſs your deſires. I did not propoſe to reduce you to a ſtate of indifference to every object, for that would have been to cut off the ſources of pleaſure; and I am of opinion that our friend Horace was never more

out in his philoſophy, than in the following couplet;

Nil admirari prope res eſt una, Numici,
Solaque quæ poteſt facere, et ſervare beatum. *

For though to admire nothing may be a means of preventing regret, it can be no means of happineſs, at leaſt of that kind of happineſs, which obtains in my creed; for that is pleaſure. If eaſe be happineſs, if an exemption from evil alone may be termed ſo, the dead have the beſt claim to it, and the inhabitants of vaults and charnels are more to be envied than the living.

But this was never the purpoſe of nature. The portion ſhe gives her children is the enjoyment of their exiſtence, and thoſe are the

* Thus tranſlated by Creech:

"*Nought to admire is all the art we know*
"*To make men happy, and to keep them ſo.*"

Pope has borrowed this tranſlation, becauſe he could not find a better; and then very ungratefully laughs at poor Creech for lending him it.

"*So take it in the very words of Creech.*"

moſt undutiful who moſt neglect or depreciate this her firſt and greateſt law.

Nothing that is not dear to us can be enjoyed: for this reaſon nature has given us attachments, affections, and deſires.

The end of theſe gifts was to promote our happineſs; when they are retained longer than that purpoſe can be anſwered; when they are extended to objects out of our power, it is not nature that errs; we alone are to blame, who miſapply her gifts.

While we are attached to particular objects, that attachment conſtitutes our happineſs, ſo long as they are in our power. When that ceaſes to be the caſe; when this law of nature is obliged to give place to the contingencies of fortune, or is ſuperſeded by ſome other law of our own, then are we not to imitate nature herſelf in this caſe, and make the leſs ſubmit to the greater? No—we will not yield to this. We are determined to retain our attachments when their objects are vaniſhed; we cheriſh what is altogether ſuperfluous; and what was given us for our pleaſure we pervert to a torment.

It is not neceſſary to ſpecify the ſeveral objects I allude to: I mean, whatever is the end of our purſuits, affections, paſſions, and deſires. Whether love or friendſhip, fame, place, or power, or whatever elſe may be the ſubject, the rule is ſtill the ſame. While either hope, or deſire can be reaſonably exerciſed, we follow our happineſs in the paths that nature has pointed out to us; but when hope is cut off, our purſuits are madneſs; and when deſire can no longer be gratified, the indulgence of it is folly.

Theſe ſpeculations, you will ſay, are eaſy, and the charge may be juſt; but is it ſo eaſy to overcome an attachment which is grown into habit, and has been confirmed by time? Certainly, I anſwer, there can be no difficulty in doing what nature intended we ſhould do. —Were it unnatural it might be difficult. Our love of life laſt as long as life itſelf, becauſe it was ſo long neceſſary for the preſervation of our being; yet this love of life cannot poſſibly ſurvive its object, and that is the general law which nature has given to all our attachments. She never meant that they ſhould

laſt longer than the tranſient ſubjects that occaſioned them; and if ſhe never meant it, it cannot be difficult for us to act in conformity to her original purpoſes.

It is generally a diſpoſition to act contrary to nature, which occaſions our miſery in this, as well as in almoſt every other reſpect. It is from her bounty we derive the objects of enjoyment; but with this we are not ſatisfied; we want to preſcribe the terms and the duration of that enjoyment ourſelves. When ſhe has lent us the play-things of pleaſure for our amuſement, like children, we cannot part with them without petulance and tears. No;—it muſt be the laſt bauble, or nothing. In vain ſhe offers us ſomething elſe—She has taken the bells from us; and the whiſtle ſhe holds out to us we ſnatch, and daſh it to the ground.

Thus we act like children, and it is like children we ſuffer. Could we but perſuade ourſelves quietly to give up one toy, and take another, how much miſery, occaſioned by obſtinacy and abſurdity, might we avoid!

It would, moreover, be no very ineffectual

means of inducing us to part unreluctantly with what we have enjoyed, if we could then begin to view the object in the moſt unfavourable light. Nothing more probable than that we ſhould find it a toy! We often admire without attention, or the exerciſe of reaſon; and it is neceſſary we ſhould; for were we to examine minutely every object that ſhould engage our affections, or exerciſe our deſires, we ſhould find ſo much weakneſs, ſuch inſignificant properties, or ſuch contemptible qualities, that deſire and affection would for ever be ſuſpended, and we ſhould languiſh through life without enjoyment or delight. Then is the time to look upon an object in the leaſt favourable point of view, when it is gone from us, and would carry our hearts along with it—While it laſts, let us, for our own ſakes, always contemplate it in the moſt agreeable light; let us caſt a ſhade over its imperfections, and cheriſh in our imagination thoſe pleaſing qualities, whether real or ideal, that firſt drew us towards it.

This is a very profitable, and a very pardonable theft of happineſs; a ſpecies of ſelf-

deception, which ought, by all means, to be encouraged, becauſe it ſoothes the mind without interrupting it.

There are ſome ſpecies of ſelf-deception, which it may be dangerous to indulge. The cauſe of ſocial virtue may ſuffer where it becomes the ſupport of inequitable principles; but where it is admitted only in aſcribing imaginary perfections to the objects of our regard, it is productive of happineſs without any moral inconvenience.

By this, then, or by any other unexceptionable means, let us cheriſh our attachments while their objects are in our power. When they are no longer ſo, let us withdraw the veil that hid their weakneſs from us, and when we ſee their imperfections, learn to be ſatisfied with their loſs.

Ungrateful, and unfeeling Waller! (at this moment exclaims the ducheſs of M——:) "What, then, is there no tenderneſs due to the memory of what has afforded us pleaſure? Shall we not beſtow a ſigh, a tear, upon the rememberance of what was dear to us? How

unnaturally ſage is ſuch cold philoſophy! — Nay, how very ungrateful!"—

"Ungrateful, ſaid your grace? Ungrateful to whom, or to what?"

"To thoſe who, of all others, have the greateſt claim to our tenderneſs, to the dead."

"Ungrateful to the dead," madam! Is it poſſible? Do you ſuppoſe them to be attentive to our conduct?

"I ſee no reaſon why they ſhould not be ſo." But even ſuppoſing them to be mindful of the living, would they be offended at ſuch a conduct as I have preſcribed? If they retained any real regard for us, would they not rejoice that we conſulted our own happineſs by every means in our power; even though it were by reflecting on their paſt foibles and frailties? Either this muſt be allowed, or it muſt be taken for granted that they are the ſame weak and vain creatures in their diſembodied ſtate that they were before.

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A billet for lady C——!

LETTER XV.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

HOW happy, my dear St. Evremond, are the true and dutiful children of philoſophy! No ſooner had I folded up my laſt letter, than I had occaſion to practiſe the ſevereſt precepts I had been preaching—In happy expectation, I flew to Lady C.'s, promiſing myſelf all that luxury of converſation which we find in the uninterrupted enjoyment of thoſe we admire—She was utterly inacceſſible—A croud of coxcombs had ſhut up every avenue. I had aſſurance enough to aſſume an air of gloom and diſſatisfaction, at which I perceived ſhe was piqued, though ſhe affected to enjoy it—I made a ſhort viſit, and ſet my heart at eaſe with the following reflections: "How abſurd, ſaid I, to hope, from ſo vain and ſo variable a creature as woman, any certainty of happineſs, or enjoyment! The

ſentiments of that ſex are ſo lightly taken up, and ſo ſuperficially impreſt, that they are diſperſed and ſwept away by the ſlighteſt breath of chance. Their reaſon, if they have any, (for even that has been diſputed) is a vague, volatile, and flexible principle, whoſe office is never to direct their inclinations, but to defend and apologiſe for them when purſued. Nature apparently intended them for little more than one purpoſe, and we fooliſhly put it in their power to plague us, by expecting more from them than they were meant to give."

Do not you believe that, after theſe reflections, my heart was at reſt? Be aſſured that it was — I plainly perceived that lady C —— had invited me merely to enjoy her own importance in my mortification. When I conſidered this, I pitied her weakneſs as much as I had indulged her vanity, and made them both together a motive for my repoſe.

My charming Catullus! my happy, my elegant philoſopher! with what an intereſting pleaſure did I recollect theſe beautiful lines.

Miſer Catulle, deſinas ineptire!
Et quod vides periſſe, perditum ducas.
Fulsêre quondam candidi Tibi ſoles,
Cum ventitabas, quà puella ducebat,
Amata nobis, quantum amabitur nulla.
Ibi illa multa tam jocoſa fiebant
Quæ tu volebas, nec puella nolebant.
Fulsêre verè candidi Tibi ſoles. [*noli.*
Nunc jam illa non vult; tu quoque impotens,
Nec quæ fugit ſectare; nec miſer vive:
Sed obſtinata mente prefer, obdura:
Vale puella: jam Catullus obdurat.

Nothing was ever more perfectly agreeable to my own ſentiments —This, St. Evremond, is the very doctrine I have been preaching; let us try how well it will ſit upon myſelf.

Wretched Waller! fool no more;
Give thy idle paſſion o'er:
Charming all that once might be,
Think it loſt, if loſt to thee.
Thine were paths beſtrewed with flowers,
Golden ſuns, and ſmiling hours;
When thy conſtant feet would ſtray
Along the love-enchanted way;

Led by her, that in thy heart
No nymph has left an equal part.
When each joy thy ſoul could ſhare
Was ſnatched from no unwilling fair,
Thine were paths beſtrewed with flowers,
Golden ſuns and ſmiling hours.
Now the nymph is kind no more,
Give thy idle paſſion o'er:
Why, inconſtant if ſhe be,
Should it make a wretch of thee?
Tell her that her arts are vain,
Waller is himſelf again.

Nature had undoubtedly very wiſe ends in rendering that beautiful creature ſo very imperfect, and ſo deficient in all but perſonal accompliſhments. Had the charms of the female mind borne any proportion to thoſe of the female form, that idol alone would have engroſſed our attention, and the other beauties of creation would have paſſed unnoticed —But nature, willing to be admired through the variety of her works, has thrown into each ſomething that might diſpoſe us to turn from

it, and, after a ſhort attention, to ſeek for new objects.

Thus, in the vegetable creation, many fowers that are adorned with the fineſt and moſt glowing colours, are either totally deſtitute of ſmell, or in ſome meaſure diſagreeable. We admire their beauty, and paſs from them to be relieved by the fragrance of others.

Nature is perfectly wiſe in all her diſpenſations, and it is our beſt wiſdom to conform to her apparent purpoſes. Had ſhe intended woman to be the ſole object of man's attention, ſhe would have given her qualities of power enough to fix his conſtant regard. But, from this ſhe ſeems to have had views entirely different. She has given ſo much levity and vanity, ſo much fickleneſs and inconſiſtency, ſuch a wandering head, and ſuch a trifling ſpirit, to the female character, that ſhe certainly never meant ſo variable a creature to be the object of an invariable attachment.—Such are my preſent ſentiments, and I find that they are of no little uſe to me.

LETTER XVI.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

YOU and De l'Enclos are the moſt extraordinary philoſophers I ever knew. You do not confine yourſelves to the rules of former ſages, nor indeed to any rules at all. You make your own laws *ex poſt facto*. You purſue devoutly your inclinations. If they are gratified, all is well: it is upon the principles of nature that you act; and, for living agreeably to her dictates, ſhe rewards you with enjoyment. If they are deluded, though then, perhaps, all is not ſo well, yet you will range through the whole moral and natural world to account for the diſappointment. Your ſearch is not in vain. You never fail to find the cauſe in nature. Certain imperfections ſhe has left in her works, for very wiſe purpoſes. You muſt be perfectly reconciled to her adminiſtration; for you find your happineſs in following her precepts!

An excellent philoſophy, this, and perfectly convenient! It removes every ſubject of ſelf-reproach, and all the moral cauſes of diſcontent vaniſh into nothing. You ſit ſerene beneath the banners of wiſdom and rectitude. Reaſon, prudence, and propriety charge you with no tranſgreſſions — Your hopes and deſires always move within the circle deſcribed by truth and nature—You are always, therefore, in your own opinion, entitled to what you enjoy, and by this commodious philoſophy you are reconciled to what eſcapes you.

That theſe may be very convenient principles, I will not deny; but their truth, I apprehend, and even their juſtice, muſt frequently be diſputable.

Againſt their truth it muſt be alledged, that to refer moral inconveniencies to natural cauſes, would conſequently lead us to charge nature with all the evils and irregularities that the folly or depravity of man might bring upon him, and, in many caſes, with the breach of her own obvious laws, which would be abſurd.

With reſpect to their juſtice, it muſt be fre-

quently problematical; for as it is one of your firſt principles to remove every ſhadow of error from your own conduct, it will follow, as a general conſequence, that you will not be too tender in your opinion of others; and thus, either nature, or the works of nature, or both, will ſuffer the imputation.

As to your Un-Waller-like treatment of the ladies, I muſt tell you that I had put on ſhield and buckler to ſtep forth their redoubted knight, but Bouillon vowed ſhe was able to encounter ſo puny a paynim herſelf, and you may therefore prepare to meet her lance.

LETTER XVII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

I SEND you the incloſed without the leaſt compaſſion for you: You have deſerved a more ſevere chaſtiſement, and you will be too much honoured in falling by ſo diſtinguiſhed a hand.

Advenit qui veſtra dies muliebribus armis
Verba redargueret. Nomen tamen haud leve patrum
Manibus hoc refers, telo cecidiſſe Camillæ!

Madam DE BOUILLON *to Mr.* WALLER.

I HAVE the pleaſure of being obliged to Mr. Waller for a more agreeable opinion both of myſelf and of my whole ſex, than I have

ever before dared to entertain. St. Evremond, either to gratify his own ſpleen, or to excite mine, ſhewed me a letter, which, but for certain circumſtances, I ſhould never have believed to be written by the gallant Mr. W——. The unmerciful cenſures of that invidious letter, thrown indiſcriminately on the whole female world, awakened, I muſt confeſs, my keeneſt reſentment. What! ſaid I, are we then ſuch weak, ſuch inſignificant creatures, born for no purpoſes?—The diſdain I this moment feel at my ſoul, tells me that the charge is not leſs groundleſs than malicious. For no nobler purpoſe than——— But you ſhall find, Waller, that I can be cool; and that a woman has fortitude enough to repel an injurious attack with calmneſs.

If nature intended us for nothing more than the preſervation of her favourite boys, why did ſhe give us any other powers than ſuch as were neceſſary merely for that end?—But you will ſay, ſhe has not given us any other—You diſpute with us even the privilege of reaſon—O blindneſs of prejudice! Vain and arrogant partiality? What is reaſon but the power

of diſtinguiſhing right from wrong, the capacity of drawing juſt concluſions from known principles? And will you dare to deny that we have this power? Let the noble inſtances of rectitude, virtue, and intrepidity; let the ſhining powers of mind, the fire of genius, the delicacy of taſte, the vivacity of penetration, and the clearneſs of underſtanding, that have diſtinguiſhed numbers of illuſtrious women, make you think of your cenſure with ſilent bluſhes!—Shall I mention the ſeveral characters which at once occur to my memory? No, Sir! I will not pay ſo ill a compliment to yours.

But if, after all, you ſhould have charity enough to allow us this ſame faculty of reaſon, it muſt not be without limitations—Limitations almoſt as diſgraceful as the total excluſion of it! 'The reaſon of a woman is 'a flexible principle, whoſe office is never to 'direct her inclinations, but to defend them 'when purſued." I wiſh, with all my heart, that this were leſs the condition of human reaſon in general; but that it is more particularly ſo with the female world, I believe no

candid obſerver of characters will allow. Are many of us remarkable for abſurdities, for levities, inconſiſtencies, and inſignificant purſuits? Let it be ſuppoſed—But have not you, too, your wrong-heads, your inſipid triflers, your fickle and frivolous characters? Though a woman ſhould make uſe of her reaſon to defend her follies, is ſhe therefore more deſpicable, or more ridiculous than he whoſe conduct is equally exceptionable, but who has not modeſty or ingenuity ſufficient to apologiſe for it? Are we deſtitute of virtue? You will not dare ſay it—And are you not philoſopher enough to know, that virtue is the effect of reaſon? If virtue be the effect of reaſon, and if women are not deſtitute of virtue, neither can they be deſtitute of reaſon; of reaſon in its utmoſt perfection; for it is that alone which is productive of virtue?

But "we are vain and variable!" Thanks to that unbounded adulation of yours, and that fickle diſpoſition to which we owe both theſe qualities! It is to your diſſimulation, or your ſervility, or both, that we are indebted for the greateſt part of our vanity: and you know

too well your paſſion for variety, to be ignorant of the motives why we are given to change.

It is this neceſſity we find of aſſuming different appearances, and of varying our conduct in compliance with our taſte, that has furniſhed you with your curiouſly-careleſs obſervation, that 'our ſentiments are lightly taken up, and 'ſuperficially impreſt.' We can think, Sir, with as much depth, as much firmneſs and ſolidity, as any MASCULINE MIND—But what a ſuperficial obſerver muſt you be, who could not at once ſee into the reaſons you give us for this variety of ſentiment, as well as of conduct?— Be ingenuous, Waller! be frank, and conſtant; and the woman who ſhall treat you with levity, will deſerve your reproaches.

I cannot help thinking, that you and your friend Catullus are like two truant ſchool-boys, who, after they have been properly chaſtiſed, affect to laugh and play upon their puniſhment, but always return to their maſter with fear and trembling.

Nothing ſo fine as your ſpeculative alluſions to the œconomy of nature! Nothing ſo ſlight, or ſoon blown away! Gently—Thou

curious texture, let me behold thy delicate frame? — Hold! It is gone, like the goſſamer! Gone for ever! and not a film remaining!

LETTER XVIII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

YOU have uſed me cruelly, in not introducing me ſooner to the acquaintance of Mr. Cowley. To find, at my time of life, that there is a pleaſure which I might have enjoyed for ſome years, is a very mortifying thing. I am ſenſible of this loſs. Mr. Cowley has convinced me, that I had an affection, which only wanted to be called forth and exerciſed, to add to my ſtock of happineſs. He has taught me to love him, or rather to love ſomething that is in his genius and turn of mind, with a degree of ſenſibility that is very delightful to me. His pleaſant, eaſy manners, the enthuſiaſm of his

ſancy, the luxury of his imagination, have a certain charm in them, which ſeems to communicate itſelf by ſympathy. When he ſpeaks of rural life, and the retired enjoyment of nature, he carries me, without reluctance, into the ſcenes that he deſcribes; and though I knew from experience, that I could not live two whole days in the country, I wonder, for the time, that I ſhould live any where elſe. Mr. Cowley's love of nature appears ſo perfectly unaffected, that it creates a kind of reverence for him. It inſpires one with ſomething like thoſe ſenſations, which we may ſuppoſe the antient poets felt, when they believed and deſcribed the exiſtence of genii and tutelary powers in the ſeveral departments of nature. —Let me aſk you, if you have not often regretted the loſs of that doctrine. I am not aſhamed to own, that I have lamented the abolition of it with great ſincerity. Could any thing be more delightfully affecting, more calculated to inſpire a noble and dignifying enthuſiaſm, than thus to walk with gods?—To ſee nature full of divinities? —Nothing thus is inanimate or unintereſting. Every grove,

every river has its conſequence, when accompanied with the idea of its peculiar deity. How much muſt it have heightened the fancy, and harmonized the numbers of the poet, when he could ſuppoſe himſelf attended by liſtening Dryads, by Naids that had left their fountains to hear the muſic of his lays; perhaps by Apollo himſelf, the god of melody and fancy, habited like ſome ſhepherd, or ſome wandering herdſman! — I am ſincerely ſorry for the loſs of this theology!

LETTER XIX.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

IT would have given me pleaſure to have been of your party with Mr. Cowley. Nothing could have entertained me more than the raptures you expreſſed on the idea of retirement. I know you both, and am ſatisfied that the world has not two men in it who are ſo little capable of living alone. You, indeed, acknowlege it; but poor Cowley has my compaſſion. He miſtakes the chagrin of diſappointment for an averſion to public life; and I grieve to think, that he muſt find himſelf unhappy in that miſtake — I have obſerved, that men who have the greateſt reſources in themſelves are the leaſt able to live in ſolitude. It is not difficult to account for this. It is owing to an exceſs of ſentiment. Evacuation is as neceſſary in the mentals as in the corporal functions. A mind that overflows with ideas, if it wants the accuſtomed means of

communication, will languiſh or find itſelf oppreſt. Books are of no great ſervice in this reſpect. They pour in freſh ſupplies, and draw but little off. Something, indeed, may be ſpent in reflection; but that is a kind of diſcharge, which, like the ebbing tide, goes off to return with the ſame force and fullneſs. The pen is the only relief in ſuch ſituations as theſe. The great Raleigh found it ſo during his infamous impriſonment. Had he been capable of bearing ſolitude, we ſhould probably never have ſeen his hiſtory of the world. But no man can write always. It is a ſevere kind of exerciſe, which will not fail to weaken the mind, if taken too frequently, or too long. Therefore, where retirement becomes an object of neceſſity rather than of choice, which, to the ſhame of the world be it ſpoke, is the caſe with Mr. Cowley; it were to be wiſhed, as you obſerve, that the ancient theology could be revived, and that there were a poſſibility of converſing with ideal beings. I fancy that you, who are a true catholic, might, without much difficulty, reconcile this doctrine to orthodoxy and right faith. I often think, that

the ſubaltern deities in the heathen bible were conſidered only as ſo many ſymboles of the attributes of the univerſal parent. Thus Ceres, Flora, and Pomona, with the reſt of that tribe, repreſent his beneficence in its various operations. Pan, Pales, Sylvanus, and their aſſociate powers, imperſonate his providential care in the animal and vegetable creation. In ſhort, it ſeems to me, that you may recal, without impropriety, this enthuſiaſm of antiquity, and that in all your excurſions you may walk with God!

LETTER XX.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

IT is with me, as with thoſe unhappy debtors, who, when they have no hope of retrieving their affairs, diſcover their diſtreſs to their creditors, and bid them, in deſpair, take the little that is left—Time has a long account againſt me; and, now that I have nothing left worth holding, I am willing to ſettle with him — O Waller! I have lived too long — I have ſurvived myſelf— She is gone — that elegant, that enchanting woman, is gone for ever — Thoſe lips, that never opened without pouring perſuaſion into the ſoul; that ſmiled into ſuch meanings as no language could expreſs — Merciful God! they are ſilent, ſenſeleſs—I ſaw them quiver in the agonies of death; and then, even then, when her eye was half raiſed to meet mine, a tremulous ſmile hung upon them for a moment —That was the laſt ſign of ſenſibility, and in

a moment more ſhe expired, in ſuch a manner as an angel may be imagined to fall aſleep.— I am very ſick of this world. Nothing that is good, or valuable, will live in it. I find myſelf alone, in the midſt of a vaſt, unfeeling, regardleſs circle of beings, with whom I have no mutuality of intereſt or concern. Every thing around me ſeems to have loſt its conſequence. My hopes and deſires, my very will itſelf — are all in a ſtate of ſuſpenſion; and thoſe things which uſed to give me pleaſure, by exciting my attention, are now perfectly indifferent to me. Even the faculty of ſpeech ſeems to have forſaken me, and if I have any indulgence left, it is in a kind of ſombre ſilence.

Et, ceſſant de parler, je remets à mes pleurs
Le ſoin de faire voir l'excès de mes douleurs.
Dans un lieu frequente, dans un lieu ſolitaire,
Le plus aimable objet ne fait que me deplaire;
Inſenſible toujours aux clartes du Soleil,
Plus inſenſible encore aux douceurs de ſommeil.

I knew not that my happineſs ſo totally dedended on the object I have loſt. I ſuſpected

not that ſhe was ſo neceſſary to my peace, to my very exiſtence — It is true, I loved her; but how unpardonable was that ignorance!— I ought to have known the conſequences of loſing her before I felt them — I ſhould then have formed a truer eſtimate of her importance to me — How painful is the anguiſh of too late a gratitude! — How wretched to be for ever learning what we ſhould for ever know!

LETTER XXI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

IS poor Mazarin, then, no more? Eſcaped at laſt from the malice of her fate! — Good heaven! that the moſt beautiful agreeable objects in the creation ſhould thus ſuffer, and periſh! How has the fell ſatyr, MISFORTUNE, purſued that fair and amiable woman, from her very entrance into the world!—And has the chace, then, only ended in the grave? Alas! my St. Evremond, I feel for you, for my-

ſelf, for human nature.—But let us change our grief into indignation—Let us remember, that this loved, lamented victim fell at the ſhrine of SUPERSTITION *, and pour our heavieſt curſes on her deteſted head — Join me, St. Evremond! — Lend me your aſſiſting hand, and we will cruſh her into atoms— Let us purſue her through all her horrid haunts, her diſmal retreats — The injured ghoſt of Mazarin ſhall lead the way, and ſcare her from the meditated taſk of murder.

There is a ſuperfluous kind of generoſity peculiar to liberal ſpirits, which makes them, upon the loſs of thoſe who were dear to them, lament that they have been deficient in friendſhip or in kindneſs. This, I find, is amongſt the things that afflict you; but this is a ſuperſtition of the moral kind, which you muſt not indulge. I know that madam Mazarin had

* The ſuperſtition of the duke De Mazarin, and the ridiculous circumſtances of his fanatical conduct, rendered it impoſſible for a woman of the ducheſs's ſpirit and temper to live with him. Unhappily, however, ſhe had no alternative, but to ſtarve without him. — Yet ſhe preferred even that to ſlavery, and the debaſement of the mind. Mr. De St. Evremond was among thoſe who contributed to her ſupport in England.

the greateſt obligations to your friendſhip. You enlivened her unhappy fortunes with your good humour; you mitigated them with your philoſophy; you relieved them out of an income hardly ſufficient for yourſelf. Remember theſe things, and the reflections which now give you pain will bring you different ſenſations along with them. The idea of Mazarin will be accompanied with a penſive but pleaſing tenderneſs, which, though it may bear the name of ſorrow, you will be unwilling to part with. There is a kind of luxury in lamenting the death of thoſe we have loved. Our affections themſelves ſupply the place of their object. We enjoy the exerciſe of them again; and thus there is a period of mourning that has its charms.

LETTER XXII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I REMEMBER to have been much pleaſed in my youth with a deſign and motto of the duke of Florence. The emblem was a fine ſpreading tree, full of innumerable thriving and flowery branches: the device,

——*Primo avulſo, non deficit alter Aureus.*

The long ſucceſſion of that illuſtrious houſe, the idea of being communicated through a ſeries of deſcendants, and renewing life, only in different forms, gave occaſion to many pleaſing and flattering reflections. — Alas! St. Evremond, they were the dreams of young and unmortified hope. Now, when I want them moſt, they have the leaſt weight with me. I ſhall, indeed, leave children behind me, branches that ſpring up from the decay-

ed ſtock of the body—But the incommunicable mind — Of that I find no traces in thoſe who are to follow me. They may, poſſibly, bear my name to the diſtance of a few centuries; during which time it may acquire appendages of every infirmity in human nature; be ſtigmatized with diſhoneſty, vanity, and ſtupidity!

Yet how unaccountably prevalent is the fondneſs of preſerving a family-name! Could we impreſs the features of the ſoul; could we, like the Grecian architect, give ſome internal character, that might be a laſting honour to us, this ambition would have ſome ſhadow of reaſon for its ſupport. But I find myſelf, and I believe the greateſt part of thoſe who are moſt ſtrongly bent on this method of preſerving nature, to be in the circumſtances with Ptolemy Philadelphus, when he built his celebrated Pharos. His principal intention was, that this building ſhould convey his memory to the remoteſt poſterity; and, therefore, that future times might have no motives to deſtroy it, he took care that it ſhould be of public utility, and ſerve both as a land-mark and as a

light to all thoſe that uſed thoſe ſeas. The ambition of the prince, however, was defeated by the cunning of the architect. The name of Ptolemy was cut upon a thin ſhell, behind which was artfully concealed a ſolid ſquare of white Marble, with the following inſcription: "Soſtratus of Gnidos, the ſon of Dexiphanes; "to the gods protectors, for the ſafeguard of "ſailors." Time did juſtice to the artiſt, and brought him to the enjoyment of his proper fame. It is this fame only that a reaſonable man ſhould make his object. The paſſion of conveying a name through a ſeries of generations, is ridiculous even in thoſe who have no merit to make themſelves remembered.

LETTER XXIII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I AM much afflicted with what you tell me, concerning the death of De Neuville: for though I have not ſeen him theſe many years, I believe he once had a regard for me, and I muſt, therefore, bear a tenderneſs to his memory. The worſt loſſes we ſuſtain, are in the death of thoſe that love us. Every kind ſentiment in our favour is a treaſure of the greateſt value: It is the approbation of a rational being, and is the moſt pardonable kind of flattery in which we can indulge ourſelves. The deſire of having many friends, in all the extent and confidence of the idea, would be followed by great inconveniencies; but to wiſh for the eſteem, or even the love, of many people, has nothing unreaſonable in it. There are moral advantages to be derived from it. Every one, whoſe eſteem or affection is of conſequence to us, becomes, on that account, a

guardian of our virtue. To ſuch we voluntarily make ourſelves anſwerable for our conduct, and our caution will always be in proportion to the eſteem we ſuppoſe ourſelves to poſſeſs. I would not have this idea extended to that popularity which is purſued, and ſometimes obtained, by men of courtly talents and public appointments. Favour, like every thing elſe, when it grows common, loſes its conſequence. Its moral influence, at leaſt, no longer remains; for though the eſteem of individuals makes us careful to preſerve that virtue that attended it, popularity has no ſuch effect. There is ſomething unintereſting, or intoxicating; ſomething that infatuates, or ſomething that cloys in the poſſeſſion of public favour. Thoſe who enjoy it moſt, are never ſollicitous to hold it long. From the ſlighteſt motives, and frequently from none, they act in oppoſition to thoſe very principles, which procured them the applauſe of their fellow-citizens *. If it ſhould fare with poets, then,

* Had Mr. Waller lived nearer our own times, he would not have found it ſo difficult to account for the change of conduct in popular patriots.

as with politicians, popular admiration would be no deſirable thing. Indeed, there are few minds that are capable of ſuſtaining it as they ought. The cordial eſteem of one private friend is more valuable, becauſe leſs dangerous, than the loudeſt echoes of applauſe. If thoſe praiſes are heard, they are ſeldom heard with ſafety. They are apt to deſtroy that equanimity which is the ſupport of wiſdom and virtue. Believe me, St. Evremond, were I always ſure of enjoying the approbation of a few ſuch friends as yourſelf, I ſhould think that ſhare of reputation alone ſufficient. But death and fortune have uſed me cruelly in that reſpect.

LETTER XXIV.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

I AM almoſt perſuaded to think, with the philoſopher of Chatſworth, that it is a right thing to avoid reading—Not from the fear of having my own ſentiments adulterated by the introduction of others: I have not affectation of that kind. But where is the page that is not full of the follies and miſeries of men? Whoever goes into a library, finds himſelf in the ſame circumſtances with Æneas among the pictures of Carthage. The *lacrymæ rerum* occur to him every where. If he opens a book, he is preſented with the hiſtory of human miſfortunes, perhaps with his own. The annals of latter times are ſo filled with death and ruin, that I paſs over them with the fears of a child, that thinks of ghoſts and ſpectres as it wanders through the dark. The image of ſome brave friend ſtill ſtarts up before me, points to his bleeding wounds, and bids me

curſe the rage of faction and ambition. Oh, Waller! what deſtruction of the human ſpecies have you and I lived to behold! — What havock of our cotemporaries, of our friends! — Of what miſerable times do we ſtand the melancholy moments! The ſtorm that tore up the foreſt ſtill left our ſolitary trunks unbroken! To what purpoſe? —To drop the tears of pity and anguiſh on the ruins that lie beneath us!

The concluſion of your laſt brought before me all that I had ſuffered in the deſtruction of my friends. I laboured to oppoſe the growing reflections — I took up an antient author — Merciful God! the book opened at the following paſſage: — *Accipe, mi Commilito; — ede; non enim tibi gladium præbeo, ſed panem — Accipe rurſum et bibe; non enim tibi ſcutum, ſed poculum trado: ut ſive tu me interficias, ſive ego te, moriamur facilius: atque ut ne me enervata atque imbecilla manu occidas, aut ego te. Hæ noſtræ ſunt exequiæ, nobis adhuc viventibus.* He who can read this with dry eyes — He who can think of it without execrating the authors of civil diſſenſions, cannot bear the heart of a man in his boſom. I need not tell you that

this is recorded in the life of Vitellius. When, in the civil wars between that prince and Veſpaſian, the army of the former was ſupplied with proviſions by their women, they conveyed part of them by night into the camp of Veſpaſian, to refreſh their countrymen, whom they were to fight the following day. The manner in which they deliver them, the language they uſe to remove their apprehenſions, is more affecting than any thing I ever met with of the kind: 'Take this, fellow-ſoldier, and eat it — It is not my ſword I put towards you, it is bread — This, too, take, and drink it — It is not my ſhield I am holding to you; it is a cup. Whether you fall by my hand, or I by yours, this refreſhment will make death more eaſy. It will ſtrengthen the arm that gives the deciſive blow, and we ſhall not die ſlowly by a feeble wound. Theſe, fellow-ſoldier, are the only funeral rites we ſhall have. Let us thus celebrete them while we live.' — In what a deteſtable light do thoſe wretches appear, whoſe competitions could lead thoſe brave and merciful men to the ſlaughter of each other!

Surely ſome curſe of peculiar bitterneſs is reſerved for thoſe diabolical ſpirits, who, for private gratifications, break the bonds of ſociety! Is there no place of public puniſhment for theſe demoniacs? I would ſooner believe there is no heaven for the virtuous.

LETTER XXV.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

CROMWEL once obſerved to me, when we were lamenting the loſs of ſome brave men, who had fallen in the civil wars, that as it was the property of God to bring good out of evil, man might ſometimes be unblameably inſtrumental in doing that evil for the production of the enſuing good. I am ſenſible, added he, that St. Paul ſpeaks ſomewhat differently on this ſubject, but he does not ſeem to have intended that his precept ſhould affect political matters. It is thus that the diſturbers of ſociety reaſon, when they want to effect

their purpoſes by pernicious means. Cromwel was certainly a great man, an able negociator, a deep politician; but, without ingenuity, without humanity, without any affection for truth or honour, he made uſe of the worſt and cruelleſt of all political engines, fanaticiſm. I have often been aſtoniſhed at his command of face, and expreſſion of ſanctity, when he liſtened to the vileſt nonſenſe that ever tortured the ear of a rational creature. Not one look, or glance, or feature bore any marks of that contempt which he felt at his heart. It ſeemed to me that he had two ſouls, one directing his countenance, attitude, and motion; the other, more retired, charged with his proper and private ſentiments; one that ſecretly planned and watched over the deep-laid ſchemes of political ambition; another that received its orders from within, and went through the external drudgery of carrying thoſe ſchemes into execution.—I received many favours from him, partly becauſe I had the honour to be related to him, and partly on account of the panegyric I wrote upon him— I muſt, therefore, beg for ſome indulg-

ence to his memory. — Save, at leaſt, one of his ſouls, the pious and innocent ſubaltern, that was employed in prayers, and praiſes! that waited for the Lord, and would rebuke him for his delay! that lay violent hands upon the throne of grace, and cried, Come, come quickly! ——— Surely, St. Evremond, this ſoul ſhould be ſaved: the other we muſt give up to the allotment of your demoniacs!

LETTER XXVI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

NO, my St. Evremond, it is time to cloſe the idle purſuits of poetry. I am now deſcending from the little eminence of life, and muſt ſoon drop into thoſe dark, unfathomed waters that lie at the bottom.—The impreſſions of fancy are never indulged without danger. They leave the mind in a fluctuating and unſettled ſtate. They withdraw its attention from fixed principles and points of view. They confuſe its clear and ſimple lights, by mingling them with ſhadows and fantaſtic appearances. Are ſuch circumſtances proper for declining years?—where all ſhould be ſteady, conſiſtent, and uniform—where we ſhould tread only on the firm ground of philoſophy—ſhall we ſtep aſide like children to gather flowers? Believe me, St. Evremond, to pay a ſerious court to the muſes would now be as abſurd, as it would be to ad-

dreſs any other misfortune on the ſame terms. The attempt would be equally fruitleſs and ridiculous:

The muſe that caught from Sidney's eyes her fire,
In Sidney's aſhes felt the flame expire.

Poetical ground, like every other ſoil, becomes barren and unfruitful by too long exerciſe. There is a period in life beyond which poets, in particular, ought not to think of writing. Fancy is not the gueſt of age; and, therefore, old men rarely ſucceed in works of that nature. Thoſe depend principally on enthuſiaſm; and that is, almoſt peculiarly, the growth of young and vigorous minds. We grow cold to the love of nature, after a long acquaintance with her, and it is that love to which poetical enthuſiaſm owes its very exiſtence. Nor is it eaſy to ſubſtitute any thing of equal energy in its place. It is not many years ſince I attempted ſome poems on divine ſubjects, thinking thoſe moſt ſuited to my age and condition. But I cannot boaſt of ſucceſs, not even of ſatisfaction in thoſe performances. They may be pleaſing to devout minds; but there is ſomething want-

ing. It is the *vis ingenii*, the vigour of imagination and expreſſion that has failed. You will conſider theſe frank acknowlegements as an unanſwerable apology for the ſilence of what you call my muſes. Yours are of a more elaſtic kind; and, like the nympths of your country, they will dance till they die.

LETTER XXVII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

IT was uſual, I think, amonſt the ancient Hebrews, when they had paſſed the period of ſixty, to make a feaſt for their friends, and ſing the ſongs of Sion. There was ſomething truly rational and philoſophical in this chearful cuſtom. It was the natural tribute of good ſenſe and gratitude. A people, who believed the mortality of their exiſtence, could not but look upon the prolongation of it as an effect of the divine benevolence, and every teſtimony of their joy was, on that principle, an act of

religion.—What is the reaſon that we have conceived ſuch very different ideas of the proper deportment of age? We have impoſed upon it a gravity of manners, and a ſeverity of ſtudies. We add to the weights that time hangs upon that period. The lighter amuſements are deemed improper, and the indulgence of fancy muſt be utterly excluded.—I own I am unable to diſcover the wiſdom, or even the propriety of this.——What! becauſe I have the promiſe but of a few years before I muſt be locked up in the grave, is the work of death to begin already? Shall it not be left to nature? Am I to die through my beſt parts and faculties before ſhe gives the ſummons? Muſt I now part with my vivacity, my fancy? —ſhut up every ſource of amuſement, becauſe they muſt infallibly be taken from me at laſt? Is it the art of accommodation I am to learn? Is any art neceſſary for ſleeping in the grave? Were it ſo, the cave of Trophonius would, indeed, be a proper ſchool. But if my ſleep will be the ſame, whether I am called from thence, or beckoned from the circle of the muſes and the graces, I cannot entertain a

doubt to which of thoſe ſcenes my proper happineſs ſhould lead me. I have admired the death of Buchanan. He was willing to go to reſt with agreeable ideas, and therefore retained to the laſt the image of that object, which, in life, had given him the greateſt pleaſure.

Cynthia prima ſuis miſerum me cepit ocellis;
Contactum nullis ante cupidinibus.

With that couplet of Propertius he cloſed the ſcene; and, though his death was more poetical than pious, he certainly was right in his firſt principle. To what purpoſe, Waller, ſhould we affect a cold and ſombrous gravity of temper? Our little fires will too ſoon be extinguiſhed. Let us ſtir up and brighten the dying embers. We may not ſtrike the lyre with the vivacity of youth, but we may yet call from it ſome ſoothing notes to divert the idea of eternal ſilence.

LETTER XXVIII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

IF there ſhould be no greater impropriety in giving the faculty of ſpeech to the vegetable than to the animal creation, many fine morals, I think, might be drawn from fables deſigned in that part of nature. For my own part, I am fond of animating every thing around me; and there is hardly a tree or flower of any note in my garden, which is not, in my idea, inveſted with ſome peculiar deſign or quality; which has not ſome relative intereſt, conſequence, or purſuit. It was under the influence of this kind of fancy, that the following little piece was written; which may not improperly be called, *The Lady's Moral.*

The TULIP *and the* MYRTLE.

I.

'TWAS on the border of a ſtream
A gayly-painted Tulip ſtood,
And gilded by the morning beam,
Survey'd her beauties in the flood.

II.

And ſure, more lovely to behold,
Might nothing meet the wiſtful eye,
Than crimſon fading into gold,
In ſtreaks of faireſt ſymmetry.

III.

The beauteous flower, with pride elate,
Ah me! that pride with beauty dwells!
Vainly affects ſuperior ſtate,
And thus in empty fancy ſwells.

IV.

" O luſtre of unrivalled bloom!
Fair painting of a hand divine!
Superior far to mortal doom,
The hues of heaven alone are mine!

V.

Away, ye worthleſs, formal race!
Ye weeds, that boaſt the name of flowers!
No more my native bed diſgrace,
Unmeet for tribes ſo mean as yours!

VI.

Shall the bright daughter of the ſun,
Aſſociate with the ſhrubs of earth?
Ye ſlaves, your Sovereign's preſence ſhun!
Reſpect her beauties and her birth.

VII.

And thou, dull, ſullen ever-green!
Shalt thou my ſhining ſphere invade?
My noon-day beauties beam unſeen,
Obſcured beneath thy duſky ſhade!"

VIII.

"Deluded flower! the Myrtle cries,
Shall we thy moment's bloom adore?
The meaneſt ſhrub that you deſpiſe,
The meaneſt flower has merit more.

IX.

That daiſy, in its ſimple bloom,
Shall laſt along the changing year;
Bluſh on the ſnow of winter's gloom,
And bid the ſmiling ſpring appear.

X.

The violet, that, thoſe banks beneath,
Hides from thy ſcorn its modeſt head,
Shall fill the air with fragrant breath,
When thou art in thy duſty bed.

XI.

Ev'n I who boaſt no golden ſhade,
Am of no ſhining tints poſſeſt,
When low thy lucid form is laid,
Shall bloom on many a lovely breaſt.

XII.

And he, whoſe kind and foſtering care
To thee, to me, our beings gave,
Shall near his breaſt my flowrets wear,
And walk regardleſs o'er thy grave.

XIII.

Deluded flower! thy friendly ſcreen,
That hides thee from the noon-tide ray,
And mock thy paſſion to be ſeen,
Prolongs the tranſitory day.

XIV.

But kindly deeds with ſcorn repaid,
No more by virtue need be done:
I now withdraw my duſky ſhade,
And yield thee to thy darling ſun."

XV.

Fierce on the flower the ſcorching beam
With all its weight of glory fell;
The flower exulting caught the gleam,
And lent its leaves a bolder ſwell.

XVI.

Expanded by the ſearching fire,
The curling leaves the breaſt diſclos'd;
The mantling bloom was painted higher,
And ev'ry latent charm expos'd.

XVII.

But when the ſun was ſliding low,
And ev'ning came, with dews ſo cold;
The wanton beauty ceas'd to blow,
And ſought her bending leaves to fold.

XVIII.

Thoſe leaves, alas, no more would cloſe;
Relaxed, exhauſted, ſickening, pale;
They left her to a parent's woes,
And fled before the riſing gale.

I think there cannot be any great impropriety in the indulgence of poetical amuſements of this moral nature, even at my far advanced time of life. You found ſome difficulty,

notwithſtanding, to bring me over to this opinion; and I cannot yet think that an old man can ſpend his time very properly in what you call the circle of the muſes and the graces. There is one John Milton, an old commonwealth's man, who hath, in the latter part of his time, written a poem, intitled, *Paradiſe Loſt*; and to ſay the truth, it is not without ſome fancy and bold invention. But I am much better pleaſed with ſome ſmaller productions of his in the ſcenical and paſtoral way; one of which, called Lycidas, I ſhall herewith ſend you, that you may have ſome amends for the trouble of reading this bad poetry.

LETTER XXIX.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

I THANK you for your vegetable fable, and have long thought as you do, that a very beautiful collection of moral poems of the ſame kind might be drawn from that part of nature. The enthuſiaſm that would be excited by the ſcenery in general, and the pleaſure which might ariſe from the minuter beauties of deſcription, would give to the compoſitions of this ſort many evident advantages. Nature is a much better moraliſt than Seneca or Epictetus, and gives her leſſons both more agreeably and more effectually.

The poem called Lycidas, which you ſay is written by Mr. Milton, has given me much pleaſure. It has in it what I conceive to be the true ſpirit of paſtoral poetry, the old Arcadian enthuſiaſm. Your Engliſh poets have been ſtrangely miſtaken, when they have thought it poſſible to accommodate the genius

of this poetry to the inelegant ſimplicity of your clowns. Your Spenſer, in other reſpects an agreeable painter of nature, is, in his ruſtic paſtorals, inſupportable. It is not to be denied, however, that Theocritus is, in ſome places, quite as vile as Spenſer, and Virgil almoſt as vile as Theocritus. But the latter, I think, ſeems to have written beneath the dignity of poetry with reluctance. The language of his Taſte was always,

——*Sylvæ ſint conſule dignæ!*

but his reverence for his model led him into an imitation of his defects.

The great error ſeems to have ariſen from an inattention to this doctrine, that every ſpecies of poetry is under the patronage of the Graces. How the Greeks ſhould, at any time, forget this, is ſomewhat difficult to account for; as the Muſes and the Graces are with them, very often, ſynonymous terms, and their word Charites is uſed indifferently for either. Yet it is certain that ſome of their beſt poets have frequently forgotten in whoſe temple they were worſhiping.

It is not the moſt unadorned ſimplicity that is improper in any ſpecies of paſtoral compoſition; for ſimplicity is the ground of every thing that is graceful. It is the introduction of objects or ideas that are in themſelves low and inelegant, which ſpoils the beauty of paſtoral imagery. Taſte is always attended with a peculiar delicacy, and will be diſguſted with every work of art, where that is wanting.

But if your Spenſer is too groſs, your Dryden is too trim, and too full of low conceits in his paſtoral ſcenery. Nothing can be a ſtronger proof of this than the following couplet,

For thee, gay month, the groves green liveries
If not the firſt, the faireſt of the year. [*wear,*

It is hardly poſſible to conceive any thing more contemptible than the idea of dreſſing the woods in livery; yet I doubt not that this couplet has had its admirers. Sure I am, that Malherbe has been praiſed for a thouſand verſes as vile.

Shall we praiſe the Italian paſtoral? How is it poſſible? Even the celebrated paſtoral comedy

of Guarini is, with all the profuſion of genius, a moſt abſurd performance. He is right in the locality of his piece; but his great misfortune is, that love is not a local thing. Neither is it romantic; though, by ſetting the ideas afloat, it ſometimes gives people a turn to what we call romantic. Neither will it bear to be bound up in allegory. We hate the very idea of demi-gods and ſatyrs. Unleſs we held the religion that bred them, it would be impoſſible to conſider them otherwiſe than in a farcical light. In the buſineſs of love, therefore, they will not go down, becauſe love is a ſerious thing.

What pleaſes me in John Milton's poem, beſide the true paſtoral enthuſiaſm, and the ſcenical merit, is the various and eaſy flow of its numbers. Thoſe meaſures are well adapted to the tender kind of imagery, though they are not expreſſive of the firſt ſtrong impreſſions of grief.

A little poem of this kind was lately put into my hands, which, as it has not been printed, I will tranſcribe for you.

A MONODY,

Inſcribed to my worthy Friend, J. S. being written in his garden at Amwell, in Hertfordſhire, the beginning of the year 1669.

I.

FRIEND of my genius! on whoſe natal hour,
Shone the ſame ſtar, but ſhone with brighter ray;
Oft as amidſt thy Amwell's ſhades I ſtray,
And mark thy true taſte in each winding bower,
From my full eye why falls the tender ſhower?
While other thoughts than theſe fair ſcenes convey,
Bear on my trembling mind, and melt its powers away.

II.

Ah me! my friend! in happier hours I ſpread,
Like thee, the wild walk o'er the varied plain;
The faireſt tribes of Flora's painted train,
Each bolder ſhrub that grac'd her genial bed,
When old Sylvanus, by young wiſhes led,
Stole to her arms, of ſuch fair offspring vain,
That bore her mother's beauties on their head.

III.

Like thee, inſpired by love — 'twas Delia's charms,
'Twas Delia's taſte the new creation gave:
For her my groves in plaintive ſighs would wave,
And call her abſent to her maſter's arms.

IV.

She comes — Ye flowers your faireſt blooms unfold! [bear!
Ye waving groves, your plantive ſighs for-
Breathe all your fragrance to the amorous air,
Ye ſmiling ſhrubs whoſe heads are cloth'd with gold!

V.

She comes, by truth, by fair affection led,
The long-lov'd miſtreſs of my faithful heart!
The miſtreſs of my ſoul, no more to part,
And all my hopes, and all my vows are ſped.
Vain, vain deluſions! Dreams for ever fled!
Ere twice the ſpring had waked the genial hour,
The lovely parent bore one beauteous flower,
And drooped her gentle head,
And ſunk, for ever ſunk into her ſilent bed.

VI.

Friend of my genius! partner of my fate!
To equal ſenſe of painful ſuffering born!
From whoſe fond breaſt a lovely parent torn,
Bedewed thy pale cheek with a tear ſo late;—
Oh! let us mindful of the ſhort, ſhort date,
That bears the ſpoil of human hopes away,
Indulge ſweet memory of each happier day!
No! cloſe, for ever cloſe the iron-gate
Of cold oblivion on that dreary cell,
Where the pale ſhades of paſt enjoyments dwell,
And, pointing to their bleeding boſoms ſay,
On life's diſaſtrous hour what varried woes await!

VII.

Let ſcenes of ſofter, gentler kind
Awake to fancy's ſoothing call,
And milder on the penſive mind,
The ſhadowed thought of grief ſhall fall.
Oft as the ſlowly-cloſing day
Draws her pale mantle from the dew-ſtar's eye,
What time, the ſhepherd's cry
Leads from the paſtured hills his flocks away,
Attentive to the tender lay

That ſteals from Philomela's breaſt,
Let us in muſing ſilence ſtray,
Where LEE beholds in mazes flow
His uncomplaining waters flow
And all his whiſpering ſhores invite the charm
of reſt.

LETTER XXX.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I WAS much pleaſed with a converſation, which I overheard a few days ago, between the king and an honeſt Worceſterſhire baronet, who was lately elected for a borough in that county. The good-natured man came up to take his ſeat among us, and as he lived in the neighbourhood of the royal oak, he ſuppoſed that he could not pay a better compliment to his majeſty than by bringing him a a branch of his old aſylum. Who is that antique, ſaid the king, with a withered branch in his hand !—It is Sir Thomas ****, member for ****.

The KING.

Sir Thomas, I am glad to ſee you: I hope you can give a good account of your friends in Worceſterſhire.

Sir THOMAS ****

I wiſh I could, pleaſe your majeſty; but there is a blackſmith's wife —

The KING.

No matter for her — I enquired only after the health of your family.

Sir THOMAS.

Thank God! in good health — But this woman, pleaſe your majeſty —

The KING.

What of her?

Sir THOMAS,

—— Has ſworn a child to your majeſty.

The KING.

I am glad of it — I do remember that I met a woman, when I went a wood-cutting with farmer Penderell.

Sir THOMAS.

A roſy complexion, pleaſe your majeſty!

The KING.

No matter! What is become of the woman, and her child? —

Sir THOMAS.

She is very well taken care of, pleaſe your majeſty! The church wardens are my tenants, and I order them to allow her an upper ſheet.

The KING.

Fye! Fye!

Sir THOMAS.

Pleaſe your majeſty, I was near loſing my election by it. Some of that pariſh were free men, and they ſaid that I, as a magiſtrate, ought to have ſent a warrant to your majeſty, to give a bond to the pariſh, or to pay ten pounds.

The KING.

Why did you not do your duty?

Sir Thomas.

Becauſe, pleaſe your majeſty, I thought it my duty not to do it. Your majeſty has been at a great expence of late.

The KING.

True; very true, Sir Thomas! What is that branch in your hand? Some token, I ſuppoſe, by which you hold your lands —

Sir THOMAS.

No; it is ſomething by which your majeſty

holds your lands — It is a branch of that bleſſed oak which preſerved your majeſty's precious life.

The KING.

This is a wooden compliment; but it is honeſt, and I thank you for it — You have wit, Sir Thomas; why do not we ſee you oftener at court?

Sir THOMAS.

I can do your majeſty much more ſervice in the country, by keeping up a ſpirit of loyalty and good will towards you amongſt my neighbours.

The KING.

And how do you manage that point?

Sir THOMAS.

I give them beef, and bid 'em fall to without the long grace of the Roundheads. Then I give them ſtrong beer, and they cry, God bleſs your majeſty.

The KING.

If that is the toaſt, Sir Thomas, you are the king; and, in truth, I think you govern with profound policy. Could I adopt the ſame meaſures, I ſhould have much leſs trou-

ble; but there is no finding beef enough for that hungry circle which you ſee there.

Sir THOMAS.

God bleſs your majeſty! I have ten fat oxen in Worceſterſhire; and nine of them are heartily at your majeſty's ſervice.

* * * * * * * * *

This bountiful offer of the honeſt baronet's made the king laugh ſo violently, that it put an end to the converſation. His majeſty told us, with great good humour, what we had to expect, and added, that he hoped every member of the houſe would be as ready to give as Sir Thomas ****, that he might be able to find wine for the feaſt. — This is a meaſure which I will promote with all my power; for the king's neceſſities are truly deplorable.— Conſidering his extreme poverty, his good humour is aſtoniſhing. I believe there never was a prince at the ſame time ſo pleaſant and ſo poor.

LETTER XXXI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

O VALES of Penhurſt, now ſo long unſeen!
Forgot each ſecret ſhade, each winding green;
Thoſe lonely paths what art have I to tread,
Where once young Love, the blind enthuſiaſt, led?
Yet if the genius of your conſcious groves
His Sidney in my Sachariſſa loves;
Set him with pride her cruel power unfold;
By him my pains let Evremond be told

The LOVES *of* THYRSIS *and* SACHARISSA.

Related by the GENIUS *of* Penſhurſt.

WHATE'ER hath met mine ear of tale or ſong,
Since he of Arcady firſt ſtole the reed
Of Hermes, and made every ſhepherd ſcorn
His evening ſlumbers, needleſs have I heard,
Yet pity for the gentle Thyrſis drew
Me frequent from the moſſy breaſt of ſleep;
And when beneath the cold moon's ſhadowy light,
Like that fond bird which courteth ſilence beſt,
He thus complained harmonious, I have ſighed,
And felt his ſorrow through my depth of ſhades.

THYRSIS *at* Penſhurſt.

WHile in the park I ſing, the liſtening deer
Attend my paſſion, and forget to fear.
When to the beeches I report my flame,
They bow their heads as if they felt the ſame:
To gods appealing, when I reach their bowers
With loud complaints, they anſwer me in ſhowers.
To thee a wild, and cruel fate is given,
More deaf than trees, and prouder than the heaven.
Love's foe profeſt, why doſt thou falſely feign
Thyſelf a Sidney? from which noble ſtrain
He ſprung, that could ſo far exalt the name
Of love, and warm our nation with his flame,
That all we can of love, or high deſire,
Seems but the ſmoke of amorous Sidney's fire.
Nor call her mother, who ſo well does prove,
One breaſt may hold both chaſtity and love.
Never can ſhe, that ſo exceeds the ſpring
In joy and bounty, be ſuppoſed to bring

One ſo deſtructive; to no human ſtock
We owe this fierce unkindneſs, but the rock,
That cloven rock produced thee, by whoſe ſide
Nature to recompenſe the fatal pride
Of ſuch ſtern beauty, placed thoſe healing ſprings,
Which not more help than that deſtruction brings.
Thy heart no ruder than the rugged ſtone,
I might, like Orpheus, with my numerous moan
Melt to compaſſion now my traiterous ſong,
With thee conſpires to do the ſinger wrong.
While thus I ſuffer not myſelf to loſe
The memory of what augments my woes:
But with my own breath ſtill foment the fire
Which flames as high as fancy can aſpire.
This laſt complaint th' indulgent ears did pierce
Of juſt Apollo, preſident of verſe:
Highly concerned, that the muſe ſhould bring
Damage to one whom he had taught to ſing;
Thus he adviſed me; On yon aged tree
Hang up thy lute, and hie thee to the ſea,
That there with wonders thy diverted mind
Some truce at leaſt may with this paſſion find.

Ah, cruel nymph! from whom her humble
ſwain,
Flies for relief, into the raging main;
And from the winds and tempeſts does expect
A milder fate than from her cold neglect:
Yet there he'll pray that the unkind may prove
Bleſt in her choice, and vows this endleſs love
Springs from no hope of what ſhe can confer,
But from thoſe gifts which heaven has heaped
on her.

Thus ſung he plaintive, and full ſore I grieved
That the fair miſtreſs of theſe flowery plains,
Where love and nature triumphed, foe to love,
Tho' born of Sidney's race, in ſuch high ſcorn
Should hold his gentle prayer; yet, ſhepherd,
ceaſe
Theſe vain complaints of cruelty, I cried,
And threats of raſh deſpair: theſe only feed
The female pride; they ſoften not their hearts.
Would you ſucceed, let ſoothing blandiſhments
Of careleſs praiſe, as from a mind at eaſe,
To call for no reward, invade their ear.
Eager they drink the golden draught that flows
From this unnoted ſource, and yield that love,

That rich reward, which, firſt ſollicited,
Were harder to be won; for flattery fails not,
Save when her thin veil ſhews the hated form
Of ſelfiſh hope behind. Obedient thus
The ſwain reſumed his ſong.

THYRSIS *at* Penſhurſt.

HAD Sachariſſa lived when mortals made
Choice of their deities, this ſacred ſhade
Had held an altar to her power that gave
The peace and glory which theſe alleys have.
Embroidered ſo with flowers where ſhe ſtood,
That it became a garden of a wood:
Her preſence has much more than human grace
That it can civilize the rudeſt place;
And beauty too and order can impart,
Where nature ne'er intended it, nor art.
The plants acknowlege this, and her admire
No leſs than thoſe of old did Orpheus's lyre.
If ſhe ſit down, with tops all toward her bowed,
They round about her into arbours crowd;
Or if ſhe walk, in even ranks they ſtand
Like ſome well marſhalled, and obſequious band.

Amphion ſo made ſtones and timber leap :
Into fair figures from a confuſed heap :
And in her ſymmetry of parts is found
A power like that of harmony in ſound.
Ye lofty beeches tell this matchleſs dame
That if together ye fed all one flame,
It could not equalize the hundredth part
Of what her eyes have kindled in my heart.
Go, boy, and carve this paſſion on the bark
Of yonder tree, which ſtands the ſacred mark
Of noble Sidney's birth, when ſuch benign,
Such more than mortal-making ſtars did ſhine;
That there they cannot but for ever prove
The monument and pledge of humble love :
His humble love, whoſe hope ſhall ne'er riſe higher
Than for a pardon that he dares admire.

— — —
— — —

And did no ſmile, good Thyrſis, no kind look
On thoſe ſoft numbers fall ? — O yes, more precious
Than all the treaſure that the Lydian wave
Sweeps from his ſands of gold ; but, coldly pleaſed,

Theſe ſtrains of art and fancy, ſhe replied,
Fantaſtic minds amuſe: they love the errors
That live in poets' creeds, their vain divinities,
And idle adorations; ſtrange to me,
Who love no language but of truth and nature!
Yet, gentle Thyrſis, other hopes are thine.
This haughty fair the love of power may charm,
And yield her to thy wiſh; ſome other miſtreſs,
Some object of a former flame muſt bleed
A victim on her altar — She muſt know
Muſt ſee the ſacrifice, thyſelf unſeen,
Unconſcious that ſhe finds the flattering bait.
Haſte then, and leave it in theſe lonely walks,
Where oft ſhe wanders, when the ſtar of eve
Lights up the hour of love.

THYRSIS *to* AMORET.

FAIR, that you may truly know
What you unto Thyrſis owe;
I will tell you how I do
Sachariſſa love and you.
Joy ſalutes me when I ſet
My bleſt eyes on Amoret:
But with wonder I am ſtruck,
When I on the other look.
If ſweet Amoret complains,
I have ſenſe of all her pains;
But for Sachariſſa I
Do not only grieve, but die.
All that of myſelf is mine;
Lovely Amoret, is thine;
Sachariſſa's captive fain
Would untie his iron chain;
And thoſe ſcorching beams to ſhun,
To thy gentle ſhadow run.
If the ſoul had free election
To diſpoſe of her affection,

I would not thus long have borne
Haughty Sachariſſa's ſcorn:
But 'tis ſure ſome power above,
Which controuls our will in love.
If not love, a ſtrong deſire
To create and ſpread that fire,
In my breaſt ſollicits me,
Beauteous Amoret, for thee.
'Tis amazement more than love,
Which her radiant eyes do move;
If leſs ſplendor wait on thine,
Yet they ſo benignly ſhine,
I would turn my dazzled ſight
To behold their milder light.
But as hard 'tis to deſtroy
That high flame as to enjoy:
Which how eaſily I may do,
Heaven, as eaſily ſcaled, does know.
Amoret, as ſweet and good
As the moſt delicious food,
Which, but taſted, does impart
Life and gladneſs to the heart.
Sachariſſa's beauty's wine
Which to madneſs doth incline;
Such a liquor as no brain
That is mortal, can ſuſtain.

Scarce can I to heaven excuſe
The devotion, which I uſe
Unto that adored dame;
For 'tis not unlike the ſame,
Which I thither ought to ſend;
So that if it could take end,
'Twould to heaven itſelf be due
To ſucceed her, and not you,
Who already have of me
All that's not idolatry;
Which, though not ſo fierce a flame,
Is longer like to be the ſame.
Then ſmile on me, and I will prove
Wonder is ſhorter-lived than love.

Beneath the ſacred ſhade of that fair tree,
From Sidney's birth that marks the flight of time,
Thus framed the bard his eaſy artful lay,
And, left as heedleſs, there. From waſting dews
The doves of Venus with their ſheltering wings
The ſoft impreſſions ſaved; till the fair ſtar,
That lights the hour of love, and lonely muſing,
Led Sachariſſa on her wonted way

To Sidney's ſacred tree—She ſaw, ſhe read;
And twice ſhe felt the ſoothing charm of power,
And twice the ſenſe of conqueſt on her cheek
Sate in an orient bluſh. Even jealouſy
She ſeemed to feel, when in his cloſing ſtrain
Her captive feigned to fly—Ah, ſhepherd, then,
For thee what triumph!—Triumph—ſhort and vain!
'Tis art, ſhe cried; O inſolence of art,
And ſmooth deſign, to catch the wareleſs ear
Of unſuſpecting virgins! ſoothing ſtrains,
Inſidious flattery, hence! From her fair hand
The folded paper fell—yet, parting ſighs
Swelled her fair boſom, and with voice more ſoft
ThanEcho's, when ſhe caught the dying plaint
Of young Narciſſus, parting, ſhe reſumed—
But for Sachariſſa I
Do not only grieve, but die.
From the deep covert of a lonely ſhade,
Where rambling wild vines bound the oſier ſpray.
Th' impatient lover ſprung—Ah, deſperate youth!
Sure ruin follows that raſh deed—Unmarked

By thee, the ſweet infection ſhould have ſtolen
Thro' her unconſcious heart--awaked, alarmed,
The magic works no more: with ſwifter ſteps
Not Daphne fled from thy miſtaken maſter,
Like thee precipitately loſt— Yet ſtill
One hope remains: defend her injured fame:
The love of power, the love of pleaſure yields
To that prevailing honeſty of pride
Which ſpurns at envy's falſhood ——

On the Miſreport of SACHARISSA'S *being painted.*

AS when a ſort of wolves infeſt the night
With their wild howlings at fair Cynthia's light,
The noiſe may chaſe ſweet ſlumber from our eyes,
But never reach the miſtreſs of the ſkies:
So with the news of Sachariſſa's wrongs,
Her ſervants vexed blame thoſe envious tongues;
Call love to witneſs, that no painted fire
Can ſcorch men ſo, or kindle ſuch deſire:

While unconcerned, ſhe ſeems moved no more,
With this new malice, than our loves before;
But from the height of her great mind looks down
On both our paſſions, without ſmile or frown:
So little care of what is done below ſo.
Hath the bright dame whom heaven affecteth
Paints her, 'tis true, with the ſame hand which ſpreads
Like glorious colours o'er the flowery meads,
When laviſh nature with her beſt attire
Clothes the gay ſpring, the ſeaſon of deſire.
Paints her, 'tis true, and does her cheek adorn
With the ſame art, wherewith ſhe paints the morn:
With the ſame art wherewith ſhe gildeth ſo
Thoſe painted clouds that form Traumantia's bow.

Deſunt cætera *****

LETTER XXXII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

THE ſtatue of the Cretan Jupiter was without ears; and the reaſon one of the ancient mythologiſts gives for it is, that the governor of the univerſe, whoſe care is over the whole, ſhould not be ſuppoſed to be particularly attentive to any individual. Had that mythologiſt lived in theſe times, and heard the prayers of our bigots, our enthuſiaſts, and fanatics, he might have aſſigned a much better reaſon for Jupiter's deafneſs. The father of gods and men, might he have ſaid, was ſo harraſſed by the latter with vain, ſelfiſh, impudent, abaſing, and abſurd addreſſes, that he ordered Mercury to convey to them his image without ears; thereby ſignifying how little they had to hope from their impertinent petitions.

It is obſervable that God is never ſo much blaſphemed as when men are moſt religious.

It is then that they ſo liberally inveſt him with their peculiar follies, paſſions, and prejudices. The Creator of the univerſe muſt be of a party, a ſect, or faction. He muſt be particularly their God, or he is no God. His attributes and qualities muſt be ſuch as are moſt likely to ſerve their proper purpoſes: if their way be through heaps of ſlain, he muſt go before them. The blood of his creatures muſt be ſhed for his glory; and he who has declared that his delight is in mercy and ſacrifice, is not allowed to be ſerved or gratified in his own way. The Scots fanatics, after the loſs of a battle, gave him a very warm reception. They remonſtrated with great ſpirit againſt his conduct towards the ſaints, and intimated, that whatever right he might have to their allegiance as the Lord, he was but a poor politician, and had very little idea of his own intereſt. "For our parts, ſaid they, it is but a ſmall thing for us to loſe our lands and inheritance; but for the Lord's flock to be leſſened, his glory ſet at nought, and his people trodden under foot; this ſhews a ſtrange negligence ſomewhere."

Prayers and addreſſes, conceived in ſuch a ſpirit as this, ſurely approach very near blaſphemy; but it is true in religious as well as in ſocial life, that too much familiarity begets contempt. The Lord muſt not look for very much reſpect from thoſe with whom he vouchſafes to be ſo intimate.

The marquis of Hallifax uſed to ſay, that the common people would not believe in God at all, unleſs they were permitted to believe wrong in him. I doubt not the truth of his obſervation; but I am of opinion, that there are ſome modes of faith worſe than infidelity, and that fanaticiſm is a more dangerous thing than irreligion.

LETTER XXXIII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

THE dutcheſs of R——, whom you once pleaſed ſo much, by telling her that ſhe was deſcended from Leda, has lately given us a proof that you miſtook her anceſtry, and that ſhe is more nearly allied to Medea. While ſhe amuſed herſelf with harmleſs extravagancies, with dreams of night-errantry and heroic love, her follies were entertaining. Nothing more pleaſant than to find her by moonlight repoſing under an oak near the old caſtle, with a flaming creſcent on her head, in the character of Dian; while my poor lord duke, under the burden of his infirmities, was condemned to hobble up to her, and perſonate Endymion. Theſe are things which, as the poet ſays, Jove laughs at. One of her late adventures was of a more ſerious caſt.

A certain itinerant philoſopher, a profound adept in the occult ſciences, recommended to

her the merit of his art, and found no great difficulty in perſuading her, that it was in his power to reſtore her to youth and beauty. The proceſs he recommended was ſomewhat different from the operation that Æſon was ſuppoſed to undergo. A fat, well-grown, well-looking young fellow was to be found out for the purpoſe, drawn, quartered, and diſtilled, into the quinteſſence of juvenility. A ſon of one of her grace's tenants was pitched upon as a proper ſubject, but the philoſopher deeming him not quite fat enough, he was put up for a ſhort time to feed. The richeſt food of every kind was procured for him, and he was confined to an apartment juſt large enough to contain his bed, that he might not impair his corpulency by exerciſe. The poor man's curioſity was naturally excited by ſuch extraordinary inſtances of her grace's goodneſs, and one day ſeeing the duke's fool before his window, he aſked him the meaning of it. "Do "not you ſee that turkey in the coop? ſaid "the fool; you are kept here for the ſame pur-"poſe. The ducheſs is ſick of fiſh and butch-"ers meat, and ſhe intends to eat you." This

information had ſuch an effect upon the intended victim, that he preſently pined away, and the philoſopher, thinking him an improper ſubject, he was diſmiſſed. Another was ſoon fixed upon, but the king being informed of her grace's abſurdity, commanded her to give up her chemiſtry, and her philoſopher to be hanged.

This ridiculous affair has led me into many ſerious reflections on the errors of the mind. 'Tis obvious from this as well as a thouſand other inſtances, how much every ſpecies of enthuſiaſm deſtroys the power of moral reaſon. From that ſource ſprung all this poor woman's abſurdities. Her paſſion for the high romance abſorbed every other principle. The ſenſe of juſtice, honour, truth, and decency was totally overborne. So it is in religious, ſo it is in political ſyſtems: let us once become enthuſiaſts; there is nothing ſo wicked we will not do for religion, nothing ſo impolitic we will not attempt for our country.

LETTER XXXIV.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I NEVER think of the glorious fate of antient genius, without a ſigh that riſes from the moſt ſenſible part of my ſoul. You have an expreſſion in your language, *je meurs d'envie*, which is deſcriptive of what I feel. To be carried down the current of time, my St. Evremond, undeſtroyed by the wrecks of two thouſand years! To have our beſt productions, the productions of the mind, confirm and maintain their exiſtence in the ſouls of ſurviving ages, and when our aſhes have been ſo long the ſport of winds, that even the winds cannot find them! Heavens! what glory is in the hope! My ſoul is on fire at the proſpect! The ſpirit of this ambition is irreſiſtible! It is inchantment! it is magic!

But, oh! my friend, it is deluſion; it is vanity! The fugitive ſtate of modern language forebodes deſtruction to every thing that

is conveyed in it. Your wit, your elegance of thought, your vivacity of imagination will ſhare the ſame fate with my trifling ſtrains, and be involved in the impenetrable maſs of obſolete expreſſion.

Your language ſeems, indeed, to be ſomewhat nearer to a period of perfection than that in which I am obliged to write. You begun more early to refine, and phraſeological criticiſm was more cultivated in your country. Yet the time, I apprehend, is at no great diſtance, when our harſher and heavier periods will loſe the ſtiffneſs and formality of their march, and acquire an air of grace and delicacy, without being impaired in their ſtrength. Whenever that æra ſhall arrive, the Engliſh language will be in a ſtate of comparative excellence, beyond which it will be hazardous for it to go. For, ſhould it once depart from its characteriſtic ſimplicity, and affect a pompous and inflated diction, that will prove a certain ſymptom of its decay.

It is to be feared that our language will have the ſame fate which that of Rome had formerly. Men of vain minds and weak judgments

will think it a merit at leaſt to be ſingular. For this purpoſe they will depart from nature, and, inſtead of purſuing her plain and eaſy walks, will ride like Sancho and his unfortunate maſter through ſulphur, ſmoke, and clouds.

The genius of your language ſets this danger at a greater diſtance from you; but when ill-judging writers riſe up amongſt us, I am afraid that it will be the fate of the Engliſh tongue to periſh, like Samſon, by a fatal exertion of its own ſtrength.

LETTER XXXV.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

WHEN the prince of Condé was in priſon, the princeſs headed his party in Normandy; and as that great general amuſed himſelf in a little garden adjoining to his apartments, he uſed to ſay pleaſantly, that whilſt he was watering pinks, his wife was making war. My occupations, ſince I quitted thoſe of the field, have, I think, been of much the ſame conſequence, and have anſwered much the ſame purpoſe. When I had done with making war, I betook myſelf to make ſongs, and making love. When they would no longer let me fight in France, I ſat down to write verſes in England, and took up the *belle* paſſion for the ſole end of inſpiriting and embelliſhing my poetry.

At firſt I looked upon my exile as the worſt of evils; but for theſe many years paſt I have been in doubt whether, on the whole, my life

has been a loſer by it or not. If the purſuits of wealth, of court diſtinctions, and military glory have nothing more inportant in them than thoſe of poetry and love, I have even profited by the exchange. For the labours, and anxieties and difficulties, neceſſarily attending the former, darken many an hour that might otherwiſe have paſſed, if not in pleaſure, at leaſt in tranquillity.

If the delight I have experienced in the cultivation of a ſucceſsful amour has not been equal to that of a general after victory, neither was it attended with thoſe painful reflections, which the very means and circumſtances of conqueſt muſt give to a mind that has the leaſt ſenſibility. For my own part, when I bore arms, though I never went into the field of battle without pleaſure, I never quitted it without tears. A ſtrange, ferocious kind of joy that muſt be, which ariſes from beholding the bodies of the brave, either in death, or in chains. The glorious man I have juſt mentioned uſed to ſuffer the greateſt diſtreſs, when he ſaw a gallant enemy mortally wound-

ed. My victories, he would ſay, give me more pain than the ſevereſt duties of command.

From theſe, and many other inconveniencies, I was ſet free, when I was no longer retained in the military ſervice of France. The abuſe and ingratitude that Fortune meets with in the world are utterly indefenſible. How often have I accuſed her of ſeverity, in inſtances where ſhe was moſt effectually ſerving me! In the protection and beneficence of a monarch, I have, in this happy country, long enjoyed both ſecurity and ſupport. When deprived of every poſt of profit and honour in my own nation, the tranſition was only from a life of labour and ſervice, to a ſtate of eaſe and freedom; where my hours were my own, and I was left to the purſuit of ſuch objects as might amuſe me moſt. I found in the refined philoſophy of taſte and the belles lettres, in the cultivation of wit and gallantry, in the religion of love and beauty, and in the converſation and favour of the moſt diſtinguiſhed perſons of the age, materials of happineſs ſufficient for the whole circle of time.

Yet in the language and memory of thoſe

few friends I have in France, I am ſtill *pauvre St. Evremond! comment malheureux!* You will be happy when I aſſure you, that, whatever I might once have wiſhed, there is not one of thoſe compaſſionate perſons with whom I would change my ſtation.

LETTER XXXVI.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

THERE is a paſſage in Ariſtotle concerning the iſland of Sicily, which I never recollect without the greateſt pleaſure. It is obſervable, ſays the philoſopher, that the earth and air of this country are ſo impregnated with the odour of its flowers, that the dogs have no power to trace the ſcent in hunting. Enter into the heathen theology, and this gives you quite a new and moſt amiable idea of the queen of flowers. Suppoſing her to be one of the tutelary deities of the iſland, ſhe is thus

concerned for the preſervation and ſecurity of the innocent animals that inhabit it.

I never had any enthuſiaſtic enjoyment ſo great as this, and many other circumſtances attending this once celebrated country, inſpired me with. When I was upon the continent, my curioſity naturally led me to viſit a place which had been the repoſitory of arts and arms, the grainary of the world, the prize of contending empires, the ſeat of the muſes, but particularly the birth-place of paſtoral poetry.

Of theſe fair ſcenes what monuments remain!
A burning mountain and a barren plain!

Yet there are ſome few parts of the iſland that ſtill bear the marks of its ancient fertility and beauty; particularly that part which anſwers to the beautiful deſcription of Theocritus, where an extenſive lawn of paſturage ſtretches from the mountains to the ſea. I imagined that I had found the very rock, under the ſhadow of which his ſhepherd is repreſented ſitting with his ſhepherdeſs in his arms, and looking with complacency on his flocks, as they fed towards the ſea. Enchanted with the idea,

I was carried headlong into verſe, and carved upon a neighbouring beech ſomething like the ſtanzas that follow:

Sweet land of muſes! o'er whoſe favoured plains
  Ceres and Flora held alternate ſway;
By Jove refreſhed with life-diffuſing rains,
  By Phebus bleſt with every kinder ray!

O with what pride do I thoſe times ſurvey!
  When freedom, by her ruſtic minſtrels led,
Danc'd on the green lawn many a ſummer's day,
  While paſtoral eaſe reclined her careleſs head,
In theſe ſoft ſhades; ere yet that ſhepherd fled,
  Whoſe muſic pierced earth, air, and heaven and hell,
And called the ruthleſs tyrant of the dead
  From the dark ſlumbers of his iron-cell.

His ear unfolding caught the magic ſpell:
  He felt the ſounds glide ſoftly thro' his heart;
The ſounds that deigned of love's ſweet power to tell;
  And as they told, would point his golden dart.

Fixed was the god; nor power had he to part,
For the fair daughter of the ſheaf-crowned queen,
Fair without pride, and lovely without art,
Gathered her wild flowers on the daiſied green.

He ſaw; he ſighed; and that unmelting breaſt,
Which arms the hand of death, the power of love confeſſed.

LETTER XXXVII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

THE letter * I wrote to poor Mazarin, to diſſuade her from entering on the conventual life, has not yet been in any other hands. That, and the ſtanzas on the ſame ſubject, I have reſerved amongſt thoſe private pledges of tenderneſs and friendſhip which the memory of a beloved object makes of much conſequence to ourſelves, though they may be of little or none to others. I will give them up to you, notwithſtanding; but on condition that you ſhall make them ſomething better than they are, by returning them clothed in your own language.

* This Letter, and the Stanzas that follow it, are the only pieces, in this collection, that have appeared before. Mr. Waller's tranſlation has never been printed; and the originals do ſo much honour to St. Evremond, that the editor thought he ſhould conſult both his reputation, and the entertainment of the public, by inſerting them.

LETTRE

A Madame la Ducheſſe MAZARINE,

Sur la deſſein qu'elle avoit de ſe retirer dans un Couvent.

*** *** ***

COMMENT eſt-il poſſible que vous quittiez des gens que vous charmez et qui vous adorent, des amis que vous aiment mieux qu'ils ne s'aiment eux-mêmes, pour aller chercher des inconnus qui vous deplairont, et dont vous ſerez peut-être outragée ? Songez vous, Madame, que vous vous jettez dans un couvent, que Madame la Connetable avoit en horreur. Si elle y rentre, c'eſt qu'il y faut rentrer ou mourir ; ſa captivité preſente, toute affreuſe qu'elle eſt, lui ſemble moins dure que cet infortuné ſejour ; et pour y aller, Madame, vous voulez quitter une cour où vous etes eſtimée, ou l'affection d'un Roi doux et honnête vous traite ſi bien, ou toutes les perſonnes rai-

ſonnables out du reſpect et de l'amitié pour vous. Le jour le plus heureux que vous paſſerez dans le couvent ne vaudra pas le plus triſte que vous paſſerez dans votre maiſon.

Encore ſi vous etiez touchée d'une grace particuliere de Dieu, qui vous attachât a ſon ſervice, on excuſeroit la dureté de votre condition, par l'ardeur de votre zele qui vous rendroit tout ſupportable : mais je ne vous trouve pas perſuadée, et il vous faut apprendre à croire celui que vous allez ſervir ſi durement. Vous trouverez toutes les peines des religieuſes, et ne trouverez point cet epoux qui les conſole. Tout epoux a vous eſt odieux, et dans le couvent et dans le monde. Douter un jour de la felicité de l'autre vie eſt aſſez pour deſeſperer la plus ſainte fille d'un couvent ; car la foi ſeule la fortifié, et la rend capable de ſupporter les mortifications qu'elle ſe donne. Qui ſait, Madame, ſi vous croirez un quart-d'heure ce qu'il faut qu'elle croye toujours, pour n'être pas malheureux ? Qui ſait ſi l'idée d'un bonheur promis aura jamais la force de vous ſoûtenir contre les ſentimens de maux preſens.

Il n'y a rein de plus raiſonnable à des gens veritablement perſuadés que de vivre dans l'auſterité, qu'ils croyent neceſſaire pour arriver à la poſſeſſion d'un bien éternel ; et rien de plus ſage à ceux qui ne le ſont pas, que de prendre ici leurs commodités, et de goûter avec moderation tous les plaiſirs ou ils ſont ſenſibles. C'eſt la raiſon pourquoi les philoſophes qui ont crû l'immortalité de l'ame, ont compte pour rien toutes les douceurs de ce monde ; et que ceux qui n'attendoint rien aprés la mort, ont mis le ſouveraine bien dans la volupté. Pour vous, Madame, vous avez une philoſophie toute nouvelle. Oppoſée a epicure, vous cherchez les peines, les mortifications, les douleurs. Contraire a Socrate, vous n'attendez aucune récompenſe de la vertu. Vous vous faites religieuſe ſans beaucoup de religion : Vous mépriſez ce monde ici, et vous ne faites pas grand cas de l'autre. A moins que vous n'en ayiez trouvé un troiſième faite pour vous, il n'y a pas moyen juſtifier votre conduite.

Il faut, Madame, il faut ſe perſuader avant que de ſe contraindre : Il ce faut pas ſouffrir ſans ſavoir pour qui l'on ſouffre. En un mot,

il faut travailler ſerieuſement a connoître Dieu avant que de renoncer à ſoi-même. C'eſt au milieu de l'univers que la contemplation des merveilles de la nature vous fera connoître celui dont elle depend. La vûe du ſoleil vous fera connoître la grandeur et la magnificence de celui qui l'a formé. Cet ordre, ſi merveilleux et ſi juſte, qui lie et entretient toutes choſes, vous donnera la connoiſſance de ſa ſageſſe. Enfin, Madame, dans ce monde que vous quittez, Dieu eſt tout ouvert, et tout expliqué à nos penſées. Il eſt ſi reſſerré dans les monaſteres, qu'il ſe cache au lieu de ſe decouvrir ; ſi deguiſé par les baſſes et indignes figures qu'on lui donne, que les plus éclairés ont de la peine a le reconnoitre. Cependant une vieille ſupérieure ne vous parlera que de lui, et ne connoîtra rien moins : Elle vous commandera des ſottiſes, et une exacte obeiſſance ſuivra toujours le commandement, quelque ridicule qu'il puiſſe etre. Le directeur ne prendra pas moins d'aſcendant ſur vous, et votre raiſon humiliée ſe verra ſoumiſe à une ignorance preſomptueuſe. La raiſon, ce caractere ſecret, cette image de Dieu que nous portons

en nos ames, vous fera paſſer pour rebelle, ſi vous ne reverez l'imbecillité de la nature humaine en ce directeur. De bonnes ſœurs trop ſimples vous degoûteront ; des libertines vous donnerent du ſcandale : vous verrez les crimes du monde : Helas ! vous en aurez quitté les plaiſirs.

Juſqu'ici vous avez vécu dans les grandeurs, et dans les délices ; vous avez été élevée en Reine, et vous meritiez de l'être. Devenue heritiere du miniſtre qui gouvernoit l'univers, vous avez eu plus de bien en mariage, que toutes les Reines de l'Europe enſemble n'en ont porté aux Rois leurs epoux. Un jour vous a enlevé tous ces biens ; mais votre merite vous a tenue lieu de votre fortune, et vous a fait vivre plus magnifiquement dans les pays etrangers que vous n'euſſiez vécu dans le nôtre. La curioſité, la delicateſſe, la propreté, le ſoin de votre perſonne, les commodites, les plaiſirs ne vous ont pas abandonnée ; et ſi votre diſcretion vous a defendu des voluptés, vous avez cet avantage, que jamais faveurs n'ont été ſi deſirées que les votres.

Que trouverez vous, Madame, ou vous allez ? Vous trouverez une defence rigoureuſe

de tout ce que demande raiſonnablement la nature, de tout ce qui eſt permis a l'humanité. Une cellule, un méchant lit, un plus deteſtable repas, des habits ſales et puants remplaceront vos délices. Vous ſerez ſeule a vous ſervir ſeule a vous plaire, au milieu de tant de choſes que vous deplairont ; et peutêtre ne ſerez vous pas en état d'avoir pour vous la plus ſecrette complaiſance de l'amour propre ; peut-être que votre beauté devenue toute inutile, ne ſe decouvrira, ni à vos yeux, ni à ceux des autres.

Cependant, Madame, cette beauté ſi merveilleuſe, ce grand ornement de l'univers, ne vous a pas été donnée pour le cacher. Vous vouz devez au public, a vos amis, a vous-même. Vous étés faite pour vous plaire, poure plaire à tous, poure diſſiper la triſteſſe, inſpirer la joie, pour ranimer generalement tout ce qui languit. Quand les laides et les imbécilles ſe jettent dans les couvens, c'eſt une inſpiration divine qui leur fait quitter le monde, ou elles ne paroiſſent que pour faire honte a leur auteur. Sur votre ſujet, Madame, c'eſt une vraie tentation du diable, lequel, envieux de la glorie de Dieu,

ne peut ſouffrir l'admiration que nous donne ſon plus bel ouvrage. Vingt ans de Pſeaumes et Cantiques chantés dans le chœur ne feront pas tant pour cette gloire, comme un ſeul jour que votre beauté ſera expoſée aux yeux des hommes. Vous montrer eſt votre veritable vocation : c'eſt le culte le plus propre que vous puiſſiez lui rendre. Si le temps a pouvoir d'effacer vois traits, comme il efface ceux des autres, s'il ruine un jour cette beauté que nous admirons, retirez vous alors ; et apres avoir accompli la volonté de celui qui a formée, allez chanter ſes louanges dans le couvent. Mais ſuivez la diſpoſition qu'il a faite de votre vie ; car ſi vous prevenez l'heure qu'il a deſtinée pour votre retraite, vous trahirez ſes intentions, par une ſecrette complaiſance pour ſon ennemi.

Un de vos grands malheurs, Madame, ſi vous ecoutez cet ennemi, c'eſt que vous n'aurez a vous prendre de tous vos maux qu'a vous-même. Madame la Connetable rejette les ſiens ſur la violence qu'on lui fait. Elle a les cruautés d'un mari qui la force, l'injuſtice d'une cour qu'appuye ſon mari : elle a mille objets,

vrais ou faux, qu'elle peut accuſer. Vous n'avez que vous, Madame, pour cauſe de votre infortune. Vous n'avez a condamner que votre erreur. Dieu vous explique ſes volontes par ma bouche, et vous ne m'ecountez pas. Il ſe ſert de mes raiſons pour vous ſauver, et vous ne conſultez que vous pour perdre. Un jour accablée de tous les maux que je vous depeins, vous ſongeres, mais trop tard, a celui qui a voulu les empêcher.

Peut-être étés vous flattée de bruit que fera votre retraite, et par une vanité extravagante, vous croyez qu'il ni a rein de plus illuſtre que de derober au monde la plus grande beauté qu'on y vit jamais, quand les autres ne donnet a Dieu qu'une laideur naturelle, ou les ruines d'un viſage tout effacé. Mais depuis quand préferez vous l'erreur de l'opinion a la réalité des choſes? Et qui vous a dit, apres tout, que votre reſolution ne paroitra pas auſſi folle qu'extraordinaire? Qui vous a dit qu'on ne la prendra pas pour le retour d'une humeur errante et voyageuſe? qu'on ne croira pas que vous voulez faire trois cens de lieues pour chercher une avanture, celeſte, ſi

vous voulez, mais toujours une eſpece d'aventure ?

Je ne doute point que vous n'eſperiez trouver beaucoup de douceur dans l'entretien de Madame la Connetable ; mais, ſi je ne me trompe, cette deuceur la finira bientôt. Apres avoir parlé trois ou quatre jours de la France, et de l'Italie, apres avoir parlé de la paſſion du Roi, et de la timidité de monſieur votre oncle, et de ce que vous avez penſé etre, et de ce que vous etes devenue : apres avoir epuiſé le ſouvenir de la maiſon de Monſieur le Connetable, de votre ſortie de Rome, et du malheureux ſuccés de vous voyages, vous vous trouverez enfermée dans un convent ; et votre captivité dont vous commencerez a ſentir la rigueur, vous fera ſonger a la douce liberté, que vous aurez goûtée en Angletterre. Les choſes qui vous paroiſſent ennuyeuſes aujourd'hui, ſe preſenteront avec des charmes ; et ce que vous aurez quittée par degoût, reviendra ſolliciter votre envie. Alors, Madame, alors, de quelle force d'eſprit n'urez-vous pas beſoin, pour vous conſoler de maux préſens et des biens perdus ?

Je veux que mes pénetrations ſoient fauſſes

et mes conjectures mal fondées; je veux que la converſation de Madame la Connêtable ait toujours de grandes agrémens pour vous : mais qui vous dira que vous en pourrez jouïr librement ! Une des maximes des couvens eſt de ne ſouffrir aucune liaiſon entre des perſonnes qui ſe plaiſent, parce que l'union des particuliers eſt une eſpece de detachement des obligations contractées avec l'ordre. D'ailleurs, les ſoins de monſieur le Connêtable pourront bien s'étendre juſqu'à empêcher une communication qui fait tout craindre a un homme ſoupçonneux qui a trop offenſé. Je ne parle point des caprices d'une ſuperieure, ni des ſecrettes jalouſies des religieuſes, qui voudront nuire a une perſonne, dont le mérite confondra le leur. Ainſi, Madame, vous vous ſerez faite religieuſe pour vivre avec Madame la Connêtable, et il arrivera que vons ne la verrez preſque pas. Vous ſerez, donc, ou ſeule avec vos triſtes imaginations, ou dans la foule, parmi les ſottiſes, et les erreurs, ennuyée des ſermones en langue que vous ſera peu connue, fatiguée des Matins qui auront troublé votre repos, laſſée d'une habitude continuelle du chant des Vêpres, et du murmure importune de quelque Roſaire.

Quelle parti prendre, Madame ? Conſervez votre raiſon : Vous vous rendrez malheureuſe ſi vos la perdez. Quelle perte de n'avoir plus ce diſcernemeut ſi exquis, et cette intelligence ſi rare ! Avez-vous commis un ſi grand crime contre vous, que vous devez vous punir auſſi rigoureuſement que vous faites ? Et quel ſujet de plainte avez vous contre vos amis, pour exercer ſur eux une ſi cruelle vengeance ? Les Italiens aſſaſſinent leurs ennemis : mais leurs amis ſeſauvent de la juſtice ſauvage qu'ils ſe veulent faire.

Mademoiſelle de Beverweert et moi avons déja eu les coups mortels: la penſée de vos maux a fait les nôtres, et je me trouve aujourd'hui le plus miſére de tous les hommes, parceque vous allez vous rendre la plus malheureuſe des toutes les femmes. Quand je vais voir Mademoiſelle de Beverweert les Matins, nous nous regardons un quart-d'heure ſans parler ; et ce triſte ſilence eſt toujours accompagné de nos larmes. Ayez pitié de nous, Madame, ſi vous n'en avez de vous-même. On peut ſe priver des commodités de la vie pour l'amour de ſes amis : nous vous demandons que vous vous priviez

des tourmens, et nous ne ſaurions l'obtenir. Il faut que vous ayez une dureté bien naturelle, puiſque vous etes la premiere a en reſſentir les effets. Songez, Madame, ſongez ſerieuſement à ce que je vous dis : vous étes ſur le bord du precipice ; un pas en avant, vous étes perdue ; un pas en arriere, vous étes en pleine ſûreté. Vos biens et vos maux dependent de vous. Ayez la force de vouloir étre heureuſe, et vous la ſerez.

Si vous quittez le monde, comme vous ſemblez vous y preparer, ma conſolation eſt que je n'y demeurerai pas long-temps. La nature, plus favourable que vous, finira bientôt ma triſte vie. Cependant, Madame, vos ordres previendront les ſiens, quand il vous plaira ; car les droits qu'elle ſe garde ſur moi ne vont qu'après ceux que je vous y a donnes. Il n'eſt point de voyage que je n'entreprenne ; et ſi pour derniere rigueur, vous n'y voulez pas conſentir, je me cacherai dans un déſert, dégouté de toute autre commerce que le votre. Là, votre idée me tiendra lieu des tous objets : là je me detacherai de moi-même, s'il eſt permis de parler ainſi, pour penſer eternellement

à vous : la, j'apprendrai à tout ce monde ce qu'auront pû ſur moi, le charme de votre merite, et la force de ma douleur.

SENTIMENS de Madame la Ducheſſe MAZARIN, qui ſe conſacre a Dieu.

STANCES.

SAINTS et ſacrés ennuis, ſalutaire triſteſſe,
Dégoûts dont mon eſprit eſt occupé ſans ceſſe,
Chaſſez les vains deſirs qui reſtent dans mon cœur ;
Eteignez dans mon ſein le ſentiment des vices ;
Eteignez l'appétit de mes fauſſes delices,
Et faites que le Ciel aujourd'hui ſoit vainqueur.

C'eſt pour lui deſormais que j'ai deſſein de vivre.
Vous m'attirez, Seigneur ; Seigneur, il faut vous ſuivre ;

Vous aurez tous mes ſoins, vous aures mon amour :
A vos loix ſeulement je vais être aſſervie ;
Et je veux bien donner le reſte de ma vie
Au Dieu dont la bonté m'a sû donner le jour.

De Dieu qui me forma ſi charmante et ſi belle,
A borné ſes faveurs, et me laiſſe mortelle.
Malgré tout le pouvoir qui donne à mes appas,
Le temps effacera les traits de mon viſage ;
Et l'Eſprit, de ce Dieu la plus vivante image,
Echappera lui ſeul aux rigueurs de trepas.

Quelle bonheur eſt certain d'une longue durée?
Quelle condition nous peut-être aſſurée ?
Qui pout nous garantir des injures du ſort ?
On ne poſſede rien qui ne ſoit périſſable :
Souvent le plus heureux devient ſi miſerable,
Qu'il ſemble avoir beſoin du ſecours de la mort.

J'ai connu tous les biens qu'apporte la fortune ;
J'ai connu la grandeur, et ſa pompe importune ;
En amour, pour les Moins, j'ai connu les deſirs ;
Des fauſſes vanités j'ai fait l'experience ;
Et je connois enfin qu'une heure d'innocence
Vaut mieux qu'un ſiecle entier de frivoles plaiſirs.

Faites, faites, Seigneur, que vos ſaintes lumières
Diſſipent l'ignorance, et les erreurs groſſiéres
Dont mon eſprit confus étoit enveloppé.
Le monde eſt un trompeur; Dieu ſeul eſt véritable,
Je n'eſpere qu'en lui, je ne ſuis plus capable
De me laiſſer ſurprendre à ce qui m'a trompé.

Temps ou ſe doit fixer ma longue incertitude,
Lieux qui devez finir ma triſte inquiétude,
Quand me donnerez-vous ce repos ſouhaité?
Je delibere encor, jour et nuit je conſulte
Si je dois préférer vos douceurs au tumulte:
C'en eſt fait, lieux ſacrés, vous l'avez emporté.

O vous, Maître abſolu de la terre et de l'onde,
Vous, dont l'ordre ſecret gouverne tout le monde,
Voudrez vous bien, Seigneur devenir mon epoux?
Celui qu'on me donna n'eſt pas digne de l'être,
C'eſt vous ſeul aujourd'hui qui je veux reconnoître,
Mes liens ſent rompus, et je ſuis toute à vous.

Vieux et triſtes liens, cauſes de tant de larmes,
Peut-être que ſans vous le monde eut eu ſes charmes ;
Mais le monde avec vous eſt aiſément vaincu.
Je ferai deſormais on quelque ſolitude,
D'un doux et ſaint repos une paiſible étude,
Et compterai pour rein le temps que j'ai vécu.

Palais, meubles, habits, folle magnificence,
Jeu, repas, vains ſujets de luxe et de dépenſe,
Je vous dis maintenant un eternel adieu :
Beaux cheveux, doux liens ou s'engageoint les ames,
Qui prenoient en mes yeux les amoureuſes flames,
Beaux cheveux, je vous coupe, et vous conſacre a DIEU.

Un voile pour jamais va couvrir mon viſage,
Et me beauté cachée y perdra tout uſage
De ce charme trompeur qui ſait flatter les ſens :
Un amant y perdra la ſujet de ſa paine :
Je vais perdre les noms d'*ingrate* et d'*inhumaine*,
Et les maux qu'en ſecret, moi-même je reſſens.

Je vous degage, amans, des loix de mon empire :
Pour des objets nouveaux ſi votre cœur ſoupire :
Je ne me plaindra point d'une infidélité :
J'aimerois mieux pourtant — que les femmes ſont vaines !
J'aimerois vous voir au ſortir des mes chaines,
Jouir paiſiblement de votre liberté.

J'eimerois mieux encor que votre ame fidèle
De ſa premiere ardeur formât un nouveau zèle,
Qui nous tiendroit unis même apres le trépas.
De ce nouvel amour ſentez l'heureuſe atteinte ;
Vouz m'aimâtes profane, aimez-moi comme ſainte,
Et ſuivez mes virtus au lieu de mes appas.

Mais des adieux ſi longs aux amans que l'on quitte,
Montrent notre foibleſſe, ou marquent leur mérite :
C'eſt un reſte ſecret des profanes amours,
Permettez, Lieux divins, quelque humaine tendreſſe,
Pour ceux qui m'ont aimée, et qu'aujourd'hui je laiſſe,
Ils ne me verront plus, et vous m'aurez toujours.

A Monſ. de to ST. EVREMOND.

SUJET, triſte ſujet, qui pleurez mon abſence,
Pourquoi me plaignez-vous, quand mon bonheur commence,
C'eſt à vous ſeulement que vous devez des pleurs;
Je ne menerai plus cet vie incertaine
Dont vous fûtes témoin; et finiſſant ma peine,
Je vous donne un exemple à finir vos malheurs.

La retraite à vôtre âge eſt toujours néceſſaire;
Avec tant de beauté vous me la voyez faire,
Et vous iriez encor vous traîner dans les cours?
Que ſi la voix du Ciel de tout autre écoutée
Sur la bord de cercueil eſt par vos rejettée,
De la morale, au moins écoutez le diſcours.

Le Ciel eſt impuiſſant, et la raiſon timide
Sur vos durs ſentimens trop foiblement préſide;
Mais vous devez encor reconnoître ma Loi:
Retirez-vous, vieillard; c'eſt moi qui vous l'ordonne;

Voici l'ordre dernier qu'en Reine je vous donne;
Vieillard, quittez le monde en même temps que
moi.

ST. EVREMOND.

MA Reine me verroit a ſon ordre fidèlé,
Mais la mort où je cours m'empêche d'obêïr;
Il m'eſt plus aiſé de mourir
Que de vivre un moment ſans elle.

LETTER XXXVIII.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

THE moſt perfect and moſt perſuaſive piece of eloquence that ancient or modern times have produced, would require a more maſterly hand than mine to do it juſtice in a tranſlation. In paſſing from one language to another, every work ſuffers; but works of wit more than others. The peculiar felicities of expreſſion are moſt commonly incommunicable, and the taſk of the tranſlator is ſomewhat like that of the Iſraelites in Egypt, who were obliged to make the ſame kind of bricks with ſtubble that had uſually been made with ſtraw: It is like that of an architect, who is to imitate with exactneſs his model, and yet muſt build with different materials, which, by means of weight or lightneſs, will give his work a different air.—I am not mentioning theſe diſadvantages without the expectation of indulgence. Your letter and verſes will not

appear in their original beauty, but I have endeavoured, as much as poſſible, to preſerve your ideas.

To the Ducheſs of MAZARIN, *on her Deſign of retiring into a Convent.*

IS it poſſible, then, madam, that you ſhould quit that ſociety, of which you are ſo juſtly the admiration and delight? Abandon the friends that adore you! for whom? for ſtrangers, who want even the capacity of giving you pleaſure; for ſtrangers that will give you diſguſt! reflect, madam, that you are about to enter upon a life which your illuſtrious ſiſter could not look upon without horror. If ſhe retires into a convent, it is becauſe the alternative is death. Her preſent confinement, dreadful as it is, ſeems, in her opinion, preferable to that wretched retreat. But your ſituation, how different! For, is it a priſon you exchange for a nunnery? is it not a court, where you are univerſally reſpected; where

you enjoy the trueſt and tendereſt affection of a monarch, and where all the liberal and the ſenſible world receive you into their friendſhip and eſteem? The happieſt day that a convent will afford you, will not be worth the leaſt enlivened hours you paſs at preſent.

Were it the influence of ſome prevailing grace that attached you wholly to religious duties, the ſeverities of the life you lay before you, might find ſome apology, in the ardor of that zeal, which would render them more ſupportable. But, far from the poſſeſſion of grace, you have not even faith: you have yet to learn to believe in that maſter, for whom you are about to engage in ſo painful a ſervice. You will experience all the hardſhips of religious retirement, without finding that ſpouſe, by whoſe conſolations they are alleviated. The very name of ſpouſe is odious to you, whether in a convent or in a court. To entertain the leaſt ſhadow of doubt concerning the happineſs of a future exiſtence, were ſufficient to deſtroy the peace of the moſt pious ſiſter. It is faith alone that ſupports her, and reconciles her to the voluntary mortifications

of her life. But is it certain, madam, that you ſhall believe, even for one moment, what your happineſs requires that you ſhould believe always? Is it certain that your confidence of future felicities will be ſufficient to ſupport you under the ſenſe of preſent ſufferings?

For the family of faith, nothing can be more reaſonable, than to endure thoſe auſterities which they believe to be neceſſary to their eternal welfare. But, for thoſe who are of different ſentiments, a different oeconomy is neceſſary. It is their proper happineſs to embrace the conveniences of life, and to purſue, with moderation, thoſe pleaſures that are adapted to their nature. It was upon this principle, that thoſe philoſophers, who believed the immortality of the ſoul, depreciated the delights of this life; and that thoſe, who entertained no opinion of a future exiſtence, placed the ſovereign good in pleaſure. But you, madam, have a philoſophy of a ſpecies altogether uncommon. Contrary to the doctrine of Epicurus, the objects of your purſuit are pains, and ſufferings, and ſorrows. Inconſiſtent with the principles of Socrates, you

have no belief in the rewards of virtue. You engage in a religious life, without religion. You ſet this world at naught, and yet you have no idea of the other. It is at leaſt neceſſary that a third ſhould be created for your purpoſe, were it but to juſtify your conduct.

It is abſolutely neceſſary that you ſhould know for whom you ſuffer, before you enter upon your ſufferings. In ſhort, it is neceſſary to obtain a proper knowlege of God, before you give up to him the intereſts of your life. It is in the viſible creation that the contemplation of the wonders of nature will bring you acquainted with her ſublime author. It is the ſight of the ſun that muſt give you an idea of the magnificence of him that made it. It is that order that is preſerved in the great chain of created beings, that muſt inſpire you with proper ſentiments of the aſtoniſhing wiſdom of the Creator. It is that world you are about to forſake, where God is to be found. It is in his works you are to read an account of his being. Is he to be found in the narrow precincts of a monaſtery? Far from being diſcovered there, is he not concealed? —

So diſguiſed by low and unworthy images, that he is hid even from that intelligence he has given.

Yet ſhall you continually hear of him from ſome aged abbeſs, who will talk to you concerning him, and know nothing of him. She will command you to do the abſurdeſt things, and her commands muſt be implicitly obeyed. Your confeſſor will have equally the aſcendant over you, and your humbled reaſon muſt ſubmit to the tyranny of preſumptuous ignorance. Reaſon! that hidden character! that image of the Deity impreſt upon the ſoul, will make you be conſidered in the light of a rebel, if you pay not the moſt abject deference to the weakneſs of human nature in the perſon of the confeſſor. The good ſiſters will diſguſt you with their inſipidity; the libertines will expoſe you to ſcandal. You will find youſelf ſurrounded by the infirmities of life; and, alas! you will find that you have parted with its pleaſures.

Hitherto you have lived in luxury and grandeur. You have had the education of a queen, and you were juſtly entitled to it. The heir-

eſs of a miniſter who governed the world, your marriage portion exceeded the united fortunes of all the queens in Europe. One fatal day deprived you of your poſſeſſions, but your merit ſupplied the place of fortune, and eſtabliſhed you in that magnificence in a land of ſtrangers, which you had hardly known in your own country. A love of elegance, a natural delicacy, a regard for perſonal ornament, the conveniences of ſituation, and the pleaſures of life, have not forſaken you; and if your diſcretion has preſerved you from other indulgences, your virtue has the greater merit; for never were favours more ſollicited than yours.

What is it, madam, that you will find in a convent? What, but a rigorous abſtinence from every innocent indulgence that nature may require, or reaſon allow? A cell, a wretched bed, a more wretched diet, and the vileſt dreſs, will take place of the preſent elegancies of your life. No ſervant to attend you! no companion to entertain you! It is yourſelf alone that muſt give you pleaſure amidſt a thouſand objects that will give you diſ-

guſt. And yet it is far from certain, that you will retain even this complaiſance for yourſelf. When captivity ſhould have deprived that beauty of its uſe, wil l the fair poſſeſſor any longer find pleaſure in it?

But was, then, that wonderful beauty, the ornament, the boaſt of human nature, was it given you to be concealed? Do not you ſtand accountable for it to the world, to your friends, to yourſelf? Formed, as you are, to diffuſe univerſal pleaſure, to diſpel the gloom of melancholy, and call forth every idea of joy! Let the ugly and infirm be ſhut up in convents. The inſpiration that directs them thither is divine. It is the voice of nature, that bids them retire from that ſociety where they do no honour to their Creator. But, in your caſe, Madam, this is abſolutely a temptation of the devil, who, envious of the glory of God, cannot endure that admiration with which we behold the faireſt of his works. Believe me, twenty long years of Pſalm-ſinging will not contribute ſo much to that glory, as the expoſing your beauties one ſingle day to the eyes of the admiring world. Your proper religion

is to appear in ſociety. It is the beſt worſhip you can pay to your Creator. If thoſe charms, like common beauties, muſt ſubmit to the devaſtations of time, then may you retire; and after having fulfilled the deſign of him that made you, may you ſing his praiſes in the retreat of a convent. But, follow the ſcheme that his providence has laid down for your life: for, if you withdraw from ſociety, before the time he has appointed, you will fruſtrate his intentions to gratify his enemy.

Should you liſten, after all, to the inſinuations of that enemy, it will not be one of your leaſt misfortunes, that you have none but yourſelf to charge with the evils that fall upon you. Your illuſtrious ſiſter may lay the blame of her ſufferings on the violence with which ſhe has been treated; on the cruelty of a huſband who compelled her, and on the injuſtice of a court, which ſupported that huſband. She has a thouſand cauſes, real or imaginary, on which ſhe may charge her misfortunes.—You have only one, and that one is yourſelf. You fall not by the error, or the injuſtice of others, but by your own. I am the voice of

the divine intentions, and you will not hear me. Providence avails itſelf of my reaſon to ſave you; but when your ruin is in the queſtion, you will conſult only yourſelf. Yet the day will come, when, overborne by all the evils I have deſcribed, you will think, but too late, of him who would have prevented them.

Poſſibly, you may be flattered by the voice of public fame and popular curioſity, which your retirement will undoubtedly excite. By an extravagance of vanity you may be induced to deprive the world of the greateſt beauty it can boaſt; while others conſign to the retreats of piety nothing more, than either their natural deformity, or the ruins of a departed face. But, are the errors of opinion, then, to take place of truth and nature? And who, after all, has had the hardineſs to aſſure you, that your reſolution will not appear as abſurd as it is extraordinary? Is it clear that the reſolution itſelf is any thing more than a tranſient humour? A piece of holy knight-errantry? Shall we not be apt to ſay, that the ducheſs of Mazarin is going three hundred leagues in queſt of an adventure? Of a hea-

venly one, if you pleaſe; but ſtill it is a ſpecies of adventure.

I doubt not that you hope for much happineſs in the converſation of your illuſtrious ſiſter. But, if I am not miſtaken, that happineſs will be of ſhort continuance. After having ſpent three, or four days, in converſation about France and Italy; concerning the paſſion of the king, and the puſillanimity of your uncle; on what you might have expected to be, and on what you now are; after having run through every idea of the family of Colonna, of your removal from Rome, and the ill ſucceſs of your journies, you will find yourſelf in the captivity of a convent; and that captivity will be rendered more painful, by the remembrance of that delightful liberty you enjoyed in this land of freedom. Even thoſe things which you now behold with indifference, will then have their charms; and what you now abandon through diſguſt, will then excite your envy. What fortitude, what force of mind, will be ſufficient to ſupport you? — to ſupport you under the ſenſe of preſent ſufferings, and bleſſings that are loſt.

Be it ſuppoſed, my apprehenſions may be vain, and my conjectures ill-founded! Be it ſuppoſed, you may ſtill find a charm in the converſation of your ſiſter, that ſhall compenſate for all the evils of your confinement; yet is it ſure that you ſhall have free acceſs to it? It is a maxim in convents to ſuffer no connections, or intimacies, becauſe the union of individuals is conſidered as a kind of revolt from the obligations contracted with the order. Beſides, the induſtry of the prince may exert itſelf in this reſpect, and prevent that communication which muſt appear formidable to a ſuſpicious and injurious huſband. I paſs over the caprices of an abbeſs, and the ſecret jealouſies of the ſiſter-hood, ever induſtrious to oppreſs that merit which obſcures their own. Thus, it can only be for the ſociety of your ſiſter that you enter on the religious life; and yet, perhaps, that ſiſter you will hardly ever ſee. Your life, therefore, will either paſs in the ſolitary indulgence of your own ſad thoughts, or in a ſociety pregnant with follies and abſurdities; where you will be wearied with ſermons in a language that is unknown

to you, harraſſed with matins that will diſturb your reſt, ſickened with the dull chanting of the ſame round of veſpers, or teaſed with the troubleſome murmurs of ſome induſtrious roſary.

What is it, then, you have to do, madam? Make a right uſe of your reaſon: if you attend not to it, you are undone. What a loſs! ſhould you no longer find the uſe of that exquiſite diſcernment, that unrivaled ſenſe! What crime have you committed that can juſtify ſo ſevere a ſentence againſt yourſelf? What crime have your friends committed, that they muſt feel the effects of the ſame ſeverity? It is uſual for the Italians to aſſaſſinate their enemies; but their friends are free from the ſavage juſtice and the vengeance they aſſert.

Madam De Beverweert and myſelf are truly miſerable. The ſenſe of your misfortunes affects us extremely; and I am at this moment the moſt wretched of men, becauſe you are reſolved to make yourſelf the moſt unhappy of women. In my morning viſits to madam De Beverweert we ſit looking on each other in melancholy ſilence, and that ſilence is always ac-

companied with tears. Have ſome compaſſion for us, madam, if you will have none for yourſelf. For the advantage of your friends do we not willingly deprive ourſelves of the comforts and conveniences of life? Your friends intreat you only to give up your miſeries for their ſakes, and their intreaties are vain.

Yet notwithſtanding this more than natural obduracy, reflect, madam, I intreat you, on what I have already laid before you. You are now on the brink of a precipice — One ſtep forward, and you periſh unavoidably — One ſtep backward, and you are in perfect ſafety. Your happineſs and miſery are in your own diſpoſal. Only reſolve to be happy, and you will be ſo.

However, ſhould you abandon the world, which ſeems at preſent your intention, I have one conſolation left, that I ſhall not ſtay long it. Nature, more merciful than you, will ſoon put an end to my wretched being; yet ſtill your commands will take place of her's; and the right ſhe has has over me will be but ſecondary to that I have given you. I am pre-

pared to go whenever I ſhall have my ſummons; and if you, as a laſt inſtance of your cruelty, ſhall refuſe, I will hid myſelf in ſome ſolitary deſart, and ſicken at the thought of all ſociety but yours. Your idea ſhall take place of every other object, and I will retire even from myſelf, that I may for ever think of you. Such are the proofs I will exhibit to the world of the power of your charms, and the force of my deſpair.

The Ducheſs of MAZARIN, *on her Retiring into a Convent.*

YE holy cares that haunt theſe lonely cells,
Theſe ſcenes where ſalutary ſadneſs dwells;
Ye ſighs that minute the ſlow waſting day,
Ye pale regrets that wear my life away;
O bid theſe paſſions for the world depart,
Theſe wild deſires, and vanities of heart!
Hide every trace of vice, of follies paſt,
And yield to heaven the victory at laſt.

To that the poor remains of life are due,
'Tis heaven that calls, and I the call purſue.
Lord of my life, my future cares are thine,
My love, my duty greet thy holy ſhrine.
No more my heart to vainer hopes I give,
But live for thee, whoſe bounty bids me live.

The power that gave thoſe little charms their grace,
His favours bounded, and confined their ſpace.
Spite of thoſe charms ſhall time, with rude eſſay,
Tear from the cheek the tranſient roſe away.
But the free mind, ten thouſand ages paſt,
Its Maker's form, ſhall with its Maker laſt.

Uncertain objects ſtill our hopes employ;
Uncertain all that bears the name of joy!
Of all that feels the injuries of fate
Uncertain is the ſearch, and ſhort the date.
Yet even that boon what thouſands wiſh to gain!
That boon of death, the ſad reſource of pain!

Once on my path all fortune's glory fell,
Her vain magnificence, aud courtly ſwell:
Love touched my ſoul at leaſt with ſoft deſires,
And vanity there fed her meteor fires.
This truth at laſt the mighty ſcenes let fall.
An hour of innocence was worth them all.

Lord of my life! O, let thy ſacred ray
Shine o'er my heart, and break its clouds away!
Deluding, flattering, faithleſs world adieu!
Long haſt thou taught me, GOD IS ONLY TRUE!

That God alone I truſt, alone adore,
No more deluded, and miſled no more.

Come, ſacred hour, when wavering doubts
ſhall ceaſe!
Come holy ſcenes of long repoſe and peace!
Yet ſhall my heart, to other intereſts true,
A moment balance 'twixt the world and you?
Of penſive nights, of long-reflecting days,
Be yours, at laſt, the triumph and the praiſe!

Great, gracious Maſter, whoſe unbounded
ſway,
Felt thro' ten thouſand worlds, thoſe worlds
obey;
Wilt thou for once thy awful glories ſhade,
And deign t'eſpouſe the creature thou haſt
All other ties indignant I diſclaim, [made
Diſhonoured thoſe, and infamous to name!

O fatal ties, for which ſuch tears I've ſhed,
For which the pleaſures of the world lay dead!
That world's ſoft pleaſures you alone diſarm;
That world without you, ſtill might have its
charm.

But now theſe ſcenes of tempting hope I cloſe,
And ſeek the peaceful ſtudies of repoſe;
Look on the paſt as time that ſtole away,
And beg the bleſſings of a happier day.

Ye gay ſaloons, ye golden-veſted halls,
Scenes of high treats and heart-bewitching balls!
Dreſs, figures, ſplendor, charms of play, farewell,
And all the toilet's ſcience to excel!
Even love that ambuſhed in this beauteous hair,
No more ſhall lie, like Indian archers, there.
Go, erring love! for nobler objects given!
Go, beauteous hair, a ſacrifice to heaven!

Soon ſhall the veil thoſe glowing features hide,
At once the period of their power and pride!
The hapleſs lover ſhall no more complain
Of vows unheard, or unrewarded pain;
While calmly ſleep in each untortured breaſt
My ſecret ſorrow, and his ſighs profeſt.

Go, flattering train! and, ſlaves to me no more,
With the ſame ſighs ſome happier fair, adore!

Your altered faith, I blame not, nor bewail—
And haply yet, (what woman is not frail?)
Yet, haply, might I calmer minutes prove,
If he that loved me knew no other love!

Yet were that ardour, which his breaſt inſpired,
By charms of more than mortal beauty fired;
What nobler pride! could I to heaven reſign
The zeal, the ſervice that I boaſted mine!
O, change your falſe deſires, ye flattering train!
And love me pious, whom ye loved profane!

Theſe long adieus with lovers doomed to go,
Or prove their merit, or my weakneſs ſhew,
But heaven, to ſuch ſoft frailties leſs ſevere,
May ſpare the tribute of a female tear,
May yield one tender moment to deplore
Thoſe gentle hearts that I muſt hold no more.

To M. DE ST. EVREMOND.

SHALT thou, ſad ſervant of my darker days,
Bewail that fortune farer hours diſplays?
Go, witneſs of the wandering life I led,
And ceaſe thoſe tears, for thee more juſtly ſhed.
See the long ſeries of my ſufferings o'er!
Avoid the ſtorm, purſue, partake the ſhore.

Declining years ſhould ſtill in ſilence cloſe,
And hide their human weakneſs in repoſe.
Shall I in life's, in beauty's bloom retire?
Grown old in courts ſhall EVREMOND expire?
Far from thoſe courts, tho' every call divine!
Yet, reaſon, ſenſe, and fortitude are thine.

Are theſe unheard? In habit's powerful reign
Does reaſon wield her little arms in vain?
Yet ſhalt thou yield to my ſuperior ſway:
Thy queen commands thee; EVREMOMD, obey.

Sick of the world, ſhe quits the painful ſcene,
And calls thee thence, if yet ſhe calls, thy queen.

Mr. DE ST. EVREMOND.

O, ſtill my ſovereign! whoſe unrivaled ſway,
'Tis yet my pride, my pleaſure to obey.
I come—I fly—No!—Death that duty ends,
Deprived of thee, the laſt, the beſt of friends!

LETTER XXXIX.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

THERE are two ſetts of men againſt whom a writer of any other country than their own ſtands but an ill chance of preſerving his reputation. Theſe are Dutch authors and Dutch bookſellers. They divide you, body and ſoul, between them. The authors publiſh your writings as their own productions: the bookſellers publiſh the productions of others as yours. They treat you like the pirates of Algiers. You no ſooner fall into their hands, than they ſtrip you naked, and ſet you to hard labour. I ſpeak of their cruelty by experience. An honeſt bookſeller of Rotterdam has not only publiſhed ſeveral of my pieces in the names of his day-labouring authors, but has ſet me to work on ſubjects, of which I am at leaſt as ignorant as the people that wrote in my name. He has made me

author of a treatiſe on the longitude, though there are not above two ſtars in the ſky that I know by name. I ſtand on the title-page of chemical aphoriſms, though I do not know an alembic from a dark-lantern. I am author of a treatiſe againſt the Antinomians, of whom I know as much as I do of the antediluvians: but what is moſt provoking, he has introduced me in the character of field-marſhal of France, and has made me write a narrative of a battle, in which I was forced to run away.

This is certainly worſe treatment than that which made Diagoras turn atheiſt. We are told, that when a plagiary had ſtoln and fathered his book, he would no longer believe there were any Gods, becauſe they did not puniſh the thief with a thunderbolt. For my own part, I do not find that the impunity of theſe caitiffs has made any alteration in my faith. All I am afraid of is, that the devil has too much ſenſe to let bookſellers come into his dominions; for as he has the character of a genius, it would not be long before they gave him the fool's cap of an author.

I am very confident that my honeſt friend

at Rotterdam, were he to carry on trade in his kingdoms, would have no manner of ſcruple to make him author of a treatiſe on original ſin. This publication would ſoon be followed by a diſſertation on the medical effects of brimſtone, *Auctore Sereniſſimo Diabolo, M. D.* or, a narative of the battle between himſelf and Michael, in which, like the poor marſhal De St. Evremond, he was put to the rout.

LETTER XL.

WALLER *to* ST. EVREMOND.

I HAVE often thought that there is a great ſimilarity of genius between Ovid and our Mr. Cowley. They have the ſame fondneſs for pointed expreſſion, and minute painting. Their enthuſiaſm and their fancy, and their turn of verſe, which is ſometimes eaſy, clean, and natural, and ſometimes quaint, have all of them the greateſt reſemblance of each other. And, what is no leſs obſervable, their diſpo-

ſitions and tempers are, in many inſtances, alike. Mr. Cowley's Complaint has the very ſame ſpirit and features with Ovid's melancholy Elegies written during his exile; and I am afraid, too, that it will have no better effect.

It always gives me pleaſure to obſerve the coincidence of genius, and taſte. For this purpoſe, when I have the favour of Mr. Cowley company, I very often take up Ovid's Metamorphoſes, and read ſuch paſſages to him as I think will ſtrike him moſt. What he principally admires in the ſtory of the rape of Proſerpine, was her grief for the loſs of the flowers ſhe had gathered.

Collecti flores tunicis cecidere remiſſis.
Tentaque ſimplicitas puerilibus adfuit annis;
Hæc quoque virgineum movit jactura dolorem.

Had he writ on the ſame ſubject, I verily believe that he would have had the ſame thought.

In reading the ſtory of Pyramus and Thiſbe, we both concluded that there muſt be ſomething wrong in the following paſſage:

Tempore crevit amor, tædæ quoque jure coiſſent,
Sed vetuere patres, quod non potuere vetare.
Ex æquo captis ardebant mentibus ambo.

"*Sed vetuere patres quod non potuere vetare,*" is certainly nonſenſe. Yet ſo it ſtands in all the editions I have met with, undiſturbed by commentators, who paſs it over in *ſacro ſilentio*. Nothing, however, is more eaſy than to remove the error, which lies only in the punctuation. Let the paſſage ſtand thus, and it is reſtored to ſenſe.

———*Tædæ quoque jure coiſſent,*
Sed vetuere patres. Quod non potuere vetare,
Ex æquo captis ardebant mentibus ambo.

There is, if I am not miſtaken, another error in the ſame ſtory.

Conſcius omnes abeſt; *nutu ſigniſque loquuntur.*

If every ſpy is at a diſtance, why ſhould they have recourſe to nods and ſigns, to convey their ſentiments? That could only be neceſſary, admitting the caſe to be quite otherwiſe. Suppoſe then we read

Conſcius omnis adeſt; *nutu ſigniſque loquuntur.*

This alteration is by no means violent, and it at once brings the paſſage to ſenſe and conſiſtency. However, I am not ſo hardy as to ſay, *Sic lege meo periculo.* I only offer this to you by way of conjecture; but the firſt, I am ſatisfied, muſt be right.

LETTER XLI.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

IT is ſaid of the mouſe of Armenia, that, ſuch is her paſſion for cleanlineſs, ſhe will ſooner die than come out of her hole, if the mouth of it is by any means made dirty. I own I have often admired the decency of this good mouſe, though I deſpair of imitating it. The love of purity is one of the natural virtues, and it grieves me to think how ſtrangely I have degenerated from it. Ever ſince I quitted my marſhal's batoon, I have had, as

you lately told me, the leaſt attachment to this virtue of any man living. When I went from France, I left their neatneſs to the men, and took with me the ſlovenlineſs of the women. This diſpoſition was abundantly encouraged by a long reſidence in Holland; for the people of that country, like our Engliſh hogs, keep their ſleeping-places neat, but their perſons dirty. A daily and familiar intercourſe with dogs and cats, of which I have always a numerous family, completes the reſt. This is a commerce which no conſideration whatever could induce me to part with. It gives me as much conſequence as belongs to the man who has a large family to provide for, or a province under his care. It is a conſtant exerciſe to my benevolence, which a man, who, like me, is without ſocial connections, muſt alway be in a danger of loſing. Without any ſervant of my own ſpecies, I live with the magnificence of a prince, who has a large retinue; and, what no prince in the world can ſafely aſſert, I am convinced that my domeſtics are unexceptionably faithful. I amuſe myſelf by preſerving a good underſtanding,

and maintaining the balance of power between the two ſpecies of animals that attend me. They know their reſpective provinces, and make no encroachments on each other. My cats have the territory of the ſhoulders, my dogs of the lap.

I love to keep up the dignity of anceſtry, and I dine, as I ſuppoſe, in the ſame ſtile and manner with my firſt parent, before his expulſion from paradiſe. I have ſeen a painting of Tintoret's, repreſenting them at dinner, ſurrounded by a variety of his fellow creatures; to ſuch of which as were capable of partaking with him, he was diſtributing his bounty. In this reſpect I find another ſatisfaction in the ſociety I ſpeak of. I gratify myſelf by diſtinguiſhing and rewarding merit. Modeſty goes a great way with me; and the animal that is leaſt importunate is always fed the firſt. You will hardly believe what an effect this has had upon the teaſers. Obſerving the rewards of diſtance and modeſty, they have totally changed their conduct. I took the liberty of mentioning this to the king. — "My dogs, ſaid

he, St. Evremond, are more incorrigible than yours: they will never give over teaſing, till they get the bone."

LETTER XLII.

ST. EVREMOND *to* WALLER.

BEFORE the infamous and diſgraceful peace of the Pyrenées, a political writer of conſiderable name in France, propoſed, upon the neceſſity of military reinforcements, that the eccleſiaſtics ſhould be called to the diſcipline of arms; — that the monaſtries, like ſo many graves at the general reſurrection, ſhould give up their dead; — and that a ſett of men, who were a burden to ſociety and to themſelves, ſhould be made uſe of in the preſervation of civil property. The cardinal premier was ſo enraged at this propoſal, that had not the author made a ſeaſonable viſit to another country, he would ſoon have become as

uſeleſs a ſubject to France, as thoſe whoſe confinement was voluntary.

Nevertheleſs there was ſomething very reaſonable in what he advanced; and it is really aſtoniſhing, that in a country, diſtinguiſhed for the cultivation of civil and political knowlege, there ſhould be the leaſt remains of any inſtitution ſo abſurd as that of cutting off a number of men from the ſervice of their fellow-creatures for the glory of God. Certainly the beſt and moſt acceptable ſervices we are capable of rendering to the Creator of the univerſe, muſt be thoſe that ariſe from the diſcharge of the ſocial duties: and it has often been matter of ſerious amazement to me, how eccleſiaſtics came by the idea, that they ſhould do the greateſt honour to God by renouncing all intercourſe with his works.

But I ſuppoſe there might be reaſons of private indulgence, ſecret intrigue, and uninſpected growth of power. Theſe neſts of holy loungers the church muſt have conſidered as a corps de reſerve, that would be ready to defend that power which ſupported them in indolence, in caſe of unforeſeen or dangerous

invaſions. It is plain that your Henry the eighth looked upon them in this light, when he had the good ſenſe and the good policy to extirpate them from his dominions.

Chriſtianity, with reſpect to the ſupport of ſuch inſtitutions as theſe, is a ſyſtem more burdenſome and leſs ſerviceable than Mahometiſm, or even Druidiſm. The Druid would retire to his groves for the exerciſe of his ſuperſtitious devotion; but if his country were attacked by an enemy, he failed not to be in the front of the battle.

In proportion to the progreſs of philoſophy and the advancement of moral knowlege, it might have been expected, that the idea of rendering the body of eccleſiaſtics uſeful to ſociety, ſhould have been more effectually attended to. But, perhaps, there never was a time, when they were leſs ſerviceable than at preſent.

When your Richard the firſt was at war with France, he found a formidable enemy in Philip, biſhop of Beau-vieu, who annoyed his coaſts with diſtinguiſhed valour and intrepidity. The biſhop, however, was at length

taken by Richard in a ſkirmiſh. The pope demanded his demiſſion as an eccleſiaſtical perſon, and bade the king reverence his ſon's coat. Richard immediately ſent the biſhop's coat of mail to the pope, with theſe words engraven upon it: "See whether this be thy ſon's "coat or not."

THE END.

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