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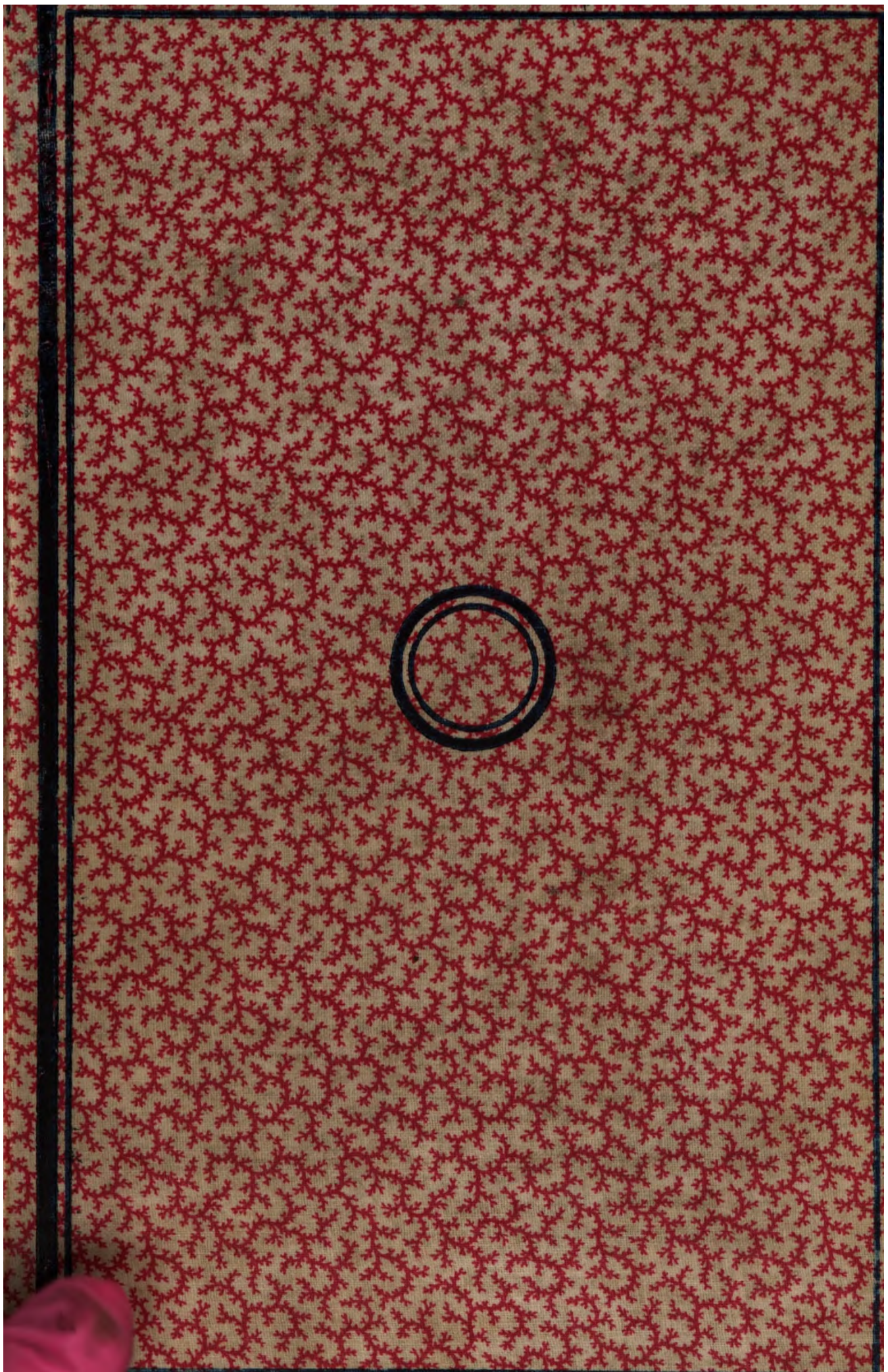
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CLARISSA.

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CLARISSA

A *Nobel*

By SAMUEL RICHARDSON

EDITED BY E. S. DALLAS

AUTHOR OF THE GAY SCIENCE

“ The prolixity of Richardson, which, to our giddy paced time, is the greatest fault of his writing, was not such a fault to his contemporaries. But a modern reader may be permitted to wish that *Clarissa* had been a good deal abridged at the beginning.”

Sir Walter Scott's *Memoir of Richardson*.

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CLARISSA.

Part Second continued.—Her Flight from Home.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Friday, April 21.

THOU, Lovelace, hast been long the entertainer; I the entertained. Nor have I been solicitous to animadvert, as thou wentest along, upon thy inventions, and their tendency. For I believed, that with all thy airs, the unequalled perfections and fine qualities of this lady would always be her protection and security. But now, that I find, thou hast so far succeeded, as to induce her to come to town, and to choose her lodgings in a house, the people of which will too probably damp and suppress any honourable motions which may arise in my mind in her favour, I cannot help writing: and that professedly in her behalf.

Last time I was at M. Hall, thy noble uncle so earnestly pressed me to use my interest to persuade thee to enter the pale, and gave me so many family-reasons for it, that I could not help engaging myself heartily on his side of the question; and the rather, as I knew, that thy own intentions with regard to this fine woman, were then worthy of her. And of this I assured his lordship; who was half-afraid of

thee, because of the ill usage thou receivest from her family. But now, that the case is altered, let me press the matter home to thee from other considerations.

And let me tell thee, Lovelace, that in this lady's situation, the trial is not a fair trial. Considering the depth of thy plots and contrivances : considering the opportunities which I see thou must have with her, in spite of her own heart ; all her relations' follies acting in concert, though unknown to themselves, with thy wicked scheming head : considering how destitute of protection she is : considering the house she is to be in, where she will be surrounded with thy implements ; specious, well-bred, and genteel creatures, not easily to be detected when they are disposed to preserve appearances, especially by a young, unexperienced lady wholly unacquainted with the town : considering all these things, I say, what glory, what cause of triumph, wilt thou have, if she should be overcome ?—Thou, too, a man born for intrigue, full of invention, intrepid, remorseless, able patiently to watch for thy opportunity ; not hurried, as most men, by gusts of violent passion, which often nip a project in the bud, and make the snail that was just putting out its horns to meet the inviter, withdraw into its shell—a man who has no regard to his word or oath to the sex ; the lady scrupulously strict to her word, incapable of art or design ; apt therefore to believe well of others—it would be a miracle if she stood such an attempter, such attempts, and such snares, as I see will be laid for her. And after all, I see not when men are so frail without importunity, that so much should be expected from women, daughters of the same fathers and mothers, and made up of the same brittle compounds (education all the difference), nor where the triumph is in subduing them.

May there not be other Lovelaces, thou askest, who, attracted by her beauty, may endeavour to prevail with her ?

No ; there cannot, I answer, be such another man, person, mind, fortune, and thy character, as above given, taken in. If thou imaginest there could, such is thy pride, that thou wouldst think the worse of thyself.

That she loves thee, wicked as thou art, and cruel as a panther, there is no reason to doubt. Yet, what a command has she over herself, that such a penetrating self-flatterer as thyself, is sometimes ready to doubt it! Though persecuted on the one hand, as she was, by her own family, and attracted on the other, by the splendour of thine ; every one of whom courts her to rank herself among them !

Wicked as the sober world accounts you and me, we have not yet, it is to be hoped, got over all compunction. Although we find religion against us, we have not yet presumed to make a religion to suit our practices. We despise those who do. And we know better than to be even doubters. In short, we believe a future state of rewards and punishments. But as we have so much youth and health in hand, we hope to have time for repentance. That is to say, in plain English (nor think thou me too grave, Lovelace : thou art grave sometimes, though not often) we hope to live to sense, as long as sense can relish, and purpose to reform when we can sin no longer.

And shall this admirable woman suffer for her generous endeavours to set on foot thy reformation ; and for insisting upon proofs of the sincerity of thy professions before she will be thine ?

I suppose you will soon be in town. Without the lady, I hope. Farewell.

Be honest, and be happy.

J. BELFORD.

MRS. HERVEY TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Saturday, April 22.

DEAR NIECE,—It would be hard not to write a few lines, so much pressed to write, to one I ever loved. Your former letter I received; yet was not at liberty to answer it. I break my word to answer you now.

Strange informations are every day received about you. The wretch you are with, we are told, is every hour triumphing and defying—must not these informations aggravate? You know the uncontrollableness of the man. He loves his own humour better than he loves you—though so fine a creature as you are! I warned you over and over: no young lady was ever more warned!—Miss Clarissa Harlowe to do such a thing!

You did not design to go, you say. Why did you meet him then, chariot-and-six, horsemen, all prepared by him? O, my dear, how art produces art!—Will it be believed?—If it would, what power will he be thought to have had over you!—He!—Who? Lovelace!—The vilest of libertines!—Over whom?—A Clarissa!—Was your love for such a man above your reason? Above your resolution? What credit would a belief of this, if believed, bring you?—How mend the matter?—Oh! that you had stood the next meeting!

It would be very grievous, you say, to be precipitated upon measures, that may make the desirable reconciliation more difficult. It is now, my dear, a time for you to be afraid of being precipitated? At present, if ever, there can be no thought of reconciliation. The upshot of your precipitation must first be seen. There may be murder yet, as far as we know. Will the man you are with part willingly with you? If not, what may be the consequence? If he will—Lord bless me! what shall we think of his

reasons for it?—I will fly this thought. I know your purity—but, my dear, are you not out of all protection?—Are you not unmarried?—Have you not (making your daily prayers useless) thrown yourself into temptation? And is not the man the most wicked of plotters?

No answer, I beseech you. I hope your messenger will not tell anybody that I have written to you. And I dare say you will not show what I have written to Mr. Lovelace—for I have written with the less reserve, depending upon your prudence.

You have my prayers.

My Dolly knows not that I write. Nobody does. Not even Mr. Hervey.

Dolly would have several times written: but having defended your fault with heat, and with a partiality that alarmed us (such a fall as yours, my dear, must be alarming to all parents), she has been forbidden, on pain of losing our favour for ever: and this at your family's request, as well as by her father's commands.

You have the poor girl's hourly prayers, I will, however, tell you, though she knows not that I do, as well as those of

Your truly afflicted aunt,

D. HERVEY.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Saturday, April 22.



HAVE just now received the inclosed from my aunt Hervey. Be pleased, my dear, to keep her secret of having written to the unhappy wretch her niece.

I may go to London, I see, or where I will. No matter what becomes of me.

I was the willinger to suspend my journey thither, till I heard from Harlowe Place. I thought, if I could be encouraged to hope for a reconciliation, I would let this

man see, that he should not have me in his power, but upon my own terms, if at all.

But I find I must be his, whether I will or not ; and perhaps through still greater mortifications than those great ones which I have already met with—and must I be so absolutely thrown upon a man, with whom I am not at all satisfied !

And now, to know that my father, an hour before he received the tidings of my supposed flight, owned that he loved me as his life : that he would have been all condescension : that he would—Oh ! my dear, how tender, how mortifyingly tender, now in him ! My aunt need not have been afraid, that it should be known that she has sent me such a letter as this !—A father to kneel to his child !—There would not indeed have been any bearing of that !—What I should have done in such a case, I know not. Death would have been much more welcome to me than such a sight, on such an occasion, in behalf of a man so very, very disgusting to me !

There may be murder, my aunt says. This looks as if she knew of Singleton's rash plot. Such an upshot, as she calls it, of this unhappy affair, Heaven avert !

She flies a thought, that I can less dwell upon—a cruel thought—but she has a poor opinion of the purity she compliments me with, if she thinks that I am not, by God's grace, above temptation from this sex. Although I never saw a man, whose person I could like, before this man ; yet his faulty character allowed me but little merit from the indifference I pretended to on his account. But I like him less than ever.

You will say I rave : forbidden to write to my aunt, and taught to despair of reconciliation, you, my dear, must be troubled with my passionate resentments. What a wretch was I to give him a meeting, since by that I put it out of my power to meet my assembled friends !—All would now, if I had met them, have been over ; and who

can tell when my present distresses will?—Rid of both men, I had been now perhaps at my aunt Hervey's, or at my uncle Antony's; wishing for my cousin Morden's arrival; who might have accommodated all.

Join with me in this prayer, my beloved friend; for your own honour's sake, as well as for love's sake, join with me in it: lest a deviation on my side should, with the censorious, cast a shade upon a friendship, which has no levity in it; and the basis of which is improvement, as well in the greater as lesser duties.

CL. HARLOWE.

O my best, my only friend! Now indeed is my heart broken! It has received a blow it never will recover. Think not of corresponding with a wretch who now seems absolutely devoted. How can it be otherwise, if a parent's curses have the weight I always attributed to them, and have heard so many instances in confirmation of that weight!—Yes, my dear Miss Howe, superadded to all my afflictions, I have the consequences of a father's curse to struggle with! How shall I support this reflection?—My past and my present situation so much authorising my apprehensions!

I have, at last, a letter from my unrelenting sister. Would to Heaven I had not provoked it by my second letter to my aunt Hervey! It lay ready for me, it seems. The thunder slept, till I awakened it. I inclose the letter itself. Transcribe it I cannot. There is no bearing the thoughts of it: for the curse extends to the life beyond this.

I am in the depth of vapourish despondency. I can only repeat, Shun, fly, correspond not with a wretch so devoted, as

CL. HARLOWE.

TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE ;

To be left at Mr. Osgood's, near Soho Square.

IT was expected you would send again to me, or to my aunt Hervey. The inclosed has lain ready for you therefore by direction. You will have no answer from anybody, write to whom you will, and as often as you will, and what you will.

It was designed to bring you back by proper authority, or to send you whither the disgraces you have brought upon us all, should be in the likeliest way, after a while, to be forgotten. But I believe that design is over : so you may range securely—nobody will think it worth while to give themselves any trouble about you. Yet my mother has obtained leave to send you your clothes, of all sorts : but your clothes only. This is a favour you'll see by the within letter not designed you : and now not granted for your sake, but because my poor mother cannot bear in her sight anything you used to wear. Read the inclosed, and tremble.

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

TO THE MOST UNGRATEFUL AND UNDUTIFUL OF
DAUGHTERS.

Harlowe Place, April 15.

SISTER THAT WAS!—For I know not what name you are permitted, or choose to go by.

You have filled us all with distraction. My father, in the first agitations of his mind, on discovering your wicked, your shameful elopement, imprecated, on his knees, a fearful curse upon you. Tremble at the recital of it!—No less, than that you may meet your punishment, both here and hereafter, by means of the very wretch, in whom you have chosen to place your wicked confidence.

My brother vows revenge upon your libertine—for the family's sake he vows it—not for yours!—for he will treat

you, he declares, like a common creature, if ever he sees you : and doubts not, that this will be your fate.

My uncle Harlowe renounces you for ever.

So does my uncle Antony.

So does my aunt Hervey.

So do I, base unworthy creature! the disgrace of a good family, and the property of an infamous rake, as questionless you will soon find yourself, if you are not already.

Your books, since they have not taught you what belongs to your family, to your sex, and to your education, will not be sent you. Your money neither. Nor yet the jewels so undeservedly made yours. For it is wished you may be seen a beggar along London streets.

If all this is heavy, lay your hand to your heart, and ask yourself, why you have deserved it ?

Your worthy Norton is ashamed of you, and mingles her tears with your mother's; both reproaching themselves for their shares in you, and in so fruitless an education.

Everybody, in short, is ashamed of you : but none more than

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Tuesday, April 25.

BE comforted ; be not dejected ; do not despond, my dearest and best-beloved friend. God Almighty is just and gracious, and gives not his assent to rash and inhuman curses. Can you think that Heaven will seal to the black passions of its depraved creatures ? If it did, malice, envy, and revenge would triumph ; and the best of the human race, blasted by the malignity of the worst, would be miserable in both worlds.

This outrageousness shows only what manner of spirit they are of, and how much their sordid views exceed their parental love. 'Tis all owing to rage and disap-

pointment—disappointment in designs proper to be frustrated.

Has not God commanded us to bless and curse not? Pray for your father then, that he incur not the malediction he has announced on you; since he has broken, as you see, a command truly divine; while you, by obeying that other precept which enjoins us to pray for them that persecute and curse us, will turn the curse into a blessing.

My mother blames them for this wicked letter of your sister; and she pities you; and, of her own accord, wished me to write to comfort you, for this once: for she says, It is pity your heart, which was so noble (and when the sense of your fault, and the weight of a parent's curse, are so strong upon you) should be quite broken.

You will now see, that you have nothing left, but to overcome all scrupulousness, and marry as soon as you have opportunity. Determine so to do, my dear.

I will give you a motive for it, regarding myself. For this I have resolved, and this I have vowed (O friend, the best beloved of my heart, be not angry with me for it!) That so long as your happiness is in suspense, I will never think of marrying. In justice to the man I shall have, I have vowed this: for, my dear, must I not be miserable, if you are so? And what an unworthy wife must I be to any man who cannot have interest enough in my heart to make his obligingness a balance for an affliction he has not caused?

I would show Lovelace your sister's abominable letter, were it to me. I enclose it. It shall not have a place in this house. This will enter him of course into the subject which now you ought to have most in view. Let him see what you suffer for him. He cannot prove base to such an excellence. I should never enjoy my head or my senses, should this man prove a villain to you!—With a merit so exalted, you may have punishment more than enough for your involuntary fault, in that husband.

My mother, notwithstanding this particular indulgence, is very positive. They have prevailed upon her, I know, to give her word to this purpose—Spiteful poor wretches! How I hate in particular your foolish uncle Antony!

How poor, to withhold from you your books, your jewels, and your money! As money is all you can at present want, since they will vouchsafe to send your clothes, I send fifty guineas by the bearer, inclosed in single papers in my Norris's Miscellanies. I charge you, as you love me, return them not.

I have more at your service. So if you like not your lodgings or his behaviour when you get to town, leave both them and him out of hand.


Once more, my dear, let me beg of you to be comforted. Manage with your usual prudence the stake before you, and all will still be happy. Suppose yourself to be me, and me to be you (you may—for your distress is mine); and then you will add full day to these but glimmering lights which are held out to you by

Your ever affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Wednesday Morning, April 26.

OUR letter, my beloved Miss Howe, gives me great comfort. How sweetly do I experience the truth of the wise man's observation, That a faithful friend is the medicine of life!

All my comfort is, that your advice repeatedly given to the same purpose, in your kind letter before me, warrants me. I now set out the more cheerfully to London on that account: for before, a heavy weight hung upon my heart; and, although I thought it best and safest to go, yet my spirits sank, I know not why, at every motion I made towards a preparation for it.

I hope no mischief will happen on the road.—I hope these violent spirits will not meet.

Every one is waiting for me.—Pardon me, my best, my kindest friend, that I return your Norris. In these more promising prospects, I cannot have occasion for your favour. Besides, I have some hope, that with my clothes they will send me the money I wrote for, although it is denied me in the letter. If they do not, and if I should have occasion, I can but signify my want to so ready a friend. And I have promised to be obliged only to you. But I had rather methinks you should have it still to say, if challenged, that nothing of this nature has been either requested or done. I say this, with a view entirely to my future hopes of recovering your mother's favour, which, next to that of my own father and mother, I am most solicitous to recover.

I must acquaint you with one thing more, notwithstanding my hurry; and that is, that Mr. Lovelace offered either to attend me to Lord M.'s, or to send for his chaplain, yesterday. He pressed me to consent to this proposal, most earnestly; and even seemed desirous rather to have the ceremony pass here, than in London: for when there I had told him, it was time enough to consider of so weighty and important a matter. Now, upon the receipt of your kind, your consolatory letter, methinks I could almost wish it had been in my power to comply with his earnest solicitations. But this dreadful letter has unhinged my whole frame. Then some little punctilio surely is necessary. No preparation made. No articles drawn. No licence ready. Grief so extreme: no pleasure in prospect, nor so much as in wish—O my dear, who could think of entering into so solemn an engagement! Who, so unprepared, could seem to be so ready!

Adieu, my best beloved and kindest friend! Pray for
your

CLARISSA.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Monday, April 24.

FA TE is weaving a whimsical web for thy friend ;
and see not but I shall be inevitably manacled.

Here have I been at work, dig, dig, dig, like a cunning miner, at one time, and spreading my snares, like an artful fowler, at another, and exulting in my contrivances to get this inimitable creature absolutely into my power. Everything made for me. Her brother and uncles were but my pioneers : Her father stormed as I directed him to storm. Mrs. Howe was acted by the springs I set at work : Her daughter was moving for me, and yet imagined herself plump against me : And the dear creature herself had already run her stubborn neck into my gin, and knew not that she was caught ; for I had not drawn my springes close about her—And just as all this was completed, wouldst thou believe, that I should be my own enemy, and her friend ?—That I should be so totally diverted from all my favourite purposes, as to propose to marry her before I went to town, in order to put it out of my own power to resume them ?

Well, but how comes this all about, methinks thou askest ?—Thou, Lovelace, dealest in wonders ; yet aimest not at the marvellous—How did all this come about ?

I will tell thee—I was in danger of losing my charmer for ever.—She was soaring upward to her native skies. She was got above earth, by means, too, of the earth-born : And something extraordinary was to be done to keep her with us sublunaries. And what so effectually as the soothing voice of love, and the attracting offer of matrimony from a man not hated, can fix the attention of the maiden heart aching with uncertainty ; and before impatient of the questionable question ?

This, in short, was the case—while she was refusing all

manner of obligation to me, keeping me at haughty distance, in hopes that her cousin Morden's arrival would soon fix her in a full and absolute independence of me ; disgusted likewise at her adorer, for holding himself the reins of his own passions, instead of giving them up to her control—She writes a letter, urging an answer to a letter before sent, for her apparel, her jewels, and some gold, which she had left behind her ; all which was to save her pride from obligation, and to promote the independence her heart was set upon. And what followed but a shocking answer, made still more shocking by the communication of a father's curse upon a daughter deserving only blessings?—A curse upon the curser's heart, and a double one upon the transmitter's, the spiteful, the envious Arabella !

Absent when it came ; on my return, I found her recovering from fits, again to fall into stronger fits ; and nobody expecting her life ; half-a-dozen messengers despatched to find me out. Nor wonder at her being so affected ; she, whose filial piety gave her dreadful faith in a father's curses ; and the curse of this gloomy tyrant extending (to use her own words, when she could speak) to both worlds—O that it had turned, in the moment of its utterance, to a mortal quinsy, and sticking in his gullet had choked the old execrator, as a warning to all such unnatural fathers !

What a miscreant had I been, not to have endeavoured to bring her back, by all the endearments, by all the vows, by all the offers, that I could make her ?

I did bring her back. More than a father to her ; for I have given her a life her unnatural father had wellnigh taken away : Shall I not cherish the fruits of my own benefaction ? I was earnest in my vows to marry ; and my ardour to urge the present time was a real ardour. But extreme dejection, with a mingled delicacy, that in her dying moments I doubt not she will preserve, have caused her to refuse me the time, though not the solemnity ; for

she has told me, that now she must be wholly in my protection (being destitute of every other!)—more indebted, still, thy friend, as thou seest, to her cruel relations, than to herself, for her favour!

She has written to Miss Howe an account of their barbarity; but has not acquainted her, how very ill she was.

Low, very low, she remains; yet, dreading her stupid brother's enterprise, she wants to be in London where, but for this accident, and (wouldst thou have believed it?) for my persuasions, seeing her so very ill, she would have been this night; and we shall actually set out on Wednesday morning, if she be not worse.

Well, but to return to my principal subject; let me observe, that be my future resolutions what they will as to this lady, the contents of the violent letter she has received, have set me at least a month forward with her. I can now, as I hinted, talk of love and marriage, without control or restriction; her injunctions no more my terror.

In this sweetly familiar way shall we set out together for London. Mrs. Sorlings's eldest daughter, at my motion, is to attend her in the chaise; while I ride by way of escort: For she is extremely apprehensive of the Singleton plot; and has engaged me to be all patience, if anything should happen on the road. But nothing I am sure will happen: for, by a letter received just now from Joseph, I understand, that James Harlowe has already laid aside his stupid project: and this by the earnest desire of all those of his friends to whom he had communicated it; who were afraid of the consequences that might attend it. But it is not over with me however; although I am not determined at present as to the uses I may make of it.

But, after all, I hope I shall be enabled to be honest to a merit so transcendent. The devil take thee though for thy opinion given so mal-à-propos, that she may be overcome.

If thou designest to be honest, methinks thou sayest why should not Singleton's plot be over with thee, as it is with her brother?

Because (if I must answer thee) where people are so modestly doubtful of what they are able to do, it is good to leave a loophole. And let me add, that when a man's heart is set upon a point, and anything occurs to beat him off, he will find it very difficult, when the suspending reason ceases, to forbear resuming it.

Wednesday, April 26.

At last my lucky star has directed us into the desired port, and we are safely landed. Well says Rowe :

The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them. Sloth and folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
And make th' impossibility they fear.

But in the midst of my exultation, something, I know not what to call it, checks my joys, and glooms over my brighter prospects. If it be not conscience, it is wondrously like what I thought so, many, many years ago.

Surely, Lovelace, methinks thou sayest, thy good motions are not gone off already! Surely thou wilt not now at last be a villain to this lady!

I can't tell what to say to it. Why would not the dear creature accept of me, when I so sincerely offered myself to her acceptance? Things already appear with a very different face now I have got her here. Already have our mother and her daughters been about me: "Charming lady! What a complexion! What eyes! What majesty in her person!—O Mr. Lovelace, you are a happy man!—You owe us such a lady!"—Then they remind me of my revenge, and of my hatred to her whole family.

Sally was so struck with her, at first sight, that she broke out to me in those lines of Dryden :

—Fairer to be seen
Than the fair lily on the flow'ry green !
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new !

I sent to thy lodgings within half an hour after our arrival, to receive thy congratulations upon it : but thou wert at Edgeware, it seems.

My beloved, who is charmingly amended, is retired to her constant employment, writing. I must content myself with the same amusement, till she shall be pleased to admit me to her presence ; for already have I given to every one her cue.

“ And, among the rest, who dost thou think is to be her maid-servant ?—Deb. Butler.

“ Ah, Lovelace !

“ And ah, Belford ! It can't be otherwise. But what dost think Deb.'s name is to be ?—Why, Dorcas, Dorcas Wykes. And won't it be admirable, if either through fear, fright, or good liking, we can get my beloved to accept of Dorcas Wykes for a bedfellow ?”

In so many ways will it be now in my power to have the dear creature, that I shall not know which of them to choose !—

But here comes the widow, with Dorcas Wykes in her hand, and I am to introduce them both to my fair one.

So !—The honest girl is accepted—Of good parentage : but, through a neglected education, plaguy illiterate—She can neither write, nor read writing. A kinswoman of Mrs. Sinclair—Could not therefore well be refused, the widow in person recommending her ; and the wench only taken till her Hannah can come. What an advantage has an imposing or forward nature over a courteous one !—So here may something arise to lead into correspondences, and so forth. To be sure, a person need not be so wary, so cautious of what she writes, or what she leaves upon her table or toilette, when her attendant cannot read.

Dorcas is a neat creature, both in person and dress ; her countenance not vulgar. And I am in hopes, as I hinted

above, that her lady will accept of her for her bedfellow, in a strange house, for a week or so. But I saw she had a dislike to her at her very first appearance : yet I thought the girl behaved very modestly—overdid it a little, perhaps—her lady shrank back, and looked shy upon her. The doctrine of sympathies and antipathies is a surprising doctrine.—But Dorcas will be excessively obliging, and win her lady's favour soon, I doubt not. I am secure in one of the wench's qualities however—she is not to be corrupted. A great point that!—Since a lady and her maid, when heartily of one party, will be too hard for half a score devils.

The dear creature was no less shy when the widow first accosted her, at her alighting. Yet I thought, that honest Doleman's letter had prepared her for her masculine appearance.

And now I mention that letter, why dost thou not wish me joy, Jack ?

Joy of what ?

Why, joy of my nuptials.—Know then, that said, is done with me, when I have a mind to have it so ; and that we are actually man and wife : only that consummation has not passed—bound down to the contrary of that, by a solemn vow, till a reconciliation with her family take place. The women here are told so. They know it, before my beloved knows it ; and that, thou wilt say, is odd.

But how shall I do to make my fair one keep her temper on the intimation ? Why, is she not here ?—At Mrs. Sinclair's ?—But if she will hear reason, I doubt not to convince her, that she ought to acquiesce.

She will insist, I suppose, upon my leaving her, and that I shall not take up my lodgings under the same roof. But circumstances are changed since I first made her that promise. I have taken all the vacant apartments ; and must carry this point also.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Wednesday Afternoon, April 26.

AT length, my dearest Miss Howe, I am in London, and in my new lodgings. They are neatly furnished, and the situation, for the town, is pleasant. But, I think, you must not ask me, how I like the old gentlewoman. Yet she seems courteous and obliging. Her kinswomen just appeared to welcome me at my alighting. They seem to be genteel young women. But more of their aunt and of them, as I shall see more.

Miss Sorlings has an uncle at Barnet, whom she found so very ill, that her uneasiness on that account (having large expectations from him) made me comply with her desire to stay with him. Yet I wished, as her uncle did not expect her, that she would see me settled in London; and Mr. Lovelace was still more earnest that she would, offering to send her back again in a day or two, and urging, that her uncle's malady threatened not a sudden change. But leaving the matter to her choice, after she knew what would have been mine, she made me not the expected compliment. Mr. Lovelace, however, made her a handsome present at parting.

His genteel spirit on all occasions makes me often wish him more consistent.

As soon as I arrived, I took possession of my apartment. I shall make good use of the light closet in it, if I stay here any time.

Here I was broken in upon by Mr. Lovelace; introducing the widow leading in a kinswoman of hers to attend me, if I approved of her, till my Hannah should come, or till I had provided myself with some other servant. The widow gave her many good qualities; but said, that she had one great defect; which was, that she

could not write, nor read writing; that part of her education having been neglected when she was young: but for discretion, fidelity, obligingness, she was not to be outdone by anybody. She commended her likewise for her skill at the needle.

As for her defect, I can easily forgive that. She is very likely and genteel; too genteel indeed, I think, for a servant. But, what I like least of all in her, she has a strange sly eye. I never saw such an eye—half confident, I think. But indeed Mrs. Sinclair herself (for that is the widow's name) has an odd winking eye; and her respectfulness seems too much studied, methinks, for the London ease and freedom. But people can't help their looks, you know; and after all, she is extremely civil and obliging. And as for the young woman (Dorcas is her name) she will not be long with me.

I accepted her: how could I do otherwise (if I had had a mind to make objections, which in my present situation I had not), her aunt present, and the young woman also present; and Mr. Lovelace officious in his introducing them, to oblige me? But, upon their leaving me, I told him (who seemed inclinable to begin a conversation with me) that I desired that this apartment might be considered as my retirement: that when I saw him it might be in the dining-room (which is up a few stairs; for this back house being once two, the rooms do not all of them very conveniently communicate with each other); and that I might be as little broken in upon as possible, when I am here. He withdrew very respectfully to the door; but there stopped; and asked for my company then in the dining-room. If he were about setting out for other lodgings, I would go with him now, I told him: but if he did not just then go, I would first finish my letter to Miss Howe.

I see he has no mind to leave me, if he can help it. My brother's scheme may give him a pretence to try to

engage me to dispense with his promise. But if I now do, I must quit him of it entirely.

My approbation of his tender behaviour in the midst of my grief has given him a right, as he seems to think, of addressing me with all the freedom of an approved lover. I see by this man, that when once a woman embarks with this sex, there is no receding. One concession is but the prelude to another with them. He has been ever since Sunday last continually complaining of the distance I keep him at; and thinks himself entitled now, to call in question my value for him; strengthening his doubts by my former declared readiness to give him up to a reconciliation with my friends — and yet has himself fallen off from that obsequious tenderness, if I may couple the words, which drew from me the concessions he builds upon.

I have turned over the books I found in my closet; and am not a little pleased with them; and think the better of the people of the house for their sakes.

Stanhope's Gospels; Sharp's, Tillotson's, and South's Sermons; Nelson's Feasts and Fasts; a Sacramental piece of the Bishop of Man, and another of Dr. Gauden, Bishop of Exeter; and Inett's Devotions, are among the devout books.

In the blank leaves of the Nelson and Bishop Gauden, is Mrs. Sinclair's name; and in those of most of the others, either Sarah Martin, or Mary Horton, the names of the two nieces.

I am exceedingly out of humour with Mr. Lovelace: and have great reason to be so. As you will allow, when you have read the conversation I am going to give you an account of; for he would not let me rest till I gave him my company in the dining-room.


She is thus out of humour with Lovelace, because of a confession which he now thinks it prudent to make. He owns to having told Mrs. Sinclair that he and

Clarissa are wedded. The lady is indignant at such a deception—in her own phrase, “raves at him”—not knowing to what it may lead. She is not pacified by his assurances that he had acted for the best; but softens a little when Lovelace defines more accurately the nature of his communication to Mrs. Sinclair. “This,” he says, “is what I have told the widow before her kinswomen and before your new servant—that indeed we were privately married at Hertford, but that you had preliminarily bound me under a solemn vow. And I am most religiously resolved to keep, to be content with separate apartments, and even not to lodge under the same roof, till a certain reconciliation shall take place, which is of high consequence to both. And further, I have acquainted them that I have solemnly promised to behave to you before everybody as if we were only betrothed and not married.” Nevertheless, the same night, and much against the wishes of the lady he professed to honour, Lovelace contrives to establish himself in Mrs. Sinclair’s house, under a pretence of the difficulty of finding a convenient lodging elsewhere; and he then, in a letter to his friend Belford, reveals a scheme by which he hopes to gain access to Clarissa’s chamber. On a pretence that the house is full, Miss Harlowe is requested to allow Miss Partington, an innocent looking girl, to pass the night with her. Miss Harlowe refuses with decision, and so puts an end to the project. Lovelace, however, contrives to make her receive, on her supposed marriage, the compliments of all his male friends, who are invited to spend an evening at Mrs. Sinclair’s, in order that the glory of the prize he is intent on debasing may be shown off to them. Clarissa is not only much annoyed at this, she is also offended by

the behaviour of these gentlemen, and she condemns them severely both to Miss Howe and to Lovelace. Still more is she averse from the women of the party. A child in years, who had never caught a glimpse of such a world as Lovelace and his companions lived in, she shrinks from the bold faces and the meretricious airs of those with whom she is forced into contact. Feminine quickness supplies the place of matured experience, and she suspects that Mr. Lovelace's acquaintance with these gaudy women is of longer date than he would have her believe.—ED.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Tuesday, May 2.

 THOUSAND pounds wouldst thou give for the good opinion of this single lady—to be only thought tolerably of, and not quite unworthy of her conversation, would make thee happy. And at parting last night, or rather this morning, thou madest me promise a few lines to Edgware, to let thee know what she thinks of thee, and of thy brethren.

Thy thousand pounds, Jack, is all thy own: for most heartily does she dislike ye all—thee as much as any of the rest.

I must never talk of reformation, she told me, having such companions, and taking such delight as I seemed to take, in their frothy conversation.

She did not like Miss Partington—Let her fortune be what it would, and she had heard a great deal said of her fortune, she should not choose an intimacy with her. She thought it was a hardship to be put upon such a difficulty, as she was put upon the preceding night, when there were lodgers in the front house, whom they had reason to be freer with than, upon so short an acquaintance, with her.

I pretended to be an utter stranger as to this parti-

cular; and, when she explained herself upon it, condemned Mrs. Sinclair's request, and called it a confident one.

She, artfully, made lighter of her denial of the girl for a bedfellow, than she thought of it, I could see that; for it was plain, she supposed there was room for me to think she had been either over-nice, or over-cautious.

I offered to resent Mrs. Sinclair's freedom.

No; there was no great matter in it. It was best to let it pass. It might be thought more particular in her to deny such a request, than in Mrs. Sinclair to make it, or in Miss Partington to expect it to be complied with. But as the people below had a large acquaintance, she did not know how often she might have her retirements invaded, if she gave way. And indeed there were levities in the behaviour of that young lady, which she could not so far pass over as to wish an intimacy with her.

I was nettled. Hard would be the lot of more discreet women, as far as I knew, than Miss Partington, were they to be judged by so rigid a virtue as hers.

Not so, she said: but if I really saw nothing exceptionable to a virtuous mind, in that young person's behaviour, my ignorance of better behaviour was, she must needs tell me, as pitiable as hers: and it were to be wished, that minds so paired, for their own sakes, should never be separated.

See, Jack, what I get by my charity!

I thanked her heartily. But said, that I must take the liberty to observe, that good folks were generally so uncharitable, that, devil take me, if I would choose to be good, were the consequence to be that I must think hardly of the whole world besides.

She congratulated me upon my charity: but told me, that to enlarge her own, she hoped it would not be expected of her to approve of the low company I had brought her into last night.

And now, Jack, let me know, what thy opinion, and the opinions of thy brother varlets, are of my Gloriana.

I have just now heard, that Hannah hopes to be soon well enough to attend her young lady, when in London. It seems the girl has had no physician. I must send her one, out of pure love and respect to her mistress. Who knows but medicine may weaken nature, and strengthen the disease.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Edgware, Tuesday Night, May 2.



WITHOUT staying for the promised letter from you to inform us what the lady says of us, I write to tell you, that we are all of one opinion with regard to her; which is, that there is not of her age a finer woman in the world, as to her understanding. As for her person, she is at the age of bloom, and an admirable creature; a perfect beauty: but this poorer praise, a man who has been honoured with her conversation, can hardly descend to give; and yet she was brought amongst us contrary to her will.

And here, let me put a serious question or two. Thinkest thou, truly admirable as this lady is, that the end thou proposest to thyself, if obtained, is answerable to the means, to the trouble thou givest thyself, and to the perfidies, tricks, stratagems, and contrivances thou hast already been guilty of, and still meditatest? In every real excellence she surpasses all her sex. But in the article thou seekest to subdue her for, a mere sensualist, a Partington, a Horton, a Martin, would make a sensualist a thousand times happier than she either will or can.

Sweet are the joys that come with willingness.

And wouldst thou make her unhappy for her whole life, and thyself not happy for a single moment.

Hitherto, it is not too late; and that perhaps is as much as can be said, if thou meanest to preserve her

esteem and good opinion, as well as person ; for I think it is impossible she can get out of thy hands now she is in this cursed house. O that damned hypocritical Sinclair, as thou callest her ! How was it possible she should behave so speciously as she did all the time the lady stayed with us !—Be honest, and marry ; and be thankful, that she will condescend to have thee. If thou dost not, thou wilt be the worst of men ; and wilt be condemned in this world and the next : as I am sure thou oughtest, and shouldest too, wert thou to be judged by one, who never before was so much touched in a woman's favour : and whom thou knowest to be

Thy partial friend,

J. BELFORD.

Our companions consented, that I should withdraw to write to the above effect. They can make nothing of the characters we write in ; so I read this to them. They approve of it ; and of their own motion each man would set his name to it. I would not delay sending it, for fear of some detestable scheme taking place.

THOMAS BELTON.

RICHARD MOWBRAY.

JAMES TOURVILLE.

Just now are brought me both yours. I vary not my opinion, nor forbear my earnest prayers to you in her behalf, notwithstanding her dislike of me.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Thursday.

MR. LOVELACE is extremely sunk in my opinion since Monday night : nor see I before me any thing that can afford me a pleasing hope. For what, with a mind so unequal as his, can be my best hope ?

I think I mentioned to you, in my former, that my clothes were brought me. You fluttered me so, that I am

not sure I did. But I know I designed to mention that they were. They were brought me on Thursday; but neither my few guineas with them, nor any of my books, except a *Drexelius on Eternity*, the good old *Practice of Piety*, and a *Francis Spira*. My brother's wit, I suppose. He thinks he does well to point out death and despair to me. I wish for the one, and every now and then am on the brink of the other.

You will the less wonder at my being so very solemn, when, added to the above, and to my uncertain situation, I tell you, that they have sent me with these books a letter from my cousin Morden. It has set my heart against Mr. Lovelace. Against myself too. I send it enclosed. If you please, my dear, you may read it here.

COL. MORDEN TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Florence, April 13.

I AM extremely concerned to hear of a difference betwixt the rest of a family so near and dear to me, and you, still dearer to me than any of the rest.

Your parents, the most indulgent in the world, to a child the most deserving, have given way it seems to your refusals of several gentlemen. They have contented themselves at last to name one with earnestness to you, because of the address of another whom they cannot approve.

I know very little of either of the gentlemen: but of Mr. Lovelace I know more than of Mr. Solmes. I wish I could say more to his advantage than I can. As to every qualification but one, your brother owns there is no comparison. But that one outweighs all the rest together. It cannot be thought, that Miss Clarissa' Harlowe will dispense with morals in a husband.

What, my dearest cousin, shall I first plead to you on this occasion? Your duty, your interest, your temporal, and your eternal welfare, do, and may all, depend upon

this single point, the morality of a husband. A woman who hath a wicked husband may find it difficult to be good, and out of her power to do good ; and is therefore in a worse situation than the man can be in, who hath a bad wife. You preserve all your religious regards, I understand. I wonder not that you do. I should have wondered, had you not. But what can you promise yourself, as to perseverance in them, with an immoral husband ?

Your brother acknowledges, that Mr. Solmes is not near so agreeable in person as Mr. Lovelace. But what is person, with such a lady as I have the honour to be now writing to ? He owns likewise, that he has not the address of Mr. Lovelace : but what a mere personal advantage is a plausible address, without morals. A woman had better take a husband whose manners she were to fashion, than to find them ready-fashioned to her hand, at the price of his morality ; a price that is often paid for travelling accomplishments.

Mr. Lovelace, I know, deserves to have an exception made in his favour ; for he is really a man of parts and learning : he was esteemed so both here and at Rome ; and a fine person, and a generous turn of mind, gave him great advantages. But you need not be told, that a libertine man of sense does infinitely more mischief, than a libertine of weak parts is able to do. And this I will tell you farther, that it was Mr. Lovelace's own fault that he was not still more respected than he was, among the literati here. There were, in short, some liberties in which he indulged himself, that endangered his person and his liberty ; and made the best and most worthy of those who honoured him with their notice, give him up ; and his stay both at Florence and at Rome shorter than he designed.

This is all I choose to say of Mr. Lovelace. I had much rather have had reason to give him a quite contrary cha-

racter. But as to rakes or libertines in general, I, who know them well, must be allowed, because of the mischiefs they have always in their hearts, and too often in their power, to do your sex, to add still a few more words upon this topic.

A libertine, my dear cousin, a plotting, an intriguing libertine, must be generally remorseless—unjust he must always be. The noble rule, of doing to others what he would have done to himself, is the first rule he breaks ; and every day he breaks it ; the oftener, the greater his triumph. He has great contempt for your sex. He believes no woman chaste, because he is a profligate. Every woman who favours him, confirms him in his wicked incredulity. He is always plotting to extend the mischiefs he delights in. If a woman loves such a man, how can she bear the thought of dividing her interest in his affections, with half the town, and that perhaps the dregs of it ?

Weigh all these things, which I might insist upon to more advantage, did I think it needful to one of your prudence—weigh them well, my beloved cousin ; and if it be not the will of your parents that you should continue single, resolve to oblige them ; and let it not be said, that the powers of fancy shall (as in many others of your sex) be too hard for your duty and your prudence. The less agreeable the man, the more obliging the compliance. Remember, that he is a sober man—a man who has reputation to lose, and whose reputation therefore is a security for his good behaviour to you.

I have written a very long letter, and will add no more, than that I am, with the greatest respect, my dearest cousin,

Your most affectionate and faithful servant,
WM. MORDEN.

I will suppose my dear Miss Howe, that you have read

my cousin's letter. It is now in vain to wish it had come sooner. But if it had, I might perhaps have been so rash as to give Mr. Lovelace the fatal meeting, as I little thought of going away with him.

This letter was enclosed (opened) in a blank cover. Scorn and detest me as they will, I wonder that one line was not sent with it—were it but to have more particularly pointed the design of it, in the same generous spirit, that sent me the *Spira*.

The sealing of the cover was with black wax. I hope there is no new occasion in the family to give reason for black wax. But, if there were, it would, to be sure, have been mentioned, and laid at my door—perhaps too justly!

I had begun a letter to my cousin Morden some time ago: but now I can never end it. You will believe I cannot: for how shall I tell him, that all his compliments are misbestowed? That all his advice is thrown away? All his warnings vain? And that even my highest expectation is to be the wife of that free liver, whom he so pathetically warns me to shun?

I must lay down my pen. I must brood over these reflections. Once more, before I enclose my cousin's letter, I will peruse it: and then I shall have it by heart.

CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Sunday Night, May 7.

She tells Miss Howe, that now her clothes are come, Mr. Lovelace is continually teasing her to go abroad with him in a coach, attended by whom she pleases of her own sex, either for the air, or to the public diversions.

She gives the particulars of a conversation that has passed between them on that subject, and his several proposals. But takes notice, that he says not the least word of the solemnity which he so much pressed for before

they came to town ; and which, as she observes, was necessary to give propriety to his proposals.

NOW, my dear, *says she*, I cannot bear the life I live. I would be glad at my heart to be out of his reach. If I were, he should soon find the difference. If I must be humbled, it had better be by those to whom I owe duty, than by him. My aunt writes in her letter, that she dare not propose anything in my favour. You tell me, that, upon enquiry, you find, that, had I not been unhappily seduced away, a change of measures was actually resolved upon ; and that my mother particularly, was determined to exert herself for the restoration of the family peace ; and, in order to succeed the better, had thoughts of trying to engage my uncle Harlowe in her party. What I am thinking of, is this—“Suppose Mr. Hickman, whose good character has gained him every body’s respect, should put himself in my uncle Harlowe’s way ? And (as if from your knowledge of the state of things between Mr. Lovelace and me) assure him not only of the above particulars, but that I am under no obligations that shall hinder me from taking his directions ?”

I submit the whole to your discretion, whether to pursue it at all, or in what manner. But if it be pursued, and if my uncle refuses to interest himself in my favour upon Mr. Hickman’s application as from you (for so, for obvious reasons, it must be put) I can then have no hope ; and my next step, in the mind I am in, shall be to throw myself into the protection of the ladies of his family.

The Lady dates again on Monday, to let Miss Howe know, that Mr. Lovelace, on observing her uneasiness, had introduced to her Mr. Mennell, Mrs. Fretchville’s kinsman, who managed all her affairs. She calls him a young officer of sense and politeness, who gave her an account of the house and furniture, to the same effect that Mr. Lovelace had done before ;

as also of the melancholy way Mrs. Fretchville is in.

She tells Miss Howe, how extremely urgent Mr. Lovelace was with the gentleman, to get his spouse (as he now always calls her before company) a sight of the house: And that Mr. Mennell undertook that very afternoon to show her all of it, except the apartment Mrs. Fretchville should be in when she went. But that she chose not to take another step till she knew how she approved of her scheme to have her uncle sounded; and with what success, if tried, it would be attended.

MR. LOVELACE TO MR. BELFORD.

Mr. Lovelace, in his humorous way, gives his friend an account of the lady's peevishness and dejection, on receiving a letter with her clothes. He regrets that he has lost her confidence; which he attributes to his bringing her into the company of his four companions. Yet he thinks he must excuse them, and censure her for over niceness; for that he never saw men behave better, at least not them.

Mentioning his introducing Mr. Mennell to her,

NOW, Jack, says he, was it not very kind of Mr. Mennell (Captain Mennell I sometimes call him; for among the military men there is no such officer, thou knowest, as a Lieutenant, or an Ensign—was it not very kind in him) to come along with me so readily as he did, to satisfy my beloved about the vapourish lady and the house?

But who is Captain Mennell? methinks thou askest: I never heard of such a man as Captain Mennell.

Very likely. But knowest thou not young Newcomb, honest Doleman's nephew?

O-ho! is it he?

It is. And I have changed his name by virtue of my own single authority.

But Mennell, now he has seen this angel of a woman, has qualms ; that's the devil ! I shall have enough to do to keep him right. But it is the less wonder, that he should stagger, when a few hours conversation with the same lady could make four much more hardened varlets find hearts.—Only, that I am confident, that I shall at last reward her virtue, if her virtue overcome me, or I should find it impossible to persevere—for at times, I have confounded qualms myself. But say not a word of them to the confraternity : nor laugh at me for them thyself.

In another letter, dated Monday night, he writes as follows :

This perverse lady keeps me at such distance, that I am sure something is going on between her and Miss Howe, notwithstanding the prohibition from Mrs. Howe to both :

It is impossible that one so young and so inexperienced as she is, can have all her caution from herself ; the behaviour of the women so unexceptionable ; no revellings, no company ever admitted into this inner house ; all genteel, quiet, and easy, in it ; the nymphs well bred, and well read ; her first disgusts to the old one got over—It must be Miss Howe therefore (who once was in danger of being taken in by one of our class, by honest Sir George Colmar, as thou hast heard) that makes my progress difficult.

I shall never rest till I have discovered in the first place, where the dear creature puts her letters ; and in the next till I have got her to a play, to a concert, or to take an airing with me out of town for a day or two.

Dorcas, who is ever attentive to all her lady's motions, has given me some instances of her mistress's precautions. She wafers her letters, it seems, in two places ; pricks the wafers ; and then seals upon them. No doubt but the same care is taken with regard to those brought to her ;

for she always examines the seals of the latter before she opens them.

I must, I must come at them. This difficulty augments my curiosity. Strange, so much as she writes, and at all hours, that not one sleepy or forgetful moment has offered in our favour!

I am a very unhappy man. This lady is said to be one of the sweetest tempered creatures in the world: And so I thought her. But to me, she is one of the most perverse. I never was supposed to be an ill-natured mortal neither. How can it be? I imagined for a long while, that we were born to make each other happy: But, quite the contrary; we really seem to be sent to plague each other.

But I will lead to the occasion of this preamble.

I had been out. On my return, meeting Dorcas on the stairs—Your lady in her chamber, Dorcas? In the dining-room, sir: And if ever you hope for an opportunity to come at a letter, it must be now. For at her feet I saw one lie, which, as may be seen by its open folds, she has been reading, with a little parcel of others she is now busied with—All pulled out of her pocket, as I believe: So, sir, you'll know where to find them another time.

I was ready to leap for joy, and instantly resolved to bring forward an expedient which I had held in petto; and entering into the dining-room, with an air of transport, I boldly clasped my arms about her, as she sat; she huddling up her papers in her handkerchief all the time; the dropped paper unseen. O my dearest life, a lucky expedient have Mr. Mennell and I hit upon, just now. In order to hasten Mrs. Fretchville to quit the house, I have agreed, if you approve of it, to entertain her cook, her housemaid, and two men-servants (about whom she was very solicitous) till you are provided to your mind. And that no accommodations may be wanted, I have consented to take the household linen at an appraisement.

I am to pay down five hundred pounds, and the remain-

der as soon as the bills can be looked up, and the amount of them adjusted. Thus will you have a charming house entirely ready to receive you. Some of the ladies of my family will soon be with you: They will not permit you long to suspend my happy day. And that nothing may be wanted to gratify your utmost punctilio, I will till then consent to stay here at Mrs. Sinclair's, while you reside at your new house; and leave the rest to your own generosity. O my beloved creature, will not this be agreeable to you? I am sure it will—it must—and clasping her closer to me, I gave her a more fervent kiss than ever I had dared to give her before. I permitted not my ardour to overcome my discretion however; for I took care to set my foot upon the letter, and scraped it farther from her, as it were behind her chair.

She was in a passion at the liberty I took. Bowing low, I begged her pardon; and stooping still lower, in the same motion, took up the letter, and whipt it into my bosom.

Pox on me, for a puppy, a fool, a blockhead, a clumsy varlet, a mere Jack Belford!—I thought myself a much cleverer fellow than I am!—Why could I not have been followed in by Dorcas; who might have taken it up, while I addressed her lady?

For here, the letter being unfolded, I could not put it into my bosom, without alarming her ears, as my sudden motion did her eyes.—Up she flew in a moment: Traitor! Judas! her eyes flashing lightning, and a perturbation in her eager countenance, so charming!—What have you taken up?—And then, what for both my ears I durst not to have done to her, she made no scruple to seize the stolen letter, though in my bosom.

What was to be done on so palpable a detection?—I clasped her hand, which had hold of the ravished paper, between mine: O my beloved creature! said I, can you think I have not some curiosity? Is it possible you can be thus for ever employed; and I, loving narrative letter-

writing above every other species of writing, and admiring your talent that way, should not (thus upon the dawn of my happiness, as I presume to hope) burn with a desire to be admitted into so sweet a correspondence?

Let go my hand!—stamping with her pretty foot: how dare you, sir! At this rate, I see—too plainly I see—and more she could not say: but, gasping, was ready to faint with passion and affright; the devil a bit of her accustomed gentleness to be seen in her charming face, or to be heard in her musical voice.

Having gone thus far, loth, very loth was I to lose my prize—Once more I got hold of the rumped-up letter!—Impudent man! were her words: stamping again. For God's sake, then it was. I let go my prize, lest she should faint away: but had the pleasure first to find my hand within both hers, she trying to open my reluctant fingers. How near was my heart at that moment to my hand, throbbing to my fingers' ends, to be thus familiarly, although angrily, treated by the charmer of my soul!

When she had got it in her possession, she flew to the door. I threw myself in her way, shut it, and, in the humblest manner, besought her to forgive me. And yet do you think the Harlowe-hearted charmer (notwithstanding the agreeable annunciation I came in with) would forgive me?—No truly; but pushing me rudely from the door, as if I had been nothing, she gaining that force through passion, which I had lost through fear, out she shot to her own apartment (thank my stars she could fly no further!); and as soon as she entered it, in a passion still, she doubled-locked and double-bolted herself in. This my comfort, on reflection, that, upon a greater offence, it cannot be worse.

I retreated to my own apartment, with my heart full: and, my man Will not being near me, gave myself a plaguery knock on the forehead, with my double fist.

And now is my charmer shut up from me: refusing to

see me ; refusing her meals. She resolves not to see me ; that's more :—never again, if she can help it ; and in the mind she is in—I hope she has said.

The dear creatures, whenever they quarrel with their humble servants, should always remember this saving clause, that they may not be forsworn.

But thinkest thou that I will not make it the subject of one of my first plots, to inform myself of the reason why all this commotion was necessary on so slight an occasion as this would have been, were not the letters that pass between these ladies of a treasonable nature ?

Wednesday Morning.

No admission to breakfast, any more than to supper. I wish this lady is not a simpleton, after all.

I must keep a good look-out. She is not now afraid of her brother's plot. I shan't be at all surprised, if Singleton calls upon Miss Howe, as the only person who knows, or is likely to know, where Miss Harlowe is ; pretending to have affairs of importance, and of particular service to her, if he can but be admitted to her speech—of compromise, who knows, from her brother ?

Then will Miss Howe warn her to keep close. Then will my protection be again necessary. This will do, I believe. Anything from Miss Howe must.

Joseph Leman is a vile fellow with her, and my implement. Joseph, honest Joseph, as I call him, may hang himself. I have played him off enough, and have very little further use for him. No need to wear one plot to the stumps, when I can find new ones every hour.

Nor blame me for the use I make of my talents. Who, that hath such, will let 'em be idle ?

Well then, I will find a Singleton ; that's all I have to do.

Instantly find one !—Will !—

Sir—

This moment call me hither thy cousin Paul Wheatly, just come from sea, whom thou wert recommending to my service, if I were to marry, and keep a pleasure-boat.

Presto—Will's gone—Paul will be here presently. Presently will he be gone to Mrs. Howe's. If Paul be Singleton's mate, coming from his captain, it will do as well as if it were Singleton himself.

But to own the truth, I have overplotted myself. To make my work secure, as I thought, I have frightened the dear creature with the sight of my four Hottentots, and I shall be a long time, I doubt, before I can recover my lost ground. And then this cursed family at Harlowe Place have made her out of humour with me, with herself, and with all the world, but Miss Howe, who, no doubt, is continually adding difficulties to my other difficulties.

I am very unwilling to have recourse to measures which these demons below are continually urging me to take; because I am sure, that, at last, I shall be brought to make her legally mine.

One complete trial over, and I think I will do her noble justice.

Well, Paul's gone—gone already—has all his lessons. A notable fellow!—Lord W.'s necessary-man was Paul before he went to sea. A more sensible rogue Paul than Joseph! Not such a pretender to piety neither, as the other. At what a price have I bought that Joseph! I believe I must punish the rascal at last: but must let him marry first: then (though that may be punishment enough) I shall punish two at once in the man and his wife. And how richly does Betty deserve punishment for her behaviour to my goddess?

But now I hear the rusty hinges of my beloved's door give me creaking invitation. My heart creaks and throbs with respondent trepidations: whimsical enough though!

For what relation has a lover's heart to a rusty pair of hinges? But they are the hinges that open and shut the door of my beloved's bedchamber. Relation enough in that.

She calls her maid Dorcas. No doubt, that I may hear her harmonious voice, and to give me an opportunity to pour out my soul at her feet; to renew all my vows; and to receive her pardon for the past offence: and then, with what pleasure shall I begin upon a new score; and afterwards wipe out that; and begin another, and another; till the last offence passes; and there can be no other! And once, after that, to be forgiven, will be to be forgiven for ever.

The door is again shut. Dorcas tells me, that her Lady denies to admit me to dine with her; a favour I had ordered the wench to beseech her to grant me, the next time she saw her—not uncivilly, however, denies—coming to by degrees!

But here I conclude; though the tyranness leaves me nothing to do, but to read, write, and fret.

Subscription is formal between us. Besides, I am so totally hers, that I cannot say how much I am thine or any other person's.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Tuesday, May 9.

IF, my dear, you approve of the application to my Uncle Harlowe, I wish it may be made as soon as possible. We are quite out again. I have shut myself up from him. The offence indeed not very great—and yet it is too. He had like to have got a letter. One of yours. But never will I write again, or re-peruse my papers, in an apartment where he thinks himself entitled to come. He did not read a line of it. Indeed he did not. So don't be alarmed. And rely upon future caution.

Thus it was. The sun being upon my closet, and Mr. Lovelace abroad—

She then gives Miss Howe an account of his coming in by surprise upon her: of his fluttering speech: of his bold address: of her struggle with him for the letter, &c.

And now, my dear, proceeds she, I am more and more convinced, that I am too much in his power to make it prudent to stay with him. And if my friends will but give me hope, I will resolve to abandon him for ever.

Adieu, my dearest friend!—May your heart never know the hundredth part of the pain mine at present feels! prays

Your CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE, TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Wednesday, May 10.

WILL write! No man shall write for me. No woman shall hinder me from writing. Surely I am of age to distinguish between reason and caprice. I am not writing to a man, am I?—If I were carrying on a correspondence with a fellow, of whom my mother disapproved, and whom it might be improper for me to encourage, my own honour and my duty would engage my obedience. But as the case is so widely different, not a word more on this subject, I beseech you!

I much approve of your resolution to leave this wretch, if you can make up with your uncle.

I hate the man—most heartily do I hate him, for his teasing ways. The very reading of your account of them teazes me almost as much as they can you. May you have encouragement to fly the foolish wretch!

I have other reasons to wish you may: for I have just made an acquaintance with one who knows a vast deal of his private history. The man is really a villain, my dear!

an execrable one! if all be true that I have heard: and yet I am promised other particulars. I do assure you, my dear friend, that had he a dozen lives, he might have forfeited them all, and been dead twenty crimes ago.

I am sorry to tell you, that I have reason to think, that your brother has not laid aside his foolish plot. A sun-burnt, sailor-looking fellow was with me just now, pretending great service to you from Captain Singleton, could he be admitted to your speech. I pleaded ignorance, as to the place of your abode. The fellow was too well instructed for me to get anything out of him.

Your ever faithful and affectionate,

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

Sunday, May 14.

IHAVE not been able to avoid a short debate with Mr. Lovelace. I had ordered a coach to the door. When I had notice that it was come, I went out of my chamber to go to it; but met him dressed on the stairs-head with a book in his hand, but without his hat and sword. He asked with an air very solemn, yet respectful, if I were going abroad. I told him I was. He desired leave to attend me, if I were going to church. I refused him. And then he complained heavily of my treatment of him; and declared that he would not live such another week as the past, for the world.

I owned to him very frankly, that I had made an application to my friends; and that I was resolved to keep myself to myself till I knew the issue of it.

He coloured, and seemed surprised. But checking himself in something he was going to say, he pleaded my danger from Singleton, and again desired to attend me.

And then he told me, that Mrs. Fretchville had desired to continue a fortnight longer in the house. She found, said he, that I was unable to determine about entering

upon it; and now who knows when such a vapourish creature will come to a resolution? This, madam, has been an unhappy week; for had I not stood upon such bad terms with you, you might have been now mistress of that house; and probably had my cousin Montague, if not Lady Betty, actually with you.

And so, sir, taking all you say for granted, your cousin Montague cannot come to Mrs. Sinclair's? What, pray, is her objection to Mrs. Sinclair's? Is this house fit for me to live in a month or two, and not fit for any of your relations for a few days? And Mrs. Fretchville has taken more time too!—Then, pushing by him, I hurried down stairs.

Dorcas just then bringing him his sword and hat, he opened the street door, and taking my reluctant hand, led me, in a very obsequious manner, to the coach. People passing by, stopped, stared, and whispered—But he is so graceful in his person and dress, that he generally takes every eye.

I was uneasy to be so gazed at; and he stepped in after me, and the coachman drove to St. Paul's.

He was very full of assiduities all the way; while I was as reserved as possible: and when I returned, dined, as I had done the greatest part of the week, by myself.

He told me, upon my resolving to do so, that although he would continue his passive observance till I knew the issue of my application; yet I must expect, that then I should not rest one moment till I had fixed his happy day: for that his very soul was fretted with my slights, resentments, and delays.

A wretch! when I can say, to my infinite regret, on a double account, that all he complains of is owing to himself!

O that I may have good tidings from my uncle! Your
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MRS. JUDITH NORTON.

Thursday, May 11.

GOOD MRS. NORTON,—Cannot you, without naming me as an adviser, who am hated by the family, contrive a way to let Mrs. Harlowe know, that in an accidental conversation with me, you had been assured, that my beloved friend pines after a reconciliation with her relations? That she has hitherto, in hopes of it, refused to enter into any obligation that shall be in the least an hindrance to it: that she would fain avoid giving Mr. Lovelace a right to make her family uneasy in relation to her grandfather's estate: that all she wishes for still, is to be indulged in her choice of a single life, and, on that condition, would make her father's pleasure hers with regard to that estate: that Mr. Lovelace is continually pressing her to marry him; and all his friends likewise: but that I am sure, she has so little liking to the man, because of his faulty morals, and of the antipathy of her relations to him, that if she, had any hope given her of a reconciliation, she would forego all thoughts of him, and put herself into her father's protection. But that their resolution must be speedy; for otherwise she would find herself obliged to give way to his pressing entreaties; and it might then be out of her power to prevent disagreeable litigations.

I do assure you, Mrs. Norton, upon my honour, that our dearest friend knows nothing of this procedure of mine.

Pray acquaint me by a line of the result of your interposition. If it prove not such as may be reasonably hoped for, our dear friend shall know nothing of this step from me; and pray let her not from you. For, in that case, it would only give deeper grief to a heart already too much afflicted. I am, dear and worthy Mrs. Norton,

Your true friend,

ANNA HOWE.

MRS. NORTON TO MISS HOWE.

Saturday, May 13.

DEAR MADAM,—My heart is almost broken to be obliged to let you know, that such is the situation of things in the family of my ever dear Miss Harlowe, that there can be at present no success expected from any application in her favour. Her poor mother is to be pitied. I have a most affecting letter from her ; but must not communicate it to you ; and she forbids me to let it be known that she writes upon the subject ; although she is compelled, as it were, to do it, for the ease of her own heart. I mention it therefore, in confidence.

I hope in God that my beloved young lady has preserved her honour inviolate. I hope there is not a man breathing who could attempt a sacrilege so detestable. I have no apprehension of a failure in a virtue so established. God for ever keep so pure a heart out of the reach of surprises and violence ! Ease, dear madam, I beseech you, my over-anxious heart, by one line, by the bearer, although but by one line, to acquaint me (as surely you can) that her honour is unsullied.—If it be not, adieu to all the comforts this life can give : Since none will it be able to afford

To the poor JUDITH NORTON.

MISS HOWE TO MRS. JUDITH NORTON.

Saturday Evening, May 13.

DEAR GOOD WOMAN,—Your beloved's honour is inviolate !—Must be inviolate ! And will be so, in spite of men and devils. Could I have had hope of a reconciliation, all my view was, that she should not have had this man.—All that can be said

now, is, she must run the risk of a bad husband : she, of whom no man living is worthy !

You pity her mother—So do not I ! I pity no mother, that puts it out of her power to show maternal love, and humanity, in order to patch up for herself a precarious and sorry quiet, which every blast of wind shall disturb.

I repeat that I pity none of them. Our beloved friend only deserves pity. She had never been in the hands of this man, but for them. She is quite blameless. You don't know all her story. Were I to tell you that she had no intention to go off with this man, it would avail her nothing. It would only serve to condemn, with those who drove her to extremities, him, who now must be her refuge. I am

Your sincere friend and servant,

ANNA HOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sunday, May 14.

HOW it is now, my dear, between you and Mr. Lovelace, I cannot tell. But wicked as the man is, I am afraid he must be your lord and master.

I called him by several very hard names in my last. I had but just heard of some of his vilenesses, when I sat down to write ; so my indignation was raised. But on inquiry, and recollection, I find that the facts laid to his charge were all of them committed some time ago—not since he has had strong hopes of your favour.

Yet his teasing ways are intolerable : his acquiescence with your slight delays, and his resignedness to the distance you now keep him at (for a fault so much slighter as he must think, than the punishment) are unaccountable : he doubts your love of him, that is very probable ; but you have reason to be surprised at his want of ardour ; a blessing so great within his reach, as I may say.

There is yet, to a person of your fortune and indepen-

dence, a good deal to do, if you enter upon those terms which ought to be entered upon. I don't find, that he has once talked of settlements; nor yet of the licence. A foolish wretch!—But as your evil destiny has thrown you out of all other protection and mediation, you must be father, mother, uncle to yourself; and enter upon the requisite points for yourself.

“Mr. Lovelace,” would I say; yet hate the foolish fellow, for his low, his stupid pride, in wishing to triumph over the dignity of his own wife;—“I am by your means deprived of every friend I have in the world. In what light am I to look upon you? I have well considered of everything. You have made some people, much against my liking, think me a wife: others know I am not married; nor do I desire anybody should believe I am. Do you think your being here in the same house with me can be to my reputation? You talked to me of Mrs. Fretchville's house.” This will bring him to renew his last discourse on that subject, if he does not revive it of himself. “If Mrs. Fretchville knows not her own mind, what is her house to me? You talked of bringing up your cousin Montague to bear me company: If my brother's schemes be your pretence for not going yourself to fetch her, you can write to her. I insist upon bringing these two points to an issue. Off or on, ought to be indifferent to me, if so to them.”

This is my advice: Mend it as circumstances offer, and follow your own. But indeed, my dear, this, or something like it, would I do. And let him tell me afterwards, if he dared or would, that he humbled down to his shoe-buckles the person it would have been his glory to exalt.

Adieu, my dearest friend,

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Monday, May 15.

NOW indeed it is evident, my best, my only friend, that I have but one choice to make. And now do I find, that I have carried my resentment against this man too far ; since now I am to appear as if under an obligation to his patience with me for a conduct, which perhaps he will think (if not humoursome and childish) plainly demonstrative of my little esteem of him ; of but a secondary esteem at least, where before, his pride rather than his merit, had made him expect a first. O my dear ! to be cast upon a man, that is not a generous man ; that is indeed a cruel man ! A man that is capable of creating a distress to a young creature, who by her evil destiny is thrown into his power ; and then of enjoying it, as I may say ! What a fate is mine !

Bad as the returns are which my application by Mr. Hickman has met with, you tell me, “that you have not acquainted me with all the bad ; nor now, perhaps, ever will.” Have you worse than this, my dear, behind ?—Surely my father has not renewed his dreadful malediction !—Surely, if so, my mother has not joined in it ! Have my uncles given it their sanction, and made it a family act ? And themselves thereby more really faulty, than ever they suppose me to be, though I the cause of that greater fault in them ?—What, my dear, is the worst, that you will leave for ever unrevealed ?

O Lovelace ! why comest thou not just now, while these black prospects are before me ? For now, couldst thou look into my heart, wouldst thou see a distress worthy of thy barbarous triumph !

He went out in the morning ; intending not to return to dinner, unless (as he sent me word) I would admit him to dine with me.

I excused myself. The man, whose anger is now to be of such high importance to me, was, it seems, displeased.

But let me sit with my hands before me, all patience, all resignation; for I think I hear him coming up. Or shall I roundly accost him, in the words, in the form, which you, my dear, have prescribed?

He is come in. He has sent to me, all impatience, as Dorcas says, by his aspect.—But I cannot, cannot see him!

Monday Night.

The contents of your letter, and my own heavy reflections, rendered me incapable of seeing this expecting man. The first word he asked Dorcas, was, if I had received a letter since he had been out? She told me this; and her answer, that I had; and was fasting, and had been in tears ever since.

He sent to desire an interview with me.

I answered by her, that I was not very well. In the morning, if better, I would see him as soon as he pleased.

Very humble! was it not, my dear? Yet he was too royal to take it for humility; for Dorcas told me, he rubbed one side of his face impatiently; and said a rash word, and was out of humour; stalking about the room.

Half an hour after, he sent again; desiring very earnestly, that I would admit him to supper with me. He would enter upon no subjects of conversation, but what I should lead to.

So I should have been at liberty, you see, to court him!

I again desired to be excused.

Indeed, my dear, my eyes were swelled: I was very low-spirited; and could not think of entering all at once, after the distance I had kept him at for several days, into the freedom of conversation which the utter rejection I have met with from my relations, as well as your advice, has made necessary.

He sent up to tell me, that as he heard I was fasting, if I would promise to eat some chicken which Mrs. Sinclair had ordered for supper, he would acquiesce.—Very kind in his anger!—Is he not?

I promised that I would. Can I be more preparatively condescending?—How happy, I'll warrant, if I may meet him in a kind and forgiving humour!

I hate myself!—But I won't be insulted—Indeed I won't, for all this.

Tuesday, May 16.

I think once more, we seem to be in a kind of train; but through a storm. I will give you the particulars.

I heard him in the dining-room at five in the morning. I had rested very ill, and was up too. But opened not my door till six: when Dorcas brought me his request for my company.

He approached me, and taking my hand as I entered the dining-room, I went not to bed, Madam, till two, said he; yet slept not a wink. For God's sake, torment me not, as you have done for a week past.

He paused. I was silent.

At first, proceeded he, I thought your resentment of a curiosity, in which I had been disappointed, could not be deep; and that it would go off of itself: but when I found it was to be kept up till you knew the success of some new overtures which you had made, and which, complied with, might have deprived me of you for ever; how, madam, could I support myself under the thoughts of having, with such an union of interests, made so little impression upon your mind in my favour?

This, madam, after the persecutions of those relations! After what you have suffered! After what you have made me hope! Let me, my dearest creature, ask you what sort of pride must his be, which can dispense with inclination and preference in the lady whom he adores?—What must be that love—

Love, sir ! who talks of love ?—Was not merit the thing we were talking of ?—Have I ever professed, have I ever required of you professions of a passion of that nature !—But there is no end of these debatings ; each so faultless, each so full of self—

I do not think myself faultless, madam :—But—

But what, sir !—Would you evermore argue with me, as if you were a child ?—Seeking palliations, and making promises ?—Promises of what, sir ? Of being in future the man it is a shame a gentleman is not ?—Of being the man—

Good God ! interrupted he, with eyes lifted up, if thou wert to be thus severe—

Well, well, sir (impatiently), I need only to observe, that all this vast difference in sentiments shows how unpaired our minds are—So let us—

Let us what, madam !—My soul is rising into tumults !. And he looked so wildly, that I was a good deal terrified—Let us what, madam !—

I was, however, resolved not to desert myself—Why, sir, let us resolve to quit every regard for each other—Nay, flame not out—I am a poor weak-minded creature in some things : But where what I should be, or not deserve to live, if I am not, is in the question, I have a great and invincible spirit, or my own conceit betrays me—Let us resolve to quit every regard for each other that is more than civil. This you may depend upon ; I will never marry any other man. I have seen enough of your sex ; at least of you.—A single life shall ever be my choice : while I will leave you at liberty to pursue your own.

By my soul, said he, and grasped my hand with an eagerness that hurt it, we were born for one another : you must be mine—you shall be mine (and put his other arm round me), although my damnation were to be the purchase !

I was still more terrified—Let me leave you, Mr.

Lovelace, said I; or do you begone from me. Is the passion you boast of, to be thus shockingly demonstrated?

You must not go, madam!—You must not leave me in anger—

I will return—I will return—when you can be less violent—less shocking.

And he let me go.

The man quite frightened me; insomuch that when I got into my chamber, I found a sudden flow of tears a great relief to me.

In half an hour, he sent a little billet, expressing his concern for the vehemence of his behaviour, and praying to see me.

I went. Because I could not help myself, I went.

He was full of his excuses.—O my dear, what would you, even you, do with such a man as this; and in my situation?

I presume, madam, replied he, from what you have said, that your application to Harlowe Place has proved unsuccessful: I therefore hope, that you will now give me leave to mention the terms in the nature of settlements, which I have long intended to propose to you; and which having till now delayed to do, through accidents not proceeding from myself, I had thoughts of urging to you the moment you entered upon your new house; and upon your finding yourself as independent in appearance as you are in fact. Permit me, madam, to propose these matters to you—not with an expectation of your immediate answer; but for your consideration.

Were not hesitation, a self-felt glow, a downcast eye, encouragement more than enough? “And yet you will observe (as I now do on recollection) that he was in no great hurry to solicit for a day; since he had no thoughts of proposing settlements, till I had got into my new house; and now, in his great complaisance to me, he desired leave to propose his terms, not with an expectation of my im-

mediate answer ; but for my consideration only."—Yet, my dear, your advice was too much in my head at this time. I hesitated.

But he seemed to think it enough that he had asked my leave to propose his settlements. He took no advantage of my silence, as I presume men as modest as Mr. Lovelace would have done, in a like case : yet, gazing in my face very confidently, and seeming to expect my answer, I thought myself obliged to give the subject a more diffuse turn, in order to save myself the mortification of appearing too ready in my compliance, after such a distance as had been between us ; and yet (in pursuance of your advice) I was willing to avoid the necessity of giving him such a repulse, as might again throw us out of the course.—A cruel alternative to be reduced to !

I have no spirits just now, sir, I said, to attend to such weighty points. What you have a mind to propose, write to me : and I shall know what answer to return. Only one thing let me remind you of, that if you touch upon any subject, in which my father has a concern, I shall judge by your treatment of the father, what value you have for the daughter.

He looked as if he would choose rather to speak than write : but had he said so, I had a severe return to have made upon him ; as possibly he might see by my looks.

Although circumstances have so offered, that I could not take your advice as to the manner of dealing with him, yet you gave me so much courage by it, as has enabled me to conduct things to this issue ; as well as determined me against leaving him : which before, I was thinking to do, at all adventures. Whether, when it came to the point, I should have done so, or not, I cannot say, because it would have depended upon his behaviour at the time.

But let his behaviour be what it will, I am afraid (with you) that, should anything offer at last to oblige me to

leave him, I shall not mend my situation in the world's eye, but the contrary. And yet I will not be treated by him with indignity while I have any power to help myself.

Tuesday Night.

Mr. Lovelace has sent me, by Dorcas, his proposals, as follow :

“To spare a delicacy so extreme, and to obey you, I write : And the rather, that you may communicate this paper to Miss Howe, who may consult any of her friends you shall think proper to have intrusted on this occasion. I say intrusted ; because, as you know, I have given it out to several persons, that we are actually married.

“In the first place, madam, I offer to settle upon you, by way of jointure, your whole estate : and moreover to vest in trustees such a part of mine in Lancashire, as shall produce a clear four hundred pounds a year, to be paid to your sole and separate use, quarterly.

“My own estate is a clear not nominal £2,000 per annum. Lord M. proposes to give me possession either of that which he has in Lancashire (to which, by the way, I think I have a better title than he has himself) or that we call The Lawn in Hertfordshire, upon my nuptials with a lady whom he so greatly admires ; and to make that I shall choose a clear £1,000 per annum.

“If, as your own estate is at present in your father's hands, you rather choose that I should make a jointure out of mine, tantamount to yours, be it what it will, it shall be done. I will engage Lord M. to write to you, what he proposes to do on the happy occasion : not as your desire or expectation, but to demonstrate, that no advantage is intended to be taken of the situation you are in with your own family.

“To show the beloved daughter the consideration I have for her, I will consent, that she shall prescribe the terms of agreement in relation to the large sums, which must be

in her father's hands, arising from her grandfather's estate. I have no doubt, but he will be put upon making large demands upon you. All those it shall be in your power to comply with, for the sake of your own peace. And the remainder shall be paid into your hands, and be entirely at your disposal, as a fund to support those charitable donations, which I have heard you so famed for out of your family ; and for which you have been so greatly reflected upon in it.

“ These, madam, are my proposals. They are such as I always designed to make, whenever you would permit me to enter into the delightful subject. But you have been so determined to try every method for reconciling yourself to your relations, even by giving me absolutely up for ever, that you have seemed to think it but justice to keep me at a distance, till the event of that your predominant hope could be seen. It is now seen!—And although I have been, and perhaps still am, ready to regret the want of that preference I wished for from you as Miss Clarissa Harlowe ; yet I am sure, as the husband of Mrs. Lovelace, I shall be more ready to adore than to blame you for the pangs you have given to a heart, the generosity, or rather justice of which, my implacable enemies have taught you to doubt : and this still the readier, as I am persuaded, that those pangs never would have been given by a mind so noble, had not the doubt been entertained (perhaps with too great an appearance of reason) ; and as I hope I shall have it to reflect, that the moment the doubt shall be overcome, the indifference will cease.

“ I will only add, that if I have omitted anything, that would have given you further satisfaction ; or if the above terms be short of what you would wish ; you will be pleased to supply them as you think fit. And when I know your pleasure, I will instantly order articles to be drawn up conformably ; that nothing in my power may be wanting to make you happy.

“ You will now, dearest madam, judge, how far all the rest depends upon yourself.”

I shall now judge how far all the rest depends upon myself! So coldly concludes he such warm, and, in the main, unobjectible proposals! Would you not, as you read, have supposed, that the paper would conclude with the most earnest demand of a day?—I own, I had that expectation so strong, resulting naturally, as I may say, from the premises, that without studying for dissatisfaction, I could not help being dissatisfied when I came to the conclusion.

But you say there is no help. I must perhaps make further sacrifices. All delicacy it seems is to be at an end with me!—But if so, this man knows not what every wise man knows, that prudence, and virtue, and delicacy of mind in a wife, do the husband more real honour in the eye of the world, than the same qualities (were she destitute of them) in himself, do him: as the want of them in her does him more dishonour: for are not the wife’s errors the husband’s reproach? How justly his reproach, is another thing.

I will consider this paper; and write to it, if I am able: for it seems now, all the rest depends upon myself.

Mr. Lovelace would fain have engaged me last night. But as I was not prepared to enter upon the subject of his proposals (intending to consider them maturely) and was not highly pleased with his conclusion, I desired to be excused seeing him till morning; and the rather, as there is hardly any getting from him in tolerable time overnight.

Accordingly, about seven o’clock we met in the dining-room.

I find, he was full of expectation that I should meet him with a very favourable, who knows but with a thankful aspect? And I immediately found by his sullen coun-

tenance, that he was under no small disappointment that I did not.

My dearest love, are you well? Why look you so solemn upon me? Will your indifference never be over? If I have proposed terms in any respect short of your expectation—

I told him, that he had very considerably mentioned my showing his proposals to Miss Howe; and as I should have a speedy opportunity to send them to her by Collins, I desired to suspend any talk upon that subject till I had her opinion upon them.

Good God!—If there were but the least loop-hole! the least room for delay!—But he was writing a letter to Lord M. to give him an account of his situation with me, and could not finish it so satisfactorily, either to my Lord or to himself, as if I would condescend to say, whether the terms he had proposed were acceptable or not.

He asked me then, if I would so far permit him to touch upon the happy day, as to request the presence of Lord M. on the occasion, and to be my father?

Father had a sweet and venerable sound with it, I said. I should be glad to have a father who would own me!

Was not this plain speaking, think you, my dear? Yet it rather, I must own, appears so to me on reflection, than was designed freely at the time. For I then, with a sigh from the bottom of my heart, thought of my own father; bitterly regretting, that I am an outcast from him and from my mother.

Mr. Lovelace I thought seemed a little affected; at the manner of my speaking, and perhaps at the sad reflection.

He turned towards the window (rejoice with me, my dear, since I seem to be devoted to him, that the man is not absolutely impenetrable!): his emotion was visible; yet he endeavoured to suppress it. Approaching me again; again he was obliged to turn from me; angelic something, he said: but then, obtaining a heart more suitable to his

wish, he once more approached me.—For his own part, he said, as Lord M. was so subject to the gout, he was afraid, that the compliment he had just proposed to make him, might, if made, occasion a longer suspension than he could bear to think of: and if it did, it would vex him to the heart that he had made it.

I could not say a single word to this, you know, my dear. But you will guess at my thoughts of what he said—so much passionate love, lip-deep! So prudent, and so dutifully patient at heart to a relation he had till now so undutifully despised!—Why, why, am I thrown upon such a man, thought I!

He hesitated, as if contending with himself; and after taking a turn or two about the room, he was at a great loss what to determine upon, he said, because he had not the honour of knowing when he was to be made the happiest of men—would to God it might that very instant be resolved upon!

He stopped a moment or two, staring in his usual confident way, in my downcast face (did I not, O my beloved friend, think you, want a father or a mother just then?): but if he could not, so soon as he wished, procure my consent to a day; in that case, he thought the compliment might as well be made to Lord M. as not—(See, my dear!) since the settlements might be drawn and engrossed in the intervenient time, which would pacify his impatience, as no time would be lost.

You will suppose how I was affected by this speech, by repeating the substance of what he said upon it; as follows.

—But, by his soul, he knew not, so much was I upon the reserve, and so much latent meaning did my eye import, whether, when he most hoped to please me, he was not farthest from doing so. Would I vouchsafe to say, whether I approved of his compliment to Lord M. or not?

Would to Heaven, my dearest life, added he, that, without complimenting anybody, to-morrow might be the happiest day of my life!—What say you, my angel? with a trembling impatience that seemed not affected—what say you for to-morrow?

It was likely, my dear, I could say much to it, or name another day, had I been disposed to the latter, with such an hinted delay from him.

I was silent.

Next day, madam, if not to-morrow?—

Had he given me time to answer, it could not have been in the affirmative, you must think—but in the same breath, he went on—or the day after that?—and taking both my hands in his, he stared me into a half-confusion—Would you have had patience with him, my dear?

No, no, said I, as calmly as possible, you cannot think that I should imagine there can be reason for such a hurry. It will be most agreeable, to be sure, for my Lord to be present.

I am all obedience and resignation, returned the wretch, with a self-pluming air, as if he had acquiesced to a proposal made by me, and had complimented me with a great piece of self-denial.

But when he would have rewarded himself, as he had heretofore called it, for this self-supposed concession, with a kiss, I repulsed him with a just and very sincere disdain.

He seemed both vexed and surprised, as one who had made the most agreeable proposals and concessions, and thought them ungratefully returned. He plainly said, that he thought our situation would entitle him to such an innocent freedom: and he was both amazed and grieved to be thus scornfully repulsed.

No reply could be made by me on such a subject. I abruptly broke from him. I recollect, as I passed by one of the pier-glasses, that I saw in it his clenched hand offered in wrath to his forehead: the words, indifference,

by his soul, next to hatred, I heard him speak : and something of ice he mentioned : I heard not what.

Whether he intends to write to my Lord, or to Miss Montague, I cannot tell. But as all delicacy ought to be over with me now, perhaps I am to blame to expect it from a man who may not know what it is. If he does not, and yet thinks himself very polite, and intends not to be otherwise, I am rather to be pitied, than he to be censured.

MR. LOVELACE TO MR. BELFORD.

Four letters are written by Mr. Lovelace from the date of his last, giving the state of affairs between him and the lady, pretty much the same as in hers in the same period, allowing for the humour in his, and for his resentment expressed with vehemence on her resolution to leave him, if her friends could be brought to be reconciled to her.—A few extracts from them will be only given.



W^HAT, says he, might have become of me, and of my projects, had not her father, and the rest of the implacables stood my friends ?

After violent threatenings of revenge, he says,

'Tis plain she would have given me up for ever : nor should I have been able to prevent her abandoning of me, unless I had torn up the tree by the roots to come at the fruit ; which I hope still to bring down by a gentle shake or two, if I can but have patience to stay the ripening season.

Mentioning the settlement, he says,

I am in earnest as to the terms. If I marry her (and I have no doubt but that I shall, after my pride, my ambition, my revenge, if thou wilt, is gratified) I will do her noble justice. The more I do for such a prudent, such an

excellent economist, the more shall I do for myself.—But, by my soul, Belford, her haughtiness shall be brought down to own both love and obligation to me. Nor will this sketch of settlements bring us forwarder than I would have it. Modesty of sex will stand my friend at any time. At the very altar, our hands joined, I would engage to make this proud beauty leave the parson and me, and all my friends who should be present, though twenty in number, to look like fools upon one another, while she took wing, and flew out of the church-door, or window (if that were open, and the door shut); and this only by a single word.

He mentions his rash expression, that she should be his, although his damnation were to be the purchase.

At that instant, says he, I was upon the point of making a violent attempt; but was checked in the very moment, and but just in time to save myself, by the awe I was struck with on again casting my eye upon her terrified but lovely face, and seeing, as I thought, her spotless heart in every line of it.

O Virtue, Virtue! proceeds he, what is there in thee, that can thus against his will affect the heart of a Lovelace!—Whence these involuntary tremors, and fear of giving mortal offence?—What art thou, that acting in the breast of a feeble woman, canst strike so much awe into a spirit so intrepid! Which never before, no, not in my first attempt, young as I then was, and frightened at my own boldness (till I found myself forgiven) had such an effect upon me!

He paints, in lively colours, that part of the scene between him and the lady, where she says, "The word father has a sweet and venerable sound with it."

I was exceedingly affected, says he, upon the occasion. But was ashamed to be surprised into such a fit of un-

manly weakness—so ashamed, that I was resolved to subdue it at the instant, and to guard against the like for the future. Yet, at that moment, I more than half regretted, that I could not permit her to enjoy a triumph which she so well deserved to glory in—her youth, her beauty, her artless innocence, and her manner, equally beyond comparison or description. But her indifference, Belford!—That she could resolve to sacrifice me to the malice of my enemies; and carry on the design in so clandestine a manner—yet love her, as I do, to frenzy!—revere her, as I do, to adoration!—These were the recollections with which I fortified my recreant heart against her!—Yet, after all, if she persevere, she must conquer!—Coward, as she has made me, that never was a coward before!

He concludes his fourth letter in a vehement rage upon her repulsing him, when he offered to salute her; having supposed, as he owns, that she would have been all condescension on his proposals to her.

This, says he, I will for ever remember against her, in order to steel my heart, that I may cut through a rock of ice to hers; and repay her for the disdain, the scorn, which glowed in her countenance, and was apparent in her air, at her abrupt departure from me, after such obliging behaviour on my side, and after I had so earnestly pressed her for an early day. The women below say, she hates me; she despises me!—and 'tis true: she does; she must. And why cannot I take their advice? I will not long, my fair one, be despised by thee, and laughed at by them!

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday, May 18.



HAVE neither time nor patience, my dear friend, to answer every material article in your last letters just now received. Mr. Lovelace's proposals are all I like of him. And yet (as you do) I think

that he concludes them not with that warmth and earnestness which we might naturally have expected from him. Never in my life did I hear or read of so patient a man, with such a blessing in his reach. But wretches of his cast, between you and me, my dear, have not, I fancy, the ardours that honest men have. Who knows, as your Bell once spitefully said, but he may have half a dozen creatures to quit his hands of before he engages for life?—Yet I believe you must not expect him to be honest on this side of his grand climacteric.

Would to heaven to-morrow, without complimenting any body, might be his happy day!—Villain! After he had himself suggested the compliment!—And I think he accuses YOU of delaying!—Fellow, that he is!—How my heart is wrung.

I will endeavour to think of some method, of some scheme, to get you from him, and to fix you safely somewhere till your Cousin Morden arrives—a scheme to lie by you, and to be pursued as occasion may be given. You are sure, that you can go abroad when you please? and that our correspondence is safe? I cannot, however (for the reasons heretofore mentioned respecting your own reputation), wish you to leave him while he gives you not cause to suspect his honour. But your heart I know would be the easier, if you were sure of some asylum in case of necessity.

I shall be impatient till I have your next. I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

MR. BELFORD, TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Wednesday, May 17.

FET me once more entreat thee, Lovelace, to reflect, before it be too late (before the mortal offence be given) upon the graces and merits of this lady. Let thy frequent remorse at last end in one effectual

remorse. Let not pride and wantonness of heart ruin thy fairer prospects. By my faith, Lovelace, there is nothing but vanity, conceit, and nonsense, in our wild schemes. As we grow older we shall be wiser, and looking back upon our foolish notions of the present hour (our youth dissipated) shall certainly despise ourselves when we think of the honourable engagements we might have made. Thou, more especially, if thou lettest such a matchless creature slide through thy fingers. A creature pure from her cradle. In all her actions and sentiments uniformly noble. Strict in the performance of all her even unrewarded duties to the most unreasonable of fathers, what a wife will she make the man who shall have the honour to call her his!

Could any man but thee put together upon paper the following questions with so much unconcern as thou seemest to have written them! Give them a re-perusal, O heart of adamant! "Whither can she fly to avoid me? Her parents will not receive her; her uncles will not entertain her; her beloved Norton is in their direction, and cannot; Miss Howe dare not. She has not one friend in town but ME; is entirely a stranger to the town." What must that heart be that can triumph in a distress so deep, into which she has been plunged by thy elaborate arts and contrivances? And what a sweet, yet sad reflection was that, which had like to have had its due effect upon thee, arising from thy naming Lord M. for her nuptial father! Her tender years inclining her to wish a father, and to hope a friend. O my dear Lovelace, canst thou resolve to be, instead of the father thou has robbed her of, a devil?

Thou knowest, that I have no interest, that I can have no view, in wishing thee to do justice to this admirable creature. For thy own sake, once more I conjure thee, for thy family's sake, and for the sake of our common humanity, let me beseech thee to be just to Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

Thy real friend,

J. BELFORD.


Mr. Lovelace having not returned an answer to Mr. Belford's expostulatory letter, so soon as Mr. Belford expected, he wrote to him, expressing his apprehension, that he had disobliged him by his honest freedom. Among other things, he says—

I pass my time here at Watford, attending my dying uncle, very heavily. I cannot, therefore, by any means, dispense with thy correspondence. And why shouldst thou punish me, for having more conscience and more remorse than thyself? Thou, who never thoughtest either conscience or remorse an honour to thee. Do thou, Lovelace, whether thou art, or art not, determined upon thy measures with regard to the fine lady in thy power, enliven my heavy heart by thy communications; and thou wilt oblige

Thy melancholy friend,
J. BELFORD.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday Night, May 19.

HEN I have opened my views to thee so amply as I have done in my former letters, and have told thee that my principal design is but to bring virtue to a trial that, if virtue, it need not be afraid of; and that the reward of it will be marriage; I am amazed at the repetition of thy wambling nonsense.

I do not intend to let this matchless creature slip through my fingers.

Saturday, May 20.

AND now will I favour thee with a brief account of our present situation.

From the highest to the lowest we are all extremely happy. Dorcas stands well in her lady's graces. Polly has asked her advice in relation to a courtship affair of her own.

No oracle ever gave better. Sally has had a quarrel with her woollen-draper; and made my charmer lady-chancellor in it. She blamed Sally for behaving tyrannically to a man who loves her.

But how stands it between thyself and the lady, methinks thou askest, since her abrupt departure from thee, and undutiful repulse of Wednesday morning?

Why, pretty well in the main. Nay, very well. For why? The dear saucy-face knows not how to help herself. Can fly to no other protection. And has, besides, overheard a conversation (who would have thought she had been so near?) which passed between Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Martin, and myself, that very Wednesday afternoon; which has set her heart at ease with respect to several doubtful points.

Such as, particularly, "Mrs. Fretchville's unhappy state of mind—Most humanely pitied by Miss Martin, who knows her very well—The husband she has lost, and herself (as Sally says) lovers from their cradles. Pity from one begets pity from another, be the occasion for it either strong or weak; and so many circumstances were given to poor Mrs. Fretchville's distress, that it was impossible but my beloved must extremely pity her whom the less tender-hearted Miss Martin greatly pitied.

"My Lord M.'s gout his only hindrance from visiting my spouse. Lady Betty and Miss Montague soon expected in town.

"My earnest desire signified to have my spouse receive those ladies in her own house, if Mrs. Fretchville would but know her own mind; and I pathetically lamented the delay occasioned by her not knowing it.

"My intention to stay at Mrs. Sinclair's, as I said I had told them before, while my spouse resides in her own house (when Mrs. Fretchville could be brought to quit it,) in order to gratify her utmost punctilio.

"My passion for my beloved (which as I told them in a

high and fervent accent, was the truest that man could have for woman,) I boasted of. It was, in short, I said, of the true Platonic kind; or I had no notion of what Platonic love was."

So it is, Jack; and must end as Platonic love generally does end.

"Sally and Mrs. Sinclair next praised, but not grossly, my beloved. Sally particularly admired her purity; called it exemplary; yet (to avoid suspicion) expressed her thoughts, that she was rather over-nice, if she might presume to say so before me. But nevertheless she applauded me for the strict observation I made of my vow.

"I more freely blamed her reserves to me; called her cruel; inveighed against her relations; doubted her love. Every favour I asked of her denied me. Yet my behaviour to her as pure and delicate when alone, as when before them. Hinted at something that had passed between us that very day, that showed her indifference to me in so strong a light, that I could not bear it.

"I then, from a letter just before received from one in her father's family, warned them of a person who had undertaken to find us out, and whom I thus in writing (having called for pen and ink,) described, that they might arm all the family against him"—'a sun-burnt, pock-fretten sailor, ill-looking, big-boned.'

"No questions asked by this fellow must be answered. They should call me to him. But not let my beloved know a tittle of this, so long as it could be helped. And I added, that if her brother or Singleton came, and if they behaved civilly, I would, for her sake, be civil to them: and in this case, she had nothing to do, but to own her marriage, and there could be no pretence for violence on either side. But most fervently I swore, that if she were conveyed away, either by persuasion or force, I would directly, on missing her but one day, go to demand her at Harlowe Place, whether she were there or not; and if I

recovered not a sister, I would have a brother; and should find out a captain of a ship as well as he."

And now, Jack, dost thou think she'll attempt to get from me, do what I will?

Here's preparation, Belford! Dost think I will throw it all away for anything thou canst say, or Lord M. write? No indeed!—as my charmer says, when she bridles.

And what must necessarily be the consequence of all this, with regard to my beloved's behaviour to me? Canst thou doubt, that it was all complaisance next time she admitted me into her presence?

Thursday we were very happy. All the morning extremely happy. I kissed her charming hand.—I need not describe to thee her hand and arm. When thou sawest her, I took notice that thy eyes dwelt upon them whenever thou couldst spare them from that beauty spot of wonders, her face.—Fifty times kissed her hand, I believe. Once her cheek, intending her lip, but so rapturously, that she could not help seeming angry.

Had she not thus kept me at arm's-length; had she not denied me those innocent liberties which our sex, from step to step, aspire to; could I but have gained access to her in her hours of heedlessness and dishabille (for full dress creates dignity, augments consciousness, and compels distance); we had been familiarized to each other long ago. But keep her up ever so late, meet her ever so early, by breakfast time she is dressed for the day, and at her earliest hour, as nice as others dressed. All her forms thus kept up, wonder not that I have made so little progress in the proposed trial. But how must all this distance stimulate!

Thursday morning, as I said, we were extremely happy; about noon, she numbered the hours she had been with me; all of them to me but as one minute; and desired to be left to herself. I was loth to comply: but observing the sunshine begin to shut in, I yielded.

I dined out. Returning, I talked of the house, and of Mrs. Fretchville—had seen Mennell—had pressed him to get the widow to quit. She pitied Mrs. Fretchville (another good effect of the overheard conversation)—had written to Lord M.; expected an answer soon from him. I was admitted to sup with her. I urged for her approbation or correction of my written terms. She again promised an answer as soon as she had heard from Miss Howe.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

Friday, May 19.

FET me tell you, my dear, that I have known four-and-twenty hours together not unhappy ones, my situation considered.

She then gives the particulars of the conversation which she had overheard between Mr. Lovelace, Mrs. Sinclair, and Miss Martin; but accounts more minutely than he had done, for the opportunity she had of overhearing it, unknown to them.

She gives the reason she has to be pleased with what she heard from each; but is shocked at the measure he is resolved to take, if he misses her but for one day. Yet is pleased, that he proposes to avoid aggressive violence, if her Brother and he meet in town.

I cannot but acknowledge that I am pleased to find, that he has actually written to Lord M.

I have promised to give Mr. Lovelace an answer to his proposals as soon as I have heard from you, my dear, on the subject.

I hope that in my next letter I shall have reason to confirm these favourable appearances. Favourable I must think them in the wreck I have suffered.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Saturday, May 20.

I DID not know, my dear, that you deferred giving an answer to Mr. Lovelace's proposals till you had my opinion of them. A particular hand occasionally going to town, will leave this at Wilson's, that no delay may be made on that account.

I never had any doubt of the man's justice and generosity in matters of settlement; and all his relations are as noble in their spirit as in their descent. But now, it may not be amiss for you to wait, to see what returns my Lord makes to his letter of invitation.

The scheme I think of is this.

There is a person whom I believe you have seen with me; her name Townsend, who is a great dealer in Indian silks, Brussels and French laces, cambrics, linen, and other valuable goods, which she has a way of coming at, duty free, and has a great vend for them (and for other curiosities which she imports) in the private families of the gentry round us.

She has her days of being in town, and then is at a chamber she rents at an inn in Southwark, where she keeps patterns of all her silks, and much of her portable goods, for the conveniency of her London customers. But her place of residence, and where she has her principal warehouse, is at Deptford, for the opportunity of getting her goods on shore.

Mrs. Townsend, as I have recollected, has two brothers, each a master of a vessel, and who knows, as she and they have concerns together, but that, in case of need, you may have a whole ship's crew at your devotion? If Lovelace give you cause to leave him, take no thought for the people at Harlowe Place. Let them take care of one another. It is a care they are used to.

Had you not been so minute in your account of the circumstances that attended the opportunity you had of overhearing the dialogue between Mr. Lovelace and two of the women, I should have thought the conference contrived on purpose for your ear.

I showed Mr. Lovelace's proposals to Mr. Hickman, who had chambers once at Lincoln's Inn, being designed for the law, had his elder brother lived. He looked so wise, so proud, and so important, upon the occasion, and wanted to take so much consideration about them—would take them home if I pleased, and weigh them well, and so forth, and the like, and all that—that I had no patience with him, and snatched them back with anger.

O dear!—to be so angry, an't please me, for his zeal—

Yes, zeal without knowledge, I said; like most other zeals. If there were no objections that struck him at once, there were none.

So hasty, dearest madam!

And so slow, undearest sir, I could have said. But, surely, said I, with a look which implied, would you rebel, sir!

He begged my pardon. Saw no objection, indeed! But might he be allowed once more.

But, my dear, let the articles be drawn up, and engrossed, and solemnize upon them; and there's no more to be said.

Let me add, that the sailor fellow has been tampering with my Kitty, and offered a bribe to find where to direct to you. Next time he comes I will have him laid hold of; and if I can get nothing out of him, will have him drawn through one of our deepest fish-ponds. His attempt to corrupt a servant of mine will justify my orders.

Your own

ANNA HOWE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Sunday, May 21.



AM too much disturbed in my mind, to think of anything but revenge.

What's the matter now, thou'lt ask ?

Matter enough ; for Dorcas has found means to come at some of Miss Howe's last-written letters ; and Sally, and she, employed themselves with the utmost diligence, in making extracts, according to former directions, from these cursed letters, for my use. Cursed, I may well call them—such abuses !—such virulence !—O this little fury Miss Howe !—Well might her saucy friend (who has been equally free with me, or the occasion could not have been given) be so violent as she lately was, at my endeavouring to come at one of these letters.

And here, just now, is another letter brought from the same little virulent devil.

May eternal vengeance pursue the villain if he give room to doubt his honour !—Women can't swear, Jack—sweet souls ! they can only curse.

I am said, to doubt her love—Have I not reason ? And she, to doubt my ardour.—Ardour, Jack ! Why, 'tis very right—Women, as Miss Howe says, and as every rake knows, love ardours !

She apprises her of the ill-success of the application made to her uncle—by Hickman, no doubt !—I must have this fellow's ears in my pocket, very quickly, I believe.

She raves about coming up, if by so doing she could prevent so noble a creature from stooping too low, or save her from ruin—one reed to support another ! I think I will contrive to bring her up.

How comes it to pass, that I cannot help being pleased with this virago's spirit, though I suffer by it ? Had I her

but here, I'd engage in a week's time, to teach her submission without reserve. What pleasure should I have in breaking such a spirit! I should wish for her but for one month, in all, I think. She would be too tame and spiritless for me after that. How sweetly pretty to see the two lovely friends, when humbled and tame, both sitting in the darkest corner of a room, arm in arm, weeping and sobbing for each other!—And I their emperor, their then acknowledged emperor, reclined at my ease in the same room, uncertain to which I should first, grand signor like, throw out my handkerchief?

Again mind the girl: she is enraged at the Harlowes: she is angry at her own mother; she is exasperated against her foolish and low-vanity'd Lovelace. Foolish, a little toad! Let us stoop to lift the wretch out of his dirt, though we soil our fingers in doing it! He has not been guilty of direct indecency to you.—It seems extraordinary to Miss Howe that I have not. Nor dare he. She should be sure of that. If women have such things in their heads, why should not I in my heart?—Not so much of a devil as that comes to neither. Such villainous intentions would have shown themselves before now if I had them.—Lord help them!

She then puts her friend upon urging for settlements, licence, and so forth.—No room for delicacy now, she says; and tells her what she shall say, to bring all forward from me.—Is it not as clear to thee, Jack, as it is to me, that I should have carried my point long ago, but for this vixen? She reproaches her for having modesty'd away, as she calls it, more than one opportunity, that she ought not to have slipt.—Thus thou seest, that the noblest of the sex mean nothing in the world by their shyness and distance, but to pound the poor fellow they dislike not, when he comes into their purlieus.

I have still more unpardonable transcripts from other letters.

Mr. Lovelace then transcribes from his short-hand notes, that part of Miss Howe's letter, which relates to the design of engaging Mrs. Townsend (in case of necessity) to give her protection till Colonel Morden come: and repeats his vows of vengeance.

He then adds;—"Tis my pride, to subdue girls who know too much to doubt their knowledge; and to convince them, that they know too little, to defend themselves from the inconveniences of knowing too much.

How passion drives a man on! proceeds he. I have written a prodigious quantity in a very few hours! Now my resentments are warm, I will see, and perhaps will punish, this proud, this double-armed beauty. I have sent to tell her, that I must be admitted to sup with her. We have neither of us dined. She refused to drink tea in the afternoon: and I believe neither of us will have much stomach to our supper.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE, TO MISS HOWE.

Sunday Morning.

HAVE your kind letter of yesterday. He knows I have. And I shall expect, that he will be inquisitive next time I see him after your opinion of his proposals. I doubted not your approbation of them, and had written an answer on that presumption; which is ready for him. He must study for occasions of procrastination, and to disoblige me, if now anything happen to set us at variance again.

He is very importunate to see me. He has desired to attend me to church. He is angry that I have declined to breakfast with him. I am sure that I should not have been at my own liberty if I had. I bid Dorcas tell him that I desired to have this day to myself. I would see him in the morning as early as he pleased. She says, she knows not what ails him, but that he is out of humour with everybody.

I have accepted of his servant's proposed attendance. But he is quite displeas'd, it seems. I don't care. I will not be perpetually at his insolent beck. Adieu, my dear, till I return. The chair waits. He won't stop me, sure, as I go down to it.

He has just sent me word, that he insists upon supping with me. As we had been in a good train for several days past, I thought it not prudent to break with him for little matters. Yet, to be, in a manner, threatened into his will, I know not how to bear that.

While I was considering, he came up, and, tapping at my door, told me, in a very angry tone, he must see me this night. He could not rest, till he had been told what he had done to deserve the treatment I gave him.

Treatment I gave him!—A wretch! Yet perhaps he has nothing new to say to me. I shall be very angry with him.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

As the lady could not know what Mr. Lovelace's designs were, nor the cause of his ill-humour, it will not be improper to pursue the subject from his letter.

Having described his angry manner of demanding, in person, her company at supper; he proceeds as follows:

'**T**IS hard, answered the fair perverse, that I am to be so little my own mistress. I will meet you in the dining-room half an hour hence.

I went down to wait that half-hour. All the women set me hard to give her cause for this tyranny. They demonstrated, as well from the nature of the sex, as of the case, that I had nothing to hope for from my tameness, and could meet with no worse treatment, were I to be guilty of the last offence. They urged me vehemently to try at least what effect some greater familiarities than I had ever taken with her, would have: and their argu-

ments being strengthened by my just resentments on the discoveries I had made, I was resolved to take some liberties, and, as they were received, to take still greater, and lay all the fault upon her tyranny. In this humour I went up, and never had paralytic so little command of his joints, as I had, while I walked about the dining-room, attending her motions.

With an erect mien she entered, her face averted, her lovely bosom swelling, and the more charmingly protuberant for the erectness of her mien. O Jack! that sullenness and reserve should add to the charms of this haughty maid! But in every attitude, in every humour, in every gesture, is Beauty beautiful. By her averted face, and indignant aspect, I saw the dear insolent was disposed to be angry—but by the fierceness of mine, as my trembling hands seized hers, I soon made fear her predominant passion. And yet the moment I beheld her, my heart was dastardised; and my reverence for the virgin purity so visible in her whole deportment, again took place. Surely, Belford, this is an angel. And yet, had she not been known to be a female, they would not from babyhood have dressed her as such, nor would she, but upon that conviction, have continued the dress.

Let me ask you, madam, I beseech you tell me, what I have done to deserve this distant treatment?

Pray, Mr. Lovelace, do not grasp my hands so hard (endeavouring to withdraw them). Pray let me go.

You hate me, madam.

I hate nobody, sir.

You hate me, madam, repeated I.

She struggled to disengage herself. Pray, Mr. Lovelace, let me withdraw. I know not why this is. I know not what I have done to offend you. I see you are come with a design to quarrel with me. If you would not terrify me by the ill-humour you are in, permit me to withdraw. I will hear all you have to say another time—to-morrow

morning, as I sent you word—but indeed you frighten me, I beseech you, if you have any value for me, permit me to withdraw.

Night, midnight, is necessary, Belford. Surprise, terror, must be necessary to the ultimate trial of this charming creature, say the women below what they will. I could not hold my purposes. This was not the first time that I had intended to try if she could forgive.

I kissed her hand with a fervour, as if I would have left my lips upon it. Withdraw then, dearest and ever dear creature. Indeed I entered in a very ill-humour. I cannot bear the distance at which you so causelessly keep me. Withdraw, madam, since it is your will to withdraw; and judge me generously; judge me but as I deserve to be judged; and let me hope to meet you to-morrow morning early, in such a temper as becomes our present situation and my future hopes.

And so saying, I conducted her to the door, and left her there. But instead of going down to the women, I went into my own chamber, and locked myself in; ashamed of being awed by her majestic loveliness, and apprehensive virtue, into so great a change of purpose, notwithstanding I had such just provocations from the letters of her saucy friend, founded on her own representations of facts and situations between herself and me.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

The lady (dating Sunday night) thus describes her terrors, and Mr. Lovelace's behaviour, on the occasion.



WAS so disgusted with him, as well as frightened by him, that, on my return to my chamber, in a fit of passionate despair, I tore almost in two, the answer I had written to his proposals.

I will see him in the morning, because I promised I

would. But I will go out, and that without him, or any attendant. If he account not tolerably for his sudden change of behaviour, and a proper opportunity offer of a private lodging in some creditable house, I will not any more return to this. At present I think so. And there will I either attend the perfecting of your scheme ; or, by your epistolary mediation, make my own terms with the wretch ; since it is your opinion, that I must be his, and cannot help myself : or, perhaps, take a resolution to throw myself at once into Lady Betty's protection ; and this will hinder him from making his insolently-threatened visit to Harlowe-Place.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Monday Morning, May 22.

NO generosity in this lady. None at all. Wouldst thou not have thought, that after I had permitted her to withdraw, primed for mischief as I was, she would meet me next morning early ; and that with a smile ; making me one of her best courtesies ?

I was in the dining-room before six, expecting her. She opened not her door. I went upstairs and down ; and hemmed ; and called Will ; called Dorcas ; threw the doors hard to ; but still she opened not her door. Thus till half an hour after eight, fooled I away my time ; and then (breakfast ready) I sent Dorcas to request her company.

But I was astonished, when (following the wench, as she did at the first invitation) I saw her enter dressed, all but her gloves, and those and her fan in her hand ; in the same moment bidding Dorcas direct Will to get her a chair to the door.

Cruel creature, thought I, to expose me thus to the derision of the women below !

Going abroad, madam ?

I am, sir.

I looked cursed silly, I am sure. You will breakfast first, I hope, madam ; in a very humble strain ; yet with an hundred tenter-hooks in my heart.

Had she given me more notice of her intention, I had perhaps wrought myself up to the frame I was in the day before, and begun my vengeance. And immediately came into my head all the virulence that had been transcribed for me from Miss Howe's letters, and in that letter which I had transcribed myself.

Yes, she would drink one dish ; and then laid her gloves and fan in the window just by.

I was perfectly disconcerted. I hemmed, and was going to speak several times ; but knew not in what key. Who's modest now, thought I ! Who's insolent now ! How a tyrant of a woman confounds a bashful man ! She was acting Miss Howe, I thought ; and I the spiritless Hickman.

At last, I will begin, thought I.

She a dish—I a dish.

Sip, her eyes her own, she ; like a haughty and imperious sovereign, conscious of dignity, every look a favour.

Sip, like her vassal, I ; lips and hands trembling, and not knowing that I sipped or tasted.

I was—I was—I sipped—(drawing in my breath and the liquor together, though I scalded my mouth with it)—I was in hopes, madam——

Dorcas came in just then. Dorcas, said she, is a chair gone for ?

Damned impertinence, thought I, thus to put me out in my speech ! And I was forced to wait for the servant's answer to the insolent mistress's question.

William is gone for one, madam.

This cost me a minute's silence before I could begin again. And then it was with my hopes, and my hopes, and my hopes, that I should have been early admitted to——

What weather is it, Dorcas? said she, as regardless of me as if I had not been present.

A little lowering, madam—the sun is gone in—it was very fine half an hour ago.

I had no patience. Up I rose. Down went the tea-cup, saucer and all. Confound the weather, the sunshine, and the wench! Begone for a devil, when I am speaking to your lady, and have so little opportunity given me.

Up rose the saucy-face, half-frighted; and snatched from the window her gloves and fan.

You must not go, madam!—seizing her hand—by my soul you must not.

Must not, sir? But I must. You can curse your maid in my absence, as well as if I were present—except—except—you intend for me, what you direct to her.

Do not make me desperate, madam. Permit me to say, that you shall not leave me in this humour. Wherever you go, I will attend you. Had Miss Howe been my friend, I had not been thus treated. It is but too plain to whom my difficulties are owing. I have long observed, that every letter you receive from her, makes an alteration in your behaviour to me. She would have you treat me, as she treats Mr. Hickman, I suppose: but neither does that treatment become your admirable temper to offer, nor me to receive.

This startled her. She did not care to have me think hardly of Miss Howe.

But recollecting herself, Miss Howe, said she, is a friend to virtue, and to good men. If she like not you, it is because you are not one of those.

Yes, madam; and therefore to speak of Mr. Hickman and myself, as you both, I suppose, think of each, she treats him as she would not treat a Lovelace. I challenge you, madam, to show me but one of the many letters you have received from her, where I am mentioned.

Miss Howe is just; Miss Howe is good, replied she.

She writes, she speaks, of everybody as they deserve. If you point me out but any one occasion, upon which you have reason to build a merit to yourself, as either just or good, or even generous, I will look out for her letter on that occasion (if such an occasion there be, I have certainly acquainted her with it); and will engage it shall be in your favour.

Devilish severe! And as indelicate as severe, to put a modest man upon hunting backward after his own merits.

She would have flung from me: I will not be detained, Mr. Lovelace. I will go out.

Indeed you must not, madam, in this humour. And I placed myself between her and the door. And then, fanning, she threw herself into a chair, her sweet face all crimsoned over with passion.

I cast myself at her feet.—Begone, Mr. Lovelace, said she, with a rejecting motion, her fan in her hand; for your own sake leave me! My soul is above thee, man! with both her hands pushing me from her! Urge me not to tell thee, how sincerely I think my soul above thee! Thou hast in mine, a proud, a too proud heart, to contend with! Leave me, and leave me for ever! Thou hast a proud heart to contend with!

Her air, her manner, her voice, were bewitchingly noble, though her words were so severe.

Let me worship an angel, said I, no woman. Forgive me, dearest creature! Creature if you be, forgive me! Forgive my inadvertencies! Forgive my inequalities! Pity my infirmities! Who is equal to my Clarissa?

I trembled between admiration and love; and wrapt my arms about her knees, as she sat. She tried to rise at the moment; but my clasping round her thus ardently, drew her down again; and never was woman more affrighted. But free as my clasping emotion might appear to her apprehensive heart, I had not, at the instant, any thought but what reverence inspired. And till she had actually

withdrawn (which I permitted under promise of a speedy return, and on her consent to dismiss the chair) all the motions of my heart were as pure as her own.

She kept not her word. An hour I waited before I sent to claim her promise. She could not possibly see me yet, was the answer. As soon as she could, she would.

Dorcas says, she still excessively trembled; and ordered her to give her hartshorn and water.

Monday, Two o'clock.

Not yet visible!—My beloved is not well. What expectations had she from my ardent admiration of her!—More rudeness than revenge apprehended. Yet, how my soul thirsts for revenge upon both these ladies! I must have recourse to my master-strokes. This cursed project of Miss Howe and her Mrs. Townsend (if I cannot contrive to render it abortive) will be always a sword hanging over my head. Upon every little disobligation my beloved will be for taking wing; and the pains I have taken to deprive her of every other refuge or protection in order to make her absolutely dependent upon me, will be all thrown away. But perhaps I shall find out a smuggler to counterplot Miss Howe.

And now, Belford, according to my new system, I think this house of Mrs. Fretchville an embarrass upon me. I will get rid of it; for some time at least. Mennell, when I am out, shall come to her, enquiring for me. What for? thou'lt ask. What for!—Hast thou not heard what has befallen poor Mrs. Fretchville?—Then I'll tell thee.

One of her maids, about a week ago, was taken with the small-pox. The rest kept their mistress ignorant of it till Friday; and then she came to know it by accident. The greater half of the plagues poor mortals of condition are tormented with, proceed from the servants they take, partly for show, partly for use, and with a view to lessen their cares.

This has so terrified the widow, that she is taken with

all the symptoms that threaten an attack from that dreadful enemy of fair faces.—So must not think of removing: yet cannot expect, that we should be further delayed on her account.

So this affair of the house will be over; at least, for one while. But then I can fall upon an expedient which will make amends for this disappointment. I must move slow, in order to be sure. I have a charming contrivance or two in my head, even supposing my beloved should get away, to bring her back again.

But what is become of Lord M. I trow, that he writes not to me, in answer to my invitation? If he would send me such a letter as I could show, it might go a great way towards a perfect reconciliation. I have written to Charlotte about it.

Monday Evening.

At my repeated request she condescended to meet me in the dining-room to afternoon tea, and not before.

She entered with bashfulness, as I thought; in a pretty confusion, for having carried her apprehensions too far. Sullen and slow moved she towards the tea-table.—Dorcas present, busy in tea-cup preparations. I took her reluctant hand, and pressed it to my lips—Dearest, loveliest of creatures, why this distance? Why this displeasure?—How can you thus torture the faithfullest heart in the world?

She disengaged her hand. Again I would have snatched it.

Be quiet, peevishly withdrawing it: and down she sat; a gentle palpitation in the beauty of beauties indicating mingled sullenness and resentment; her snowy handkerchief rising and falling, and a sweet flush overspreading her charming cheeks.

For God's sake, madam!—And a third time I would have taken her repulsing hand.

And for the same sake, sir; no more teasing.

My indignation rises against you, Mr. Lovelace, while I speak to you, when I recollect the many instances, equally ungenerous and unpolite, of your behaviour to one whom you have brought into distress—and I can hardly bear you in my sight.

She turned from me, standing up; and lifting up her folded hands, and charming eyes swimming in tears, O my Father, said the inimitable creature, you might have spared your heavy curse, had you known how I have been punished, ever since my swerving feet led me out of your garden-doors to meet this man!—Then, sinking into her chair, a burst of passionate tears forced their way down her glowing cheeks.

My dearest life, taking her still folded hands in mine, who can bear an invocation so affecting, though so passionate?

And, as I hope to live, my nose tingled, as I once, when a boy, remember it did (and indeed once more very lately) just before some tears came into my eyes; and I durst hardly trust my face in view of hers.

What have I done to deserve this impatient exclamation?

O Mr. Lovelace, we have been long enough together, to be tired of each other's humours and ways; ways and humours so different, that perhaps you ought to dislike me, as much as I do you.—I think, I think, that I cannot make an answerable return to the value you profess for me. My temper is utterly ruined. You have given me an ill opinion of all mankind; of yourself in particular: and withal so bad a one of myself, that I shall never be able to look up, having utterly and for ever lost all that self-complacency, and conscious pride, which are so necessary to carry a woman through this life with tolerable satisfaction to herself.

She paused. I was silent. By my soul, thought I, this sweet creature will at last undo me!

She proceeded.—What now remains, but that you pronounce me free of all obligation to you? And that you hinder me not from pursuing the destiny that shall be allotted me?

Again she paused. I was still silent; meditating whether to renounce all further designs upon her; whether I had not received sufficient evidence of a virtue, and of a greatness of soul, that could not be questioned or impeached.

She went on: Propitious to me be your silence, Mr. Lovelace!—Tell me, that I am free of all obligation to you. You know, I never made you promises.—You know, that you are not under any to me.—My broken fortunes I matter not—

She was proceeding—My dearest life, said I, I have been all this time, though you fill me with doubts of your favour, busy in the nuptial preparations. I am actually in treaty for equipage.

Equipage, sir!—Trappings, tinsel!—What is equipage; what is life; what is anything; to a creature sunk so low as I am in my own opinion!

I had not a word to say for myself. Such a war in my mind had I never known. Gratitude, and admiration of the excellent creature before me, combating with villainous habit, with resolutions so premeditatedly made, and with views so much gloried in!—A hundred new contrivances in my head, and in my heart, that, to be honest, as it is called, must all be given up, by a heart delighting in intrigue and difficulty—Miss Howe's virulences endeavoured to be recollected—Yet recollection refusing to bring them forward with the requisite efficacy—I had certainly been a lost man, had not Dorcas come seasonably in, with a letter.—On the superscription written—Be pleased, sir, to open it now.

I retired to the window—opened it.—It was from Dorcas herself.—These the contents.—“Be pleased to detain my

lady : A paper of importance to transcribe. I will cough when I have done."

I put the paper in my pocket, and turned to my charmer, less disconcerted, as she, by that time, had also a little recovered herself.—One favour, dearest creature—Let me but know, whether Miss Howe approves or disapproves of my proposals ?

Miss Howe likes some of your ways as little as I do ; for I have set everything before her. Yet she is thus far your enemy, as she is mine—She thinks I should not refuse your offers ; but endeavour to make the best of my lot. And now you have the truth. Would to heaven you were capable of dealing with equal sincerity !

I am, madam. And here, on my knee, I renew my vows, and my supplication, that you will make me yours—yours for ever.—And let me have cause to bless you and Miss Howe in the same breath.

To say the truth, Belford, I had before begun to think, that the vixen of a girl, who certainly likes not Hickman, was in love with me.

Rise, sir, from your too-ready knees ; and mock me not.

Too-ready knees, thought I !—Though this humble posture so little affects this proud beauty, she knows not how much I have obtained of others of her sex, nor how often I have been forgiven for the last attempts, by kneeling.

Mock you, madam !—And I arose, and re-urged her for the day.

My day, sir, said she, is never. Be not surprised. A person of politeness judging between us, would not be surprised that I say so. But indeed, Mr. Lovelace (and wept through impatience) you either know not how to treat with a mind of the least degree of delicacy, notwithstanding your birth and education, or you are an ingrateful man ; and (after a pause) a worse than ingrateful one. But I will retire. I will see you again to-morrow. I can-

not before. I think I hate you—You may look—Indeed I think I hate you. And if, upon a re-examination of my own heart, I find I do, I would not for the world that matters should go on farther between us.

But I see, I see, she does not hate me!

I was however too much vexed, disconcerted, mortified, to hinder her from retiring—And yet she had not gone, if Dorcas had not coughed.

The wench came in, as soon as her lady had retired and gave me the copy she had taken. And what should it be but of the answer the truly admirable creature had intended to give to my written proposals in relation to settlements.

I have but just dipped into this affecting paper. Were I to read it attentively, not a wink should I sleep this night. To-morrow it shall obtain my serious consideration.

Tuesday Morning, May 23.

THE dear creature desires to be excused seeing me till evening. She is not very well, as Dorcas tells me.

Read here, if thou wilt, the paper transcribed by Dorcas. It is impossible that I should proceed with my projects against this admirable woman, were it not that I am resolved, after a few trials more, if as nobly sustained as those she has already passed through, to make her (if she really hate me not) legally mine.

TO MR. LOVELACE.

When a woman is married, that supreme earthly obligation requires that in all instances where her husband's real honour is concerned, she should yield her own will to his. But, beforehand, I could be glad, conformably to what I have always signified, to have the most explicit assurances, that every possible way should be tried to avoid litigation with my father. Time and patience will subdue all things. My prospects of happiness are ex-

tremely contracted. A husband's right will be always the same. In my life-time I could wish nothing to be done of this sort. Your circumstances, sir, will not oblige you to extort violently from him what is in his hands. All that depends upon me, either with regard to my person, to my diversions, or to the economy that no married woman, of whatever rank or quality, should be above inspecting, shall be done, to prevent a necessity for such measures being taken.

As for myself, sir, I must leave it (so seems it to be destined) to your justice, to treat me as you shall think I deserve.

Were I to accept of the handsome separate provision you seem to intend me; added to the considerable sums arisen from my grandfather's estate since his death (more considerable, than perhaps you may suppose from your offer); I should think it my duty to lay up for the family good, and for unforeseen events, out of it: for, as to my donations, I would generally confine myself in them to the tenth of my income, be it what it would. Two hundred pounds a year would do all I wish to do of the separate sort: for all above, I would content myself to ask you; except, mistrusting your own economy, you would give up to my management and keeping, in order to provide for future contingencies, a larger portion.

As to your complaints of my diffidences, and the like, I appeal to your own heart, if it be possible for you to make my case your own for one moment, and to retrospect some parts of your behaviour, words, and actions, whether I am not rather to be justified than censured: and whether, of all men in the world, avowing what you avow, you ought not to think so. If you do not, let me admonish you, sir, from the very great mismatch, that then must appear to be in our minds, never to seek, nor so much as wish, to bring about the most intimate union of interests between yourself and

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Dorcas found this paper in one of the drawers of her lady's dressing-table. She was re-perusing it, as she supposes, when the honest wench carried my message to desire her to favour me at the tea-table ; for she saw her pop a paper into the drawer as she came in ; and there, on her mistress's going to meet me in the dining-room, she found it ; and to be this.

But I had better not to have had a copy of it, as far as I know : for, determined as I was before upon my operations, it instantly turned all my resolutions in her favour. Yet I would give something to be convinced, that she did not pop it into her drawer before the wench, in order for me to see it ; and perhaps (if I were to take notice of it) to discover whether Dorcas, according to Miss Howe's advice, were most my friend, or hers.

Our mother and her nymphs say, I am a perfect craven, and no Lovelace : And so I think. But this is no simpering, smiling charmer, as I have found others to be, when I have touched upon affecting subjects at a distance ; as once or twice I have tried to her, the mother introducing them (to make sex palliate the freedom to sex) when only we three together. She is above the affectation of not seeming to understand you. She shows by her displeasure, and a fierceness not natural to her eye, that she judges of an impure heart by an impure mouth, and darts dead at once even the embryo hopes of an encroaching lover, however distantly insinuated, before the meaning hint can dawn into *double entendre*.

By my faith, Jack, as I sit gazing upon her, my whole soul in my eyes, contemplating her perfections, and thinking, when I have seen her easy and serene, what would be her thoughts, did she know my heart as well as I know it ; when I behold her disturbed and jealous, and think of the justness of her apprehensions, and that she cannot fear so much, as there is room for her to fear ; my heart often misgives me.

Well did I, and but just in time, conclude to have done with Mrs. Fretchville and the house ; for here Mennell has declared, that he cannot in conscience and honour go any farther. He would not for the world be accessory to the deceiving of such a lady !—I was a fool to let either you or him see her ; for ever since ye have both had scruples, which neither would have had, were a woman to have been in the question.

Well, I can't help it !

Mennell has, however, though with some reluctance consented to write me a letter, provided I will allow it to be the last step he shall take in this affair.

This letter is directed, "To Robert Lovelace, Esq. ; or, in his absence, to his Lady." She had refused dining with me, or seeing me ; and I was out when it came. She opened it : so is my lady by her own consent, proud and saucy as she is.

I am glad at my heart that it came before we entirely make up. She would else perhaps have concluded it to be contrived for a delay : and now, moreover, we can accommodate our old and new quarrels together ; and that's contrivance, you know. But how is her dear haughty heart humbled to what it was when I knew her first, that she can apprehend any delays from me ; and have nothing to do but to vex at them !

I came in to dinner. She sent me down the letter, desiring my excuse for opening it.—Did it before she was aware. Lady-pride, Belford !—recollection, then retrogradation.

I requested to see her upon it that moment. But she desires to suspend our interview till morning. I will bring her to own, before I have done with her, that she can't see me too often.

My impatience was so great, on an occasion so unexpected, that I could not help writing, to tell her, "How much vexed I was at the accident : but that it need not

delay my happy day, as that did not depend upon the house : and as Mrs. Fretchville, by Mr. Mennell, so handsomely expressed her concern upon it, and her wishes, that it could suit us to bear with the unavoidable delay, I hoped, that going down to the Lawn for two or three of the summer months, when I was made the happiest of men, would be favourable to all round."

The dear creature takes this incident to heart, I believe : she has sent word to my repeated request to see her notwithstanding her denial, that she cannot till the morning : It shall be then at six o'clock, if I please !

To be sure I do please !

Can see her but once a day, now, Jack !

Did I tell thee, that I wrote a letter to my cousin Montague, wondering that I heard not from Lord M. as the subject was so very interesting ? In it I acquainted her with the house I was about taking ; and with Mrs. Fretchville's vapourish delays.

I have received just now an answer from Charlotte.

Here follows a copy of her letter. Thou wilt see by it, that every little monkey is to catechise me. They all depend upon my good-nature.

M. Hall.

DEAR COUSIN.—We have been in daily hope for a long time, I must call it, of hearing that the happy knot was tied. My lord has been very much out of order : and yet nothing would serve him, but he would himself write an answer to your letter. It was the only opportunity he should ever have, perhaps, to throw in a little good advice to you, with the hope of its being of any signification ; and he has been several hours in a day, as his gout would let him, busied in it. It wants now only his last revisal. He hopes it will have the greater weight with you, if it appear all in his own handwriting.

As for myself, I am not at all well. But you may assure yourself, that when our dear relation-elect shall be entered

upon the new habitation you tell me of we will do ourselves the honour of visiting her; and if any delay arises from the dear lady's want of courage (which, considering her man, let me tell you, may very well be) we will endeavour to inspire her with it, and be sponsors for you;—for, cousin, I believe you have need to be christened over again before you are entitled to so great a blessing. What think you?

My best compliments, and sister's, to the most deserving lady in the world conclude me

Your affectionate cousin and servant,

CHARL. MONTAGUE.

Thou seest how seasonably this letter comes. I hope my lord will write nothing but what I may show to my beloved. I have actually sent her up this letter of Charlotte's; and hope for happy effects from it. R. L.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

The lady, in her next letter, gives Miss Howe an account of what has passed between Mr. Lovelace and herself. She resents his behaviour with her usual dignity: but when she comes to mention Mr. Mennell's letter, she re-urges Miss Howe to perfect her scheme for her deliverance; being resolved to leave him. But, dating again, on his sending up to her Miss Montague's letter, she alters her mind, and desires her to suspend for the present her application to Mrs. Townsend.

HAD begun, *says she*, to suspect all he had said of Mrs. Fretchville and her house; and even Mr. Mennell himself, though so well appearing a man. But now that I find Mr. Lovelace had apprised his relations of his intention to take it, and had engaged some of the ladies to visit me there; I could hardly forbear blaming myself for censuring him as capable of so vile an imposture. But may he not thank himself for acting so

very unaccountably, and taking such needlessly awry steps, as he has done; embarrassing, as I told him, his own meanings, if they were good?

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

May 24.

THE devil take this uncle of mine! He has at last sent me a letter, which I cannot show, without exposing the head of our family for a fool. A confounded parcel of pop-guns has he let off upon me.

I have already offered the bill enclosed in it to my beloved; and read to her part of the letter. But she refused the bill: and as I am in cash myself, I shall return it. She seemed very desirous to peruse the whole letter. And when I told her, that were it not for exposing the writer, I would oblige her, she said, it would not be exposing his lordship to show it to her; and that she always preferred the heart to the head. I knew her meaning; but did not thank her for it. All that makes for me in it, I will transcribe for her—Yet hang it, she shall have the letter, and my soul with it, for one consenting kiss.

She has got the letter from me, without the reward. Deuce take me, if I had the courage to propose the condition. A new character this of bashfulness in thy friend. I see, that a truly modest woman may make even a confident man keep his distance.

LORD M. TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Tuesday, May 23.

THIS is a long lane that has no turning—Do not despise me for my proverbs—You know I was always fond of them; and if you had been so too, it would have been the better for you, let me tell you. I dare swear the fine lady you are so likely to be soon happy with, will be far from despising them; for I am told that

she writes well, and that all her letters are full of sentences. God convert you ! for nobody but He and this lady can.

And methinks I could wish to give a word of comfort to the lady, who, doubtless, must be under great fears, how she shall be able to hold in such a wild creature as you have hitherto been. I would hint to her, that, by strong arguments, and gentle words, she may do anything with you; for though you are too apt to be hot, gentle words will cool you, and bring you into the temper that is necessary for your cure.

Pray let her know as that I will present her (not you) either my Lancashire seat, or the Lawn in Hertfordshire; and settle upon her a thousand pounds a-year peny-rents; to show her, that we are not a family to take base advantages: and you may have writings drawn, and settle as you will.

I am still very bad with my gout; but will come in a litter, as soon as the day is fixed: it would be the joy of my heart to join your hands. And, let me tell you, if you do not make the best of husbands to so good a young lady, and one who has had so much courage for your sake, I will renounce you; and settle all I can upon her and hers by you, and leave you out of the question.

If anything further may be needful toward promoting your reciprocal felicity, let me know it; and how you order about the day; and all that. The inclosed bill is very much at your service. 'Tis payable at sight, as whatever else you may have occasion for, shall be.

So God bless you both; and make things as convenient to my gout as you can; tho' be it whenever it will, I will hobble to you; for I long to see you; and still more to see my niece; and am (in expectation of that happy opportunity).

Your most affectionate uncle, M.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Thursday, May 25.



ANOTHER agreeable conversation. The day of days the subject. As to fixing a particular one, that need not be done, my charmer says, till the settlements are completed. As to marrying at my lord's chapel, the ladies of my family present, that would be making a public affair of it; and the dear creature observed with regret, that it seemed to be my lord's intention to make it so.

It could not be imagined, I said, but that his lordship's setting out in a litter and coming to town, as well as his taste for glare, and the joy he would take to see me married at last, and to her dear self, would give it as much the air of a public marriage, as if the ceremony were performed at his own chapel, all the ladies present.

I cannot, said she, endure the thoughts of a public day. It will carry with it an air of insult upon my whole family. And, for my part, if my lord will not take it amiss (and perhaps he will not, as the motion came not from himself, but from you, Mr. Lovelace) I will very willingly dispense with his lordship's presence; the rather, as dress and appearance will then be unnecessary; for I cannot bear to think of decking my person while my parents are in tears.

How excellent this! Yet do not her parents richly deserve to be in tears?

See, Belford, with so charming a niceness, we might have been a long time ago upon the verge of the state, and yet found a great deal to do, before we entered into it.

All obedience, all resignation—no will but hers. I

withdrew, and wrote directly to my lord ; and she not disapproving of it, I sent it away. The purport as follows ; for I took no copy.

“ That I was much obliged to his lordship for his intended goodness to me, on an occasion the most solemn of my life. That the admirable lady, whom he so justly praised, thought his lordship’s proposals in her favour too high. That she chose not to make a public appearance, if, without disobliging my friends, she could avoid it, till a reconciliation with her own could be effected. That although she expressed a grateful sense of his lordship’s consent to give her to me with his own hand ; yet presuming, that the motive to this kind intention was rather to do her honour, than it otherwise would have been his own choice (especially as travelling would be at this time so inconvenient to him) she thought it advisable to save his lordship trouble on this occasion ; and hoped he would take as meant her declining the favour.”

I conclude with telling him, “ That I had offered to present the lady his lordship’s bill ; but on her declining to accept of it (having myself no present occasion for it) I return it inclosed, with my thanks, &c.”

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

AND now, that my beloved seems secure in my net, for my project upon the vixen Miss Howe, and upon her mother, in which the officious prancer Hickman is to come in for a dash.

But why upon her mother, methinks thou askest, who, unknown to herself, has only acted by thy impulse through thy agent, Joseph Leman, upon the folly of old Tony the uncle ?

No matter for that, she believes she acts upon her own judgment, and deserves to be punished for pretending to judgment when she has none. Every living soul, but

myself, I can tell thee, shall be punished, that treats either cruelly or disrespectfully so adored a lady. What a plague; is it not enough that she is teased and tormented in person by me?

I have already broken the matter to our three confederates; as a supposed, not a resolved on, case indeed. And yet they know that with me, in a piece of mischief, execution, with its swiftest feet, is seldom three paces behind projection, which hardly ever limps neither.

The project, in short, is this:—Mrs. Howe has an elder sister in the Isle of Wight, who is lately a widow; and I am well informed that the mother and daughter have engaged, before the latter is married, to pay a visit to this lady, who is rich, and intends Miss for her heiress; and in the interim will make her some valuable presents on her approaching nuptials; which, as Mrs. Howe, who loves money more than anything but herself, told one of my acquaintance, would be worth fetching.

Now, Jack, nothing more need be done than to hire a little trim vessel, which shall sail a pleasuring backward and forward to Portsmouth, Spithead, and the Isle of Wight, for a week or fortnight before we enter upon our parts of the plot. And as Mrs. Howe will be for making the best bargain she can for her passage, the master of the vessel may have orders (as a perquisite allowed him by his owners) to take what she will give; and the master's name, be it what it will, shall be Ganmore on the occasion; for I know a rogue of that name, who is not obliged to be of any country, any more than we.

Well, then, we will imagine them on board. I will be there in disguise. They know not any of ye four, supposing (the scheme so inviting) that thou canst be one.

'Tis plaguy hard if we cannot find or make a storm.

Perhaps they will be sea-sick; but whether they be or not, no doubt they will keep their cabin.

Here will be Mrs. Howe, Miss Howe, Mr. Hickman,

a maid, and a footman, I suppose ; and thus we will order it.

I know it will be hard weather : I know it will : and before there can be the least suspicion of the matter, we shall be in sight of Guernsey, Jersey, Dieppe, Cherbourg, or anywhither on the French coast that it shall please us to agree with the winds to blow us ; and then, securing the footman, and the women being separated, one of us, according to lots that may be cast, shall overcome, either by persuasion or force, the maid-servant ; that will be no hard task ; and she is a likely wench (I have seen her often) : one, Mrs. Howe ; nor can there be much difficulty there, for she is full of health and life, and has been long a widow ; another (that, says the princely lion, must be I), the saucy daughter, who will be too much frightened to make great resistance (violent spirits in that sex are seldom true spirits—'tis but where they can) ; and after beating about the coast for three or four days for recreation's sake, and to make sure work, and till we see our sullen birds begin to eat and sip, we will set them all ashore where it will be most convenient ; sell the vessel (to Mrs. Townsend's agents, with all my heart, or to some other smugglers) or give it to Ganmore ; and pursue our travels, and tarry abroad till all is hushed up.

Now I know thou wilt make difficulties, as it is thy way ; while it is mine to conquer them. My other vassals made theirs, and I condescended to obviate them, as thus I will thine, first stating them for thee according to what I know of thy phlegm.

What, in the first place, wilt thou ask, shall be done with Hickman ? who will be in full parade of dress and primness, in order to show the old aunt what a devilish clever fellow of a nephew she is to have.

What ! I'll tell thee : Hickman, in good manners, will leave the women in their cabin, and, to show his courage with his breeding, be upon deck—

Well, and suppose he is ?

Suppose he is ! Why then I hope it is easy for Ganmore, or anybody else, myself suppose in my pea-jacket and great watch-coat (if any other make a scruple to do it) while he stands in the way, gaping and staring like a notice, to stumble against him, and push him overboard ! A rich thought !—is it not, Belford ? He is certainly plaguy officious in the ladies' correspondence ; and, I am informed, plays double between mother and daughter, in fear of both,—dost not see him, Jack ? I do : popping up and down, his wig and hat floating by him ; and paddling, pawing, and dashing, like a frightened mongrel ; I am afraid he never ventured to learn to swim.

But thou wilt not drown the poor fellow, wilt thou ?

No, no !—that is not necessary to the project. I hate to do mischiefs supererogatory. The skiff shall be ready to save him, while the vessel keeps its course. He shall be set on shore with the loss of wig and hat only, and of half of his little wits, at the place where he embarked, or anywhere else.

Well, but shall we not be in danger of being hanged for three such enormous rapes ?

Yes, to be sure, when caught : but is there any likelihood of that ? Besides, have we not been in danger before now, for worse facts ? And what is there in being only in danger ? If we actually were to appear in open day in England before matters are made up, there will be greater likelihood that these women will not prosecute, than that they will. For my own part, I should wish they may. Would not a brave fellow choose to appear in court to such an arraignment, confronting women who would do credit to his attempt ? The country is more merciful in these cases than in any others ; I should therefore like to put myself upon my country.

Let me indulge a few reflections upon what thou mayest think the worst that can happen. I will suppose that

thou art one of us, and that all five are actually brought to trial on this occasion ; how bravely shall we enter a court, I at the head of you, dressed out each man, as if to his wedding-appearance ! You are sure of all the women, old and young, of your side.—What brave fellows !—What fine gentlemen !—There goes a charming handsome man !—meaning me, to be sure !—Who could find in their hearts to hang such a gentleman as that ? whispers one lady, sitting perhaps on the right hand of the Recorder (I suppose the scene to be in London) ; while another disbelieves that any woman could fairly swear against me. All will crowd after me ; it will be each man's happiness (if ye shall chance to be bashful) to be neglected ; I shall be found to be the greatest criminal ; and my safety, for which the general voice will be engaged, will be yours.

But then comes the triumph of triumphs, that will make the accused look up, while the accusers are covered with confusion.

Make room, there !—Stand by !—Give back !—One receiving a rap, another an elbow, half a score a push apiece !

Enter the slow-moving, hooded-faced, down-looking plaintiffs :—

And first the widow, with a sorrowful countenance, though half-veiled, pitying her daughter more than herself. The people, the women especially, who on this occasion will be five-sixths of the spectators, reproaching her,—You'd have the conscience, would you, to have five such brave gentlemen as these hanged for you know not what ?

Next comes the poor maid, who perhaps had been ravished twenty times before ; and had not appeared now, but for company's sake ; mincing, simpering, weeping, by turns, not knowing whether she should be sorry or glad.

But every one dwells upon Miss !—See, see, the handsome gentleman bows to her !

To the very ground, to be sure, I shall bow, and kiss my hand.

See her confusion! see! she turns from him!—Ay! that's because it is in open court, cries an arch one!—While others admire her—Ay; that's a girl worth venturing one's neck for!

Then we shall be praised—even the judges and the whole crowded bench will acquit us in their hearts, and every single man wish he had been me!—The women all the time disclaiming prosecution, were the case to be their own. To be sure, Belford, the sufferers cannot put half so good a face upon the matter as we.

Well, but suppose after all we are convicted, what have we to do, but in time make over our estates, that the sheriff may not revel in our spoils?—There is no fear of being hanged for such a crime as this while we have money or friends. — And suppose even the worst, that two or three were to die, have we not a chance, each man of us, to escape? The devil's in them if they'll hang five for ravishing three!

I know I shall get off for one, were it but for family sake; and, being a handsome fellow, I shall have a dozen or two of young maidens, all dressed in white, go to court to beg my life.—And what a pretty show they will make, with their white hoods, white gowns, white petticoats, white scarves, white gloves, kneeling for me, with their white handkerchiefs at their eyes, in two pretty rows, as majesty walks through them, and nods my pardon for their sakes!—And, if once pardoned, all is over; for, Jack, in a crime of this nature there lies no appeal, as in murder.

So thou seest the worst that can happen, should we not make the grand tour upon this occasion, but stay and take our trials. But it is most likely that they will not prosecute at all. If not, no risk on our side will be run; only taking our pleasure abroad, at the

worst; leaving friends tired of us, in order, after a time, to return to the same friends endeared to us, as we to them, by absence.

This, Jack, is my scheme, at the first running. I know it is capable of improvement—for example: I can land these ladies in France; whip over before they can get a passage back, or before Hickman can have recovered his fright; and so find means to entrap my beloved on board. And then all will be right; and I need not care if I were never to return to England.

Memorandum, to be considered of:—Whether, in order to complete my vengeance, I cannot contrive to kidnap away either James Harlowe or Solmes, or both? A man, Jack, would not go into exile for nothing.

And now, Belford, what dost think?

That thou art a cursed fellow, if—

If—no ifs—but I shall be very sick to-morrow, I shall, 'faith.

Sick!—Why sick?—What a devil shouldst thou be sick for?

For more good reasons than one, Jack.

I should be glad to hear but one.—Sick, quotha! Of all thy roguish inventions I should not have thought of this.

Perhaps thou thinkest my view to be, to draw the lady to my bedside: that's a trick of three or four thousand years old; and I should find it much more to my purpose, if I could get to hers. However, I'll condescend to make thee as wise as myself.

I am excessively disturbed about this smuggling scheme of Miss Howe. I have no doubt, that my fair one, were I to make an attempt, and miscarry, will fly from me, if she can. I once believed she loved me: but now I doubt whether she does or not: at least, that it is with such an ardour, as Miss Howe calls it, as will make her overlook a premeditated fault, should I be guilty of one.

And what will being sick do for thee ?

Have patience. I don't intend to be so very bad as Dorcas shall represent me to be. But yet I know I shall retch confoundedly, and bring up some clotted blood. To be sure, I shall break a vessel ; there's no doubt of that : and a bottle of Eaton's Styptic shall be sent for ; but no doctor. If she has humanity, she will be concerned. But if she has love, let it have been pushed ever so far back, it will, on this occasion, come forward, and show itself ; not only in her eye, but in every line of her sweet face.

Now, Belford, I shall expect that she will show some concern at the broken vessel, as it may be attended with fatal effects, especially to one so fiery in his temper as I have the reputation to be thought to be : and the rather, as I shall calmly attribute the accident to the harasses and doubts under which I have laboured for some time past. And this will be a further proof of my love, and will demand a grateful return.

Well but, Lovelace, how the deuce wilt thou, with that full health and vigour of constitution, and with that bloom in thy face, make anybody believe thou art sick ?

How !—Why, take a few grains of ipecacuanha ; enough to make me retch like a fury.

Good !—But how wilt thou manage to bring up blood, and not hurt thyself ?

Foolish fellow ! Are there not pigeons and chickens in every poulterer's shop ?

Cry thy mercy.

But then I will be persuaded by Mrs. Sinclair, that I have of late confined myself too much ; and so will have a chair called, and be carried to the park ; where I will try to walk half the length of the Mall, or so ; and in my return, amuse myself at White's or the Cocoa.

And what will this do ?

Questioning again !—I am afraid thou'rt an infidel, Belford,—why then shall I not know if my beloved offers

to go out in my absence?—And shall I not see whether she receives me with tenderness at my return? But this is not all: I have a foreboding that something affecting will happen while I am out. But of this more in its place.

Meantime these plaguy women are so impertinent, so full of reproaches, that I know not how to do anything but curse them. And then, truly, they are for helping me out with some of their trite and vulgar artifices. Sally particularly, who pretends to be a mighty contriver, has just now in an insolent manner told me, on my rejecting her proffered aids, that I had no mind to conquer; and that I was so wicked as to intend to marry, though I would not own it to her.

Because this little devil made her first sacrifice at my altar, she thinks she may take any liberty with me: and what makes her outrageous at times, is, that I have, for a long time, studiously as she says, slighted her too readily offered favours: but is it not very impudent in her to think that I will be any man's successor? It is not come to that neither. This, thou knowest, was always my rule—once any other man's, and I know it, and never more mine. It is for such as thou, and thy brethren, to take up with harlots. I have been always aiming at the merit of a first discoverer.

We have met. All was love and unexceptionable respect on my part. Ease and complaisance on hers. She was concerned for my disorder. So sudden!—Just as we parted! But it was nothing. I should be quite well by morning.


Faith, Jack, I think I am sick already. Is it possible for such a giddy fellow as me to persuade myself to be ill? I am a better mimic at this rate than I wish to be. But every nerve and fibre of me is always ready to contribute its aid, whether by health or by ailment, to carry a resolved-on roguery into execution.

Dorcas has transcribed for me the whole letter of Miss Howe, dated Sunday, May 14, of which before I had only extracts. She found no other letter added to that parcel: but this, and that which I copied myself in character last Sunday while she was at church, relating to the smuggling scheme, are enough for me.

Dorcas tells me, that her lady has been removing her papers from the mahogany chest into a wainscot box, which held her linen, and which she put into her dark closet. We have no key of that at present. No doubt but all her letters, previous to those I have come at, are in that box. Dorcas is uneasy upon it: yet hopes that her lady does not suspect her; for she is sure that she laid in everything as she found it.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Cocoa-tree, Saturday, May 27.

 HIS ipecacuanha is a most disagreeable medicine. That these cursed physical folks can find out nothing to do us good, but what would poison the devil! In the other world, were they only to take physic, it would be punishment enough of itself for a mis-spent life. A doctor at one elbow, and an apothecary at the other, and the poor soul labouring under their prescribed operations, he need no worse tormentors.

But now this was to take down my countenance. It has done it: for, with violent retchings, having taken enough to make me sick, and not enough water to carry it off, I presently looked as if I had kept my bed a fortnight. Ill jesting, as I thought in the midst of the exercise, with edge-tools, and worse with physical ones.

Two hours it held me. I had forbid Dorcas to let her lady know anything of the matter; out of tenderness to her; being willing, when she knew my prohibition, to let her see that I expected her to be concerned for me.—

Well, but Dorcas was nevertheless a woman, and she can whisper to her lady the secret she is enjoined to keep!

Be in a plaguy hurry running up-stairs and down, to fetch from the dining-room what you carry up on purpose to fetch, till motion extraordinary put you out of breath, and give you the sigh-natural.

What's the matter, Dorcas?

Nothing, madam.

My beloved wonders she has not seen me this morning, no doubt; but is too shy to say she wonders. Repeated what's the matter, however, as Dorcas runs up and down stairs by her door, bring on, oh! madam, my master! my poor master?

What! how! when!—And all the monosyllables of surprise.

I must not tell you, madam—my master ordered me not to tell you—but he is in a worse way than he thinks for!—but he would not have you frightened.

High concern took possession of every sweet feature. She pitied me!—by my soul, she pitied me!

Where is he?

At last, O Lord! let Mrs. Lovelace know!—There is danger, to be sure! whispered from one nymph to another; but at the door, and so loud, that my listening fair-one might hear.

Out she darts—As how! as how, Dorcas!

O madam—a vomiting of blood! A vessel broke, to be sure!

Down she hastens; finds every one as busy over my blood in the entry, as if it were that of the Neapolitan saint.

In steps my charmer, with a face of sweet concern.

How do you, Mr. Lovelace?

O my best love! very well!—very well!—Nothing at all! nothing of consequence!—I shall be well in an in-

stant!—Straining again! for I was indeed plaguy sick, though no more blood came.

In short, Belford, I have gained my end. I see the dear soul loves me. I see she forgives me all that's past. I see I have credit for a new score.

Miss Howe, I defy thee, my dear—Mrs. Townsend!—Who the devil are you?—Troop away with your contrabands. No smuggling! nor smuggler, but myself! nor will the choicest of my fair-one's favours be long prohibited goods to me!

On her requiring me to take the air, I asked, if I might have the honour of her company in a coach; and this, that I might observe if she had an intention of going out in my absence.

If she thought a chair were not a more proper vehicle for my case, she would with all her heart!

There's a precious!

I kissed her hand again! She was all goodness! Would to heaven I better deserved it, I said!—But all were golden days before us!—Her presence and generous concern had done everything. I was well! Nothing ailed me. But since my beloved will have it so, I'll take a little airing!—Let a chair be called!—O my charmer! were I to have owed this indisposition to my late harasses, and to the uneasiness I have had for disoblighing you; all is infinitely compensated by your goodness—all the art of healing is in your smiles!—Your late displeasure was the only malady!

While Mrs. Sinclair, and Dorcas, and Polly, and even poor silly Mabell (for Sally went out, as my angel came in) with uplifted hands and eyes, stood thanking Heaven that I was better, in audible whispers: See the power of love, cried one! what a charming husband! another—happy couple, all!

O how the dear creature's cheek mantled! how her eyes sparkled!—how sweetly acceptable is praise to con-

scious merit, while it but reproaches when applied to the undeserving!—What a new, what a gay creation it makes at once in a diffident or dispirited heart!

And now, Belford, was it not worth while to be sick? And yet I must tell thee, that too many pleasanter expedients offer themselves, to make trial any more of this confounded ipecacuanha.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Saturday, May 27.

MR. LOVELACE, my dear, has been very ill. Suddenly taken. With a vomiting of blood in great quantities. Some vessel broken. He complained of a disorder in his stomach over-night. I was the more affected with it, as I am afraid it was occasioned by the violent contentions between us.—But was I in fault?

How lately did I think I hated him!—But hatred and anger, I see, are but temporary passions with me. One cannot, my dear, hate people in danger of death, or who are in distress or affliction. My heart, I find, is not proof against kindness, and acknowledgment of errors committed.

He took great care to have his illness concealed from me as long as it could. So tender in the violence of his disorder!—So desirous to make the best of it!—I wish he had not been ill in my sight. I was too much affected—everybody alarming me with his danger—the poor man, from such high health, so suddenly taken!—And so unprepared!—

He is gone out in a chair. I advised him to do so. I fear that my advice was wrong; since quiet in such a disorder must needs be best. We are apt to be so ready, in cases of emergency, to give our advice, without judgment, or waiting for it!—I proposed a physician indeed; but he would not hear of one. I have great honour for

the faculty; and the greater, as I have always observed, that those who treat the professors of the art of healing contemptuously, too generally treat higher institutions in the same manner.

I am really very uneasy. For I have, I doubt, exposed myself to him, and to the women below. They indeed will excuse me, as they think us married. But if he be not generous, I shall have cause to regret this surprise; which (as I had reason to think myself unaccountably treated by him) has taught me more than I knew of myself.

You will not wonder that I am grave on this detection—detection, must I call it? What can I call it?—

Dissatisfied with myself, I am afraid to look back upon what I have written.

But I will not add another word, after I have assured you, that I will look still more narrowly into myself: and that I am

Your equally sincere and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Saturday Evening.



HAD a charming airing. No return of my malady. My heart perfectly easy, how could my stomach be otherwise?

But when I came home, I found that my sweet soul had been alarmed by a new incident—the enquiry after us both, in a very suspicious manner, and that by description of our persons, and not by names, by a servant in a blue livery turned up and trimmed with yellow.

Dorcas hurried up to her lady, and alarmed her not only with the fact, but with her own conjectures; adding, that he was an ill-looking fellow, and she was sure could come for no good.

The livery and the features of the servant were parti-

cularly enquired after, and as particularly described—Lord bless her! no end of her alarms, she thought! And then did her apprehensions anticipate every evil that could happen.

She wished Mr. Lovelace would come in.

Mr. Lovelace came in soon after; all lively, grateful, full of hopes, of duty, of love, to thank his charmer, and to congratulate with her upon the cure she had performed. And then she told the story, with all its circumstances; and Dorcas, to point her lady's fears, told us, that the servant was a sun-burnt fellow, and looked as if he had been at sea.

I see your causeless terror, my dearest life, said I, and your impatience—Will you be pleased to walk down—and without being observed (for he shall come no farther than the parlour-door) you may hear all that passes?

She consented. We went down. Dorcas bid the man come forward. Well, friend, what is your business with Mr. or Mrs. Lovelace?

Bowing, scraping, I am sure you are the gentleman, sir. Why, sir, my business is only to know if your honour be here, and to be spoken with; or if you shall be here for any time?

Whom came you from?

From a gentleman who ordered me to say, if I was made to tell, but not else, it was from a friend of Mr. John Harlowe, Mrs. Lovelace's eldest uncle.

What is his name?

I don't know if I should tell.

There can be no harm in telling the gentleman's name, if you come upon a good account.

That I do; for my master told me so; and there is not an honest gentleman on the face of God's earth.—His name is Captain Tomlinson, sir.

I don't know such a one.

I believe not, sir. He was pleased to say, he don't

know your honour, sir; but I heard him say, as how he should not be an unwelcome visitor to you for all that.

Do you know such a man as Captain Tomlinson, my dearest life (aside) your uncle's friend?

No; but my uncle may have acquaintance, no doubt, that I don't know.—But I hope (trembling) this is not a trick.

Well, friend, if your master has anything to say to Mr. Lovelace, you may tell him, that Mr. Lovelace is here; and will see him whenever he pleases.

The dear creature looked as if afraid that my engagement was too prompt for my own safety; and away went the fellow—I wondering, that she might not wonder, that this Captain Tomlinson, whoever he were, came not himself, or sent not a letter the second time, when he had reason to suppose that I might be here.

Meantime, for fear that this should be a contrivance of James Harlowe, who, I said, loved plotting, though he had not a head turned for it, I gave some precautionary directions to the servants, and the women, whom, for the greater parade, I assembled before us: and my beloved was resolved not to stir abroad till she saw the issue of this odd affair.

Sunday, May 28.

This story of Captain Tomlinson employed us not only for the time we were together last night, but all the while we sat at breakfast this morning. She would still have it, that it was the prelude to some mischief from Singleton. I insisted that it might much more probably be a method taken by Colonel Morden to alarm her, previous to a personal visit.

She had had so many disagreeable things befall her of late, that her fears were too often stronger than her hopes.

And this, madam, makes me apprehensive, that you

will get into so low-spirited a way, that you will not be able to enjoy the happiness that seems to await us.

Her duty and her gratitude, she gravely said, to the Dispenser of all good, would secure her, she hoped, against unthankfulness. And a thankful spirit was the same as a joyful one.

So, Belford, for all her future joys she depends entirely upon the Invisible good. She is certainly right; since those who fix least upon second causes are the least likely to be disappointed—and is not this gravity for her gravity?

She had hardly done speaking, when Dorcas came running up in a hurry—she set even my heart into a palpitation—thump, thump, thump, like a precipitated pendulum in a clock-case—flutter, flutter, flutter, my charmer's, as by her sweet bosom rising to her chin I saw.

Captain Tomlinson, sir!

Captain Devilson, what care I!—Do you see how you have disordered your lady?

Good Mr. Lovelace, said my charmer, trembling (see, Jack, when she has an end to serve, I am good Mr. Lovelace) if—if my brother,—if Captain Singleton should appear—pray now—I beseech you—let me beg of you—to govern your temper—my brother is my brother—Captain Singleton is but an agent.

My dearest life, folding my arms about her (when she asks favours, thought I, the devil's in it, if she will not allow of such innocent freedoms as this, from good Mr. Lovelace too) you shall be witness of all that passes between us.—Dorcas, desire the gentleman to walk up.

Let me retire to my chamber first!—Let me not be known to be in the house!

She withdrew to listen—and though this incident has not turned out to answer all I wished from it, yet is it necessary, if I would acquaint thee with my whole circu-

lation, to be very particular in what passed between Captain Tomlinson and me.

Enter Captain Tomlinson in a riding-dress, whip in hand.

Your servant, sir—Mr. Lovelace, I presume?

My name is Lovelace, sir.

Excuse the day, sir—be pleased to excuse my garb. I am obliged to go out of town directly, that I may return at night.

The day is a good day. Your garb needs no apology.

My charmer owned afterwards her concern on my being so short. Whatever I shall mingle of her emotions, thou wilt easily guess I had afterwards.

Sir, I hope no offence. I intend none.

None—none at all, sir.

May I ask you, sir, without offence, whether you wish to be reconciled, and to co-operate upon honourable terms, with one gentleman of the name of Harlowe; preparative, as it may be hoped, to a general reconciliation?

O how my heart fluttered! cried my charmer.

I can't tell, sir—(and then it fluttered still more, no doubt); the whole family have used me extremely ill. They have taken greater liberties with my character than are justifiable; and with my family too; which I can less forgive.

Sir, sir, I have done. I beg pardon for this intrusion.

My beloved was then ready to sink, and thought very hardly of me.

But pray, sir, to the immediate purpose of your present commission; since a commission it seems to be?

Sir, I will tell you, as briefly as I can, the whole of what I have to say; but you'll excuse me also a previous question, for which curiosity is not my motive; but it is necessary to be answered before I can proceed; as you will judge when you hear it.

Lovel. What, pray, sir, is your question?

Capt. Briefly, whether you are actually, and *bond fide*, married to Miss Clarissa Harlowe?

I started, and, in a haughty tone, Is this, sir, a question that must be answered before you can proceed in the business you have undertaken?

I mean no offence, Mr. Lovelace. Mr. Harlowe sought to me to undertake this office. I have daughters and nieces of my own. I thought it a good office, or I, who have many considerable affairs upon my hands, had not accepted of it. I know the world; and will take the liberty to say, that if that young lady—

Captain Tomlinson, I think you are called?

My name is Tomlinson.

Why then, Captain Tomlinson, no liberty, as you call it, will be taken well, that is not extremely delicate, when that lady is mentioned.

When you had heard me out, Mr. Lovelace, and had found, I had so behaved, as to make the caution necessary, it would have been just to have given it. Allow me to say, I know what is due to the character of a woman of virtue, as well as any man alive.

Captain Tomlinson, said I, you answer well, I love a man of spirit. Have you not been in the army?

I have, sir; but have turned my sword into a ploughshare, as the Scripture hath it (there was a clever fellow, Jack!—He was a good man with somebody, I warrant! O what a fine coat and cloak for an hypocrite will a text of Scripture, properly applied, make at any time in the eye of the pious!) And all my delight, added he, for some years past, has been in cultivating my paternal estate. I love a brave man, Mr. Lovelace, as well as ever I did in my life. But let me tell you, sir, that when you come to my time of life, you will be of opinion, that there is not so much true bravery in youthful choler, as you may now think there is.

Well, Captain, that is reproof for reproof. So we are

upon a foot. And now give me the pleasure of hearing the import of your commission.

Sir, you must first allow me to repeat my question: are you really, and *bond fide*, married to Miss Clarissa Harlowe? Or are you not yet married?

Bluntly put, Captain. But if I answer that I am, what then?

Why then, sir, I shall say, that you are a man of honour.

That I hope I am, whether you say it or not, Captain Tomlinson.

Sir, I will be very frank in all I have to say on this subject—Mr. John Harlowe has lately found out, that you and his niece are both in the same lodgings; that you have been long so; and he hopes, that you are actually married. He has indeed heard that you are; but as he knows your enterprising temper, and that you have declared, that you disdain a relation to their family, he is willing by me to have your marriage confirmed from your own mouth, before he take the steps he is inclined to take in his niece's favour.

Enter Dorcas, in a hurry.

A gentleman, this minute, sir, desires to speak with your honour—[My lady, sir!—*Aside.*]

Could the dear creature put Dorcas upon telling this fib, yet want to save me one?—

Desire the gentleman to walk into one of the parlours. I will wait on him presently.

[*Exit Dorcas.*]

The dear creature, I doubted not, wanted to instruct me how to answer the Captain's home put. I knew how I intended to answer it—plumb, thou may'st be sure—but Dorcas's message staggered me. And yet I was upon one of my master strokes—which was, to take advantage of the Captain's inquiries, and to make her own her marriage before him, as she had done to the people below;

and if she had been brought to that, to induce her, for her uncle's satisfaction, to write him a letter of gratitude; which of course must have been signed Clarissa Lovelace. I was loth, therefore, thou may'st believe, to attend her sudden commands.

Enter Dorcas again, out of breath.

Sir, the gentleman will step up to you—[My lady is impatient. She wonders at your honour's delay.—*Aside.*]

Excuse me, Captain, for one moment.

I have stayed my full time, Mr. Lovelace. What may result from my question and your answer, whatever it shall be, may take us up time. And you are engaged. Will you permit me to attend you in the morning, before I set out on my return?

You will then breakfast with me, Captain?

And so, with the highest civilities on both sides, we parted. But for the private satisfaction of so good a man, I left him out of doubt, that we were man and wife, though I did not directly aver it.

After I had attended the Captain down to the very passage, I returned to the dining-room, and put on a joyful air, on my beloved's entrance into it—O my dearest creature, said I, let me congratulate you on a prospect so agreeable to your wishes! And I snatched her hand, and smothered it with kisses.

I was going on; when, interrupting me, You see, Mr. Lovelace, said she, how you have embarrassed yourself, by your obliquities! You see, that you have not been able to return a direct answer to a plain and honest question, though upon it depends all the happiness on the prospect of which you congratulate me.

You know, my best love, what my prudent, and I will say, my kind motives were, for giving out, that we were married. You see, that I have taken no advantage of it; and that no inconvenience has followed it. You see that

your uncle wants only to be assured from ourselves, that it is so—

Not another word on this subject, Mr. Lovelace. I will not only risk, but I will forfeit, the reconciliation so near my heart, rather than I will go on to countenance a story so untrue!

Don't you see, madam, that your uncle wishes to find that we are married? May not the ceremony be privately over, before his mediation can take place?

Urge this point no farther, Mr. Lovelace. If you will not tell the truth, I will to-morrow morning (if I see Captain Tomlinson) tell it myself. Indeed I will.

I saw there was no help. I saw that the inflexible Harlowe spirit was all up in her.—A little witch!—A little—Forgive me, Love, for calling her names! And so I said, with an air, we have had too many misunderstandings, madam, for me to wish for new ones: I will obey you without reserve. Had I not thought I should have obliged you by the other method (especially as the ceremony might have been over, before anything could have operated from your uncle's intentions, and of consequence no untruth persisted in) I would not have proposed it. But think not, my beloved creature, that you shall enjoy, without condition, this triumph over my judgment.

And then, clasping my arms about her, I gave her averted cheek (her charming lip designed) a fervent kiss.—And your forgiveness of this sweet freedom (bowing) is that condition.

She was not mortally offended. And now must I make out the rest as well as I can. But this I will tell thee, that although her triumph has not diminished my love for her; yet has it stimulated me more than ever to revenge, as thou wilt be apt to call it. But victory or conquest is the more proper word.

'Tis late, or rather early; for the day begins to dawn upon me. I am plaguy heavy. Perhaps I need not to

have told thee that. But will only indulge a doze in my chair, for an hour; then shake myself, wash and refresh. At my time of life, with such a constitution as I am blessed with, that's all that's wanted.

Good night to me!—It cannot be broad day till I am awake.—Aw-w-w-w-haugh—Pox of this yawning!

Is not thy uncle dead yet?

What's come to mine, that he writes not to my last?—Hunting after more wisdom of nations, I suppose!—Yaw-Yaw-Yawn-ing again!—pen, begone.

Monday, May 29th.

Now have I established myself for ever in my charmer's heart.

The Captain came at seven, as promised, and ready equipped for his journey. My beloved chose not to give us her company till our first conversation was over—ashamed, I suppose, to be present at that part of it, which was to restore her to her virgin state by my confession, after her wifeness had been reported to her uncle. But she took her cue nevertheless, and listened to all that passed.

The modestest women, Jack, must think, and think deeply sometimes. I wonder whether they ever blush at those things by themselves, at which they have so charming a knack of blushing in company. If not; and if blushing be a sign of grace or modesty; have not the sex as great a command over their blushes, as they are said to have over their tears? This reflection would lead me a great way into female minds, were I disposed to pursue it.

I told the Captain, that I would prevent his question; and accordingly (after I had enjoined the strictest secrecy, that no advantage might be given to James Harlowe; and which he answered for as well on Mr. Harlowe's part as his own) I acknowledged nakedly and fairly the whole

truth—to wit, that we were not yet married. I gave him hints of the causes of procrastination. Some of them owing to unhappy misunderstandings: but chiefly to the lady's desire of previous reconciliation with her friends, and to a delicacy that had no example.

Less nice ladies than this, Jack, love to have delays, wilful and studied delays, imputed to them in these cases—yet are indelicate in their affected delicacy; for do they not thereby tacitly confess, that they expect to be the greatest gainers in wedlock; and that there is self-denial in the pride they take in delaying?

I told him the reason of our passing to the people below as married—yet as under a vow of restriction, as to consummation, which had kept us both to the height, one of forbearing, the other of vigilant punctilio; even to the denial of those innocent freedoms, which betrothed lovers never scruple to allow and to take.

I then communicated to him a copy of my proposals of settlement; the substance of her written answer; the contents of my letter of invitation to Lord M. to be her nuptial-father; and of my lord's generous reply. But said, that having apprehensions of delay from his infirmities, and my beloved choosing by all means (and that from principles of unrequited duty) a private solemnisation, I had written to excuse his lordship's presence; and expected an answer every hour.

The Captain was highly delighted with all I said: yet owned, that as his dear friend Mr. Harlowe had expressed himself greatly pleased to hear that we were actually married, he could have wished it had been so. But, nevertheless, he doubted not that all would be well.

He was proceeding, when breakfast being ready, in came the empress of my heart, irradiating all around her, as with a glory—a benignity and graciousness in her aspect, that, though natural to it, had been long banished from it.

Next to prostration lowly bowed the Captain. O how the sweet creature smiled her approbation of him! Reverence from one, begets reverence from another. Men are more of monkeys in imitation, than they think themselves—involuntarily, in a manner, I bent my knee—my dearest life—and made a very fine speech on presenting the Captain to her. No title, myself, to her lip or cheek, 'tis well he attempted not either. He was indeed ready to worship her;—could only touch her charming hand.

I have told the Captain, my dear creature—and then I briefly repeated (as if I had supposed she had not heard it) all I had told him.

He was astonished, that anybody could be displeased one moment with such an angel. He undertook her cause as the highest degree of merit to himself.

Never, I must needs say, did the angel so much look the angel. All placid, serene, smiling, self-assured: a more lovely flush than usual heightening her natural graces, and adding charms, even to radiance, to her charming complexion.

After we had seated ourselves, the agreeable subject was renewed, as we took our chocolate. How happy should she be in her uncle's restored favour!

The Captain engaged for it—no more delays, he hoped, on her part! Let the happy day be but once over, all would then be right. But was it improper to ask for copies of my proposals, and of her answer, in order to show them to his dear friend her uncle?

As Mr. Lovelace pleased—O that the dear creature would always say so!

It must be in strict confidence then, I said. But would it not be better to show her uncle the draft of the settlements when drawn?

And will you be so good, as to allow of this, Mr. Lovelace?

There, Belford! We were once the quarrelsome, but now we are the polite, lovers.

Indeed, my dearest creature, I will, if you desire it; and if Captain Tomlinson will engage, that Mr. Harlowe shall keep them absolutely a secret; that I may not be subjected to the cavil and control of any others of a family that have used me so very ill.

Now indeed, sir, you are very obliging.

Dost think, Jack, that my face did not now also shine?

And let me ask you, Mr. Lovelace, said the Captain; yet not so much from doubt, as that I may proceed upon sure grounds—you are willing to co-operate with my dear friend in a general reconciliation?

Let me tell you, Mr. Tomlinson, that if it can be distinguished, that my readiness to make up with a family, of whose generosity I have not had reason to think highly, is entirely owing to the value I have for this angel of a woman, I will not only co-operate with Mr. John Harlowe, as you ask; but I will meet Mr. James Harlowe, senior, and his lady, all the way. And furthermore, to make the son James and his sister Arabella quite easy, I will absolutely disclaim any further interest, whether living or dying, in any of the three brothers' estates; contenting myself with what my beloved grandfather has bequeathed to her: for I have reason to be abundantly satisfied with my own circumstances and prospects—enough rewarded, were she not to bring a shilling in dowry, in a woman who has a merit superior to all the goods of fortune.—True as the Gospel, Belford!—Why had not this scene a real foundation!

The dear creature, by her eyes, expressed her gratitude, before her lips could utter it. O Mr. Lovelace, said she—you have infinitely—and there she stopped.

The Captain ran over in my praise. He was really affected.

When I returned from attending the Captain down-

stairs, which I did to the outward door, my beloved met me as I entered the dining-room ; complacency reigning in every lovely feature.

You see me already, said she, another creature. You know not, Mr. Lovelace, how near my heart this hoped-for reconciliation is. I am now willing to banish every disagreeable remembrance. You know not, sir, how much you have obliged me. And oh, Mr. Lovelace, how happy shall I be, when my heart is lightened from the all-sinking weight of a father's curse !

Then drying her eyes with her handkerchief, after a few moments pausing, on a sudden ; as if recollecting that she had been led by her joy to an expression of it which she had not intended I should see, she retired to her chamber with precipitation ; leaving me almost as unable to stand it, as herself.

In short, I was—I want words to say how I was—my nose had been made to tingle before ; my eyes have before been made to glisten by this soul-moving beauty ; but so very much affected, I never was—for, trying to check my sensibility, it was too strong for me, and I even sobbed—yes, by my soul, I audibly sobbed, and was forced to turn from her before she had well finished her affecting speech.

I want, methinks, now I have owned the odd sensation, to describe it to thee—the thing was so strange to me—something choking, as it were, in my throat—I know not how—yet, I must needs say, though I am out of countenance upon the recollection, that there was something very pretty in it ; and I wish I could know it again, that I might have a more perfect idea of it, and be better able to describe it to thee.

And now it is time to confess (and yet I know that thy conjectures are aforehand with my exposition) that this Captain Tomlinson, who is so great a favourite with my charmer, and who takes so much delight in healing breaches, and reconciling differences, is neither a greater

man nor a less, than honest Patrick M'Donald, attended by a discarded footman of his own finding out.

Thou knowest what a virtuous-lived rascal he is ; and to what better hopes born and educated. But that ingenious knack of forgery, for which he was expelled the Dublin University, and a detection since in evidenceship, have been his ruin. For these have thrown him from one country to another ; and at last, into the way of life, which would make him a fit husband for Miss Howe's Townsend with her contrabands. He is, thou knowest, admirably qualified for any enterprise that requires adroitness and solemnity. And can there, after all, be a higher piece of justice, than to keep one smuggler in readiness to play against another ?

Well but, Lovelace (methinks thou questionest) how camest thou to venture upon such a contrivance as this, when, as thou hast told me, the lady used to be a month at a time at this uncle's ; and must therefore, in all probability, know, that there was not a Captain Tomlinson in all the neighbourhood ; at least no one of the name so intimate with him, as this man pretends to be ?

This objection, Jack, is so natural a one, that I could not help observing to my charmer, that she must surely have heard her uncle speak of this gentleman. No, she said, she never had. Besides, she had not been at her uncle Harlowe's for near ten months (this I had heard her say before) : and there were several gentlemen who used the same Green, whom she knew not.

Well but, methinks, thou questionest again, is it not probable that Miss Howe will make inquiry after such a man as Tomlinson ?—And when she cannot——

I know what thou wouldst say—but I have no doubt, that Wilson will be so good, if I desire it, as to give into my own hands any letter that may be brought by Collins to his house, for a week to come. And now I hope thou art satisfied.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

The lady acquaints her friend with the most material passages and conversations contained in those of Mr. Lovelace preceding. These are her words, on relating what the commission of the pretended Tomlinson was, after the apprehensions that his distant inquiry had given her :

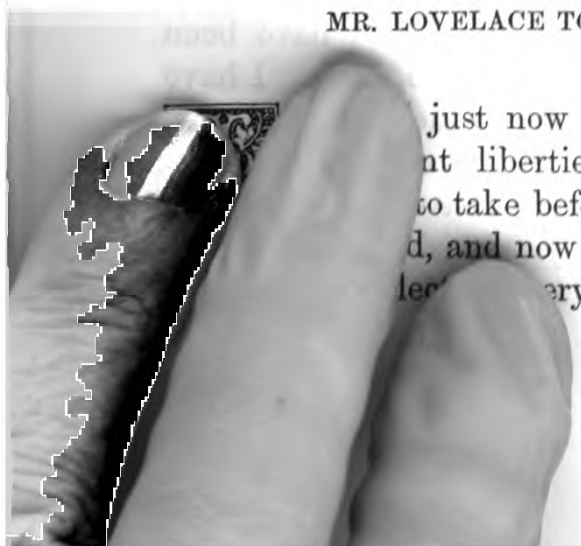
AT last, my dear, all these doubts and fears were cleared up, and banished ; and, in their place, a delightful prospect was opened to me. For it comes happily out (but at present it must be an absolute secret, for reasons which I shall mention in the sequel) that the gentleman was sent by my uncle Harlowe (I thought he could not be angry with me for ever) ; all owing to the conversation that passed between your good Mr. Hickman and him. For although Mr. Hickman's application was too harshly rejected at the time, my uncle could not but think better of it afterwards, and of the arguments that worthy gentleman used in my favour.

She describes Captain Tomlinson, on his breakfast visit, to be, a grave good sort of man. And in another place, a genteel man, of great gravity, and a good aspect ; she believes upwards of fifty years of age. I liked him, says she, as soon as I saw him.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday, June 2.

just now been called to account for some
liberties which I thought myself en-
to take before the women ; as they suppose
d, and now within view of consummation.
led very hardly ; and with impatience



wished for the happy day and hour when I might call her all my own, and meet with no check from a niceness that had no example.

She looked at me with a bashful kind of contempt. I thought it contempt, and required the reason for it; not being conscious of offence, as I told her.

This is not the first time, Mr. Lovelace, said she, that I have had cause to be displeas'd with you, when you, perhaps, have not thought yourself exceptionable.—But, sir, let me tell you, that the married state, in my eye, is a state of purity, and (I think she told me) not of licentiousness; so, at least, I understood her.

Marriage purity, Jack!—Very comical, 'faith—yet, sweet dears, half the female world ready to run away with a rake, because he is a rake; and for no other reason; nay, every other reason against their choice of such a one.

The dear creature now considers herself as my wife-elect. The unsaddened heart, no longer prudish, will not now, I hope, give the sable turn to every address of the man she dislikes not. And yet she must keep up so much reserve, as will justify past inflexibilities. “Many and many a pretty soul would yield, were she not afraid that the man she favoured would think the worse of her for it.” This is also a part of the rake's creed. But should she resent ever so strongly, she cannot now break with me; since, if she does, there will be an end of the family reconciliation; and that in a way highly discreditable to herself.

Saturday, June 3.

Just returned from Doctors' Commons. I have been endeavouring to get a licence. Very true, Jack. I have the mortification to find a difficulty, as the lady is of rank and fortune, and as there is no consent of father or next friend, in obtaining this all-fettering instrument.

I made report of this difficulty. It is very right, she says, that such difficulties should be made.—But not to a

man of my known fortune, surely, Jack, though the woman were the daughter of a duke.

Just now, in high good-humour, my beloved returned me the draughts of the settlements; a copy of which I had sent to Captain Tomlinson. She complimented me, "that she never had any doubt of my honour in cases of this nature."

In matters between man and man nobody ever had, thou knowest.

I had need, thou wilt say, to have some good qualities.

Monday, June 5.

I am now almost in despair of succeeding with this charming frost-piece by love or gentleness. Never, I believe, was there so true, so delicate a modesty in the human mind as in that of this lady. And this has been my security all along: and, in spite of Miss Howe's advice to her, will be so still; since, if her delicacy be a fault, she can no more overcome it than I can my aversion to matrimony. Habit, habit, Jack, seest thou not? may subject us both to weaknesses. And should she not have charity for me, as I have for her?

Twice indeed with rapture, which once she called rude, did I salute her; and each time, resenting the freedom, did she retire; though, to do her justice, she favoured me again with her presence at my first entreaty, and took no notice of the cause of her withdrawing.

Is it policy to show so open a resentment for innocent liberties, which, in her situation, she must so soon forgive?

Yet the woman who resents not initiatory freedoms must be lost. For Love is an encroacher. Love never goes backward. Love is always aspiring. Always must aspire. Nothing but the highest act of love can satisfy an indulged love. And what advantages has a lover who values not breaking the peace, over his mistress who is solicitous to keep it!

I have now at this instant wrought myself up, for the dozenth time, to a half-resolution. A thousand agreeable things I have to say to her. She is in the dining-room. Just gone up. She always expects me when there.

High displeasure!—followed by an abrupt departure.

I sat down by her. I took both her hands in mine. I would have it so. All gentle my voice. Her father mentioned with respect. Her mother with reverence. Even her brother amicably spoken of. I never thought I could have wished so ardently, as I told her I did wish, for a reconciliation with her family.

A sweet and grateful flush then overspread her fair face; a gentle sigh now and then heaved her handkerchief.

I perfectly longed to hear from Captain Tomlinson. It was impossible for her uncle to find fault with the draft of the settlements. I would not, however, be understood by sending them down, that I intended to put it in her uncle's power to delay my happy day. When, when, was it to be?

No new delays for Heaven's sake, I besought her; and reproached her gently for the past. Name but the day—(an early day, I hoped it would be, in the following week)—that I might hail its approach, and number the tardy hours.

My cheek reclined on her shoulder—kissing her hands by turns. Rather bashfully than angrily reluctant, her hands sought to be withdrawn; her shoulder avoiding my reclined cheek—apparently loth, and more loth, to quarrel with me; her downcast eye confessing more than her lips could utter. Now surely, thought I, is my time to try if she can forgive a still bolder freedom than I had ever yet taken.

I then gave her struggling hands liberty. I put one arm round her waist: I imprinted a kiss on her sweet

lips, with a *Be quiet* only, and an averted face, as if she feared another.

Encouraged by so gentle a repulse, the tenderest things I said; and then, with my other hand, drew aside the handkerchief that concealed the beauty of beauties, and pressed with my burning lips the most charming breast that ever my ravished eyes beheld.

A very contrary passion to that which gave her bosom so delightful a swell, immediately took place. She struggled out of my encircling arms with indignation. I detained her reluctant hand. Let me go, said she. I see there is no keeping terms with you. Base encroacher! Is this the design of your flattering speeches?—Far as matters have gone, I will for ever renounce you. You have an odious heart. Let me go, I tell you.

I was forced to obey, and she flung from me.

Monday Afternoon.

A letter received from the worthy Captain Tomlinson, has introduced me into the presence of my charmer sooner than perhaps I should otherwise have been admitted.

Sullen her brow, at her first entrance into the dining-room. But I took no notice of what had passed, and her anger of itself subsided.

The Captain, after letting me know, that he chose not to write, till he had the promised draft of the settlements, acquaints me, that his friend Mr. John Harlowe, in their first conference (which was held as soon as he got down) was extremely surprised, and even grieved (as he feared he would be) to hear, that we were not married. The world, he said, who knew my character, would be very censorious, were it owned, that we had lived so long together unmarried in the same lodgings; although our marriage were now to be ever so publicly celebrated.

My beloved was vexed. She pulled out her handkerchief: but was more inclined to blame me, than herself.

Had you kept your word, Mr. Lovelace. and left me when we came to town—And there she stopped ; for she knew, that it was her own fault that we were not married before we left the country ; and how could I leave her afterwards, while her brother was plotting to carry her off by violence ?

I read on to the following effect :

“The Captain then told Uncle John, the reasons that induced me to give out that we were married ; and the conditions on which my beloved was brought to countenance it ; which had kept us at the most punctilious distance.

“But still Mr. Harlowe objected my character. And went away dissatisfied. And the Captain was also so much concerned, that he cared not to write what the result of his first conference was.

“But in the next, which was held on receipt of the drafts, at the Captain’s house (as the former was, for the greater secrecy) when the old gentleman had read them, and had the Captain’s opinion, he was much better pleased. And yet he declared, that it would not be easy to persuade any other person of his family to believe so favourably of the matter, as he was now willing to believe, were they to know that we had lived so long together unmarried.

“And then, the Captain says, his dear friend made a proposal :—It was this—That we should marry out of hand, but as privately as possible, as indeed he found we intended (for he could have no objection to the drafts) —But yet, he expected to have present one trusty friend of his own, for his better satisfaction” —

Here I stopped, with a design to be angry—But she desiring me to read on, I obeyed.

“—But that it should pass to every one living, except to that trusty person, to himself, and to the Captain, that we were married from the time that we had lived together

in one house ; and that this time should be made to agree with that of Mr. Hickman's application to him from Miss Howe."

Well, my dearest life, what say you to your uncle's expedient? Shall I write to the Captain, and acquaint him, that we have no objection to it?

She was silent for a few minutes. At last, with a sigh, See, Mr. Lovelace, said she, what you have brought me to, by treading after you in such crooked paths!—See what disgrace I have incurred!—Indeed you have not acted like a wise man.

My beloved creature, do you not remember, how earnestly I besought the honour of your hand before we came to town?—Had I been then favoured—

Well, well, sir—There has been much amiss somewhere ; that's all I will say at present. And since what's passed cannot be recalled, my uncle must be obeyed, I think.

Charmingly dutiful!—I had nothing then to do, that I might not be behind-hand with the worthy Captain and her uncle, but to press for the day. This I fervently did. But (as I might have expected) she repeated her former answer ; to wit, that when the settlements were completed ; when the licence was actually obtained ; it would be time enough to name the day : and, O Mr. Lovelace, said she, turning from me with a grace inimitably tender, her handkerchief at her eyes, what a happiness, if my dear uncle could be prevailed upon to be personally a father, on this occasion, to the poor fatherless girl!

What's the matter with me!—Whence this dew-drop! A tear!—As I hope to be saved, it is a tear, Jack!

I withdrew, and wrote to the Captain to the following effect:—"I desired, that he would be so good as to acquaint his dear friend, that we entirely acquiesced with what he had proposed ; and had already properly cautioned the gentlewomen of the house, and their ser-

vants, as well as our own : and to tell him, that if he would in person give me the blessing of his dear niece's hand, it would crown the wishes of both. In this case, I consented, that his own day, as I presumed it would be a short one, should be ours : that by this means the secret would be with fewer persons : that I myself, as well as he, thought the ceremony could not be too privately performed ; and this not only for the sake of the wise end he had proposed to answer by it, but because I would not have Lord M. think himself slighted ; since that nobleman, as I had told him (the Captain) had once intended to be our nuptial father ; and actually made the offer ; but that we had declined to accept of it, and that for no other reason than to avoid a public wedding ; which his beloved niece would not come into, while she was in disgrace with her friends—but that, if he chose not to do us this honour, I wished that Captain Tomlinson might be the trusty person whom he would have to be present on the happy occasion.”

I showed this letter to my fair one. She was not displeased with it. So, Jack, we cannot now move too fast, as to settlements and licence : the day is her uncle's day, or Captain Tomlinson's perhaps, as shall best suit the occasion. Miss Howe's smuggling scheme is now surely provided against in all events.

And now for a little mine which I am getting ready to spring. The first that I have sprung, and at the rate I go on (now a resolution, and now a remorse) perhaps the last that I shall attempt to spring.

A little mine I call it. But it may be attended with great effects. I shall not, however, absolutely depend upon the success of it, having much more effectual ones in reserve. And yet great engines are often moved by small springs. A little spark falling by accident into a powder-magazine, has done more execution in a siege than a hundred cannon.

Come the worst, the hymeneal torch, and a white sheet, must be my *amende honorable*, as the French have it.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Thursday Morning, Five o'Clock, June 8.

NOW is my reformation secured ; for I never shall love any other woman!—O she is all variety ! She must be ever new to me ! Imagination cannot form ; much less can the pencil paint ; nor can the soul of painting, poetry, describe an angel so exquisitely, so elegantly lovely !—But I will not by anticipation pacify thy impatience. Although the subject is too hallowed for profane contemplation, yet shalt thou have the whole before thee as it passed : and this not from a spirit wantoning in description upon so rich a subject ; but with a design to put a bound to thy roving thoughts. It will be iniquity greater than a Lovelace ever was guilty of, to carry them farther than I shall acknowledge.

Thus then, connecting my last with the present, I lead to it.

At a little after two, when the whole house was still, or seemed to be so, and, as it proved, my Clarissa in bed, and fast asleep ; I also in a manner undressed (as indeed I was for an hour before) and in my gown and slippers, though, to oblige thee, writing on ;—I was alarmed by a trampling noise overhead, and a confused buzz of mixed voices, some louder than others, like scolding, and a little short of screaming. While I was wondering what could be the matter, down stairs ran Dorcas, and at my door, in an accent rather frightedly and hoarsely inward, than shrilly clamorous, she cried out Fire ! Fire ! And this the more alarmed me, as she seemed to endeavour to cry out louder, but could not.

My pen (its last scrawl a benediction on my beloved) dropped from my fingers ; and up started I ; and making

but three steps to the door, opening it, I cried out, Where! Where! almost as much terrified as the wench: while she, more than half-undressed, her petticoats in her hand, unable to speak distinctly, pointed up stairs.

I was there in a moment, and found all owing to the carelessness of Mrs. Sinclair's cook-maid, who, having sat up to read the simple *History of Dorastus and Faunia* when she should have been in bed, had set fire to an old pair of calico window-curtains.

She had had the presence of mind, in her fright, to tear down the half-burnt valance, as well as curtains, and had got them, though blazing, into the chimney, by the time I came up; so that I had the satisfaction to find the danger happily over.

Mean time Dorcas, after she had directed me upstairs, not knowing the worst was over, and expecting every minute the house would be in a blaze, out of tender regard for her lady (I shall for ever love the wench for it) ran to her door, and rapping loudly at it, in a recovered voice, cried out with a shrillness equal to her love, Fire! Fire!—The house is on fire!—Rise, madam!—This instant rise—if you would not be burnt in your bed!

No sooner had she made this dreadful outcry, but I heard her lady's door, with hasty violence, unbar, unbolt, unlock, and open, and my charmer's voice sounding like that of one going into a fit.

Thou mayest believe that I was greatly affected. I trembled with concern for her, and hastened down faster than the alarm of fire had made me run up, in order to satisfy her that all the danger was over.

When I had flown down to her chamber-door, there I beheld the most charming creature in the world, supporting herself on the arm of the gasping Dorcas, sighing, trembling, and ready to faint, with nothing on but an under-petticoat, her lovely bosom half-open, and her feet just slipped into her shoes. As soon as she saw me, she

panted, and struggled to speak ; but could only say, Oh, Mr. Lovelace ; and down was ready to sink.

I clasped her in my arms with an ardour she never felt before : My dearest life ! fear nothing : I have been up—the danger is over—the fire is got under—And how, foolish devil ! (to Dorcas) could you thus, by your hideous yell, alarm and frighten my angel !

Oh Jack ! how her sweet bosom, as I clasped her to mine, heaved and panted ! I could even distinguish her dear heart flutter, flutter, flutter against mine ; and for a few minutes, I feared she would go into fits.

Lest the half-lifeless charmer should catch cold in this undress, I lifted her to her bed, and sat down by her upon the side of it, endeavouring with the utmost tenderness, as well of action as expression, to dissipate her terrors.

And now, Belford, reflect upon the distance at which the watchful charmer had hitherto kept me : reflect upon my love, and upon my sufferings for her : reflect upon her vigilance, and how long I had lain in wait to elude it ; the awe I had stood in, because of her frozen virtue and over-niceness ; and that I never before was so happy with her ; and then think how ungovernable must be my transports in those happy moments !—And yet, in my own account, I was both decent and generous.

But, far from being affected, as I wished, by an address so fervent (although from a man for whom she had so lately owned a regard, and with whom, but an hour or two before, she had parted with so much satisfaction), I never saw a bitterer, or more moving grief, when she came fully to herself.

She appealed to heaven against my treachery, as she called it : while I, by the most solemn vows, pleaded my own equal fright, and the reality of the danger that had alarmed us both.

She conjured me, in the most solemn and affecting manner, by turns threatening and soothing, to quit her

apartment, and permit her to hide herself from the light, and from every human eye.

But, O the sweet discomposure!—Her bared shoulders and arms, so inimitably fair and lovely: her spread hands crossed over her charming neck; yet not half concealing its glossy beauties: the scanty coat, as she rose from me, giving the whole of her admirable shape, and fine-turned limbs: her eyes running over, yet seeming to threaten future vengeance: and at last her lips uttering what every indignant look and glowing feature portended; exclaiming as if I had done the worst I could do, and vowing never to forgive me; wilt thou wonder if I resumed the incensed, the already too-much provoked fair-one?

I did; and clasped her once more to my bosom: but, considering the delicacy of her frame, her force was amazing, and showed how much in earnest she was in her resentment; for it was with the utmost difficulty that I was able to hold her: nor could I prevent her sliding through my arms, to fall upon her knees: which she did at my feet: and there, in the anguish of her soul, her streaming eyes lifted up to my face with supplicating softness, hands folded, dishevelled hair; for her night head-dress having fallen off in her struggling, her charming tresses fell down in naturally shining ringlets, as if officious to conceal the dazzling beauties of her neck and shoulders; her lovely bosom too heaving with sighs, and broken sobs, as if to aid her quivering lips, in pleading for her—in this manner, but when her grief gave way to her speech, in words pronounced with that emphatical propriety, which distinguishes this admirable creature in her elocution from all the women I ever heard speak; did she implore my compassion, and my honour.

Consider me, dear Lovelace, (dear was her charming word!) on my knees I beg you to consider me, as a poor creature who has no protector but you; who has no

defence but your honour: by that honour! by your humanity! by all you have vowed! I conjure you not to make me abhor myself!—not to make me vile in my own eyes!

I mentioned the morrow as the happiest day of my life.

Tell me not of to-morrow. If indeed you mean me honourably, now, this very instant now! you must show it, and begone! You can never in a whole long life repair the evils you may now make me suffer.

Wicked wretch!—Insolent villain!—Yes, she called me insolent villain, although so much in my power! And for what?—only for kissing (with passion indeed) her inimitable neck, her lips, her cheeks, her forehead, and her streaming eyes, as this assemblage of beauties offered itself at once to my ravished sight; she continuing kneeling at my feet, as I sat.

If I am a villain, madam—and then my grasping, but trembling hand—I hope I did not hurt the tenderest and loveliest of all her beauties—if I am a villain, madam—

She tore my ruffle, shrunk from my happy hand, with amazing force and agility, as with my other arm I would have encircled her waist.

Indeed you are!—The worst of villains!—Help! dear blessed people! and screamed—No help for a poor creature?—

Am I then a villain, madam?—Am I then a villain, say you—and clasped both my arms about her, offering to raise her to my bounding heart.

O no!—and yet you are!—And again I was her dear Lovelace!—Her hands again clasped over her charming bosom:—Kill me! Kill me!—If I am odious enough in your eyes, to deserve this treatment; and I will thank you!—Too long, much too long, has my life been a burden to me!—or, wildly looking all around her, give me but the means, and I will instantly convince you, that my honour is dearer to me than my life!

Then, with still folded hands, and fresh-streaming eyes, I was her blessed Lovelace ; and she would thank me with her latest breath, if I would permit her to make that preference, or free her from further indignities.

I sat suspended for a moment : by my soul, thought I, thou art, upon full proof, an angel and no woman ! Still, however, close clasping her to my bosom, as I raised her from her knees, she again slid through my arms, and dropped upon them :—See, Mr. Lovelace !—Good God ! that I should live to see this hour, and to bear this treatment !—See at your feet a poor creature, imploring your pity, who, for your sake, is abandoned of all the world ! Let not my father's curse thus dreadfully operate ! Be not you the inflicter, who have been the cause of it : but spare me, I beseech you spare me !—For how have I deserved this treatment from you ?—For your own sake, if not for my sake, and as you would that God Almighty, in your last hour, should have mercy upon you, spare me !

What heart but must have been penetrated ?

I would again have raised the dear suppliant from her knees ; but she would not be raised, till my softened mind, she said, had yielded to her prayer, and bid her rise to be innocent.

Rise then, my angel ! Rise, and be what you are, and all you wish to be ! Only pronounce me pardoned for what has passed, and tell me you will continue to look upon me with that eye of favour and serenity which I have been blessed with for some days past, and I will submit to my beloved conqueress, whose power never was at so great a height with me, as now ; and retire to my apartment.

God Almighty, said she, hear your prayers in your most arduous moments, as you have heard mine ! And now leave me, this moment leave me, to my own recollection : in that you will leave me to misery enough, and more than you ought to wish to your bitterest enemy.

Impute not everything, my best beloved, to design ; for design it was not——

O Mr. Lovelace !

Upon my soul, madam, the fire was real—(And so it was, Jack !)—the house, my dearest life, might have been consumed by it, as you will be convinced in the morning by ocular demonstration.

O Mr. Lovelace !—

Let my passion for you, madam, and the unexpected meeting of you at your chamber-door, in an attitude so charming——

Leave me, leave me, this moment !—I beseech you, leave me ; looking wildly and in confusion about her, and upon herself.

Excuse me, dearest creature, for those liberties, which, innocent as they were, your too great delicacy may make you take amiss——

No more ! no more !—Leave me, I beseech you ! Again looking upon herself, and around her, in a sweet confusion—Begone ! begone !—

Then weeping, she struggled vehemently to withdraw her hands, which all the while I held between mine.—Her struggles !—O what additional charms, as I now reflect, did her struggles give to every feature, every limb, of a person so sweetly elegant and lovely !

Impossible, my dearest life, till you pronounce my pardon !—Say but you forgive me !—Say but you forgive me !

I beseech you, begone ! Leave me to myself, that I may think what I can do, and what I ought to do.

That, my dearest creature, is not enough. You must tell me, that I am forgiven ; that you will see me to-morrow, as if nothing had happened.

And then I clasped her again in my arms, hoping she would not forgive me——

I will—I do forgive you—wretch that you are !

Nay, my Clarissa! And is it such a reluctant pardon, mingled with a word so upbraiding, that I am to be put off with, when you are thus (clasping her close to me) in my power?

I do, I do forgive you!

Heartily?

Yes, heartily!

And freely?

Freely!

And will you look upon me to-morrow as if nothing had passed?

Yes, yes!

I cannot take these peevish affirmatives, so much like intentional negatives!—Say you will, upon your honour.

Upon my honour, then—O now, begone! begone!—And never—never——

What, never, my angel!—Is this forgiveness?

Never, said she, let what has passed be remembered more!

I insisted upon one kiss to seal my pardon—and retired like a fool, a woman's fool, as I was!—I sneakingly retired! Couldst thou have believed it?

But I had no sooner entered my own apartment, than, reflecting upon the opportunity I had lost, and that all I had gained was but an increase of my own difficulties; and upon the ridicule I should meet with below upon a weakness so much out of my usual character; I repented, and hastened back, in hope, that through the distress of mind which I left her in, she had not so soon fastened her door; and I was fully resolved to execute all my purposes, be the consequence what it would; for, thought I, I have already sinned beyond cordial forgiveness, I doubt; and if fits and desperation ensue, I can but marry at last, and then I shall make her amends.

But I was justly punished;—for her door was fast: and hearing her sigh and sob, as if her heart would burst, My

beloved creature, said I, rapping gently (her sobbings then ceasing) I want but to say three words to you, which must be the most acceptable you ever heard from me. Let me see you but for one moment.

I thought I heard her coming to open the door, and my heart leapt in that hope; but it was only to draw another bolt, to make it still the faster; and she either could not or would not answer me, but retired to the further end of her apartment, to her closet probably: and more like a fool than before, again I sneaked away.

This was my mine, my plot!—And this was all I made of it!

I love her more than ever!—And well I may!—Never saw I polished ivory so beautiful as her arms and shoulders; never touched I velvet so soft as her skin: her virgin bosom—O Belford, she is all perfection!—Then such an elegance!—In her struggling losing her shoe (but just slipped on, as I told thee) her pretty foot equally white and delicate as the hand of any other woman, or even as her own hand!

But if she can now forgive me—Can?—She must. Has she not upon her honour already done it?—But how will the dear creature keep that part of her promise, which engages her to see me in the morning, as if nothing had happened?

She would give the world, I fancy, to have the first interview over!—She had not best reproach me—Yet not to reproach me!—What a charming puzzle?—Let her break her word with me at her peril. Fly me she cannot—no appeals lie from my tribunal—What friend has she in the world, if my compassion exert not itself in her favour?—And then the worthy Captain Tomlinson, and her uncle Harlowe, will be able to make all up for me, be my next offence what it will.

Thursday Morning.

I never longed in my life for anything with so much

impatience as to see my charmer. She has been stirring, it seems, these two hours.

Dorcas just now tapped at her door, to take her morning commands.

She had none for her, was the answer.

She desired to know, if she would not breakfast ?

A sullen and low-voiced negative received Dorcas.

I will go myself.

Three different times tapped I at the door ; but had no answer.

Permit me, dearest creature, to enquire after your health. As you have not been seen to-day, I am impatient to know how you do.

Not a word of answer ; but a deep sigh, even to sobbing.

I see, madam, how you keep your word with me !—if a sudden impulse, the effects of an unthought-of accident, cannot be forgiven—

O the dreadful weight of a father's curse, thus in the very letter of it—

And then her voice dying away in murmurs inarticulate, I looked through the key-hole, and saw her on her knees, her face, though not towards me, lifted up, as well as hands, and these folded, deprecating, I suppose, that gloomy tyrant's curse.

I could not help being moved.

My dearest life ! admit me to your presence but for two minutes, and confirm your promised pardon ; and may lightning blast me on the spot, if I offer anything but my penitence, at a shrine so sacred !—I will afterwards leave you for the whole day ; and till to-morrow morning ; and then attend you with writings, all ready to sign, a licence obtained, or, if it cannot, a minister without one. This once believe me ! When you see the reality of the danger that gave occasion for this your unhappy resentment,

you will think less hardly of me. And let me beseech you to perform a promise on which I made a reliance not altogether ungenerous.

I cannot see you! Would to heaven I never had! If I write, that's all I can do.

Let your writing then, my dearest life, confirm your promise: and I will withdraw in expectation of it.

Past Eleven o'clock.

She rung her bell for Dorcas; and, with her door in her hand, only half-opened, gave her a billet for me.

How did the dear creature look, Dorcas?

She was dressed. She turned her face quite from me; and sighed, as if her heart would break.

These are the contents:

I cannot see you: nor will I, if I can help it. Words cannot express the anguish of my soul on your baseness and ingratitude.

If the circumstances of things are such, that I can have no way for reconciliation with those who would have been my natural protectors from such outrages, but through you (the only inducement I can have to stay a moment longer in your knowledge) pen and ink must be, at present, the only means of communication between us.

Vilest of men! and most detestable of plotters! how have I deserved from you the shocking indignities—but no more—only for your own sake, wish not, at least for a week to come, to see

The undeservedly injured and insulted

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I ordered Dorcas, on putting the last billet under the door, and finding it taken up, to tell her, that I hoped an answer to it before I went out.

Her reply was verbal, Tell him that I care not whither

he goes, nor what he does.—And this, re-urged by Dorcas, was all she had to say to me.

I looked through the key-hole at my going by her door, and saw her on her knees, at her bed's feet, her head and bosom on the bed, her arms extended (sweet creature, how I adore her !); and in an agony she seemed to be, sobbing, as I heard at that distance, as if her heart would break. By my soul, Jack, I am a pity-ful fellow. Recollection is my enemy!—Divine excellence!—Happy with her for so many days together! Now so unhappy!—And for what?—But she is purity itself.—And why, after all, should I thus torment—but I must not trust myself with myself, in the humour I am in.

CLARISSA.



Part Third.—Her Flight from Lovelace.



Part Third.—Her Flight from Lovelace.

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Thursday Evening, June 8.



FOR a curse to kill with!—Ruined! undone! outwitted! tricked!—Zounds, man, the lady is gone off!—Absolutely gone off! Escaped!

Thou knowest not, nor canst conceive, the pangs that wring my heart!—What can I do!—O Lord, O Lord, O Lord!

And thou, too, who hast endeavoured to weaken my hands, wilt but clap thy dragon's wings at the tidings!

Yet I must write, or I shall go distracted. Little less have I been these two hours; dispatching messengers to every stage, to every inn, to every waggon or coach, whether flying or creeping, and to every house with a bill up, for five miles round.

How she could effect this her wicked escape, is my astonishment; the whole sisterhood having charge of her:—for, as yet, I have not had patience enough to enquire into the particulars, nor to let a soul of them approach me.

Of this I am sure, or I had not brought her hither; there is not a creature belonging to this house, that could be corrupted either by virtue or remorse: the highest joy every infernal nymph of this worse than infernal habitation could have known, would have been to reduce this proud beauty to her own level.—And as to

my villain, who also had charge of her, he is such a seasoned varlet, that he delights in mischief for the sake of it: no bribe could seduce him to betray his trust, were there but wickedness in it!—'Tis well, however, he was out of my way when the cursed news was imparted to me.—Gone, the villain! in quest of her: not to return, nor to see my face (so it seems he declared) till he has heard some tidings of her; and all the out-of-place varlets of his numerous acquaintance are summoned and employed in the same business.

To what purpose brought I this angel (angel I must yet call her) to this hellish house?—And was I not meditating to do her deserved honour? By my soul, Belford, I was resolved—but thou knowest what I had conditionally resolved—and now, who can tell into what hands she may have fallen!

I am mad, stark mad, by Jupiter, at the thoughts of this!—Unprovided, destitute, unacquainted—some villain, worse than myself, who adores her not as I adore her, may have seized her, and taken advantage of her distress!—Let me perish, Belford, if a whole hecatomb of innocents, as the little plagues are called, shall atone for the broken promise and wicked artifices of this cruel creature!

This is the substance of the vile Sinclair's account.

She told me, That I had no sooner left the vile house, than Dorcas acquainted the siren (Do, Jack, let me call her names!—I beseech thee, Jack, to permit me to call her names!) than Dorcas acquainted her lady with it; and that I had left word, that I was gone to Doctors' Commons, and should be heard of for some hours at the Horn there, if inquired after by the counsellor, or anybody else: that afterwards I should be either at the Cocoa-Tree, or King's-Arms, and should not return till late. She then urged her to take some refreshment.

She was in tears when Dorcas approached her; her

saucy eyes swelled with weeping: she refused either to eat or drink; sighed as if her heart would break.—False, devilish grief! not the humble, silent grief, that only deserves pity!—Contriving to ruin me, to despoil me of all that I held valuable, in the very midst of it.

Nevertheless, being resolved not to see me for a week at least, she ordered her to bring her up three or four French rolls, with a little butter, and a decanter of water; telling her she would dispense with her attendance; and that should be all she would live upon in the interim. So, artful creature! pretending to lay up for a week's siege.—For, as to substantial food, she, no more than other angels—Angels, said I!—The devil take me if she shall be any more an angel!—For she is odious in my eyes; and I hate her mortally!—

Dorcas consulted the old wretch about obeying her. O yes, by all means; for Mr. Lovelace knew how to come at her at any time; and directed a bottle of sherry to be added.

This cheerful compliance so obliged her that she was prevailed upon to go up, and look at the damage done by the fire; and seemed not only shocked at it, but, as they thought, satisfied it was no trick; as she owned she had at first apprehended it to be. All this made them secure; and they laughed in their sleeves, to think what a childish way of showing her resentment she had found out; Sally throwing out her witticisms, that Mrs. Lovelace was right, however, not to quarrel with her bread and butter.

She sent Will with a letter to Wilson's, directed to Miss Howe, ordering him to inquire if there were not one for her there.

He only pretended to go, and brought word there was none; and put her letter in his pocket for me.

She then ordered him to carry another (which she gave him) to the Horn Tavern to me.—All this done without any seeming hurry; yet she appeared to be very

solemn ; and put her handkerchief frequently to her eyes.

Will went out, pretending to bring the letter to me ; but quickly returned ; his heart still misgiving him, on recollecting my frequent cautions, that he was not to judge for himself, when he had positive orders ; but if any doubt occurred, from circumstances I could not foresee, literally to follow them, as the only way to avoid blame.

But it must have been in this little interval, that she escaped ; for soon after his return, they made fast the street-door and hatch, the mother and the two nymphs taking a little turn into the garden ; Dorcas going up-stairs, and Will (to avoid being seen by his lady, or his voice heard) down into the kitchen.

About half an hour after, Dorcas, who had planted herself where she could see her lady's door open, had the curiosity to go to look through the keyhole, having a misgiving, as she said, that her lady might offer some violence to herself, in the mood she had been in all day ; and finding the key in the door, which was not very usual, she tapped at it three or four times, and having no answer, opened it, with *Madam, Madam, did you call ?*—supposing her in her closet.

Having no answer, she stepped forward, and was astonished to find she was not there. She hastily ran into the dining-room, then into my apartments ; searched every closet ; dreading all the time to behold some sad catastrophe.

Not finding her anywhere, she ran down to the old creature and her nymphs, with a *Have you seen my lady ?*—*Then she's gone !—She's nowhere above !*

The whole house was in an uproar in an instant ; some running up-stairs, some down, from the upper rooms to the lower ; and all screaming, *How should they look me in the face !*

Will cried out, he was a dead man ; he blamed them ;

they him ; and every one was an accuser, and an excuser at the same time.

When they had searched the whole house, and every closet in it, ten times over, to no purpose, they took it into their heads to send to all the porters, chairmen, and hackney-coachmen, that had been near the house for two hours past, to inquire if any of them saw such a young lady ; describing her.

This brought them some light : the only dawning for hope that I can have, and which keeps me from absolute despair. One of the chairmen gave them this account : That he saw such a one come out of the house a little before four (in a great hurry, and as if frightened) with a little parcel tied up in a handkerchief, in her hand : that he took notice to his fellow, who plied her without her answering, that she was a fine young lady : that he'd warrant, she had either a bad husband, or very cross parents ; for that her eyes seemed swelled with crying.

From these appearances, the fellow who gave this information, had the curiosity to follow her, unperceived. She often looked back. Everybody who passed her, turned to look after her ; passing their verdict upon her tears, her hurry, and her charming person ; till coming to a stand of coaches, a coachman plied her ; was accepted ; alighted ; opened the coach-door in a hurry, seeing her hurry ; and in she stumbled for haste ; and, as the fellow believed, hurt her shins with the stumble.

The fellow heard her say, Drive fast ! very fast ! Where, Madam ? To Holborn Bars, answered she ; repeating, Drive very fast !—And up she pulled both the windows : and he lost sight of the coach in a minute.

Will as soon as he had this intelligence, speeded away in hopes to trace her out ; declaring, that he would never think of seeing me, till he had heard some tidings of his lady.

And now, Belford, all my hope is, that this fellow (who

attended us in our airing to Hampstead, to Highgate, to Muswell Hill, to Kentish Town) will hear of her at some one or other of those places. And on this I the rather build, as I remember she was once, after our return, very inquisitive about the stages, and their prices; praising the conveniency to passengers in their going off every hour; and this in Will's hearing, who was then in attendance. Woe be to the villain, if he recollect not this!

MR. LOVELACE, TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.



LETTER is put into my hands by Wilson himself—Such a letter!

A letter from Miss Howe to her cruel friend!—

I made no scruple to open it.

It is a miracle that I fell not into fits at the reading of it; and at the thought of what might have been the consequences, had it come to the hands of this Clarissa Harlowe. Let my justly-excited rage excuse my irreverence.

TO MISS LETITIA BEAUMONT.

Wednesday, June 7.

MY DEAREST FRIEND.—You are certainly in a devilish house!—Be assured, that the woman is one of the vilest of women—nor does she go to you by her right name—Her name is not Sinclair—nor is the street she lives in, Dover Street.—Did you never go out by yourself, and discharge the coach or chair, and return by another coach or chair? If you did (yet I don't remember that you ever wrote to me, that you did) you would never have found your way to the vile house, either by the woman's name, Sinclair, or by the street's name, mentioned by that Doleman in his letter about the lodgings.

But I will tell you how I came by my intelligence.

Miss Lardner (whom you have seen at her cousin Biddulph's) saw you at St. James's Church on Sunday was fortnight. She kept you in her eye during the whole

time; but could not once obtain the notice of yours though she curtsied to you twice. But she ordered her servant to follow you till you were housed. This servant saw you step into a chair, which waited for you; and you ordered the men to carry you to the place where they took you up.

The next day, Miss Lardner sent the same servant, out of mere curiosity, to make private inquiry whether Mr. Lovelace were, or were not, with you there. And this inquiry brought out, from different people, that the house was suspected to be one of those genteel wicked houses, which receive and accommodate fashionable people of both sexes.

Miss Lardner kept this to herself some days, not knowing what to do; for she loves you, and admires you of all women. At last she revealed it, but in confidence, to Miss Biddulph, by letter. Miss Biddulph, in like confidence, being afraid it would distract me were I to know it, communicated it to Miss Lloyd; and so, like a whispered scandal, it passed through several canals; and then it came to me. Which was not till last Monday.

I thought I should have fainted upon the surprising communication. But rage taking place, it blew away the sudden illness. I besought Miss Lloyd to re-enjoin secrecy to every one. I told her that I would not for the world that my mother, or any of your family, should know it. And I instantly caused a trusty friend to make what inquiries he could about Tomlinson.

Now, my dear, it is certain, that there is not such a man within ten miles of your uncle.

But this is what I am ready to conjecture, that Tomlinson, specious as he is, is a machine of Lovelace; and that he is employed for some end, which has not yet been answered. This is certain, that not only Tomlinson, but Mennell, who, I think, attended you more than once at this vile house, must know it to be a vile house.

What can you then think of Tomlinson's declaring himself in favour of it, upon enquiry ?

Lovelace too must know it to be so ; if not before he brought you to it, soon after.

But if this be so what (it would be asked by an indifferent person) has hitherto saved you ? Glorious creature !—What, morally speaking, but your watchfulness ! What but that, and the majesty of your virtue ; the native dignity, which, in a situation so very difficult (friendless, destitute, passing for a wife, cast into the company of creatures accustomed to betray and ruin innocent hearts) has hitherto enabled you to baffle, overawe, and confound, such a dangerous libertine as this ; so habitually remorseless, as you have observed him to be ; so very various in his temper ; so inventive ; so seconded, so supported, so instigated, too probably as he has been !—That native dignity, that heroism I will call it, which has, on all proper occasions, exerted itself in its full lustre, unmingled with that charming obligingness and condescending sweetness, which is evermore the softener of that dignity, when your mind is free and unapprehensive !

If you do not fly the house upon reading of this, or some way or other get out of it, I shall judge of his power over you, by the little you will have over either him or yourself.

One word more. Command me up, if I can be of the least service or pleasure to you. I value not fame ; I value not censure ; nor even life itself, I verily think, as I do your honour, and your friendship—for, is not your honour my honour ? and is not your friendship the pride of my life ?

May heaven preserve you, my dearest creature, in honour and safety, is the prayer, the hourly prayer, of

Your ever faithful and affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

But this, Belford, I hope—that if I can turn the poison of the inclosed letter into wholesome aliment ; that is to say, if I can make use of it to my advantage ; I shall have thy free consent to do it.

I am always careful to open covers cautiously, and to preserve seals entire. I will draw out from this cursed letter an alphabet. Nor was Nick Rowe ever half so diligent to learn Spanish, at the Quixote recommendation of a certain peer, as I will be to gain a mastery of this vixen's hand.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Thursday Evening, June 8.

AFTER my last, so full of other hopes, the contents of this will surprise you. O my dearest friend, the man has at last proved himself to be a villain !

It was with the utmost difficulty last night, that I preserved myself from the vilest dishonour. He extorted from me a promise of forgiveness ; and that I would see him next day, as if nothing had happened : but if it were possible to escape from a wretch, who, as I have too much reason to believe, formed a plot to fire the house, to frighten me, almost naked, into his arms, how could I see him next day ?

I have escaped—heaven be praised that I have !—and have now no other concern, than that I fly from the only hope that could have made such a husband tolerable to me ; the reconciliation with my friends, so agreeably undertaken by my uncle.

All my present hope is, to find some reputable family, or person of my own sex, who is obliged to go beyond sea, or who lives abroad ; I care not whither ; but if I might choose, in some one of our American colonies—never to be heard of more by my relations, whom I have so grievously offended.

I am at present at one Mrs. Moore's at Hampstead. My heart misgave me at coming to this village, because I had been here with him more than once: but the coach hither was so ready a conveniency, that I knew not what to do better. Then I shall stay here no longer than till I can receive your answer to this: in which you will be pleased to let me know, if I cannot be hid, according to your former contrivance (happy, had I given into it at the time!) by Mrs. Townsend's assistance, till the heat of his search be over. The Deptford road, I imagine, will be the right direction to hear of a passage, and to get safely aboard.

Mrs. Moore, at whose house I am, is a widow, and of good character: And of this, one of her neighbours, of whom I bought a handkerchief, purposely to make enquiry before I would venture, informed me.

I will not set my foot out of doors, till I have your direction: And I am the more secure, having dropped words to the people of the house where the coach set me down, as if I expected a chariot to meet me in my way to Hendon; a village a little distance from this. And when I left their house, I walked backward and forward upon the hill; at first, not knowing what to do; and afterwards, to be certain that I was not watched before I ventured to enquire after a lodging.

You will direct for me, my dear, by the name of Mrs. Harriot Lucas.

Your unhappy, but ever affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday Morning, past Two o'Clock.

TO TRIUMPHE! Io Clarissa, sing!—Once more, what a happy man thy friend!—A silly dear novice, to be heard to tell the coachman whither to carry her!—And to go to Hampstead, of all the villages

about London!—the place where we had been together more than once!

But thou wilt be impatient to know how I came by my lights. Read the inclosed here, and remember the instructions which from time to time, as I have told thee, I have given my fellow, in apprehension of such an elopement; and that will tell thee all, and what I may reasonably expect from the rascal's diligence and management, if he wishes ever to see my face again.

HONNORED SUR,—This is to sertifie your Honner, as how I am heer at Hamestet, wher I have found out my Lady to be in logins at one Mrs. Moore's, near upon Hamestet-Hethe. And I have so ordered matters, that her Ladiship cannot stur but I must have notice of her goins and comins.

My Lady knows nothing of my being hereaway, but I thoute it best not to leve the plase, because she has tacken the logins but for a fue nites.

I am, may it plese your Honner,
Your Honner's most dutiful, and,
wonce more, happy Sarvant,

WM. SUMMERS.

And now (all around me so still, and so silent) the rattling of the chariot-wheels at a street's distance do I hear!—And to this angel of a woman I fly!

And now, dressed like a bridegroom, my heart elated beyond that of the most desiring one (attended by a footman whom my beloved never saw) I am already at Hampstead!

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Upper Flask, Hampstead, Friday, June 9.

I AM now here, and here have been this hour and a half. What an industrious spirit have I!— Nobody can say, that I eat the bread of idleness. I take true pains for all the pleasure I enjoy. I cannot but admire myself strangely; for, certainly, with this active soul, I should have made a very great figure in whatever station I had filled. But had I been a Prince! To be sure I should have made a most noble Prince! I should have led up a military dance equal to that of the great Macedonian. I should have added kingdom to kingdom, and despoiled all my neighbour-sovereigns, in order to have obtained the name of Robert the Great. And I would have gone to war with the Great Turk, and the Persian, and Mogul, for their seraglios; for not one of those eastern monarchs should have had a pretty woman to bless himself with, till I had done with her.

Will told them, before I came, That his lady was but lately married to one of the finest gentlemen in the world. But that, he being very gay and lively, she was mortal jealous of him. And that, on his refusing to satisfy her about a lady he had been seen with in St. James's Park, she had served his master thus: whom he had left half-distracted on that account.

When I came, my person and dress having answered Will's description, the people were ready to worship me. I now and then sighed, now and then put on a lighter air; which, however, I designed should show more of vexation ill-disguised, than of real cheerfulness: and they told Will, it was a thousand pities so fine a lady should have such skittish tricks; adding, that she might expose herself to great dangers by them; for that there were rakes every-

where (Lovelaces in every corner, Jack !) and many about that town, who would leave nothing unattempted to get into her company : and although they might not prevail upon her, yet might they nevertheless hurt her reputation, and, in time, estrange the affections of so fine a gentleman from her.

Good sensible people, these !—ey, Jack !

Here, landlord ; one word with you.—My servant, I find, has acquainted you with the reason of my coming this way. An unhappy affair, landlord ! A very unhappy affair ! But never was there a more virtuous woman.

So, sir, she seems to be. A thousand pities her ladyship has such ways—and to so good-humoured a gentleman as you seem to be, sir.

Mother-spoilt, landlord !—Mother-spoilt ! that's the thing !—But, sighing, I must make the best of it. What I want you to do for me, is to lend me a great coat. I care not what it is. If my spouse should see me at a distance, she would make it very difficult for me to get at her speech. A great coat with a cape, if you have one. I must come upon her before she is aware.

I am afraid, sir, I have none fit for such a gentleman as you.

O, anything will do !—The worse the better.

Exit Landlord. Re-enter with two great coats.

Ay, landlord, this will be best : for I can button the cape over the lower part of my face. Don't I look devilishly down and concerned, landlord ?

I never saw a gentleman with a better-natured look, 'tis pity you should have such trials, sir.

Can't you, landlord, lend or sell me a pair of stockings, that will draw over these ? I can cut off the feet, if they won't go into my shoes.

He could let me have a pair of coarse, but clean, stirrup-stockings, if I pleased.

The best in the world for the purpose.

He fetched them. Will drew them on; and my legs then made a good gouty appearance.

The good woman, smiling, wished me success; and so did the landlord: and as thou knowest that I am not a bad mimic, I took a cane, which I borrowed of the landlord, and stooped in the shoulders to a quarter of a foot of less height, and stumped away cross to the bowling-green, to practise a little the hobbling gait of a gouty man. The landlady whispered her husband, as Will tells me, he's a good one, I warrant him—I dare say the fault lies not all of one side. While mine host replied, that I was so lively and so good-natured, a gentleman, that he did not know who could be angry with me, do what I would. A sensible fellow!—I wish my charmer were of the same opinion.

And now I am going to try, if I can't agree with goody Moore for lodgings and other conveniences for my sick wife.

Wife, Lovelace! methinks thou interrogatest.

Yes, wife; for who knows what cautions the dear fugitive may have given in apprehension of me?

Although grievously afflicted with the gout, I alighted out of my chariot (leaning very hard on my cane with one hand, and on my new servant's shoulder with the other) the same instant almost that he had knocked at the door, that I might be sure of admission into the house.

The maid came to the door. I asked for her mistress. She showed me into one of the parlours; and I sat down, with a gouty Oh!—

Enter Goody Moore.

Your servant, Madam—but you must excuse me; I cannot well stand.—I find by the bill at the door, that you have lodgings to let (mumbling my words as if, like my man Will, I had lost some of my fore-teeth): be pleased to inform me what they are; for I like your situation—and I will tell you my family—I have a wife, a good

old woman—older than myself, by the way, a pretty deal. She is in a bad state of health, and is advised into the Hampstead air. She will have two maidservants and a footman. The coach or chariot (I shall not have them up both together) we can put up anywhere, and the coachman will be with his horses.

You shall see what accommodations I have, if you please, sir. But I doubt you are too lame to walk up-stairs.

I can make shift to hobble up now I have rested a little. I'll just look upon the apartment my wife is to have. Anything may do for the servants: and as you seem to be a good sort of gentlewoman, I shan't stand for a price, and will pay well besides for the trouble I shall give.

She led the way; and I, helping myself by the banisters, made shift to get up with less fatigue than I expected from ancles so weak. Never was there a more joyous heart and lighter heels than mine, joined together; yet both denied their functions; the one fluttering in secret, ready to burst its bars for relief-ful expression, the others obliged to an hobbling motion; when, unrestrained, they would, in their master's imagination, have mounted him to the lunar world without the help of a ladder.

There were three rooms on a floor; two of them handsome; and the third, she said, still handsomer; but a lady was in it.

But, madam, cannot a body just peep into the other apartment, that I may be more particular to my wife in the furniture of it?

The lady desires to be private, sir—but—and was going to ask her leave.

I caught hold of her hand—however, stay, stay, madam: it mayn't be proper, if the lady loves to be private. Don't let me intrude upon the lady—

O Belford! to be so near my angel, think what a painful constraint I was under!

I was resolved to fetch her out, if possible : and pretending to be going—you can't agree as to any time, Mrs. Moore, when we can have this third room, can you?—Not that (whispered I, loud enough to be heard in the next room ; not that) I would incommode the lady : but I would tell my wife when abouts—and women, you know, Mrs. Moore, love to have everything before them of this nature.

Mrs. Moore, said my charmer (and never did her voice sound so harmonious to me : oh how my heart bounded again ! It even talked to me, in a manner ; for I thought I heard, as well as felt, its unruly flutters ; and every vein about me seemed a pulse :) Mrs. Moore you may acquaint the gentleman, that I shall stay here only for two or three days at most, till I receive an answer to a letter I have written into the country ; and rather than be your hindrance, I will take up with any apartment a pair of stairs higher.

Not for the world !—not for the world, young lady, cried I !—my wife, well as I love her, should lie in a garret, rather than put such a considerate lady as you seem to be, to the least inconveniency.

She opened not the door yet ; and I said, but since you have so much goodness, madam, if I could but just look into the closet as I stand, I could tell my wife whether it is large enough to hold a cabinet she much values, and will have with her wherever she goes.

Then my charmer opened the door, and blazed upon me, as it were, in a flood of light, like what one might imagine would strike a man, who, born blind, had by some propitious power been blessed with his sight, all at once, in a meridian sun.

Upon my soul, I never was so strangely affected before. I had much ado to forbear discovering myself that instant : but, hesitatingly, and in great disorder, I said, looking into the closet, and around it, there is room, I see, for my

wife's cabinet ; and it has many jewels in it of high price ; but, upon my soul (for I could not forbear swearing, like a puppy :—habit is a cursed thing, Jack—) nothing so valuable as the lady I see, can be brought into it.

She started, and looked at me with terror. The truth of the compliment, as far as I know, had taken dissimulation from my accent.

I saw it was impossible to conceal myself longer from her, any more than (from the violent impulses of my passion) to forbear manifesting myself. I unbuttoned therefore my cape, I pulled off my flapt slouched hat ; I threw open my great coat, and, like the devil in Milton (an odd comparison though !)

I started up in my own form divine,
Touch'd by the beam of her celestial eye,
More potent than Ithuriel's spear !—

Now, Belford, for a similitude—now for a likeness to illustrate the surprising scene, and the effect it had upon my charmer, and the gentlewoman !—But nothing was like it, or equal to it. The plain fact can only describe it, and set it off—thus then take it.

She no sooner saw who it was, than she gave three violent screams ; and, before I could catch her in my arms (as I was about to do the moment I discovered myself) down she sunk at my feet, in a fit ; which made me curse my indiscretion for so suddenly, and with so much emotion, revealing myself.

It is needless to follow in detail all the cajoleries by which Lovelace manages to convince the people of the lodgings with whom his poor hunted victim had found refuge, of the integrity of his intentions and of his relation to Clarissa. He deludes them into a belief that he is already married to her, and that he abstains from living with her on the terms of a husband only to satisfy some punctilio of her own,

because she fancies that by keeping him at a distance she may more easily be reconciled to her family. He confesses that he was led away by circumstances connected with the fire (a real fire he insists) to assert his claims to the lady rather more warmly than was pleasing to her; and he dazzles the eyes of these simple-minded people by frequent reference to his high connections and unexceptionable worldly position. Further, he insinuates that Clarissa's opposition to him is heightened by the interference of one of her friends (Miss Howe), to whom he ascribes an interested motive—namely, that of an unrequited attachment to himself. Having thus enlisted the sympathies of Clarissa's new-found friends in his behalf, Lovelace next addresses himself to the task of pacifying the terrors of the lady.

The task is difficult, for her soul is in arms against him.

All the pure impulses of her nature revolt against the memory of the insult which had been offered to her by his presence in her chamber on the night of the fire. She is tired of the atmosphere of deceit which has surrounded her since her lot has been mixed with his, and she desires nothing so much as an immunity from his attentions. Oh, that she may be allowed to finish her days in some quiet refuge where she shall be free alike from the persecutions of her lover and from the tyrannies of her family. She still, however, cherishes a hope that reconciliation with her family is not impossible; and it is on this hope that Lovelace founds most of his schemes and arguments by which Clarissa is gradually lured to her doom.

Then the plausible Tomlinson once more appears in the foreground. He declares it to be essential to the success of the scheme of reconciliation that Clarissa should adhere to the assertion that she is already

married ; he hints that her brother, James Harlowe, disbelieving this report, is determined to take instant measures to ascertain its truth ; and he declares that her uncle, John Harlowe, anxious to make an end of the strife, entreats that the marriage should at once take place, adding, that should he himself be unable to attend the ceremony, he consents, "with all his heart," that Tomlinson should represent him on the occasion. Clarissa has an interview with Tomlinson, in which her grief, goodness, and beauty so affect this panderer to Lovelace's wickedness, that he is scarce able to continue the concerted conversation by which she is to be deluded once more into faith. Lovelace, however, being in the intensity of his selfishness perfectly reckless as to the amount of suffering which the gratification of his lust and his vanity may inflict on the girl he professes to love, is more obdurate, and in concert with Tomlinson persuades her that his aunt, Lady Betty Lawrence, and his cousin, Miss Charlotte Montague, are coming to visit her, and that they will assist at the celebration of her nuptials. So many specious arguments are used to show that she should not cloud the apparent sunshine of her prosperity by untimely resentment, that she at last wavers, only reserving to herself the right of waiting for the arrival of a letter from Miss Howe, in which she expects to find help and counsel. When Clarissa is at church, Lovelace intercepts Miss Howe's messenger, a simple country fellow, and induces him to believe that one of the women of the lodging (a woman who falls innocently enough into Lovelace's scheme) is Clarissa herself. To this woman—a red-faced, vulgar-looking woman—the messenger delivers Miss Howe's letter, and Lovelace then takes possession of it. Clarissa, however, continues to decline his suit.

She tells him that she can never be happy with him nor he with her; and the only immediate concession he can wring from her is that she will wait and receive the promised visit of his kinswomen.

The scheme involved in this visit—one of the darkest and most shameful of all Lovelace's tortuous designs—is thus unfolded in a letter to his friend Belford.—ED.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Monday, June 12.

THOU hast seen Lady Betty Lawrance several times—hast thou not, Belford?
No, never in my life.

But thou hast; and lain with her too; or fame does thee more credit than thou deservest—why, Jack knowest thou not Lady Betty's other name?

Other name!—has she two?

She has. And what thinkest thou of Lady Bab. Wallis?

O the devil!

Now thou hast it. Lady Barbara, thou knowest, lifted up in circumstances, and by pride, never appears or produces herself, but on occasions special—to pass to men of quality or price, for a duchess, or countess, at least. She has always been admired for a grandeur in her air, that few women of quality can come up to: and never was supposed to be other than what she passed for; though often and often a paramour for lords.

And who, thinkest thou, is my cousin Montague?

Nay, how should I know?

How indeed! Why, my little Johanetta Golding, a lively, yet modest-looking girl, is my cousin Montague.

There, Belford, is an aunt!—there's a cousin! Both have wit at will. Both are accustomed to ape quality. Both are genteelly descended. Mistresses of themselves

and well educated—yet past pity.—True Spartan dames ; ashamed of nothing but detection—always, therefore, upon their guard against that. And in their own conceit, when assuming top parts, the very quality they ape.

And how dost think I dress them out ?—I'll tell thee.

Lady Betty in a rich gold tissue, adorned with jewels of high price.

My cousin Montague in a pale pink, standing an end with silver flowers of her own working. Charlotte, as well as my beloved, is admirable at her needle. Not quite so richly jewelled out as Lady Betty ; but earrings and solitaire very valuable, and infinitely becoming.

Johanetta, thou knowest, has a good complexion, a fine neck, and ears remarkably fine—so has Charlotte. She is nearly of Charlotte's stature too.

Laces both, the richest that could be procured.

Thou canst not imagine what a sum the loan of the jewels cost me ; though but for three days.

This sweet girl will half ruin me. But seest thou not by this time, that her reign is short—It must be so. And Mrs. Sinclair has already prepared everything for her reception once more.

Here come the ladies—attended by Susan Morrison, a tenant-farmer's daughter, as Lady Betty's woman ; with her hands before her and thoroughly instructed.

How dress advantages women !—especially those, who have naturally a genteel air and turn, and have had education !

Hadst thou seen how they paraded it—cousin, and cousin, and nephew, at every word ; Lady Betty bridling, and looking haughtily-condescending : Charlotte galanting her fan, and swimming over the floor without touching it.

How I long to see my niece-elect ! cries one—for they are told, that we are not married ; and are pleased, that I have not put the slight upon them, that they had apprehended from me

How I long to see my dear cousin that is to be, the other!

Easy and unaffected!—Your very dresses will give you pride enough.

A little graver, Lady Betty. More significance, less bridling in your dignity.

That's the air! Charmingly hit—Again—You have it.

Devil take you!—Less arrogance. You are got into airs of young quality. Be less sensible of your new condition. People born to dignity command respect without needing to require it.

Now for your part, cousin Charlotte!—

Pretty well. But a little too frolicky that air—yet have I prepared my beloved to expect in you both, great vivacity and quality-freedom.

Curse those eyes!—Those glancings will never do. A down-cast bashful turn, if you can command it—look upon me. Suppose me now to be my beloved.

Devil take that leer. Too significantly arch!—Once I knew you the girl I would now have you to be.

Once more, suppose me to be my charmer.—Now you are to encounter my examining eye, and my doubting heart—

That's my dear!

Study that air in the pier-glass!—

Charming!—Perfectly right!

Your honours, now, devils!—

Pretty well, cousin Charlotte, for a young country lady!—Till form yields to familiarity, you may courtesy low. You must not be supposed to have forgot your boarding-school airs.

But too low, too low, Lady Betty, for your years and your quality. The common fault of your sex will be your danger: aiming to be young too long!—The devil's in you all, when you judge of yourselves by your wishes,

and by your vanity! Fifty, in that case, is never more than fifteen.

Graceful ease, conscious dignity, like that of my charmer, O how hard to hit!

Both together now—

Charming!—That's the air, Lady Betty!—That's the cue, cousin Charlotte, suited to the character of each!—But, once more, be sure to have a guard upon your eyes.

Never fear, nephew!—

Never fear, cousin.

A dram of Barbados each—

And now we are gone—

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

At Mrs. Sinclair's, Monday Afternoon.

ALL'S right, as heart can wish!—in spite of all objection—in spite of a reluctance next to fainting—in spite of all foresight, vigilance suspicion—once more is the charmer of my soul in her old lodgings!

Now throbs away every pulse! Now thump, thump, thumps my bounding heart for something!

But I have not time for the particulars of our management.

My beloved is now directing some of her clothes to be packed up—never more to enter this house! Nor ever more will she, I dare say, when once again out of it!

Yet not so much as a condition of forgiveness!—The Harlowe-spirited fair one will not deserve my mercy!—She will wait for Miss Howe's next letter; and then, if she find a difficulty in her new schemes (thank her for nothing)—will—will what?—Why even then will take time to consider, whether I am to be forgiven, or for ever rejected. An indifference that revives in my heart the remembrance of a thousand of the like nature.—And yet Lady Betty and Miss Montague (a man would be tempted

to think, Jack, that they wish her to provoke my vengeance) declare, that I ought to be satisfied with such a proud suspension!

They are entirely attached to her. Whatever she says, is, must be, gospel! They are guarantees for her return to Hampstead this night. They are to go back with her. A supper bespoken by Lady Betty at Mrs. Moore's. All the vacant apartments there, by my permission (for I had engaged them for a month certain) to be filled with them and their attendants, for a week at least, or till they can prevail upon the dear perverse, as they hope they shall, to restore me to her favour, and to accompany Lady Betty to Oxfordshire.

The dear creature has thus far condescended—that she will write to Miss Howe, and acquaint her with the present situation of things.

If she write, I shall see what she writes. But I believe she will have other employment soon.

Lady Betty is sure, she tells her, that she shall prevail upon her to forgive me; though she dares say, that I deserve not forgiveness. Lady Betty is too delicate to inquire strictly into the nature of my offence. But it must be an offence against herself, against Miss Montague, against the virtuous of the whole sex, or it could not be so highly resented. Yet she will not leave her till she forgive me, and till she see our nuptials privately celebrated. Meantime, as she approves of her uncle's expedient, she will address her as already my wife, before strangers.

What shall we do now! We are immersed in the depth of grief and apprehension! How ill do women bear disappointment!—Set upon going to Hampstead, and upon quitting for ever a house she re-entered with infinite reluctance; what things she intended to take with her, ready packed up; herself on tiptoe to be gone; and I prepared to attend her thither; she begins to be afraid, that she shall not go this night; and in grief and

despair has flung herself into her old apartment ; locked herself in ; and through the key-hole Dorcas sees her on her knees—praying I suppose for a safe deliverance.

And from what ?—And wherefore these agonising apprehensions ?

Why, here, this unkind Lady Betty, with the dear creature's knowledge, though to her concern, and this mad-headed cousin Montague without it, while she was employed in directing her package, have hurried away in the coach to their own lodgings (only, indeed, to put up some night-clothes, and so forth, in order to attend their sweet cousin to Hampstead) ; and, no less to my surprise than hers, are not yet returned.

I have sent to know the meaning of it.

In a great hurry of spirits, she would have had me to go myself. Hardly any pacifying her !—The girl, God bless her ! is wild with her own idle apprehensions !—What is she afraid of ?

I curse them both for their delay—my tardy villain, how he stays !—Devil fetch them ! let them send their coach, and we'll go without them. In her hearing I bid the fellow tell them so.—Perhaps he stays to bring the coach, if anything happens to hinder the ladies from attending my beloved this night.

Devil take them, again say I !—They promised too they would not stay, because it was but two nights ago, that a chariot was robbed at the foot of Hampstead hill ; which alarmed my fair one when told of it !

Oh ! here's lady Betty's servant, with a billet.

TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Monday Night.

Excuse us, dear nephew, I beseech you, to my dearest kinswoman. One night cannot break squares ; for here Miss Montague has been taken violently ill.

If she be better, we will certainly go with you to-morrow

morning, after we have breakfasted with her, at your lodgings. But, whether she be, or not, I will do myself the pleasure to attend your lady to Hampstead ; and will be with you for that purpose about nine in the morning. With due compliments to your most worthily beloved, I am

Yours affectionately,

ELIZAB. LAWRENCE.

Faith and troth, Jack, I know not what to do with myself : for here, just now, having sent in the above note by Dorcas, out came my beloved with it in her hand : in a fit of phrensy !—True, by my soul !

She had indeed complained of her head all the evening.

Dorcas ran to me, out of breath, to tell me, that her lady was coming in some strange way : but she followed her so quick, that the frightened wench had not time to say in what way.

It seems, when she read the billet—Now indeed, said she, am I a lost creature ! O the poor Clarissa Harlowe !

She tore off her head-cloths ; inquired where I was : and in she came, her shining tresses flowing about her neck ; her ruffles torn, and hanging in tatters about her snowy hands ; with her arms spread out ; her eyes wildly turned, as if starting from their orbits—down sunk she at my feet, as soon as she approached me ; her charming bosom heaving to her uplifted face ; and clasping her arms about my knees, Dear Lovelace, said she, if ever—if ever—if ever—and, unable to speak another word, quitting her clasping hold, down prostrate on the floor sunk she, neither in a fit nor out of one.

I was quite astonished.—All my purposes suspended for a few moments, I knew neither what to say, nor what to do. But, recollecting myself, am I again, thought I, in a way to be overcome, and made a fool of !—If I now recede, I am gone for ever.

I raised her : but down she sunk, as if quite disjointed ;

her limbs failing her—yet not in a fit neither. I never heard of or saw such a dear unaccountable : almost lifeless, and speechless too for a few moments—what must her apprehensions be at that moment! And for what?—an high-notioned dear soul!—pretty ignorance! thought I.

Never having met with so sincere, so unquestionable a repugnance, I was staggered—I was confounded—yet how should I know that it would be so till I tried?—And how, having proceeded thus far, could I stop, were I not to have had the women to goad me on, and to make light of circumstances, which they pretended to be better judges of than I?

I lifted her, however, into a chair; and in words of disordered passion, told her, all her fears were needless: wondered at them: begged of her to be pacified: besought her reliance on my faith and honour: and revowed all my old vows, and poured forth new ones.

At last, with an heart-breaking sob, I see, I see, Mr. Lovelace, in broken sentences she spoke—I see, I see,—that at last—at last—I am ruined!—ruined, if your pity—let me implore your pity!—and down on her bosom, like a half-broken-stalked lily, top-heavy with the overcharging dews of the morning, sunk her head, with a sigh that went to my heart.

All I could think of to re-assure her, when a little recovered, I said.

Why did I not send for their coach, as I had intimated? It might return in the morning for the ladies.

I had actually done so, I told her, on seeing her strange uneasiness. But it was then gone to fetch a doctor for Miss Montague, lest his chariot should not be so ready.

Ah! Lovelace! said she, with a doubting face; anguish in her imploring eye.

Lady Betty would think it very strange, I told her, if she were to know it was so disagreeable to her to stay one

night for her company in a house where she had passed so many !

She called me names upon this.—She had called me names before.—I was patient.

Let her go to Lady Betty's lodgings, then ; directly go ; if the person I called Lady Betty was really Lady Betty.

If, my dear ! good heaven ! what a villain does that if shew you believe me to be !

I cannot help it—I beseech you once more, let me go to Mrs. Leeson's,* if that if ought not to be said.

Dreading what might happen as to her intellects, and being very apprehensive, that she might possibly go through a great deal before morning (though more violent she could not well be with the worst she dreaded), I humoured her, and ordered Will to endeavour to get a coach directly, to carry us to Hampstead ; I cared not at what price.

Robbers, with whom I would have terrified her, she feared not—I was all her fear, I found ; and this house her terror : for I saw plainly, that she now believed, that Lady Betty and Miss Montague were both impostors.

But her mistrust is a little of the latest to do her service !

And, O Jack, the rage of love, the rage of revenge, is upon me ! by turns they tear me !—the progress already made—the women's instigations—the power I shall have to try her to the utmost, and still to marry her, if she be not to be brought to cohabitation—let me perish, Belford, if she escape me now !

Will is not yet come back. Near eleven.—

Will is this moment returned.—No coach to be got, either for love or money.

Once more, she urges—to Mrs. Leeson's let me go, Lovelace ! Good Lovelace, let me go to Mrs. Leeson's !

* Where Lady Betty was supposed to lodge.

What is Miss Montague's illness to my terror?—for the Almighty's sake, Mr. Lovelace!—her hands clasped—

O my angel—what a wildness this is!—do you know, do you see, my dearest life, what appearance your causeless apprehensions have given you?—do you know it is past eleven o'clock?

Twelve, one, two, three, four,—any hour—I care not— if you mean me honourably, let me go out of this hated house?

Thou'lt observe, Belford, that though this was written afterwards, yet (as in other places) I write it as it was spoken and happened, as if I had retired to put down every sentence as spoken. I know thou likest this lively present-tense manner, as it is one of my peculiars.

Just as she had repeated the last words, if you mean me honourable, let me go out of this hated house, in came Mrs. Sinclair, in a great ferment.—And what, pray Madam, has this house done to you?—Mr. Lovelace, you have known me some time; and, if I have not the niceness of this lady, I hope I do not deserve to be treated thus!

She set her huge arms akembo: Hoh! Madam, let me tell you, I am amazed at your freedoms with my character! and, Mr. Lovelace (holding up, and violently shaking, her head) if you are a gentleman and a man of honour—

Having never before seen anything but obsequiousness in this woman, little as she liked her, she was frightened at her masculine air, and fierce look—God help me! cried she—what will become of me now! Then, turning her head hither and thither, in a wild kind of amaze, whom have I for a protector! what will become of me now!

I will be your protector, my dearest love!—but indeed you are uncharitably severe upon poor Mrs. Sinclair! indeed you are!—she is a gentlewoman born, and the relict of a man of honour; and though left in such

circumstances as oblige her to let lodgings, yet would she scorn to be guilty of a wilful baseness.

I hope so—it may be so—I may be mistaken—but—but there is no crime, I presume, no treason, to say I don't like her house.

The old dragon straddled up to her, with her arms kemboed again—her eye-brows erect, like the bristles upon a hog's back, and, scouling over her shortened nose, more than half-hid her ferret eyes.

With two Hoh-madams she accosted the frightened fair one ; who, terrified, caught hold of my sleeve.

I feared she would fall into fits ; and with a look of indignation, told Mrs. Sinclair, that these apartments were mine ; and I could not imagine what she meant, either by listening to what passed between me and my spouse, or to come in uninvited ; and still more I wondered, at her giving herself these strange liberties.

I may be to blame, Jack, for suffering this wretch to give herself these airs ; but her coming in was without my orders.

The old Beldam, throwing herself into a chair, fell a blubbering and exclaiming. And the pacifying of her, and endeavouring to reconcile the lady to her, took up till near one o'clock.

And thus, between terror, and the late hour, and what followed, she was diverted from the thoughts of getting out of the house to Mrs. Leeson's, or anywhere else.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Tuesday Morning, June 13.



AND now, Belford, I can go no farther. The affair is over. Clarissa lives. And I am

Your humble Servant,

R. LOVELACE.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Walford, Wednesday, June 14.



THOU savage-hearted monster! what work hast thou made in one guilty hour, for a whole age of repentance!

I am inexpressibly concerned at the fate of this matchless lady! she could not have fallen into the hands of any other man breathing, and suffered as she has done with thee.

I can tell thee, it is well either for thee or for me, that I am not the brother of the lady. Had I been her brother, her violation must have been followed by the blood of one of us.

CLARISSA LIVES, thou sayest. That she does, is my wonder; and these words shew, that thou thyself (though thou couldst, nevertheless, proceed) hardly expectedst she would have survived the outrage. What must have been the poor lady's distress (watchful as she had been over her honour) when dreadful certainty took place of cruel apprehension!—and yet a man may guess what it must have been, by that which thou paintest, when she suspected herself tricked, deserted, and betrayed, by the pretended ladies.

That thou couldst behold her phrensy on this occasion, and her half-speechless, half-fainting prostration at thy feet, and yet retain thy evil purposes, will hardly be thought credible, even by those who know thee, if they have seen her.

Poor, poor lady! with such noble qualities as would have adorned the most exalted married life, to fall into the hands of the only man in the world who could have treated her as thou hast treated her!—and to let loose the old dragon, as thou properly callest her, upon the before-affrighted innocent, what a barbarity was that! what a

poor piece of barbarity! in order to obtain by terror what thou despairedst to gain by love, though supported by stratagems the most insidious!

O Lovelace! Lovelace! had I doubted it before, I should now be convinced, that there must be a world after this, to do justice to injured merit, and to punish barbarous perfidy! Could the divine Socrates, and the divine Clarissa, otherwise have suffered?

But pr'ythee, dear Lovelace, if thou'rt a man, and not a devil, resolve, out of hand, to repair thy sin of ingratitude, by conferring upon thyself the highest honour thou canst receive, in making her lawfully thine.

BELFORD.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Thursday, June 15.



LET me alone, you great dog, you!—let me alone!—have I heard a lesser boy, his coward arms held over his head and face, say to a bigger, who was pommeling him, for having run away with his apple, his orange, or his ginger-bread.

Well, but, after all, I must own, that there is something very singular in this lady's case: and, at times, I cannot help regretting, that I ever attempted her; since not one power either of body or soul could be moved in my favour; and since, to use the expression of the philosopher, on a much graver occasion, there is no difference to be found between the skull of king Philip, and that of another man.

But people's extravagant notions of things alter not facts, Belford: and, when all's done, Miss Clarissa Harlowe has but run the fate of a thousand others of her sex—only that they did not set such a romantic value upon what they call their honour; that's all.

To thy urgent supplication then, that I will do her

grateful justice by marriage, let me answer in Matt Prior's two lines on his hoped-for auditorship; as put into the mouths of his St. John and Harley;

—Let that be done, which Matt. doth say.
Yea, quoth the Earl!—but not to-day.

Thou seest, Jack, that I make no resolutions, however, against doing her, one time or other, the wished-for justice, even were I to succeed in my principal view, cohabitation. And of this I do assure thee, that, if I ever marry, it must, it shall be Miss Clarissa Harlowe.—Nor is her honour at all impaired with me, by what she has so far suffered: but the contrary. She must only take care that if she be at last brought to forgive me, she show me, that her Lovelace is the only man on earth, whom she could have forgiven on the like occasion.

But, ah, Jack! what, in the mean time, shall I do with this admirable creature? at present—(I am loth to say it—but, at present) she is quite stupefied.

I had rather, methinks, she should have retained all her active powers, though I have suffered by her nails and her teeth, than that she should be sunk into such a state of absolute—insensibility (shall I call it?) as she has been in ever since Tuesday morning. Yet, as she begins a little to revive, and now and then to call names, and to exclaim, I dread almost to engage with the anguish of a spirit that owes its extraordinary agitations to a niceness that has no example either in ancient or modern story. For, after all, what is there in her case, that should stupefy such a glowing, such a blooming charmer?—excess of grief, excess of terror, has made a person's hair stand on end, and even (as we have read) changed the colour of it. But that it should so stupefy, as to make a person, at times, insensible to those imaginary wrongs, which would raise others from stupefaction, is very surprising!

But I will leave this subject, lest it should make me too grave.

I was yesterday at Hampstead, and discharged all obligations there, with no small applause. I told them that the lady was now as happy as myself: and that is no great untruth; for I am not altogether so, when I allow myself to think.

* * * * *

I have just now had a specimen of what the resentment of this dear creature will be when quite recovered: an affecting one!—for, entering her apartment after Dorcas; and endeavouring to soothe and pacify her disordered mind; in the midst of my blandishments, she held up to heaven, in a speechless agony, the innocent licence (which she has in her own power); as the poor distressed Catalans held up their English treaty, on an occasion that keeps the worst of my actions in countenance.

She seemed about to call down vengeance upon me; when, happily, the leaden god, in pity to her trembling Lovelace, waved over her half-drowned eyes his somniferous wand, and laid asleep the fair exclaimer, before she could go half through with her intended imprecation.

Thou wilt guess, by what I have written, that some little art has been made use of: but it was with a generous design (if thou'lt allow me the word on such an occasion) in order to lessen the too quick sense she was likely to have of what she was to suffer. A contrivance I never had occasion for before, and had not thought of now, if Mrs. Sinclair had not proposed it to me: to whom I left the management of it: and I have done nothing but curse her ever since, lest the quantity should have for ever damped her charming intellects.

Hence my concern—for I think the poor lady ought not to have been so treated. Poor lady, did I say?—what have I to do with thy creeping style?—but have not I the worst of it; since her insensibility has made me but a thief to my own joys?

And now is the whole secret out.

Thou wilt say I am a horrid fellow !—as the lady does, that I am the unchained Beelzebub, and a plotting villain : and as this is what you both said beforehand, and nothing worse can be said, I desire, if thou wouldst not have me quite serious with thee, and that I should think thou meanest more by thy tilting hint, than I am willing to believe thou dost, that thou wilt forbear thy invectives : for is not the thing done ?—can it be helped ?—and must I not now try to make the best of it ?—and the rather do I enjoin thee this, and inviolable secrecy ; because I begin to think, that my punishment will be greater than the fault, were it to be only from my own reflection.

I am sorry to hear of thy misfortune ; but hope thou wilt not long lie by it. Thy servant tells me, what a narrow escape thou hadst with thy neck.

Thy fellow tells me, thou desirest me to continue to write to thee in order to divert thy chagrin on thy forced confinement : but how can I think it in my power to divert, when my subject is not pleasing to myself ?

Cæsar never knew what it was to be hypped, I will call it, till he came to be what Pompey was ; that is to say, till he arrived at the height of his ambition : nor did thy Lovelace know what it was to be gloomy, till he had completed his wishes upon the most charming creature in the world.

And yet why say I, completed ? when the will, the consent, is wanting—and I have still views before me of obtaining that ?

Yet I could almost join with thee in the wish, which thou sendest me up by thy servant, unfriendly as it is, that I had had thy misfortune before Monday night last : for here, the poor lady has run into a contrary extreme to that I told thee of in my last : for now is she as much too lively, as before she was too stupid ; and, 'bating that she has pretty frequent lucid intervals, would be deemed raving mad, and I should be obliged to confine her.

I am most confoundedly disturbed about it : for I begin to fear, that her intellects are irreparably hurt.

Who the devil could have expected such strange effects from a cause so common, and so slight ?

But these high-souled and high-sensed girls, who had set up for shining lights and examples to the rest of the sex, are with such difficulty brought down to the common standard, that a wise man, who prefers his peace of mind to his glory in subduing one of that exalted class, would have nothing to say to them.

I declare to her, that it is my resolution to marry her, the moment her uncle Harlowe informs me, that he will grace the ceremony with his presence.

But she believes nothing I say ; nor (whether in her senses, or not) bears me with patience in her sight.

I pity her with my soul ; and I curse myself, when she in her wailing fits, and when I apprehend, that intellects, so charming, are for ever damped. But more I curse these women, who put me upon such an expedient !—Lord ! Lord ! what a hand have I made of it !—and all for what ?

Last night, for the first time since Monday last, she got to her pen and ink : but she pursues her writing with such eagerness and hurry, as show too evidently her discomposure.

I hope, however, that this employment will help to calm her spirits.

Just now Dorcas tells me, that what she writes she tears, and throws the paper in fragments under the table, either as not knowing what she does, or disliking it : then gets up, wrings her hands, weeps, and shifts her seat all round the room : then returns to her table, sits down, and writes again.

One odd letter, as I may call it, Dorcas has this moment given me from her—carry this, said she, to the vilest of men. Dorcas, a toad, brought it, without any further

direction, to me. I sat down, intending (though 'tis pretty long) to give thee a copy of it : but, for my life, I cannot ; 'tis so extravagant. And the original is too much an original to let it go out of my hands.

But some of the scraps and fragments, as either torn through, or flung aside, I will copy, for the novelty of the thing, and to show thee how her mind works now she is in this whimsical way. Yet I know I am still furnishing thee with new weapons against myself. But spare thy comments. My own reflections render them needless. Dorcas thinks her lady will ask for them : so wishes to have them to lay again under her table.

By the first thou'lt guess, that I have told her, that Miss Howe is very ill, and can't write ; that she may account the better for not having received the letter designed for her.

PAPER I.

(Torn in two pieces.)

MY DEAREST MISS HOWE !—O WHAT dreadful, dreadful things have I to tell you ! But yet I cannot tell you neither. But say, are you really ill, as a vile, vile creature informs me you are ?

But he never yet told me truth, and I hope has not in this : And yet, if it were not true, surely I should have heard from you before now !—But what have I to do, to upbraid !—You may well be tired of me !—and if you are, I can forgive you ; for I am tired of myself : and all my own relations were tired of me long before you were.

How good you have always been to me, mine own dear Anna Howe !—But how I ramble !

I sat down to say a great deal—my heart was full—I did not know what to say first—and thought, and grief,

and confusion, and (O my poor head!) I cannot tell what—and thought, and grief, and confusion, came crowding so thick upon me; one would be first, another would be first, all would be first; so I can write nothing at all.—Only that, whatever they have done to me, I cannot tell; but I am no longer what I was in any one thing.—In any one thing, did I say? Yes, but I am; for I am still, and I ever will be,

Your true

Plague on it! I can write no more of this eloquent nonsense myself, which rather shows a raised, than a quenched, imagination: But Dorcas shall transcribe the others in separate papers, as written by the whimsical charmer: And some time hence, when all is over, and I can better bear to read them, I may ask thee for a sight of them. Preserve them therefore; for we often look back with pleasure even upon the heaviest griefs, when the cause of them is removed.

PAPER II.

How art thou now humbled in the dust, thou proud Clarissa Harlowe! Thou that never steppedst out of thy father's house, but to be admired! Who were wont to turn thine eye, sparkling with healthful life, and self-assurance, to different objects at once, as thou passedst, as if (for so thy penetrating sister used to say) to plume thyself upon the expected applauses of all that beheld thee! Thou that usedst to go to rest satisfied with the adulations paid thee in the past day, and couldst put off everything but thy vanity!—

PAPER III.

Thou pernicious caterpillar, that preyest upon the fair leaf of virgin fame, and poisonest those leaves which thou canst not devour !

Thou fell blight, thou eastern blast, thou over-spreading mildew, that destroyest the early promises of the shining year ! that mockest the laborious toil, and blastest the joyful hopes, of the painful husbandman !

Thou fretting moth, that corruptest the fairest garment !

Thou eating canker-worm, that preyest upon the opening bud, and turnest the damask rose into livid yellowness !

If, as religion teaches us, God will judge us, in a great measure, by our benevolent or evil actions to one another, —O wretch ! bethink thee, in time bethink thee, how great must be thy condemnation !

PAPER IV.

Lead me, where my own thoughts themselves may lose me,
Where I may doze out what I've left of life,
Forget myself, and that day's guilt!—
Cruel remembrance!—how shall I appease thee?

—Oh! you have done an act
That blots the face and blush of modesty;
Takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love,
And makes a blister there!—

Then down I laid my head,
Down on cold earth, and for awhile was dead ;
And my freed soul to a strange somewhere fled !
Ah ! sottish soul ! said I,
When back to its cage again I saw it fly ;
Fool ! to resume her broken chain,
And row the galley here again !
Fool ! to that body to return,
Where it condemn'd and destin'd is to mourn !

Death only can be dreadful to the bad :
To innocence 'tis like a bugbear dress'd
To frighten children. Pull but off the mask,
And he'll appear a friend.

Then farewell, youth,
And all the joys that dwell
With youth and life !
And life itself, farewell !

For life can never be sincerely blest.
Heav'n punishes the bad, and proves the best.

By swift misfortunes
How am I pursued !
Which on each other
Are, like waves, renew'd !

I could a tale unfold—
Would harrow up thy soul!—

In the letter she wrote me there are yet greater extravagances, and though I said it was too affecting to give thee a copy of it, yet, after I have let thee see the loose papers enclosed, I think I may throw in a transcript of that. The reading of it affected me ten times more than the severest reproaches of a regular mind could do.

TO MR. LOVELACE.

I NEVER intended to write another line to you. I would not see you, if I could help it.—O that I never had !

But tell me of a truth, is Miss Howe really and truly ill?—very ill?—And is not her illness poison?—And don't you know who gave it her ?

What you, or Mrs. Sinclair, or somebody (I cannot tell who) have done to my poor head, you best know : But I shall never be what I was. My head is gone. I



have wept away all my brain, I believe; for I can weep no more. Indeed I have had my full share; so it is no matter.

But, good now, Lovelace, don't set Mrs. Sinclair upon me again. I never did her any harm. She so affrights me, when I see her!—Ever since—when was it? I cannot tell. You can, I suppose. She may be a good woman, as far as I know. She was the wife of a man of honour—very likely—though forced to let lodgings for her livelihood. Poor gentlewoman! let her know I pity her: But don't let her come near me again—pray don't!

Yet she may be a very good woman——

What would I say!—I forget what I was going to say.

O Lovelace, you are Satan himself; or he helps you out in everything; and that's as bad!

But have you really and truly sold yourself to him? And for how long? What duration is your reign to have?

Poor man! The contract *will* be out: And then what will be your fate!

O Lovelace! if you could be sorry for yourself, I would be sorry too.—But when all my doors are fast, and nothing but the keyhole open, and the key of fate put into that, to be where you are, in a manner without opening any of them.—O wretched, wretched Clarissa Harlowe!

For I never will be Lovelace—let my uncle take it as he pleases.

Alas! you have killed my head among you—I don't say who did it!—God forgive you all!—But had it not been better to have put me out of all your ways at once? You might safely have done it! for nobody would require me at your hands—no, not a soul—except, indeed, Miss Howe would have said, when she should see you, What, Lovelace, have you done with Clarissa Harlowe?—And then you could have given any slight gay answer—Sent her beyond sea; or, She has run away from me, as she

did from her parents. And this would have been easily credited; for you know, Lovelace, she that could run away from them, might very well run away from you.

But this is nothing to what I wanted to say. Now I have it!—

I never shall be myself again: I have been a very wicked creature—a vain, proud, poor creature—full of secret pride—which I carried off under an humble guise, and deceived everybody—my sister says so—and now I am punished—So let me be carried out of this house, and out of your sight; and let me be put into that Bedlam privately, which once I saw: But it was a sad sight to me then! Little as I thought what I should come to myself!—That is all I would say: This is all I have to wish for.—Then I shall be out of all your ways; and I shall be taken care of; and bread and water; without your tormentings, will be dainties; and my straw bed the easiest I have lain in—for—I cannot tell how long!

My clothes will sell for what will keep me there, perhaps as long as I shall live. But, Lovelace, dear Lovelace I will call you; for you have cost me enough, I'm sure!—don't let me be made a show of, for my family's sake; nay, for your own sake, don't do that—for when I know all I have suffered, which yet I do not, and no matter if I never do—I may be apt to rave against you by name, and tell of all your baseness to a poor humbled creature, that once was as proud as anybody—but of what I can't tell—except of mine own folly and vanity—But let that pass—since I am punished enough for it—

So, suppose, instead of Bedlam, it were a private mad-house, where nobody comes!—that will be better a great deal.

But, another thing, Lovelace: Don't let them use me cruelly when I am there—You have used me cruelly

enough, you know!—Don't let them use me cruelly; for I will be very tractable; and do as anybody would have me do—except what you would have me do—for that I never will.—Another thing, Lovelace: Don't let this good woman; I was going to say vile woman; but don't tell her that—because she won't let you send me to this happy refuge perhaps, if she were to know it—

Another thing, Lovelace: And let me have pen, and ink, and paper, allowed me—it will be all my amusement.—But they need not send to anybody I shall write to, what I write, because it will but trouble them: And somebody may do you a mischief, may be—I wish not that anybody do anybody a mischief upon my account.

You tell me, that Lady Betty Lawrance, and your Cousin Montague, were here to take leave of me; but that I was asleep, and could not be waked. So you told me at first I was married, you know; and that you were my husband.—Ah! Lovelace! look to what you say.—But let not them (for they will sport with my misery) let not that Lady Betty, let not that Miss Montague, whatever the real ones may do; nor Mrs. Sinclair neither, nor any of her lodgers, nor her nieces, come to see me in my place—real ones, I say; for, Lovelace, I shall find out all your villanies in time—indeed I shall.—So put me there as soon as you can—it is for your good—then all will pass for ravings that I can say, as, I doubt not, many poor creatures' exclamations do pass, though there may be too much truth in them for all that.—And you know I began to be mad at Hampstead—so you said.—Ah! villanous man! what have you not to answer for!

The miserably abused

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I will not hear thy heavy preachments, Belford, upon this affecting letter. So, not a word of that sort! The

paper, thou'lt see, is blistered with the tears even of the hardened transcriber ; which has made her ink run here and there.

Mrs. Sinclair is a true heroine, and, I think, shames us all. And she is a woman too ! Thou'lt say, the best things corrupted become the worst. But this is certain, that whatever the sex set their hearts upon, they make thorough work of it. And hence it is, that a mischief which would end in simple robbery among men rogues, becomes murder, if a woman be in it.

I know thou wilt blame me for having had recourse to art. But do not physicians prescribe opiates in acute cases, where the violence of the disorder would be apt to throw the patient into a fever or delirium ? I aver, that my motive for this expedient was mercy ; nor could it be anything else.

If she escape a settled delirium when my plots unravel, I think it is all I ought to be concerned about. What therefore I desire of thee is, That, if two constructions may be made of my actions, thou wilt afford me the most favourable. For this, not only friendship, but my own ingenuousness, which has furnished thee with the knowledge of the facts against which thou art so ready to inveigh, require of thee.

Will is just returned from an errand to Hampstead ; and acquaints me, that Mrs. Townsend was yesterday at Mrs. Moore's, accompanied by three or four rough fellows ; a greater number (as supposed) at a distance. She was strangely surprised at the news that my spouse and I are entirely reconciled ; and that two fine ladies, my relations, came to visit her, and went to town with her : where she is very happy with me. She was sure we were not married, she said, unless it was while we were at Hampstead : and they were sure the ceremony was not performed there. But that the lady is happy and easy, is unquestionable : And a fling was thrown out by Mrs. Moore at

mischief-makers, as they knew Mrs. Townsend to be acquainted with Miss Howe.

Now, since my fair one can neither receive, nor send away letters, I am pretty easy as to this Mrs. Townsend and her employer. And I fancy Miss Howe will be puzzled to know what to think of the matter, and perhaps suppose that her friend slights her; or has changed her mind in my favour, and is ashamed to own it; as she has not had an answer to what she wrote; and will believe that the rustic delivered her last letter into her own hand.

Saturday night.

By Dorcas's account of her lady's behaviour, the dear creature seems to be recovering. I shall give the earliest notice of this to the worthy Captain Tomlinson, that he may apprise Uncle John of it. I must be properly enabled, from that quarter, to pacify her, or at least, to rebate her first violence.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Sunday Afternoon.

I WENT out early this morning, and returned not till just now; when I was informed, that my beloved, in my absence, had taken it into her head to attempt to get away.

She tripped down, with a parcel tied up in a handkerchief, her hood on; and was actually in the entry, when Mrs. Sinclair saw her.

Pray, madam, whipping between her and the street-door, be pleased to let me know whither you are going?

Who has a right to control me? was the word.

I have, madam, by order of your spouse: and, kemboing her arms, as she owned, I desire you will be pleased to walk up again.

She would have spoken; but could not: and, bursting

into tears, turned back, and went up to her chamber : and Dorcas was taken to task for suffering her to be in the passage before she was seen.

This shows, as we hoped last night, that she is recovering her charming intellects.

Dorcas says she was visible to her but once before, the whole day ; and then seemed very solemn and sedate.

I will endeavour to see her. It must be in her own chamber, I suppose ; for she will hardly meet me in the dining-room. What advantage will the confidence of our sex give me over the modesty of hers, if she be recovered !—I, the most confident of men : she, the most delicate of women. Sweet soul ! methinks, I have her before me : her face averted : speech lost in sighs—abashed—conscious—what a triumphant aspect will this give me, when I gaze in her downcast countenance !

Here she comes !—

Sunday Night.

Never blame me for giving way to have art used with this admirable creature. All the princes of the air, or beneath it, joining with me, could never have subdued her while she had her senses.

I will not anticipate—only to tell thee, that I am too much awakened by her to think of sleep, were I to go to bed ; and so shall have nothing to do, but to write an account of our odd conversation, while it is so strong upon my mind that I can think of nothing else.

She was dressed in a white damask night-gown, with less negligence than for some days past. I was sitting with my pen in my fingers ; and stood up when I first saw her, with great complaisance, as if the day was still her own. And so indeed it is.

She entered with such dignity in her manner, as struck me with great awe, and prepared me for the poor figure I made in the subsequent conversation. A poor figure indeed !—But I will do her justice.

She came up with quick steps, pretty close to me ; a white handkerchief in her hand ; her eyes neither fierce nor mild, but very earnest ; and a fixed sedateness in her whole aspect, which seemed to be the effect of deep contemplation : and thus she accosted me, with an air and action that I never saw equalled.

You see before you, sir, the wretch, whose preference of you to all your sex you have rewarded—as it indeed deserved to be rewarded. My father's dreadful curse has already operated upon me in the very letter of it, as to this life ; and it seems to me too evident, that it will not be your fault, that it is not entirely completed in the loss of my soul, as well as of my honour—which you, villanous man ! have robbed me of, with a baseness so unnatural, so inhuman, that, it seems, you, even you, had not the heart to attempt it, till my senses were made the previous sacrifice.

Here I made an hesitating effort to speak, laying down my pen : but she proceeded :—hear me out, guilty wretch !—abandoned man !—man did I say ?—Yet what name else can I ? since the mortal worryings of the fiercest beast would have been more natural, and infinitely more welcome, than what you have acted by me ; and that with a premeditation and contrivance worthy only of that single heart, which now, base as well as ungrateful as thou art, seems to quake within thee.—And well mayest thou quake ; well mayest thou tremble and falter, and hesitate, as thou dost, when thou reflectest upon what I have suffered for thy sake, and upon the returns thou hast made me !

By my soul, Belford, my whole frame was shaken : for not only her looks, and her action, but her voice, so solemn, was inexpressibly affecting : and then my cursed guilt, and her innocence, and merit, and rank, and superiority of talents, all stared me at that instant in the face so formidably, that my present account, to which she unex-

pectedly called me, seemed, as I then thought, to resemble that general one, to which we are told we shall be summoned, when our conscience shall be our accuser.

My dear—my love—I—I—I never—no never—lips trembling, limbs quaking, voice inward, hesitating, broken—never surely did miscreant look so like a miscreant! While thus she proceeded, waving her snowy hand, with all the graces of moving oratory.

I have no pride in the confusion visible in thy whole person. I have been all the day praying for a composure, if I could not escape from this vile house, that should once more enable me to look up to my destroyer with the consciousness of an innocent sufferer. Thou seest me, since my wrongs are beyond the power of words to express, thou seest me, calm enough to wish, that thou mayest continue harassed by the workings of thy own conscience, till effectual repentance take hold of thee, that so thou mayest not forfeit all title to that mercy which thou hast not shown to the poor creature now before thee, who had so well deserved to meet with a faithful friend, where she met with the worst of enemies.

But tell me (for no doubt thou hast some scheme to pursue), tell me, since I am a prisoner, as I find, in the vilest of houses, and have not a friend to protect or save me, what thou intendest shall become of the remnant of a life not worth the keeping? Tell me, if yet there are more evils reserved for me; and whether thou hast entered into a compact with the grand deceiver, in the person of his horrid agent in this house; and if the ruin of my soul, that my father's curse may be fulfilled, is to complete the triumphs of so vile a confederacy?—Answer me!—Say, if thou hast courage to speak out to her whom thou hast ruined, tell me what further I am to suffer from thy barbarity?

She stopped here: and, sighing, turned her sweet face

from me, drying up with her handkerchief those tears which she endeavoured to restrain; and, when she could not, to conceal from my sight.

As I told thee, I had prepared myself for high passions, raving, flying, tearing, execration: these transient violences, the workings of sudden grief, and shame, and vengeance, would have set us upon a par with each other, and quitted scores. These have I been accustomed to; and, as nothing violent is lasting, with these I could have wished to encounter. But such a majestic composure—seeking me—whom yet, it is plain, by her attempt to get away, she would have avoided seeing—no Lucretia-like vengeance upon herself in her thought—yet swallowed up, her whole mind swallowed up, as I may say, by a grief so heavy, as, in her own words, to be beyond the power of speech to express—and to be able, discomposed as she was, to the very morning, to put such a home-question to me, as if she had penetrated my future view—how could I avoid looking like a fool, and answering, as before, in broken sentences, and confusion?

What—what-a—what has been done—I, I, I—cannot but say—must own—must confess—hem—hem—is not right—is not what should have been—but-a—but—but—I am truly—truly—sorry for it—upon my soul I am—and—and—will do all—do everything—do what—whatever is incumbent upon me—all that you—that you—that you shall require, to make you amends!—

O Belford! Belford! Whose the triumph now!—hers, or mine?

Amends! O thou truly despicable wretch!—Then, lifting up her eyes—good heaven! who shall pity the creature who could fall by so base a mind!—Yet—and then she looked indignantly upon me—yet, I hate thee not (base and low-souled as thou art!) half so much as I hate myself, that I saw thee not sooner in thy proper colours!—That I hoped either morality, gratitude, or humanity,

from a libertine, who, to be a libertine, must have got over and defied all moral sanctions.

She then called upon her cousin Morden's name, as if he had warned her against a man of free principles ; and walked towards the window ; her handkerchief at her eyes ; but, turning short towards me, with an air of mingled scorn and majesty—(what, at the moment, would I have given never to have injured her !) what amends hast thou to propose !—what amends can such a one as thou make to a person of spirit, or common sense, for the evils thou hast so inhumanly made me suffer ?

As soon, madam—as soon—as—as soon as your uncle—or—not waiting—

Thou wouldst tell me, I suppose—I know what thou wouldst tell me—but thinkest thou, that marriage will satisfy for a guilt like thine ? Destitute as thou hast made me both of friends and fortune, I too much despise the wretch, who could rob himself of his wife's virtue, to endure the thoughts of thee, in the light thou seemest to hope I will accept thee in !—

Now comes the fool, the miscreant again, hesitating his broken answer : my dearest love, I am confounded, quite confounded, at the thought of what—of what has been done ; and at the thought of—to whom. I see, I see, there is no withstanding your eloquence !—such irresistible proofs of the love of virtue for its own sake—did I never hear of, nor meet with, in all my reading. And if you can forgive a repentant villain, who thus on his knees implores your forgiveness (then down I dropped, absolutely in earnest in all I said) I vow by all that's sacred and just (and may a thunderbolt strike me dead at your feet, if I am not sincere !) that I will by marriage, before to-morrow noon, without waiting for your uncle, or anybody, do you all the justice I now can do you. And you shall ever after control and direct me as you please, till you have made me more worthy of your angelic purity, than now I

am: nor will I presume so much as to touch your garment, till I have the honour to call so great a blessing lawfully mine.

O thou guileful betrayer! There is a just God, whom thou invokest: yet the thunderbolt descends not; and thou livest to imprecate and deceive!

My dearest life! rising; for I hoped she was relenting

Hadst thou not sinned beyond the possibility of forgiveness, interrupted she; and this had been the first time that thus thou solemnly promisest and invokest the vengeance thou hast as often defied; the desperateness of my condition might have induced me to think of taking a wretched chance with a man so profligate. But, after what I have suffered by thee, it would be criminal in me to wish to bind my soul in covenant to a man so nearly allied to perdition.

Good God!—how uncharitable!—I offer not to defend—would to heaven that I could recall—so nearly allied to perdition, madam!—so profligate a man, madam—

O how short is expression of thy crimes, and of my sufferings!—such premeditation in thy baseness!—to prostitute the characters of persons of honour of thy own family—and all to delude a poor creature, whom thou oughtest—but why talk I to thee?—be thy crimes upon thy head!—Once more I ask thee, am I, or am I not, at my own liberty now?

I offered to speak in defence of the women, declaring that they really were the very persons—

Presume not, interrupted she, base as thou art, to say one word in thine own vindication on this head. I have been contemplating their behaviour, their conversation, their over-ready acquiescences to my declarations in thy disfavour; their free, yet affectedly reserved light manners: and now, that the sad event has opened my eyes, and I have compared facts and passages together, in the little

interval that has been lent me, I wonder I could not distinguish the behaviour of the unmatron-like jilt whom thou broughtest to betray me, from the worthy lady whom thou hast the honour to call thy aunt: and that I could not detect the superficial creature, whom thou passest upon me for the virtuous Miss Montague.

Amazing uncharitableness in a lady so good herself!—That the high spirits those ladies were in to see you, should subject them to such censures!—I do most solemnly vow, madam—

That they were, interrupting me, verily and indeed Lady Betty Lawrence, and thy cousin Montague!—O wretch! I see by thy solemn averment (I had not yet averred it) what credit ought to be given to all the rest. Had I no other proof—

Interrupting her, I besought her patient ear.

I would have proceeded; and particularly would have said something of Captain Tomlinson and her uncle; but she would not hear me further. And indeed it was with visible indignation, and not without several angry interruptions, that she heard me say so much.

Would I dare, she asked me, to offer at a palliation of my baseness? The two women, she was convinced, were impostors. She knew not but Captain Tomlinson, and Mr. Mennell, were so too. But, whether they were so or not, I was. And she insisted upon being at her own disposal for the remainder of her short life—for indeed she abhorred me in every light; and more particularly in that, in which I offered myself to her acceptance.

And, saying this, she flung from me; leaving me absolutely shocked and confounded at her part of a conversation, which she began with such uncommon, however severe composure, and concluded with so much sincere and unaffected indignation.

Monday Morning.

I must write on. Nothing else can divert me: and I

think thou canst not have been a dog to me. I would fain have closed my eyes, but sleep flies me.

It is now near six—the sun for two hours past has been illuminating everything about me : for that impartial orb shines upon mother Sinclair's house, as well as upon any other : but nothing within me can it illuminate.

At day-dawn I looked through the key-hole of my beloved's door. She had declared she would not put off her clothes any more in this house. There I beheld her in a sweet slumber, which I hope will prove refreshing to her disturbed senses ; sitting in her elbow-chair, her apron over her head ; her head supported by one sweet hand, the other hand hanging down upon her side, in a sleepy lifelessness ; half of one pretty foot only visible.

See the difference in our cases, thought I ! She, the charming injured, can sweetly sleep, while the varlet-injurer cannot close his eyes ; and has been trying to no purpose the whole night to divert his melancholy, and to fly from himself !

As every vice generally brings on its own punishment, even in this life ; if anything were to tempt me to doubt of future punishment, it would be, that there can hardly be a greater than that which I at this instant experience in my own remorse.

I hope it will go off.—If not, well will the dear creature be avenged ; for I shall be the most miserable of men.

Six o'clock.

Just now Dorcas tells me, that her lady is preparing openly, and without disguise, to be gone. Very probable. The humour she flew away from me in last night, has given me expectation of such an enterprise.

Now, Jack, to be thus hated, and despised !—and if I have sinned beyond forgiveness——

But she has sent me a message by Dorcas, that she will meet me in the dining-room ; and desires (odd enough !)

that the wench may be present at the conversation that shall pass between us. This message gives me hope.

Nine o'clock.

Confounded art, cunning villany!—By my soul, she had like to have slipped through my fingers. She meant nothing by her message, but to get Dorcas out of the way, and a clear coast. Is a fancied distress sufficient to justify this lady for dispensing with her principles? Does she not show me, that she can wilfully deceive, as well as I?

Had she been in the fore-house, and no passage to go through to get at the street-door, she had certainly been gone. But her haste betrayed her: for Sally Martin happening to be in the fore-parlour, and hearing a swifter motion than usual, and a rustling of silks, as if from somebody in a hurry, looked out; and seeing who it was, stepped between her and the door, and set her back against it.

You must not go, madam. Indeed you must not.

By what right?—And how dare you?—And such-like imperious airs the dear creature gave herself.—While Sally called out for her aunt; and half a dozen voices joined instantly in the cry, for me to hasten down, to hasten down, in a moment.

I was gravely instructing Dorcas above-stairs, and wondering what would be the subject of the conversation to which the wench was to be a witness, when these outcries reached my ears. And down I flew.—And there was the charming creature, the sweet deceiver, panting for breath, her back against the partition, a parcel in her hand (women make no excursions without their parcels), Sally, Polly (but Polly obligingly pleading for her), the mother Mabell, and Peter (the footman of the house), about her; all, however, keeping their distance; the mother and Sally between her and the door—in her soft rage the dear soul repeating, I will go!—Nobody has a right—I will go!—If you kill me, women, I won't go up again!

As soon as she saw me, she stepped a pace or two towards me; Mr. Lovelace, I will go! said she—do you authorise these women—what right have they, or you either, to stop me?

I desired them to leave us, all but Dorcas, who was down as soon as I. I then thought it right to assume an air of resolution, having found my tameness so greatly triumphed over. And now, my dear, said I (urging her reluctant feet) be pleased to walk into the fore-parlour. Here, since you will not go upstairs; here, we may hold our parley; and Dorcas be witness to it.—And now, madam, seating her, and sticking my hands in my sides, your pleasure!

Insolent villain! said the furious lady. And, rising, ran to the window, and threw up the sash (she knew not, I suppose, that there were iron rails before the windows). And, when she found she could not get out into the street, clasping her uplifted hands together, having dropped her parcel—for the love of God, good honest man!—for the love of God, mistress—(to two passers-by) a poor, poor creature, said she, ruined!—

I clasped her in my arms, people beginning to gather about the window: and then she cried out, murder! help! help!—and carried her up to the dining-room, in spite of her little plotting heart (as I may now call it) although she violently struggled, catching hold of the banisters here and there, as she could. I would have seated her there; but she sunk down half-motionless, pale as ashes. And a violent burst of tears happily relieved her.

Dorcas wept over her. The wench was actually moved for her!

Violent hysterics succeeded. I left her to Mabell, Dorcas, and Polly; the latter the most supportable to her of the sisterhood.

This attempt, so resolutely made, alarmed me not a little. Mrs. Sinclair, and her nymphs, are much more con-

cerned ; because of the reputation of their house, as they call it, having received some insults (broken windows threatened) to make them produce the young creature who cried out.

While the mobbish inquisitors were in the height of their office, the women came running up to me, to know what they should do ; a constable being actually fetched.

Get the constable into the parlour, said I, with three or four of the forwardest of the mob, and produce one of the nymphs, onion-eyed, in a moment, with disordered head-dress and handkerchief, and let her own herself the person : The occasion, a female skirmish ; but satisfied with the justice done her. Then give a dram or two to each fellow, and all will be well.

Eleven o'clock.

All done, as I advised ; and all is well.

Mrs. Sinclair wishes she never had seen the face of so skittish a lady ; and she and Sally are extremely pressing with me, to leave the perverse beauty to their breaking, as they call it, for four or five days. But I cursed them into silence ; only ordering double precaution for the future.

Polly, though she consoled the dear perverse one all she could, when with her, insists upon it to me, that nothing but terror will procure me tolerable usage.

Dorcas was challenged by the women upon her tears. She owned them real. Said, she was ashamed of herself ; but could not help it. So sincere, so unyielding a grief, in so sweet a lady !—

The women laughed at her : but I bid her make no apologies for her tears, nor mind their laughing. I was glad to see them so ready. Good use might be made of such strangers. In short, I would have her indulge them often, and try if it were not possible to gain her lady's confidence by her concern for her.

She said, that her lady did take kind notice of them to her ; and was glad to see such tokens of humanity in her.

Well then, said I, your part, whether anything come of it or not, is to be tender-hearted. It can do no harm, if no good. But take care you are not too suddenly, or too officiously compassionate.

So Dorcas will be a humane good sort of creature, I believe, very quickly with her lady. And as it becomes women to be so, and as my beloved is willing to think highly of her own sex ; it will the more readily pass with her.

I have this moment intelligence from Simon Parsons, one of Lord M.'s stewards, that his lordship is very ill. Simon, who is my obsequious servant, in virtue of my presumptive heirship, gives me a hint in his letter, that my presence at M. Hall will not be amiss. So, I must accelerate, whatever be the course I shall be allowed or compelled to take.

But now, at last, am I to be admitted to the presence of my angry fair one : after three denials, nevertheless ; and a peremptory from me, by Dorcas, that I must see her in her chamber, if I cannot see her in the dining-room.

Dorcas, however, tells me, that she says, if she were at her own liberty, she would never see me more ; and that she has been asking after the characters and conditions of the neighbours. I suppose, now she has found her voice, to call out for help from them, if there were any to hear her.

She hinted plain enough to the honest wench that she was not married.—But Dorcas would not understand her.

This shows, that she is resolved to keep no measures. And now is to be a trial of skill, whether she shall or not.

Dorcas has hinted to her my lord's illness, as a piece of intelligence that dropped in conversation from me.

But here I stop. My beloved, pursuant to my peremptory message, is just gone up into the dining-room.

Monday Afternoon.

Pity me, Jack, for pity's sake ; since, if thou dost not, nobody else will : and yet never was there a man of my genius and lively temper that wanted it more. We are apt to attribute to the devil everything that happens to us, which we would not have happen : but here, being (as perhaps thou'lt say) the devil myself, my plagues arise from an angel. I suppose all mankind is to be plagued by its contrary.

She began with me like a true woman (she in the fault, I to be blamed) the moment I entered the dining-room : —not the least apology, not the least excuse, for the uproar she had made, and the trouble she had given me.

I come, said she, into thy detested presence, because I cannot help it. But why am I to be imprisoned here ?—Although to no purpose, I cannot help—

Dearest madam, interrupted I, give not way to so much violence. You must know, that your detention is entirely owing to the desire I have to make you all the amends that is in my power to make you. And this, as well for your sake as my own.—Surely, there is still one way left to repair the wrongs you have suffered——

Canst thou blot out the past week ? Several weeks past, I should say ; ever since I have been with thee ? Canst thou call back time ?—If thou canst——

Surely, madam, again interrupting her, if I may be permitted to call you legally mine, I might have but anticip——

Wretch, that thou art ! Say not another word upon this subject. When thou vowedst, when thou promisedst at Hampstead, I had begun to think that I must be thine. If I had consented, at the request of those I thought thy relations, this would have been a principal inducement,

that I could then have brought thee, what was most wanted, an unsullied honour in dowry, to a wretch destitute of all honour; and could have met the gratulations of a family to which thy life has been one continued disgrace, with a consciousness of deserving their gratulations. But, thinkest thou, that I will give a harlot-niece to thy honourable uncle, and to thy real aunts; and a cousin to thy cousins from a brothel? For such, in my opinion, is this detested house!—Then, lifting up her clasped hands, Great and good God of Heaven, said she, give me patience to support myself under the weight of those afflictions, which Thou, for wise and good ends, though at present impenetrable by me, hast permitted!

Then, turning towards me, who knew neither what to say to her, nor for myself, I renounce thee for ever, Lovelace!—Abhorred of my soul! for ever I renounce thee!—Seek thy fortunes wheresoever thou wilt!—Only now, that thou hast already ruined me——

Ruined you, madam—the world need not—I knew not what to say.

Ruined me in my own eyes; and that is the same to me, as if all the world knew it—hinder me not from going whither my mysterious destiny shall lead me.

Why hesitate you, sir? What right have you to stop me, as you lately did; and to bring me up by force, my hands and arms bruised with your violence? What right have you to detain me here?

I am cut to the heart, madam, with invectives so violent. I am but too sensible of the wrong I have done you, or I could not bear your reproaches. The man who perpetrates a villany, and resolves to go on with it, shows not the compunction I show. Yet, if you think yourself in my power, I would caution you, madam, not to make me desperate. For you shall be mine, or my life shall be the forfeit! Nor is life worth having without you!

Be thine !—I be thine !—said the passionate beauty. O how lovely in her violence !—

Yes, madam, be mine !—I repeat, you shall be mine !— My very crime is your glory. My love, my admiration of you is increased by what has passed : and so it ought. I am willing, madam, to court your returning favour : but let me tell you, were the house beset by a thousand armed men, resolved to take you from me, they should not effect their purpose, while I had life.

I never, never will be yours, said she, clasping her hands together, and lifting up her eyes !—I never will be yours !

We may yet see many happy years, madam. All your friends may be reconciled to you. Enjoin but the terms I can make my peace with you upon, and I will instantly comply.

Hear me out, I beseech you, madam ; for she was going to speak with an aspect unpacifiedly angry : the God, whom you serve, requires but repentance and amendment. Imitate Him, my dearest love, and bless me with the means of reforming a course of life, that begins to be hateful to me. That was once your favourite point. Resume it, dearest creature : in charity to a soul as well as body, which once, as I flattered myself, was more than indifferent to you, resume it. And let to-morrow's sun witness to our espousals.

I cannot judge thee, said she ; but the God to whom thou so boldly referrest, can ; and assure thyself He will. But, if compunction has really taken hold of thee ; if indeed thou art touched for thy ungrateful baseness, and meanest anything by pleading the holy example thou recommendest to my imitation ; in this thy pretended repentant moment, let me sift thee thoroughly ; and by thy answer I shall judge of the sincerity of thy pretended declarations.

Tell me then, is there any reality in the treaty thou

hast pretended to be on foot between my uncle and Captain Tomlinson, and thyself?

This was a cursed thrust. What could I say?—Surely, this merciless lady is resolved to damn me, thought I; and yet accuses me of a design against her soul!—But was I not obliged to proceed as I had begun?

In short, I solemnly averred, that there was!—How one crime, as the good folks say, brings on another!

Let me ask thee next, said she, if, really and truly, they were Lady Betty Lawrence and thy cousin Montague?—What sayest thou—hesitate not—what sayest thou to this question?

She pressing me still for a categorical answer, I ventured plumb; and swore to it (lover's oaths, Jack!) that they were really and truly Lady Betty Lawrence and my cousin Montague.

She lifted up her hands and eyes—What can I think!—What can I think!—

You think me a devil, madam; a very devil! or you could not, after you have put these questions to me, seem to doubt the truth of answers so solemnly sworn to.

And if I do think thee so, have I not cause? Is there another man in the world (I hope, for the sake of human nature, there is not) who could act by any poor friendless creature as thou hast acted by me, whom thou hast made friendless—and who, before I knew thee, had for a friend every one who knew me?

I thought she had now reason to be satisfied; and I begged her to allow me to talk to her of to-morrow, as of the happiest day of my life. We have the licence, madam—and you must excuse me, that I cannot let you go hence, till I have tried every way I can try, to obtain your forgiveness.

And am I then (with a kind of frantic wildness) to be detained a prisoner in this horrid house? Am I, sir?—Take care! Take care! holding up her hand, menacing,

how you make me desperate! If I fall, though by my own hand, inquisition will be made for my blood: And be not out in thy plot, Lovelace, if it should be so—make sure work, I charge thee: Dig a hole deep enough to cram in and conceal this unhappy body: for, depend upon it, that some of those, who will not stir to protect me living, will move heaven and earth to avenge me dead!

A horrid dear creature!—By my soul, she made me shudder.

What a devil ails me!—I can neither think nor write!—

Lie down, pen, for a moment!—

But to proceed with my narrative.

The dear creature resumed the topic her heart was so firmly fixed upon; and insisted upon quitting the odious house, and that in very high terms.

I urged her to meet me the next day at the altar in either of the two churches mentioned in the licence. And I besought her, whatever were her resolution, to let me debate this matter calmly with her.

If, she said, I would have her give what I desired the least moment's consideration, I must not hinder her from being her own mistress. To what purpose did I ask her consent, if she had not a power over either her own person or actions?

Will you give me your honour, madam, if I consent to your quitting a house so disagreeable to you?—

My honour, sir! said the dear creature—Alas!—And turned weeping from me with inimitable grace—As if she had said—Alas!—You have robbed me of my honour!

I hoped then, that her angry passions were subsiding; but I was mistaken: for, urging her warmly for the day; and that for the sake of our mutual honour, and the honour of both our families; in this high-flown and high-souled strain she answered me:

And canst thou, Lovelace, be so mean—as to wish to

make a wife of the creature thou hast insulted, dishonoured, and abused, as thou hast me? Was it necessary to humble me down to the low level of thy baseness, before I could be a wife meet for thee?

She put her hand to her forehead often as she talked; and at last, pleading disorder in her head, retired; neither of us satisfied with the other. But she ten times more dissatisfied with me, than I with her.

Dorcas seems to be coming into favour with her—

What now!—What now!—

Monday Night.

How determined is this lady!—Again had she like to have escaped us!—What a fixed resentment!—She only, I find, assumed a little calm, in order to quiet suspicion. She was got down, and actually had unbolted the street-door, before I could get to her; alarmed as I was by Mrs. Sinclair's cookmaid, who was the only one that saw her fly through the passage: Yet lightning was not quicker than I.

Again I brought her back to the dining-room, with infinite reluctance on her part. And before her face, ordered a servant to be placed constantly at the bottom of the stairs for the future.

She seemed even choked with grief and disappointment. She wrung her hands. She disordered her head-dress. She tore her ruffles. She was in a perfect phrensy.

I dreaded her returning malady: but entreaty rather exasperating, I affected an angry air.—I bid her expect the worst she had to fear—And was menacing on, in hopes to intimidate her, when, dropping down at my feet,

'Twill be a mercy, said she, the highest act of mercy you can do, to kill me outright upon this spot—this happy spot, as I will, in my last moments, call it!—Then, baring, with a still more frantic violence, part of her enchanting neck—Here, here, said the soul-harrowing beauty, let thy

pointed mercy enter! And I will thank thee, and forgive thee for all the dreadful past!—With my latest gasp will I forgive and thank thee!—Or help me to the means, and I will myself put out of thy way so miserable a wretch! And bless thee for those means!

Why all this extravagant passion? Why all these exclamations? Have I offered any new injury to you, my dearest life? What a phrensy is this! am I not ready to make you all the reparation that I can make you? Had I not reason to hope—

No, no, no, no—half a dozen times, as fast as she could speak.

Had I not reason to hope, that you were meditating upon the means of making me happy, and yourself not miserable, rather than upon a flight so causeless and so precipitate?—

No, no, no, no, as before, shaking her head with wild impatience, as resolved not to attend to what I said.

My resolutions are so honourable, if you will permit them to take effect, that I need not be solicitous whither you go, if you will but permit my visits, and receive my vows.—And God is my witness, that I bring you not back from the door with any view to your dishonour, but the contrary: and this moment I will send for a minister to put an end to all your doubts and fears.

But, with all this dear creature's resentment against me I cannot, for my heart, think but she will get all over, and consent to enter the pale with me. Were she even to die to-morrow, and to know she should, would not a woman of her sense, of her punctilio, and in her situation, and of so proud a family, rather die married, than otherwise?—No doubt but she would; although she were to hate the man ever so heartily. If so, there is now but one man in the world whom she can have—and that is me.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Tuesday Morning, June 20.

WELL, Jack, now are we upon another foot together. This dear creature will not let me be good. She is now authorising all my plots by her own example.

Thou must be partial in the highest degree, if now thou blamest me for resuming my former schemes, since in that case I shall but follow her clue. No forced construction of her actions do I make on this occasion in order to justify a bad cause or a worse intention. A slight pretence, indeed, served the wolf when he had a mind to quarrel with the lamb; but this is not now my case.

For here (wouldst thou have thought it?) taking advantage of Dorcas's compassionate temper, and of some warm expressions, which the tender-hearted wench let fall against the cruelty of men; and wishing to have it in her power to serve her; has she given her the following note, signed by her maiden name: for she has thought fit, in positive and plain words, to own to the pitying Dorcas, that she is not married.

Monday, June 19.

I the underwritten do hereby promise, that, on my coming into possession of my own estate, I will provide for Dorcas Martindale in a gentlewoman-like manner, in my own house: or, if I do not soon obtain that possession, or should first die, I do hereby bind myself, my executors, and administrators, to pay to her, or her order, during the term of her natural life, the sum of five pounds on each of the four usual quarterly days in the year; that is to say, twenty pounds by the year; on condition that she faithfully assist me in my escape from an illegal confinement, under which I now labour. The first quarterly payment to commence and be payable at the end of three months

immediately following the day of my deliverance. And I do also promise to give her, as a testimony of my honour in the rest, a diamond ring, which I have showed her. Witness my hand, this nineteenth day of June, in the year above-written.

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Now, Jack, what terms wouldst thou have me to keep with such a sweet corruptress? Seest thou not how she hates me? Seest thou not, that she is resolved never to forgive me? Seest thou not, however, that she must disgrace herself in the eye of the world, if she actually should escape?—that she must be subjected to infinite distress and hazard? For whom has she to receive and protect her? Yet to determine to risk all these evils! And furthermore to stoop to artifice, to be guilty of the reigning vice of the times, of bribery and corruption! O Jack, Jack! say not, write not, another word in her favour!

Thou hast blamed me for bringing her to this house: but had I carried her to any other in England, where there would have been one servant or inmate capable either of compassion or corruption, what must have been the consequence?

But seest thou not, however, that, in this flimsy contrivance, the dear implacable, like a drowning man, catches at a straw to save herself?—A straw shall she find to be the refuge she has resorted to.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Wednesday.



MAN is just now arrived from M. Hall, who tells me, that my lord is in a very dangerous way. The gout in his stomach to an extreme degree, occasioned by drinking a great quantity of lemonade.

A man of 8000*l.* a-year to prefer his appetite to his

health!—He deserves to die!—But we have all of us our inordinate passions to gratify: and they generally bring their punishment along with them.—So witnesses the nephew, as well as the uncle.

The fellow was sent up on other business; but stretched his orders a little, to make his court to a successor.

The man says that his lordship was so bad when he came away, that the family began to talk of sending for me, in post-haste. As I know the old peer has a good deal of cash by him, of which he seldom keeps account, it behoves me to go down as soon as I can. But what shall I do with this dear creature the while? To-morrow over, I shall, perhaps, be able to answer my own question. I am afraid she will make me desperate.

For here have I sent to implore her company, and am denied with scorn.

I have been so happy as to receive, this moment, a third letter from my dear correspondent Miss Howe. A little severe devil!—It would have broken the heart of my beloved, had it fallen into her hands. I will enclose a copy of it. Read it here.

MY DEAREST MISS HARLOWE,

Again I venture to write to you (almost against inclination); and that by your former conveyance, little as I like it.

I know not how it is with you. It may be bad; and then it would be hard to upbraid you, for a silence you may not be able to help. But if not, what shall I say severe enough, that you have not answered either of my last letters? The first of which (and I think it imported you too much to be silent upon it) you owned the receipt of. The other, which was delivered into your own hands, was so pressing for the favour of a line from you, that I am amazed I could not be obliged.—And still more, that I have not heard from you since.

The fellow made so strange a story of the condition he saw you in, and of your speech to him, that I know not what to conclude from it: only, that he is a simple, blundering, and yet conceited fellow, who aiming at description, and the rustic wonderful, gives an air of bumpkinly romance to all he tells. That this is his character, you will believe when you are informed, that he described you in grief excessive, yet so improved in your person and features, and so rosy, that was his word, in your face, and so flush-coloured, and so plump in your arms, that one would conclude you were labouring under the operation of some malignant poison; and so much the rather, as he was introduced to you, when you were upon a couch, from which you offered not to rise, or sit up.

Upon my word, Miss Harlowe, I am greatly distressed upon your account; for I must be so free as to say, that in your ready return with your deceiver, you have not at all answered my expectations, nor acted up to your own character: for Mr. Townsend tells me, from the women at Hampstead, how cheerfully you put yourself into his hands again: yet, at the time, it was impossible you should be married!—

Lord, my dear, what pity it is, that you took so much pains to get from the man! But you know best!—Sometimes I think it could not be you to whom the rustic delivered my letter. But it must too: yet it is strange I could not have one line by him—not one!—And you so soon well enough to go with the wretch back again?

I am not sure that the letter I am now writing will come to your hands: so shall not say half that I have upon my mind to say. But if you think it worth your while to write to me, pray let me know, what fine ladies, his relations, those were, who visited you at Hampstead, and carried you back again so joyfully, to a place that I had so fully warned you.—But I will say no more: at

least till I know more : for I can do nothing but wonder, and stand amazed.

Notwithstanding all the man's baseness, 'tis plain, there was more than a lurking love—good heaven !—But I have done !—Yet I know not how to have done, neither !—Yet I must—I will.

Only account to me, my dear, for what I cannot at all account for : and inform me, whether you are really married, or not.—And then I shall know, whether there must, or must not, be a period shorter than that of one of our lives to a friendship which has hitherto been the pride and boast of your

ANNA HOWE.

Dorcas tells me, that she has just now had a searching conversation, as she calls it, with her lady. She is willing, she tells the wench, still to place a confidence in her. Dorcas hopes she has reassured her ; but wishes me not to depend upon it.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Thursday Noon, June 22.

FET me perish, if I know what to make either of myself, or of this surprising creature—now calm, now tempestuous—but I know thou lovest not anticipation any more than I.

At my repeated requests, she met me at six this morning. She was ready dressed ; for she has not had her clothes off ever since she declared, that they never more should be off in this house.

I have been endeavouring, said she, since I am not permitted to avoid you, to obtain a composure which I never more expected to see you in. How long I may enjoy it, I cannot tell. But I hope I shall be enabled to speak to you without that vehemence which I expressed yesterday, and could not help it.

After a pause (for I was all attention) thus she proceeded:

It is easy for me, Mr. Lovelace, to see, that further violences are intended me, if I comply not with your purposes, whatever they are. I will suppose them to be what you so solemnly profess they are. But I have told you as solemnly my mind, that I never will, that I never can, be yours; nor, if so, any man's upon earth. All vengeance, nevertheless, for the wrongs you have done me, I disclaim. I want but to slide into some obscure corner, to hide myself from you, and from every one, who once loved me. The desire lately so near my heart, of a reconciliation with my friends, is much abated. They shall not receive me now, if they would. Sunk in mine own eyes, I now think myself unworthy of their favour. In the anguish of my soul, therefore, I conjure you, Lovelace (tears in her eyes) to leave me to my fate. In doing so, you will give me a pleasure, the highest I now can know.

Whither, my dearest life——

No matter whither. I will leave to Providence, when I am out of this house, the direction of my future steps. I am sensible enough of my destitute condition. I know, that I have not now a friend in the world. Even Miss Howe has given me up—or you are—but I would fain keep my temper!—By your means I have lost them all—and you have been a barbarous enemy to me. You know you have.

It was impossible for me, I told her plainly, to comply. I besought her to give me her hand as this very day. I could not live without her. I communicated to her my lord's illness, as a reason why I wished not to stay for her uncle's anniversary. I besought her to bless me with her consent; and, after the ceremony was passed, to accompany me down to Berks. And thus, my dearest life, said I, will you be freed from a house, to which you have conceived so great an antipathy.

This, thou wilt own, was a princely offer. And I was

resolved to be as good as my word. I thought I had killed my conscience, as I told thee, Belford, some time ago. But conscience, I find, though it may be temporarily stifled, cannot die; and when it dare not speak aloud, will whisper. And at this instant, I thought I felt the revived varletess (on but a slight retrograde motion) writhing round my pericardium like a serpent; and in the action of a dying one (collecting all its force into its head) fix its plaguy fangs into my heart.

She hesitated, and looked down, as if irresolute. And this set my heart up at my mouth. And, believe me, I had instantly popped in upon me, in imagination, an old spectacled parson, with a white surplice thrown over a black habit (a fit emblem of the halcyon office, which, under a benign appearance, often introduces a life of storms and tempests) whining and snuffing through his nose the irrevocable ceremony.

I pleaded, that if we joined hands this morning (if not, to-morrow; if not, on Thursday, her uncle's birth-day, and in his presence); and afterwards, as I had proposed, set out for Berks; we should, of course, quit this house; and, on our return to town, should have in readiness the house I was in treaty for.

She flung from me.—My soul disdains to hold parley with thee, were her violent words.—But I threw myself at her feet, and took hold of her reluctant hand, and began to imprecate, to vow, to promise.—But thus the passionate beauty, interrupting me, went on:

I am sick of thee, man!—One continued string of vows, oaths, and protestations, varied only by time and place, fills thy mouth!—Why detainest thou me? My heart rises against thee, O thou cruel implement of my brother's causeless vengeance.—All I beg of thee is, that thou wilt remit me the future part of my father's dreadful curse! The temporary part, base and ungrateful as thou art! thou hast completed!

I was speechless!—Well I might!—Her brother's implement!—James Harlowe's implement!—Zounds, Jack! what words were these!

I let go her struggling hand. She took two or three turns across the room, her whole haughty soul in her air. Then approaching me, but in silence, turning from me, and again to me, in a milder voice—I see thy confusion, Lovelace. Or is it thy remorse?—I have but one request to make thee—the request so often repeated—that thou wilt this moment permit me to quit this house. Adieu then, let me say, for ever adieu! And mayst thou enjoy that happiness in this world, which thou hast robbed me of!

And saying this, away she flung, leaving me in a confusion so great, that I knew not what to think, say, or do.

But Dorcas soon roused me—Do you know, sir, running in hastily, that my lady is gone down-stairs?

No, sure!—And down I flew, and found her once more at the street-door, contending with Polly Horton to get out.

She rushed by me into the fore-parlour, and flew to the window, and attempted once more to throw up the sash—Good people! good people! cried she.

I caught her in my arms, and lifted her from the window. But being afraid of hurting the charming creature (charming in her very rage) she slid through my arms on the floor.—Let me die here! let me die here! were her words; remaining jointless and immovable till Sally and Mrs. Sinclair hurried in.

She was visibly terrified at the sight of the old wretch; while I (sincerely affected) appealed, Bear witness, Mrs. Sinclair!—bear witness, Miss Martin!—Miss Horton!—Everyone bear witness, that I offer not violence to this beloved creature!

She then found her feet.—O house (looking towards the windows, and all round her,) O house contrived on purpose for my ruin! said she—But let not that woman come into

my presence—nor that Miss Horton neither, who would not have dared to control me, had she not been a base one!

Hoh, sir! hoh, madam! vociferated the old dragon, her arms kimboed, and flourishing with one foot to the extent of her petticoats—What ado's here about nothing!—I never knew such work in my life, between a chicken of a gentleman, and a tiger of a lady!—

She was visibly affrighted: and up-stairs she hastened. A bad woman is certainly, Jack, more terrible to her own sex, than even a bad man.

I followed her up. She rushed by her own apartment into the dining-room: no terror can make her forget her punctilio.

To recite what passed there of invective, exclamations, threatenings, even of her own life, on one side; of expostulations, supplications, and sometimes menaces, on the other, would be too affecting; and, after my particularity in like scenes, these things may as well be imagined as expressed.

I will therefore only mention, that, at length, I extorted a concession from her. She had reason to think it would have been worse for her on the spot, if she had not made it. It was, that she would endeavour to make herself easy, till she saw what next Thursday, her uncle's birthday, would produce. But O that it were not a sin, she passionately exclaimed on making this poor concession, to put an end to her own life, rather than yield to give me but that assurance!

This, however, shows me, that she is aware, that the reluctantly-given assurance may be fairly construed into a matrimonial expectation on my side. And if she will now, even now, look forward, I think, from my heart, that I will put on her livery, and wear it for life.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Thursday Night.

CONFOUNDEDLY out of humour with this perverse woman!—Nor wilt thou blame me, if thou art my friend. She regards the concession she made, as a concession extorted from her: and we are but just where we were before she made it.

With great difficulty I prevailed upon her to favour me with her company for one half-hour this evening. The necessity I was under to go down to M. Hall, was the subject I wanted to talk upon.

I told her, that as she had been so good as to promise, that she would endeavour to make herself easy till she saw the Thursday in next week over, I hoped, that she would not scruple to oblige me with her word, that I should find her here at my return from M. Hall.

Indeed she would make me no such promise. Nothing of this house was mentioned to me, said she: you know it was not. And do you think that I would have given my consent to my imprisonment in it?

I was plaguily nettled, and disappointed too.

Very well, madam—will you be so good, as to let me know, what you intended by your promise to make yourself easy——

To endeavour, sir, to make myself easy—were the words——

—Till you saw what next Thursday would produce?

Ask me no questions that may ensnare me. I am too sincere for the company I am in.

Let me ask you, madam, what meant you, when you said, that, were it not a sin, you would die before you gave me that assurance?

She was silent; her charming face all in a glow.

Have you, madam, any reliance upon my honour?

Still silent.

You hate me, madam ! You despise me more than you do the most odious of God's creatures !

You ought to despise me, if I did not.

You say, madam, you are in a bad house. You have no reliance upon my honour—you believe you cannot avoid me——

She arose. I beseech you, let me withdraw.

I snatched her hand, rising, and pressed it first to my lips, and then to my heart, in wild disorder. She might have felt the bounding mischief ready to burst its bars— You shall go—to your own apartment, if you please—but, by the great God of Heaven, I will accompany you thither.

She trembled.—Pray, pray, Mr. Lovelace, don't terrify me so !

Be seated, madam ! I beseech you be seated !

I will sit down——

Do then, madam—do then.—All my soul in my eyes, and my heart's blood throbbing at my fingers' ends.

I will—I will.—You hurt me.—Pray, Mr. Lovelace, don't—don't frighten me so !—And down she sat, trembling ; my hand still grasping hers.

I hung over her throbbing bosom, and putting my other arm round her waist—And you say, you hate me, madam—and you say, you despise me—and you say, you promised me nothing——

Yes, yes, I did promise you—Let me not be held down thus—You see I sat down when you bid me—Why (struggling) need you hold me down thus ?—I did promise to endeavour to be easy till Thursday was over !—But you won't let me !—How can I be easy ?—Pray, let me not be thus terrified.

Then pausing, and gaining more spirit, Let me go, said she : I am but a woman—but a weak woman—but my life

is in my own power, though my person is not.—I will not be thus constrained.

You shall not, madam, quitting her hand, bowing, but my heart at my mouth, and hoping farther provocation.

She arose, and was hurrying away.

I pursue you not, madam—I will try your generosity.—Stop—Return—This moment stop, return, if, madam, you would not make me desperate.

She stopped at the door ; burst into tears—O Lovelace !—how, how, have I deserved——

Be pleased, dearest angel, to return.

She came back—but with declared reluctance ! and imputing her compliance to terror.

I was going towards her, with a countenance intently changed to love and softness : Sweetest, dearest angel, were my words, in the tenderest accent.—But, rising up, she insisted upon my being seated at a distance from her.

I obeyed—and begged her hand over the table, to my extended hand ; to see, as I said, if in anything she would oblige me.—But nothing gentle, soft, or affectionate, would do. She refused me her hand !—Was she wise, Jack, to confirm to me, that nothing but terror would do ?

Let me only know, madam, if your promise to endeavour to wait with patience the event of next Thursday, meant me favour ?

How dare you, sir, if I must speak out, expect a promise of favour from me ?—What a mean creature must you think me, after your ungrateful baseness to me, were I to give you such a promise ?

Then standing up, thou hast made me, O vilest of men ! (her hands clasped, and a face crimsoned over with indignation) an inmate of the vilest of houses—nevertheless, while I am in it, I shall have a heart incapable of anything but abhorrence of that and of thee !

And round her looked the angel, and upon me, with

fear in her sweet aspect of the consequence of her free declaration.—But what a devil must I have been, I, who love bravery in a man, had I not been more struck with admiration of her fortitude at the instant, than stimulated by revenge ?

Wonderful creature ! But why, madam, did you lead me to hope for something favourable for next Thursday ? —Once more, make me not desperate.

My aspect, I believe, threatened still more than my words. I was rising—she arose—Mr. Lovelace, be pacified—you are even more dreadful than the Lovelace I have long dreaded—let me retire—I ask your leave to retire—you really frighten me—yet I give you no hope—from my heart I ab—

Say not, madam, you abhor me. You must, for your own sake, conceal your hatred—at least not avow it. I seized her hand.

Let me retire—let me retire, said she—in a manner out of breath.

I will only say, madam, that I refer myself to your generosity. My heart is not to be trusted at this instant. As a mark of my submission to your will, you shall, if you please, withdraw.

Away flew the charmer, with this half-permission—and no doubt thought, that she had an escape—nor without reason.

I knew not for half an hour what to do with myself. Vexed at the heart, nevertheless (now she was from me, and when I reflected upon her hatred of me, and her defiances) that I suffered myself to be so over-awed, checked, restrained—

And now I have written thus far (having of course recollected the whole of our conversation) I am more and more incensed against myself.

Methinks, I long to know how causes go at M. Hall.

I have another private intimation, that the old peer is in the greatest danger.

I must go down. Yet what to do with this lady the meanwhile!—these cursed women are full of cruelty and enterprise. She will never be easy with them in my absence. They will have provocation and pretence therefore. But woe be to them, if—

Yet what will vengeance do, after an insult committed? The two nymphs will have jealous rage to goad them on—and what will withhold a jealous and already-ruined woman?

To let her go elsewhere; that cannot be done. I am still resolved to be honest, if she'll give me hope: if yet she'll let me be honest—but I'll see how she'll be, after the contention she will certainly have between her resentment, and the terror she had reason for from our last conversation.—So let this subject rest till the morning.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday, June 23.

I WENT out early this morning, on a design that I know not yet whether I shall or shall not pursue; and on my return found Simon Parsons, my lord's Berkshire bailiff (just before arrived) waiting for me with a message in form, sent by all the family, to press me to go down, and that at my lord's particular desire; who wants to see me before he dies.

I am still resolved upon matrimony, if my fair perverse will accept of me. But, if she will not—why then I must give an uninterrupted hearing, not to my conscience, but to these women below.

Dorcas had acquainted her lady with Simon's arrival and errand. My beloved had desired to see him. But my coming in prevented his attendance on her, just as

Dorcas was instructing him what questions he should not answer to, that might be asked of him.

I am to be admitted to her presence immediately, at my repeated request. Surely the acquisition in view will help me to make all up with her. She is just gone up to the dining-room.

Nothing will do, Jack!—I can procure no favour from her, though she has obtained from me the point which she had set her heart upon.

I will give thee a brief account of what passed between us.

I first proposed instant marriage; and this in the most fervent manner: but was denied as fervently.

'Tis well, madam!—but ask me anything I can do to oblige you; and I will oblige you, though in nothing will you oblige me.

Then I ask you, then I request of you, to let me go to Hampstead.

I paused—and at last—by my soul you shall—this very moment I will wait upon you, and see you fixed there, if you'll promise me your hand on Thursday, in presence of your uncle.

I want not you to see me fixed—I will promise nothing.

Take care, madam, that you don't let me see, that I can have no reliance upon your future favour.

I have been used to be threatened by you, sir—but I will accept of your company to Hampstead—I will be ready to go in a quarter of an hour—my clothes may be sent after me.

You know the condition, madam—next Thursday.

You dare not trust——

My infinite demerits tell me that I ought not—nevertheless I will confide in your generosity—to-morrow morning (no new cause arising to give reason to the contrary) as early as you please you may go to Hampstead.

Dost thou ask, What I meant by this promise ?

No new cause arising, was the proviso on my side, thou 'lt remember, But there *will* be a new cause.

Suppose Dorcas should drop the promissory-note given her by her lady ? Servants, especially those who cannot read or write, are the most careless people in the world of written papers. Suppose I take it up ?—At a time, too, that I was determined that the dear creature should be her own mistress ?—Will not this detection be a new cause ?—A cause that will carry with it against her the appearance of ingratitude !

That she designed it a secret to me, argues a fear of detection, and indirectly a sense of guilt. I wanted a pretence. Can I have a better !—If I am in a violent passion upon the detection, is not passion an universally allowed extenuator of violence ?—Is not every man and woman obliged to excuse that fault in another, which at times they find attended with such ungovernable effects in themselves ?

The mother and sisterhood, suppose, brought to sit in judgment upon the vile corrupted—The least benefit that must accrue from the accidental discovery, if not a pretence for perpetration (which, however, may be the case) an excuse for renewing my orders for her detention till my return from M. Hall (the fault her own) ; and for keeping a stricter watch over her than before ; with direction to send me any letters that may be written by her or to her. And when I return, the devil's in it if I find not a way to make her choose lodgings for herself (since these are so hateful to her) that shall answer all my purposes, and yet I no more appear to direct her choice, than I did before in these.

But here, how am I engrossed by this lady, while poor Lord M., as Simon tells me, lies groaning in the most dreadful agonies !—What must he suffer !—Heaven relieve him !—I have a too compassionate heart. And so would

the dear creature have found, could I have thought that the worst of her sufferings is equal to the lightest of his. I mean as to fact ; for, as to that part of hers, which arises from extreme sensibility, I know nothing of that, and cannot therefore be answerable for it.

Just come from my charmer. She will not suffer me to say half the obliging, the tender things, which my honest heart is ready to overflow with. A confounded situation that, when a man finds himself in a humour to be eloquent, and pathetic at the same time ; yet cannot engage the mistress of his fate to lend an ear to his fine speeches.

She claimed the performance of my promise, the moment she saw me, of permitting her (haughtily she spoke the word) to go to Hampstead, as soon as I was gone to Berks.

Most cheerfully I renewed it.

She desired me to give orders in her hearing.

I sent for Dorcas and Will. They came.—Do you both take notice (but, perhaps, sir, I may take you with me) that your lady is to be obeyed in all her commands. She purposes to return to Hampstead as soon as I am gone.—My dear, will you not have a servant to attend you ?

I shall want no servant there.

Will you take Dorcas ?

If I should want Dorcas, I can send for her.

Dorcas could not but say, she should be very proud——

Well, well, that may be at my return, if your lady permit.—Shall I, my dear, call up Mrs. Sinclair, and give her orders to the same effect, in your hearing ?

I desire not to see Mrs. Sinclair ; nor any that belong to her.

As you please, madam.

And then (the servants being withdrawn) I urged her again for the assurance, that she would meet me at the

altar on Thursday next. But to no purpose.—May she not thank herself for all that may follow?

One favour, however, I would not be denied: to be admitted to pass the evening with her.

All sweetness and obsequiousness will I be on this occasion. My whole soul shall be poured out to move her to forgive me. If she will not, and if the promissory-note should fall in my way, my revenge will doubtless take total possession of me.

All the house in my interest, and everyone in it not only engaging to intimidate and assist, as occasion shall offer, but staking all their experience upon my success, if it be not my own fault, what must be the consequence?

This, Jack, however, shall be her last trial; and if she behave as nobly in and after this second attempt (all her senses about her) as she has done after the first, she will come out an angel upon full proof, in spite of man, woman, and devil: then shall there be an end of all her sufferings. I will then renounce that vanquished devil, and reform. And if any vile machination start up, presuming to mislead me, I will sooner stab it in my heart as it rises, than give way to it.

A few hours will now decide all. But whatever be the event, I shall be too busy to write again, till I get to M. Hall.

Meantime I am in strange agitations. I must suppress them, if possible, before I venture into her presence.—My heart bounces my bosom from the table. I will lay down my pen, and wholly resign to its impulses.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday Night, or rather Saturday Morning, 1 o'clock.



THOUGHT I should not have had either time or inclination to write another line before I got to M. Hall. But having the first ; must find the last ; since I can neither sleep, nor do anything but write, if I can do that. I am most confoundedly out of humour. The reason let it follow ; if it will follow.—No preparation for it, from me.

I tried by gentleness and love to soften—What ?—Marble. A heart incapable either of love or gentleness. Her past injuries for ever in her head. Ready to receive a favour ; the permission to go to Hampstead ; but neither to deserve it, nor return any. So my scheme of the gentle kind was soon given over.

I then wanted her to provoke me : like a coward boy, who waits for the first blow before he can persuade himself to fight. I half challenged her to challenge or defy me : she seemed aware of her danger ; and would not directly brave my resentment : but kept such a middle course, that I neither could find a pretence to offend, nor reason to hope : yet she believed my tale, that her uncle would come to Kentish Town ; and seemed not to apprehend, that Tomlinson was an impostor.

She was very uneasy, upon the whole, in my company ; wanted often to break from me ; yet so held me to my promise of permitting her to go to Hampstead, that I knew not how to get off it ; although it was impossible, in my precarious situation with her, to think of performing it.

In this situation ; the women ready to assist ; and, if I proceeded not, as ready to ridicule me ; what had I left me, but to pursue the concerted scheme, and to seek a pretence to quarrel with her, in order to revoke my

promised permission, and to convince her, that I would not be upbraided as the most brutal of ravishers for nothing.

I had agreed with the women, that if I could not find a pretence in her presence to begin my operations, the note should lie in my way, and I was to pick it up, soon after her retiring from me. But I began to doubt at near ten o'clock (so earnest was she to leave me, suspecting my over-warm behaviour to her, and eager grasping of her hand two or three times, with eye-strings, as I felt, on the strain, while her eyes showed uneasiness and apprehension) that if she actually retired for the night, it might be a chance, whether it would be easy to come at her again. Loth therefore to run such a risk, I stepped out at a little after ten, with intent to alter the preconcerted disposition a little; saying I would attend her again instantly. But as I returned, I met her at the door, intending to withdraw for the night. I could not persuade her to go back: nor had I presence of mind (so full of complacency as I was to her just before) to stay her by force: so she slid through my hands into her own apartment. I had nothing to do therefore, but to let my former concert take place.

She had hardly got into her chamber, but I found a little paper, as I was going into mine; which I took up; and, opening it (for it was carefully pinned in another paper) what should it be, but a promissory note, given as a bribe, with a further promise of a diamond ring, to induce Dorcas to favour her mistress's escape!

How my temper changed in a moment!—Ring, ring, ring, ring, I my bell, with a violence enough to break the string, and as if the house were on fire.

Every devil frightened into active life: the whole house in an uproar: up runs Will.—Sir—sir—sir!—Eyes goggling, mouth distended.—Bid the damned toad Dorcas come hither (as I stood at the stair-head) in a horrible rage, and out of breath, cried I.

In sight came the trembling devil—but standing aloof, from the report made her by Will of the passion I was in, as well as from what she heard.

Flash came out my sword immediately ; for I had it ready on.—Cursed, confounded, villanous, bribery and corruption !

Up runs she to her lady's door, screaming out for safety and protection.

Up ran two or three of the sisterhood, What's the matter ? What's the matter ?

The matter ! (for still my beloved opened not her door ; on the contrary, drew another bolt). This abominable Dorcas !—(Call her aunt up !—Let her see what a traitress she has placed about me !—And let her bring the toad to answer for herself)—has taken a bribe, a provision for life, to betray her trust ; by that means to perpetuate a quarrel between a man and his wife, and frustrate for ever all hopes of reconciliation between us !

Let me perish, Belford, if I have patience to proceed with the farce !

Suppose, sir, said Sally, you have my lady and the wench face to face ! You see she cares not to confess.

Your lady won't, she dare not come out to save you, cried Sally ; though it is more his honour's mercy, than your desert, if he does not cut your vile throat this instant.

Say, repeated Polly, was it your lady, that made the first advances, or was it you, you creature ?

If the lady has so much honour, bawled the mother, excuse me, *so*—excuse me, sir (confound the old wretch ! she had like to have said *son* !)—if the lady has so much honour, as we have supposed, she will appear to vindicate a poor servant, misled, as she has been, by such large promises !—But I hope, sir, you will do them both justice : I hope you will !—Good lack ! good lack ! clapping her hands together, to grant her everything she could ask—to

indulge her in her unworthy hatred to my poor innocent house!—to let her go to Hampstead, though your honour told us, you could get no condescension from her; no, not the least—O sir—O sir—I hope—I hope—if your lady will not come out—I hope, you will find a way to hear this cause in her presence. I value not my doors on such an occasion as this. Justice I ever loved. I desire you will come at the bottom of it in clearance to me. I'll be sworn I had no privity in this black corruption.

Just then, we heard the lady's door unbar, unlock, unbolt——

Now, sir!

Now, Mr. Lovelace!

Now, sir! from every encouraging mouth!——

But, O Jack, Jack, Jack! I can write no more!

If you must have it all, you must!

Now, Belford, see us all sitting in judgment, resolved to punish the fair briberess—I, and the mother, the hitherto dreaded mother, the nieces Sally, Polly, the traitress Dorcas, and Mabell, a guard, as it were, over Dorcas, that she might not run away, and hide herself:—all predetermined, and of necessity predetermined, from the journey I was going to take, and my precarious situation with her—and hear her unbolt, unlock, unbar, the door; then, as it proved afterwards, put the key into the lock on the outside, lock the door, and put it in her pocket—Will, I knew, below, who would give me notice, if, while we were all above, she should mistake her way, and go down-stairs, instead of coming into the dining-room: the street-doors also doubly secured, and every shutter to the windows round the house fastened, that no noise or screaming should be heard (such was the brutal preparation)—and then hear her step towards us, and instantly see her enter among us, confiding in her own innocence; and with a majesty in her person and manner, that is natural to her;

but which then shone out in all its glory!—Every tongue silent, every eye awed, every heart quaking, mine, in a particular manner, sunk, throbbless, and twice below its usual region, to once at my throat:—a shameful recreant!—She silent too, looking round her, first on me; then on the mother, as no longer fearing her; then on Sally, Polly; and the culprit Dorcas!—Such the glorious power of innocence exerted at that awful moment!

She would have spoken, but could not, looking down my guilt into confusion. A mouse might have been heard passing over the floor: her own light feet and rustling silks could not have prevented it; for she seemed to tread air, and to be all soul. She passed backwards and forwards, now towards me, now towards the door, several times, before speech could get the better of indignation; and at last, after twice or thrice hemming, to recover her articulate voice—“O thou contemptible and abandoned Lovelace, thinkest thou that I see not through this poor villanous plot of thine, and of these thy wicked accomplices?”

“Thou, woman (looking at the mother) once my terror! now my detestation! shouldst once more have provided for me intoxicating potions, to rob me of my senses——

“And then thou, wretch, (turning to me) mightest more securely have depended upon such a low contrivance as this!

“And ye, vile women, who perhaps have been the ruin, body and soul, of hundreds of innocents, know that I am not married—ruined as I am, by your help, I bless God, I am not married, to this miscreant.—And I have friends that will demand my honour at your hands!—and to whose authority I will apply; for none has this man over me. Look to it then, what further insults you offer me, or incite him to offer me. I am a person, though thus vilely betrayed, of rank and fortune. I never will be his; and, to your utter

ruin, will find friends to pursue you : and now I have this full proof of your detestable wickedness, and have heard your base incitements, will have no mercy upon you !”

They could not laugh at the poor figure I made.—Lord ! how every devil, conscience-shaken, trembled !

“And as for thee, thou vile Dorcas ! thou double deceiver !—whining out thy pretended love for me !—begone, wretch !—Nobody will hurt thee !—Begone, I say !—Thou hast too well acted thy part to be blamed by any here but myself.—Thou art safe : thy guilt is thy security in such a house as this !—Steal away into darkness !—No inquiry after this will be made, whose the first advances, thine or mine.”

And, as I hope to live, the wench, confoundedly frightened, slunk away ; so did her sentinel Mabell ; though I, endeavouring to rally, cried out for Dorcas to stay.—But I believe the devil could not have stopped her, when an angel bid her begone.

Madam, said I, let me tell you ; and was advancing towards her, with a fierce aspect, most cursedly vexed, and ashamed too——

But she turned to me ; “Stop where thou art, O vilest and most abandoned of men !—Stop where thou art !—nor, with that determined face, offer to touch me, if thou wouldst not that I should be a corpse at thy feet !”

To my astonishment, she held forth a penknife in her hand, the point to her own bosom, grasping resolutely the whole handle, so that there was no offering to take it from her.

“I offer not mischief to anybody but myself. You, sir, and ye, women, are safe from every violence of mine. The law shall be all my resource : the law !” and she spoke the word with emphasis that struck a panic into them.

“The law only shall be my refuge——”

The infamous mother whispered me, that it were better to make terms with this strange lady, and let her go.

Sally, notwithstanding all her impudent bravery at other times, said, If Mr. Lovelace had told them what was not true of her being his wife——

And Polly Horton, that she must needs say, the lady, if she were not my wife, had been very much injured ; that was all.

That is not now a matter to be disputed, cried I : you and I know, madam——

We do,—said she ; and I thank God, I am not thine—once more, I thank God for it.—I have no doubt of the further baseness that thou hadst intended me, by this vile and low trick : but I have my senses, Lovelace : and from my heart I despise thee, thou very poor Lovelace !—How canst thou stand in my presence !—thou, that——

Madam, madam, madam—these are insults not to be borne—and was approaching her.

She withdrew to the door, and set her back against it, holding the pointed knife to her heaving bosom ; while the women held me, beseeching me not to provoke the violent lady—for their house sake, and be cursed to them, they besought me—and all three hung upon me—while the heroic lady braved me, at that distance :

“ Approach me, Lovelace, with resentment, if thou wilt. I dare die. It is in defence of my honour. God will be merciful to my poor soul ! I expect no mercy from thee ! I have gained this distance, and two steps nearer me, and thou shalt see what I dare do !——”

Leave me, women, to myself, and to my angel !—They retired at a distance.—O my beloved creature, how you terrify me !—holding out my arms, and kneeling on one knee.—Not a step, not a step farther, except to receive my death at that injured hand which is thus held up against a life far dearer to me than my own ! I am a villain ! the blackest of villains !—Say you will sheath your knife in the injurer’s not the injured’s heart ; and then will I indeed approach you, but not else.

The mother twanged her damned nose ; and Sally and Polly pulled out their handkerchiefs, and turned from us. They never in their lives, they told me afterwards, beheld such a scene—

Unawares to myself, I had moved onward to my angel. —“ And dost thou, dost thou, still disclaiming, still advancing—dost thou, dost thou, still insidiously move towards me ? (And her hand was extended) I dare—I dare—not rashly neither—my heart from principle abhors the act, which thou makest necessary !—God, in thy mercy ! (Lifting up her eyes, and hands) God, in thy mercy !——”

I threw myself to the further end of the room. An ejaculation, a silent ejaculation, employing her thoughts that moment ; Polly says the whites of her lovely eyes were only visible : and, in the instant that she extended her hand, assuredly to strike the fatal blow (How the very recital terrifies me !) she cast her eye towards me, and saw me at the utmost distance the room would allow, and heard my broken voice—my voice was utterly broken ; nor knew I what I said, or whether to the purpose or not—and her charming cheeks, that were all in a glow before, turned pale, as if terrified at her own purpose ; and lifting up her eyes—“ Thank God !—thank God ! said the angel—delivered for the present ; for the present delivered—from myself !—Keep, sir, keep that distance ! (looking down towards me, who was prostrate on the floor, my heart pierced, as with a hundred daggers !) That distance has saved a life ; to what reserved, the Almighty only knows !——”

To be happy, madam ; and to make happy !—And O let me but hope for your favour for to-morrow.—I will put off my journey till then—and may God——

“ Swear not, sir !—With an awful and piercing aspect—You have too, too often sworn !—God’s eye is upon us !—His more immediate eye ; ”—and looked wildly.

If not to-morrow, madam, say but next Thursday, your uncle's birthday ; say but next Thursday !

“This I say, of this you may assure yourself, I never, never will be yours.—And let me hope, that I may be entitled to the performance of your promise, to be permitted to leave this house as soon as the day breaks.”

Did my perdition depend upon it, that you cannot, madam, but upon terms. And I hope you will not terrify me—Still dreading the accursed knife.

“Nothing less than an attempt upon my honour shall make me desperate. I have no view, but to defend my honour : with such a view only I entered into treaty with your infamous agent below.”

Then, taking one of the lights, she turned from us ; and away she went, unmolested.—Not a soul was able to molest her.

Mabell saw her, tremblingly, and in a hurry, take the key of her chamber-door out of her pocket, and unlock it : and, as soon as she entered, heard her double lock, bar, and bolt it.

By her taking out her key, when she came out of her chamber to us, she no doubt suspected my design : which was, to have carried her in my arms thither, if she made such force necessary, after I had intimidated her ; and to have been her companion for that night.

She was to have had several bedchamber women to assist to undress her upon occasion ; but, from the moment she entered the dining-room with so much intrepidity, it was absolutely impossible to think of prosecuting my designs against her.

This, this, Belford, was the hand I made of a contrivance from which I expected so much !—And now am I ten times worse off than before.

Thou never sawest people in thy life look so like fools upon one another, as the mother, her partners, and I, did

for a few minutes. And at last, the two devilish nymphs broke out into insulting ridicule upon me ; while the old wretch was concerned for her house, the reputation of her house. I cursed them altogether ; and, retiring to my chamber, locked myself in.

And now it is time to set out : all I have gained, detection, disgrace, fresh guilt by repeated perjuries, and to be despised by her I doat upon ; and, what is still worse to a proud heart, by myself.

But for the lady, by my soul I love her, I admire her, more than ever ! I must have her. I will have her still — with honour, or without, as I have often vowed. My cursed fright at her accidental bloody nose, so lately, put her upon improving upon me thus. Had she threatened me, I should soon have been master of one arm, and in both !

But she is not gone. She shall not go. I will press her with letters for the Thursday. She shall yet be mine, legally mine. For, as to cohabitation, there is now no such thing to be thought of.

The captain shall give her away, as proxy for her uncle. My lord will die. My fortune will help my will, and set me above everything and everybody.

But here is the curse—she despises me, Jack ! What man, as I have heretofore said, can bear to be despised —especially by his wife ? O Lord ! O Lord ! What a hand, what a cursed hand, have I made of this plot ! And here ends

The history of the lady and the penknife !!! The devil take the penknife ! It goes against me to say, God bless the lady !



MR. LOVELACE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.]

M. Hall. Saturday night, June 24.

MY DEAREST LIFE,—If you do not impute to love, and to terror raised by love, the poor figure I made before you last night, you will not do me justice. I thought I would try to the very last moment, if, by complying with you in everything, I could prevail upon you to promise to be mine on Thursday next, since you refused me an earlier day. Could I have been so happy, you had not been hindered going to Hampstead, or wherever else you pleased. But when I could not prevail upon you to give me this assurance, what room had I (my demerit so great) to suppose, that your going thither would not be to lose you for ever?

I will not offer to defend myself, for wishing you to remain where you are, till either you give me your word to meet me at the altar on Thursday; or till I have the honour of attending you, preparative to the solemnity which will make that day the happiest of my life.

The orders I have given to the people of the house are: that you shall be obeyed in every particular that is consistent with my expectations of finding you there on my return to town on Wednesday next: that Mrs. Sinclair, and her nieces, having incurred your just displeasure, shall not, without your orders, come into your presence: that neither shall Dorcas, till she has fully cleared her conduct to your satisfaction, be permitted to attend you: but Mabell in her place; of whom you seemed some time ago to express some liking. Will I have left behind me to attend your commands. If he be either negligent or impertinent, your dismissal shall be a dismissal of him from my service for ever. But, as to letters which may be

sent you, or any which you may have to send, I must humbly entreat, that none such pass from or to you, for the few days that I shall be absent. But I do assure you, madam, that the seals of both sorts shall be sacred: and the letters, if such be sent, shall be given into your own hands the moment the ceremony is performed, or before, if you require it.

Meantime I will enquire, and send you word, how Miss Howe does; and to what, if I can be informed, her long silence is owing.

Dr. Perkins I found here, attending my lord, when I arrived with Dr. S. He acquaints me, that your father, mother, uncles, and the still less worthy persons of your family, are well; and intend to be all at your uncle Harlowe's next week; I presume, with intent to keep his anniversary. This can make no alteration, but a happy one, as to persons, on Thursday; because Mr. Tomlinson assured me, that, if anything fell out to hinder your uncle's coming up in person (which, however, he did not then expect) he would be satisfied if his friend the captain were proxy for him. I shall send a man and horse to-morrow to the captain, to be at greater certainty.

I send this by a special messenger, who will wait your pleasure in relation to the impatiently-wished-for Thursday: which I humbly hope will be signified by a line.


His lordship is exceeding ill. Dr. S. has no hopes of him. The only consolation I can have for the death of a relation who loves me so well, if he do die, must arise from the additional power it will put into my hands of showing how much I am,

My dearest life,
Your ever-affectionate and faithful
LOVELACE.

MR. LOVELACE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.]

M. Hall. June 25.

Y DEAREST LOVE,—I cannot find words to express how much I am mortified at the return of my messenger without a line from you.

At present, revolving my poor behaviour of Friday night before you, I think I should sooner choose to go to my last audit, unprepared for it as I am, than to appear in your presence, unless you give me some hope, that I shall be received as your elected husband, rather than (however deserved) as a detested criminal.

Let me therefore propose an expedient, in order to spare my own confusion ; and to spare you the necessity for that soul-harrowing recrimination, which I cannot stand, and which must be disagreeable to yourself—to name the church, and I will have everything in readiness ; so that our next interview will be, in a manner, at the very altar ; and then you will have the kind husband to forgive for the faults of the ungrateful lover. If your resentment be still too high to write more, let it only be in your own dear hand, these words, St. Martin's Church, Thursday—or these, St. Giles's Church, Thursday ; nor will I insist upon any inscription or subscription, or so much as the initials of your name. This shall be all the favour I will expect, till the dear hand itself is given to mine, in presence of that Being whom I invoke as a witness of the inviolable faith and honour of

Your adoring

LOVELACE

MR. LOVELACE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.]

M. Hall. Monday, June 26.

IN a letter sent by the messenger whom I despatch with this, I have desired, that my friend, Mr. Belford, who is your very great admirer, and who knows all the secrets of my heart, will wait upon you, to know what I am to depend upon, as to the chosen day.

Relieve, I beseech you, dearest madam, by the four requested words, or by Mr. Belford, the anxiety of

Your ever affectionate and obliged

LOVELACE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

M. Hall. June 26.

THOU wilt see the situation I am in with Miss Harlowe by the enclosed copies of my letters to her.

Now, Belford, as I really, in my present mood, think of nothing less than marrying her, if she let not Thursday slip; I would have thee attend her, in pursuance of the intimation I have given her in my letter of this date; and vow for me, swear for me, bind thy soul to her for my honour, and use what arguments thy friendly heart can suggest, in order to procure me an answer from her; which, as thou wilt see, she may give in four words only. And then I purpose to leave Lord M. (dangerously ill as he is) and meet her at her appointed church, in order to solemnise: if she will sign but Cl. H. to thy writing the four words, that shall do; for I would not come up to be made a fool of in the face of all my family and friends.

If she should let the day go off ;—I shall be desperate. I am entangled in my own devices, and cannot bear that she should detect me.

O that I had been honest !—What a devil are all my plots come to ! What do they end in, but one grand plot upon myself, and a title to eternal infamy and disgrace ! But, depending on thy friendly offices, I will say no more of this.—Let her send me but one line !—but one line !—To treat me as unworthy of her notice ; yet be altogether in my power—I cannot—I will not bear that.

My lord, as I said, is extremely ill. The doctors give him over. He gives himself over. Those who would not have him die, are afraid he will die. But as to myself, I am doubtful.

Thou wilt see in the inclosed what pains I am at to despatch messengers ; who are constantly on the road to meet each other, and one of them to link in the chain with a fourth, whose station is in London, and five miles onward, or till met. But in truth, I have some other matters for them to perform at the same time, with my lord's banker and his lawyer ; which will enable me, if his lordship is so good as to die this bout, to be an overmatch for some of my other relations. I don't mean Charlotte and Patty ; for they are noble girls ; but others, who have been scratching and clawing underground like so many moles in my absence ; and whose workings I have discovered since I have been down, by the little heaps of dirt they have thrown up.

A speedy account of thy commission, dear Jack ! The letter travels all night.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

London, Tuesday, June 27.

YOU must excuse me, Lovelace, from engaging in the office you would have me undertake, till I can be better assured you really intend honourably at last by this much-injured lady.

If thou canst convince me time enough for the day, that thou meanest to do honourably by her, in her own sense of the word ; or, if not time enough, wilt fix some other day (which thou oughtest to leave to her option, and not bind her down for the Thursday ; and the rather, as thy pretence for so doing is founded on an absolute fiction) ; I will then most cheerfully undertake thy cause ; by person, if she will admit me to her presence ; if she will not, by pen. But in this case, thou must allow me to be guarantee for thy faith. And, if so, as much as I value thee, and respect thy skill in all the qualifications of a gentleman, thou mayest depend upon it, that I will act up to the character of a guarantee, with more honour than the princes of our day usually do—to their shame be it spoken.

Command me with honour, and thou shalt find none readier to oblige thee, than

Thy sincere friend,

JOHN BELFORD.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

M. Hall. Tuesday night, June 27.

AND so thou wilt not wait upon the charmer of my heart, but upon terms and conditions!—let it alone, and be cursed ; I care not.—But so much credit did I give to the value thou expressedst for her,

that I thought the office would have been as acceptable to thee, as serviceable to me ; for what was it, but to endeavour to persuade her to consent to the reparation of her own honour ? for what have I done but disgrace myself, and been a thief to my own joys ?—and if there be an union of hearts, and an intention to solemnize, what is there wanting but the foolish ceremony ?—and that I still offer. But if she will keep back her hand ; if she will make me hold out mine in vain—how can I help it ?

I write her one more letter, and if, after she has received that, she keep sullen silence, she must thank herself for what is to follow.

As to what you hint, of leaving to her choice another day, do you consider, that it will be impossible, that my contrivances and stratagems should be much longer concealed ?—this makes me press that day, though so near ; and the more, as I have made so much ado about her uncle's anniversary. If she send me the four words, I will spare no fatigue to be in time, if not for the canonical hour at church, for some other hour of the day in her own apartment, or any other : for money will do everything : and that I have never spared in this affair.

To show thee, that I am not at enmity with thee, I inclose the copies of two letters—one to her : it is the fourth, and must be the last on the subject—the other to Captain Tomlinson ; calculated, as thou wilt see, for him to show her.

And now, Jack, interfere in this case or not, thou knowest the mind of

R. LOVELACE.

MR. LOVELACE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[Superscribed to Mrs. Lovelace.]

M. Hall. June 28.

NOT one line, my dearest life, not one word, in answer to three letters I have written ! the time is now so short, that this must be the last letter that can reach you on this side of the important hour that might make us legally one.

My friend Mr. Belford is apprehensive, that he cannot wait upon you in time, by reason of some urgent affairs of his own.

I the less regret the disappointment, because I have procured a more acceptable person, as I hope, to attend you ; Captain Tomlinson I mean : to whom I had applied for this purpose, before I had Mr. Belford's answer.

I was the more solicitous to obtain this favour from him, because of the office he is to take upon him, as I humbly presume to hope, to-morrow. That office obliged him to be in town as this day : and I acquainted him with my unhappy situation with you ; and desired, that he would show me, on this occasion, that I had as much of his favour and friendship, as your uncle had ; since the whole treaty must be broken off, if he could not prevail upon you in my behalf.

He will dispatch the messenger directly ; whom I propose to meet in person at Slough ; either to proceed onward to London with a joyful heart, or to return back to M. Hall, with a broken one.

I ought not (but cannot help it) to anticipate the pleasure Mr. Tomlinson proposes to himself, in acquainting you with the likelihood there is of your mother's seconding your uncle's views. For, it seems, he has privately communicated to her his laudable intentions : and her

resolution depends, as well as his, upon what to-morrow will produce.

Disappoint not then, I beseech you, for a hundred persons' sakes, as well as for mine, that uncle, and that mother, whose displeasure I have heard you so often deplore.

You may think it impossible for me to reach London by the canonical hour. If it should, the ceremony may be performed in your own apartment, at any time in the day, or at night: so that Captain Tomlinson may have it to aver to your uncle, that it was performed on his anniversary.

Tell but the Captain, that you forbid me not to attend you: and that shall be sufficient for bringing to you, on the wings of love,

Your ever grateful and affectionate

LOVELACE.

MR. LOVELACE TO MR. PATRICK M^CDONALD.

M. Hall.

HEAR MACDONALD,—The bearer of this has a letter to carry to the lady. I have been at the trouble of writing a copy of it; which I enclose, that you may not mistake your cue.

You will judge of my reasons for ante-dating the enclosed sealed one, directed to you by the name of Tomlinson; which you are to show the lady, as in confidence. You will open it of course.

I doubt not your dexterity and management, dear McDonald; nor your zeal; especially as the hope of cohabitation must now be given up. Impossible to be carried is that scheme. I might break her heart, but not incline her will—am in earnest therefore to marry her, if she let not the day slip.

Improve upon the hint of her mother. That must touch her. But John Harlowe, remember, has privately engaged

that lady—privately, I say; else (not to mention the reason for her uncle Harlowe's former expedient) you know, she might find means to get a letter away to the one or the other, to know the truth; or to Miss Howe, to engage her to inquire into it: and if she should, the word privately will account for the uncle's and mother's denying it.

However, fail not, as from me, to charge our mother and her nymphs to redouble their vigilance both as to her person and letters. All's upon a crisis now. But she must not be treated ill neither.

Thursday over, I shall know what to resolve upon.

If necessary, you must resume authority. The devil's in it, if such a girl as this shall awe a man of your years and experience. You are not in love with her as I am. Fly out, if she doubt your honour. Spirits naturally soft may be beat out of their play and borne down (though ever so much raised) by higher anger. All women are cowards at bottom: only violent where they may. I have often stormed a girl out of her mistrusts, and made her yield (before she knew where she was) to the point indignantly mistrusted; and that to make up with me, though I was the aggressor.

If this matter succeed, as I'd have it (or if not, and do not fail by your fault) I will take you off the necessity of pursuing your cursed smuggling; which otherwise may one day end fatally for you.

We are none of us perfect, McDonald. This sweet lady makes me serious sometimes in spite of my heart. But as private vices are less blameable than public; and as I think smuggling (as it is called) a national evil; I have no doubt to pronounce you a much worse man than myself, and as such shall take pleasure in reforming you.

I send you enclosed ten guineas, as a small earnest of further favours. Hitherto you have been a very clever fellow.

As to clothes for Thursday, Monmouth-street will afford a ready supply. Clothes quite new would make your condition suspected. But you may defer that care, till you see if she can be prevailed upon. Your riding-dress would do for the first visit. Nor let your boots be over clean. I have always told you the consequence of attending to the minutiae, where art (or imposture, as the ill-mannered would call it) is designed—your linen ruffled and soily, when you wait upon her—easy terms these—just come to town—remember (as formerly) to loll, to throw out your legs, to stroke and grasp down your ruffles, as if of significance enough to be careless. What though the presence of a fine lady would require a different behaviour, are you not of years to dispense with politeness? You can have no design upon her, you know. You are a father yourself of daughters as old as she. Evermore is parade and obsequiousness suspectable. It must show either a foolish head or a knavish heart. Assume airs of consequence, therefore, and you will be treated as a man of consequence. I have often more than half ruined myself by my complaisance; and, being afraid of control, have brought control upon myself.

I think I have no more to say at present. I intend to be at Slough, or on the way to it, as by mine to the lady. Adieu, honest McDonald.

TO CAPTAIN ANTHONY TOMLINSON.

[*Inclosed in the preceding; to be shown to the lady as in confidence.*]

M. Hall. Tuesday morn, June 27.

DEAR CAPT. TOMLINSON,—An unhappy misunderstanding having arisen between the dearest lady in the world and me (the particulars of which she perhaps may give you, but I will not, because I might be thought partial to myself), and she refusing to answer my most pressing and respectful letters; I am at a

most perplexing uncertainty whether she will meet us or not next Thursday, to solemnize.

My lord is so extremely ill, that if I thought she would not oblige me, I would defer going up to town for two or three days. He cares not to have me out of his sight; yet is impatient to salute my beloved as his niece before he dies. This I have promised to give him an opportunity to do; intending, if the dear creature will make me happy, to set out with her for this place directly from church.

With regret I speak it of the charmer of my soul; that irreconcilableness is her family fault—the less excusable indeed in her, as she herself suffers by it in so high a degree from her own relations.

Now, Sir, as you intended to be in town some time before Thursday, if it be not too great an inconvenience to you, I could be glad you would go up as soon as possible, for my sake: and this I the more boldly request as I presume that a man who has so many great affairs of his own in hand as you have, would be glad to be at a certainty himself as to the day.

You, Sir, can so pathetically and justly set before her the unhappy consequences that will follow if the day be postponed, as well with regard to her uncle's disappointment, as to the part you have assured me her mother is willing to take in the wished-for reconciliation, that I have great hopes she will suffer herself to be prevailed upon. And a man and a horse shall be in waiting to take your dispatches, and bring them to me.

But if you cannot prevail in my favour, you will be pleased to satisfy your friend Mr. John Harlowe, that it is not my fault that he is not obliged. I am, dear Sir,

Your extremely obliged, and faithful servant,

R. LOVELACE.

PATRICK McDONALD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Wednesday, June 28, near 12 o'clock.

HONOURED SIR,—I received yours, as your servant desired me to acquaint you, by ten this morning. Horse and man were in a foam.

I instantly equipped myself, as if come off from a journey, and posted away to the lady, intending to plead great affairs that I came not before, in order to favour your antedate; and likewise to be in a hurry, to have a pretence to hurry her ladyship, and to take no denial for giving a satisfactory return to your messenger; but, upon my entering Mrs. Sinclair's house, I found all in the greatest consternation.

You must not, Sir, be surprised. It is a trouble to me to be the relater of the bad news; but so it is—the lady is gone off. She was missed but half an hour before I came.

Her waiting-maid is run away, or hitherto is not to be found; so that they conclude it was by her connivance.

They had sent, before I came, to my honoured masters, Mr. Belton, Mr. Mowbray, and Mr. Belford. Mr. Tourville is out of town.

High words are passing between Madam Sinclair and Madam Horton, and Madam Martin; as also with Dorcas, and your servant William threatens to hang or drown himself.

They have sent to know if they can hear of Mabell the waiting-maid at her mother's, who it seems lives in Chicklane, West Smithfield; and to an uncle of hers also, who keeps an alehouse at Cowcross, hard by, and with whom she lived last.

Your messenger, having just changed his horse, is come back: so I will not detain him longer than to add, that I

am, with great concern for this misfortune, and thanks for your seasonable favour and kind intentions towards me. I am sure this was not my fault.

Honoured sir,

Your most obliged and humble servant,

PATRICK McDONALD.

MR. MOWBRAY TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Wednesday, 12 o'clock.

DEAR LOVELACE,—I have plaguy news to acquaint thee with. Miss Harlowe is gone off.—Quite gon, by my soul!—I have no time for particulars, your servant being going off. But iff I had, we are not yet come to the bottom of the matter. The ladies here are all blubbering like devils, accusing one another most confoundedly: whilst Belton and I damn them all together in thy name.

If thou shouldst hear that thy fellow Will. is taken dead out of some horsepond, and Dorcas cutt down from her bed's teaster from dangling in her own garters, be not surprized. Here's the devil to pay. Nobody serene but Jack Belford, who is taking minnutes of examminations, accusations, and confessions, with the significant air of a Middlesex Justice; and intends to write at large all particulars, I suppose.

I heartily condole with thee: so does Belton. But it may turn out for the best; for she is gone away with thy marks, I understand. A foolish little devill! Where will she mend herself? For nobody will look upon her. And they tell me, that thou wouldst certainly have married her had she staid, but I know thee better.

Dear Bobby, adieu. If Lord M. will die now, to com-

fort thee for this loss, what a seasonable exit would he make! Let's have a letter from thee. Pr'ythee do. Thou canst write devill-like to Belford, who shows us nothing at all.

Thine heartily,
RD. MOWBRAY.



CLARISSA.



Part Fourth.—The Last Escape of All.



Part Fourth.—The Last Escape of All.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Thursday, June 29.

THOU hast heard from McDonald and Mowbray the news. Bad or good, I know not which thou'lt deem it. I only wish I could have given thee joy upon the same account, before the unhappy lady was seduced from Hampstead : for then of what an ungrateful villainy hadst thou been spared the perpetration, which now thou hast to answer for !

The noble exertion of spirit she had made on Friday night, had, it seems, greatly disordered her ; insomuch that she was not visible till Saturday evening ; when Mabell saw her ; and she seemed to be very ill : but on Sunday morning, having dressed herself, as if designing to go to church, she ordered Mabell to get her a coach to the door.

The wench told her, she was to obey her in everything but the calling of a coach or chair, or in relation to letters.

She sent for Will and gave him the same command.

He pleaded his master's orders to the contrary, and desired to be excused.

Upon this, down she went herself, and would have gone out without observation : but finding the street door double-locked, and the key not in the lock, she stepped into the street parlour, and would have thrown up the sash to call out to the people passing by, as they doubted not :

but that, since her last attempt of the same nature, had been fastened down.

Hereupon she resolutely stepped into Mrs. Sinclair's parlour in the back house; where were the old devil and her two partners; and demanded the key of the street door, or to have it opened for her.

They were all surprised; but desired to be excused, and pleaded your orders.

She asserted, that you had no authority over her; and never should have any: that their present refusal was their own act and deed: she saw the intent of their back house, and the reason of putting her there: she pleaded her condition and fortune; and said, they had no way to avoid utter ruin, but by opening their doors to her, or by murdering her, and burying her in their garden or cellar, too deep for detection: that already what had been done to her was punishable by death: and bid them at their peril detain her.

What a noble, what a right spirit has this charming creature, in cases that will justify an exertion of spirit!

They answered, that Mr. Lovelace could prove his marriage, and would indemnify them. And they all would have vindicated their behaviour on Friday night, and the reputation of their house: but refusing to hear them on that topic, she flung from them, threatening.

She then went up half a dozen stairs in her way to her own apartment: but, as if she had bethought herself, down she stepped again, and proceeded towards the street parlour; saying, as she passed by the infamous Dorcas, I'll make myself protectors, though the windows suffer: but that wench, of her own head, on the lady's going out of that parlour to Mrs. Sinclair's, had locked the door, and taken out the key: so that finding herself disappointed, she burst into tears, and went menacing and sobbing up stairs again.

The women, in pursuance of your orders, offered not

to obtrude themselves upon her ; and Dorcas also kept out of her sight all the rest of Sunday ; also on Monday and Tuesday. But by the lady's condescension (even to familiarity) to Mabell, they imagined, that she must be working in her mind all that time to get away : they therefore redoubled their cautions to the wench : who told them so faithfully all that passed between her lady and her, that they had no doubt of her fidelity to her wicked trust.

About eight yesterday morning, an hour after Polly had left her, she told Mabell, she was sure she should not live long ; and having a good many suits of apparel, which after her death would be of no use to any body she valued, she would give her a brown lustring gown, which, with some alterations, to make it more suitable to her degree, would a great while serve her for a Sunday wear ; for that she (Mabell) was the only person in that house of whom she could think without terror or antipathy.

Mabell expressing her gratitude upon the occasion, the lady said, she had nothing to employ herself about ; and if she could get a workwoman directly, she would look over her things then, and give her what she intended for her.

Her mistress's mantua-maker, the maid replied, lived but a little way off ; and she doubted not that she could procure her, or one of her journeywomen, to alter the gown out of hand.

I will give you also, said she, a quilted coat, which will require but little alteration, if any ; for you are much about my stature : but the gown I will give directions about, because the sleeves and the robings and facings must be altered for your wear, being, I believe, above your station ; and try, said she, if you can get the workwoman, and we'll advise about it. If she cannot come now, let her come in the afternoon ; but I had rather now, because it will amuse me to give you a lift.

Then stepping to the window, It rains, said she (and so it had done all the morning): slip on the hood and short cloak I have seen you wear, and come to me when you are ready to go out, because you shall bring me in something that I want.

Mabell equipped herself accordingly, and received her commands to buy her some trifles, and then left her; but, in her way out, stepped into the back parlour, where Dorcas was with Mrs. Sinclair, telling her where she was going, and on what account, bidding Dorcas look out till she came back. So faithful was the wench to the trust reposed in her, and so little had the lady's generosity wrought upon her.

Mrs. Sinclair commended her; Dorcas envied her, and took her cue: and Mabell soon returned with the mantua-maker's journeywoman (she was resolved, she said, she would not come without her); and then Dorcas went off guard.

The lady looked out the gown and petticoat, and before the workwoman caused Mabell to try it on; and, that it might fit the better, made the willing wench pull off her upper petticoat, and put on that she gave her. Then she bid them go into Mr. Lovelace's apartment, and contrive about it before the pier-glass there, and stay till she came to them, to give them her opinion.

Mabell would have taken her own clothes, and hood, and short cloak with her: but her lady said, no matter; you may put them on again here, when we have considered about the alterations: there's no occasion to litter the other room.

They went; and instantly, as it is supposed, she slipped on Mabell's gown and petticoat over her own, which was white damask, and put on the wench's hood, short cloak, and ordinary apron, and down she went.

Hearing somebody tripping along the passage, both Will and Dorcas whipped to the inner hall door, and saw

her; but, taking her for Mabell, Are you going far, Mabell? cried Will.

Without turning her face, or answering, she held out her hand, pointing to the stairs; which they construed as a caution for them to look out in her absence; and supposing she would not be long gone, as she had not in form repeated her caution to them, up went Will, tarrying at the stairs-head in expectation of the supposed Mabell's return.

Mabell and the workwoman waited a good while, amusing themselves not disagreeably, the one with contriving in the way of her business, the other delighting herself with her fine gown and coat: but at last, wondering the lady did not come in to them, Mabell tiptoed it to her door, and tapping, and not being answered, stepped into the chamber.

Will, at that instant, from his station at the stairs-head, seeing Mabell in her lady's clothes, for he had been told of the present (gifts to servants fly from servant to servant in a minute), was very much surprised, having, as he thought, just seen her go out in her own; and stepping up, met her at the door. How the devil can this be? said he: just now you went out in your own dress! How came you here in this? And how could you pass me unseen? But nevertheless, kissing her, said, he would now brag he had kissed his lady, or one in her clothes.

I am glad, Mr. William, cried Mabell, to see you here so diligently. But know you where my lady is?

In my master's apartment, answered Will. Is she not? Was she not talking with you this moment?

No, that's Mrs. Dolin's journeywoman.

They both stood aghast, as they said; Will again recollecting he had seen Mabell, as he thought, go out in her own clothes. And while they were debating and wondering, up comes Dorcas with your fourth letter, just then brought for her lady; and seeing Mabell dressed out

(whom she had likewise beheld a little before, as she supposed, in her common clothes), she joined in the wonder; till Mabell, re-entering the lady's apartment, missed her own clothes; and then suspecting what had happened, and letting the others into the ground of her suspicion, they all agreed, that she had certainly escaped. And then followed such an uproar of mutual accusation, and you should have done this, and you should have done that, as alarmed the whole house; every apartment in both houses giving up its devil, to the number of fourteen or fifteen, including the mother and her partners.

Will told them his story; and then ran out, as on the like occasion formerly, to make inquiry whether the lady was seen by any of the coachmen, chairmen, or porters, plying in that neighbourhood: while Dorcas cleared herself immediately, and that at the poor Mabell's expense, who made a figure as guilty as awkward, having on the suspected price of her treachery; which Dorcas, out of envy, was ready to tear from her back.

The poor Mabell, frightened out of her wits, expected every moment to be torn in pieces, having half a score open-clawed paws upon her all at once. She promised to confess all. But that all, when she had obtained a hearing, was nothing; for nothing had she to confess.

Sally hereupon, with a curse of mercy, ordered her to retire; undertaking that she and Polly would examine her themselves, that they might be able to write all particulars to his Honour; and then, if she could not clear herself, or, if guilty, give some account of the lady (who had been so wicked as to give them all this trouble) so as they might get her again, then the cleaver and gridiron might go to work with all her heart.

The wench, glad of this reprieve, went up stairs; and while Sally was laying out the law, and prating away in her usual dictatorial manner, whipped on another gown, and sliding down stairs, escaped to her relations. And this

flight, which was certainly more owing to terror than guilt, was, in the true Old Bailey construction, made a confirmation of the latter.

Where, Lovelace, can the poor lady be gone? And who can describe the distress she must be in?

By thy former letters, it may be supposed, that she can have very little money: nor, by the suddenness of her flight, more clothes than those she has on. And thou knowest who once said, Her parents will not receive her: her uncles will not entertain her: her Norton is in their direction, and cannot: Miss Howe dare not: she has not one friend or intimate in town; entirely a stranger to it. And, let me add, has been despoiled of her honour by the man for whom she made all these sacrifices; and who stood bound to her by a thousand oaths and vows, to be her husband, her protector, and friend!

How strong must be her resentment of the barbarous treatment she has received! How worthy of herself, that it has made her hate the man she once loved! And, rather than marry him, choose to expose her disgrace to the whole world; to forego the reconciliation with her friends which her heart was so set upon; and to hazard a thousand evils to which her youth and her sex may too probably expose an indigent and friendless beauty!

I must add, that, as well for thy own sake, as for the lady's, I wish ye were yet to be married to each other. It is the only medium that can be hit upon, to salve the honour of both. All that's past may yet be concealed from the world, and from her relations; and thou mayest make amends for all her sufferings, if thou resolvest to be a tender and kind husband to her.

And if this really be thy intention, I will accept, with pleasure, of a commission from thee, that shall tend to promote so good an end, whenever she can be found; that is to say, if she will admit to her presence a man who

professes friendship to thee. Nor can I give a greater demonstration, that I am

Thy sincere friend,

J. BELFORD.

P.S. Mabell's clothes were thrown into the passage *this* morning : nobody knows by whom.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday, June 30.

I AM ruined, undone, blown up, destroyed, and worse than annihilated, that's certain!—But was not the news shocking-enough, dost thou think, without thy throwing into the too weighty scale reproaches, which thou couldst have had no opportunity to make, but for my own voluntary communications? At a time too, when, as it falls out, I have another very sensible disappointment to struggle with?

I imagine, if there be such a thing as future punishment, it must be none of the smallest mortifications, that a new devil shall be punished by a worse old one. And, take that! And, take that! to have the old satyr cry to the screaming sufferer, laying on with a cat-o'-nine-tails, with a star of burning brass at the end of each : and, for what! for what!—Why, if the truth might be fairly told, for not being so bad a devil as myself.

Thou art, surely, casuist good enough to know (what I have insisted upon heretofore) that the sin of seducing a credulous and easy girl, is as great as that of bringing to your lure an incredulous and watchful one.

However ungenerous an appearance what I am going to say may have from my pen, let me tell thee, that if such a woman as Miss Harlowe chose to enter into the matrimonial state (I am resolved to disappoint thee in thy meditated triumph over my rage and despair!) and, according to the old patriarchal system, to go on contri-

buting to get sons and daughters, with no other view, than to bring them up piously, and to be good and useful members of the commonwealth, what a devil had she to do, to let her fancy run a gadding after a rake? One whom she knew to be a rake?

O but truly, she hoped to have the merit of reclaiming him. She had formed pretty notions how charming it would look to have a penitent of her own making dangling at her side to church, through an applauding neighbourhood: and, as their family increased, marching with her thither, at the head of their boys and girls, processionally as it were, boasting of the fruits of their honest desires, as my good Lord Bishop has it in his license. And then, what a comely sight, all kneeling down together in one pew, according to eldership, as we have seen in effigy, a whole family upon some old monument, where the honest chevalier in armour is presented kneeling, with uplift hands, and half a dozen jolter-headed crop-eared boys behind him, ranged gradatim or step-fashion according to age and size, all in the same posture—facing his pious dame, with a ruff about her neck, and as many whey-faced girls all kneeling behind her: an altar between them, and an opened book upon it: over their heads semilunary rays darting from gilded clouds, surrounding an atchievement-motto, *IN CÆLO SALUS*—or *QUIES*—perhaps, if they have happened to live the usual married life of brawl and contradiction.

But, alas! Jack, all this is but a copy of my countenance, drawn to evade thy malice!—Though it answer thy unfriendly purpose to own it, I cannot forbear to own it, that I am stung to the very soul with this unhappy—accident, must I call it?—Have I nobody, whose throat, either for carelessness or treachery, I ought to cut, in order to pacify my vengeance?

When I reflect upon my last iniquitous intention, the first outrage so nobly resented, as well as, so far as she

was able, so nobly resisted, I cannot but conclude, that I was under the power of fascination from these accursed Circes ; who, pretending to know their own sex, would have it, that there is in every woman a yielding, or a weak-resisting moment to be met with : and, that yet, and yet, and yet, I had not tried enough : but that, if neither love nor terror should enable me to hit that lucky moment, when, by help of their cursed arts, she was once overcome, she would be for ever overcome :—appealing to all my experience, to all my knowledge of the sex, for a justification of their assertion.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Wednesday Night, June 28.

C MY DEAREST MISS HOWE !—Once more have I escaped—But, alas ! I, my best self, have not escaped !—Oh ! your poor Clarissa Harlowe ! You also will hate me, I fear !—Yet, you won't, when you know all !

But no more of myself ! My lost self. You that can rise in a morning, to be blest, and to bless ; and go to rest delighted with your own reflections, and in your unbroken, unstartling slumbers, conversing with saints and angels, the former only more pure than yourself, as they have shaken off the incumbrance of body ; you shall be my subject, as you have long, long, been my only pleasure. And let me, at awful distance, revere my beloved Anna Howe, and in her reflect upon what her Clarissa Harlowe once was !

Forgive, O forgive, my rambling. My peace is destroyed. My intellects are touched. And what flighty nonsense must you read, if now you will vouchsafe to correspond with me, as formerly !

O my best, my dearest, my only friend ! What a tale have I to unfold !—But still upon self, this vile, this hated self !—I will shake it off, if possible ; and why should I

not, since I think, except one wretch, I hate nothing so much? Self, then, be banished from self one moment (for I doubt it will for no longer) to enquire after a dearer object, my beloved Anna Howe!—Whose mind, all robed in spotless white, charms and irradiates—But what would I say?—

And how, my dearest friend, after this rhapsody, which, on re-perusal, I would not let go, but to show you what a distracted mind dictates to my trembling pen; How do you? You have been very ill, it seems. That you are recovered, my dear, let me hear. That your mother is well, pray let me hear, and hear quickly. This comfort surely is owing to me; for if life is no worse than chequer-work, I must now have a little white to come, having seen nothing but black, all unchequered dismal black, for a great, great while.

And what is all this wild incoherence for? It is only to beg to know how you have been, and how you now do, by a line directed for Mrs. Rachel Clark, at Mr. Smith's, a glove-shop, in King Street, Covent Garden; which (although my abode is secret to everybody else) will reach the hands of—Your unhappy—but that's not enough—

Your miserable
CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MRS. HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(Superscribed as directed in the preceding.)

Friday, June 30.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.—You will wonder to receive a letter from me. I am sorry for the great distress you seem to be in. Such a hopeful young lady as you were!—But see what comes of disobedience to parents!

For my part ; although I pity you, yet I much more pity your poor father and mother. Such education as they gave you ! Such improvements as you made ! And such delight as they took in you !—And all come to this !—

But pray, miss, don't make my Nancy guilty of your fault ; which is that of disobedience. I have charged her over and over not to correspond with one who has made such a giddy step. It is not to her reputation, I am sure. You know that I so charged her ; yet you go on corresponding together, to my very great vexation ; for she has been very perverse upon it, more than once. Evil communication, miss—you know the rest.

I write a long letter, where I proposed to say but a few words ; and those to forbid you writing to my Nancy : And this as well because of the false step you have made, as because it will grieve her poor heart, and do you no good. If you love her, therefore, write not to her. Your sad letter came into my hands, Nancy being abroad ; and I shall not show it her : for there would be no comfort for her, if she saw it, nor for me, whose delight she is—As you once was to your parents——

But you seem to be sensible enough of your errors now.—So are all giddy girls, when it is too late : And what a crest-fallen figure then do the consequences of their self-willed obstinacy and headstrongness compel them to make !

I may say too much : only as I think it proper to bear that testimony against your rashness which it behoves every careful parent to bear : And none more than

Your compassionating well-wisher,

ANNABELLA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MRS. HOWE.

Saturday, July 1.

PERMIT me, madam, to trouble you with a few lines, were it only to thank you for your reproofs; which have nevertheless drawn fresh streams of blood from a bleeding heart.

My story is a dismal story. It has circumstances in it, that would engage pity, and possibly a judgment not altogether unfavourable, were those circumstances known. But it is my business, and shall be all my business, to repent of my failings, and not endeavour to extenuate them.

Nor will I seek to distress your worthy mind. If I cannot suffer alone, I will make as few parties as I can in my sufferings. And, indeed, I took up my pen with this resolution when I wrote the letter which has fallen into your hands. It was only to know, and that for a very particular reason, as well as for affection unbounded, if my dear Miss Howe, from whom I had not heard for a long time, were ill; as I had been told she was; and if so, how she now does. But my injuries being recent, and my distresses having been exceeding great, self would crowd into my letter. When distressed, the human mind is apt to turn itself to every one in whom it imagined or wished an interest, for pity and consolation.—Or, to express myself better and more concisely, in your own words, misfortune makes people plaintive: And to whom, if not to a friend, can the afflicted complain?

Miss Howe being abroad when my letter came, I flatter myself that she is recovered. But it would be some satisfaction to me to be informed if she has been ill. Another line from your hand would be too great a favour: But, if you will be pleased to direct any servant

to answer yes, or no, to that question, I will not be farther troublesome.

Nevertheless, I must declare, that my Miss Howe's friendship was all the comfort I had or expected to have in this world; and a line from her would have been a cordial to my fainting heart. Judge then, dearest madam, how reluctantly I must obey your prohibition—But yet, I will endeavour to obey it; although I should have hoped, as well from the tenor of all that has passed between Miss Howe and me, as from her established virtue, that she could not be tainted by evil communication, had one or two letters been permitted. This, however, I ask not for, since I think I have nothing to do, but to beg of God (who, I hope, has not yet withdrawn his grace from me, although he is pleased to let loose his justice upon my faults) to give me a truly broken spirit, if it be not already broken enough, and then to take to his mercy

The unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Two favours, good madam, I have to beg of you.—The first;—that you will not let any of my relations know, that you have heard from me. The other,—that no living creature be apprised where I am to be heard of, or directed to. This is a point that concerns me, more than I can express. In short, my preservation from further evils may depend upon it.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO LADY BETTY LAWRENCE.

Thursday June 29.

MADAM,—I hope you'll excuse the freedom of this address, from one who has not the honour to be personally known to you, although you must have heard much of Clarissa Harlowe. It is only to beg the favour of a line from your ladyship's hand (by

the next post, if convenient) in answer to the following questions :—

1. Whether you wrote a letter, dated, as I have a memorandum, Wednesday, June 7, congratulating your nephew Lovelace on his supposed nuptials, as reported to you by Mr. Spurrier, your ladyship's steward, as from one Captain Tomlinson :—and in it reproaching Mr. Lovelace, as guilty of slight, &c. in not having acquainted your ladyship and the family with his marriage ?

2. Whether your ladyship wrote to Miss Montague to meet you at Reading, in order to attend you to your cousin Leeson's in Albemarle Street ; on your being obliged to be in town on your old Chancery affair, I remember are the words ?—And whether you bespoke your nephew's attendance there on Sunday night the 11th ?

3. Whether your ladyship and Miss Montague did come to town at that time ? And whether you went to Hampstead, on Monday, in a hired coach and four, your own being repairing ; and took from thence to town the young creature whom you visited there ?

Your ladyship will probably guess, that these questions are not asked for reasons favourable to your nephew Lovelace. But be the answer what it will, it can do him no hurt, nor me any good ; only that I think I owe it to my former hopes (however deceived in them) and even to charity, that a person, of whom I was once willing to think better, should not prove so egregiously abandoned, as to be wanting, in every instance, to that veracity which is an indispensable in the character of a gentleman.

Be pleased, Madam, to direct to me (keeping the direction a secret for the present) to be left at the Belle Savage on Ludgate Hill, till called for. I am

Your ladyship's most humble servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LADY BETTY LAWRENCE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Saturday, July 1.

DEAR MADAM,—I find that all is not as it should be between you and my nephew Lovelace. It will very much afflict me, and all his friends, if he has been guilty of any designed baseness to a lady of your character and merit.

We have been long in expectation of an opportunity to congratulate you and ourselves upon an event most earnestly wished for by us all ; since all our hopes of him are built upon the power you have over him : For if ever man adored a woman, he is that man, and you, madam, are that woman.

Miss Montague, in her last letter to me, in answer to one of mine, enquiring if she knew, from him, whether he could call you his, or was likely soon to have that honour, has these words : I know not what to make of my cousin Lovelace, as to the point your ladyship is so earnest about. He sometimes says, he is actually married to Miss Clarissa Harlowe : at other times, that it is her own fault if he be not.—He speaks of her not only with love, but with reverence : yet owns, that there is a misunderstanding between them ; but confesses, that she is wholly faultless. An angel, and not a woman, he says she is : and that no man living can be worthy of her.

This is what my niece Montague writes.

I will now answer your questions : But indeed I hardly know what to write, for fear of widening still more the unhappy difference between you. But yet such a young lady must command everything from me. This then is my answer.

I wrote not any letter to him on or about the 7th of June.

Neither I nor my steward know such a man as Captain Tomlinson.

I wrote not to my niece to meet me at Reading, nor to accompany me to my cousin Leeson's in town.

My Chancery affair, though like most Chancery affairs, it be of long standing, is nevertheless now in so good a way, that it cannot give me occasion to go to town.

Nor have I been in town these six months; nor at Hampstead for several years.

Neither shall I have any temptation to go to town, except to pay my congratulatory compliments to Mrs. Lovelace. On which occasion I should go with the greatest pleasure; and should hope for the favour of your accompanying me to Glenham Hall, for a month at least.

Be what will the reason of your enquiry, let me entreat you, my dear young lady, for Lord M.'s sake; for my sake; for this giddy man's sake, soul as well as body; and for all our family's sakes; not to suffer this answer to widen differences so far as to make you refuse him, if he already has not the honour of calling you his; as I am apprehensive he has not, by your signing by your family name.

And here let me offer to you my mediation to compose the difference between you, be it what it will. Your cause, my dear young lady, cannot be put into the hands of anybody living more devoted to your service, than into those of

Your sincere admirer, and humble servant,

ELIZ. LAWRENCE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO LADY BETTY LAWRENCE.

Monday, July 3.

MADAM,—I cannot excuse myself from giving your ladyship this one trouble more; to thank you, as I most heartily do, for your kind letter.

I must own to you, madam, that the honour of being

related to ladies as eminent for their virtue as for their descent, was at first no small inducement with me, to lend an ear to Mr. Lovelace's address. And the rather, as I was determined, had it come to effect, to do everything in my power to deserve your favourable opinion.

I had another motive, which I knew would of itself give me merit with your whole family ; a presumptuous one (a punishably presumptuous one, as it has proved) in the hope that I might be an humble means in the hand of Providence to reclaim a man, who had, as I thought, good sense enough at bottom to be reclaimed ; or at least gratitude enough to acknowledge the intended obligation, whether the generous hope were to succeed or not.

But I have been most egregiously mistaken in Mr. Lovelace ; the only man, I persuade myself, pretending to be a gentleman, in whom I could have been so much mistaken : For while I was endeavouring to save a drowning wretch, I have been, not accidentally, but premeditatedly, and of set purpose, drawn in after him. And he has had the glory to add to the list of those he has ruined, a name, that I will be bold to say, would not have disparaged his own. And this, madam, by means that would shock humanity to be made acquainted with.

My whole end is served by your ladyship's answer to the questions I took the liberty to put to you in writing. Nor have I a wish to make the unhappy man more odious to you, than is necessary to excuse myself for absolutely declining your offered mediation.

When your ladyship shall be informed of the following particulars ;

That after he had compulsatorily, as I may say, tricked me into the act of going off with him, he could carry me to one of the vilest houses, as it proved, in London :

That he could be guilty of a wicked attempt, in resent-

ment of which, I found means to escape from him to Hampstead :

That, after he had found me out there (I know not how) he could procure two women, dressed out richly, to personate your ladyship and Miss Montague ; who, under pretence of engaging me to make a visit in town to your cousin Leeson (promising to return with me that evening to Hampstead) betrayed me back again to the vile house : where, again made a prisoner, I was first robbed of my senses ; and then of my honour. Why should I seek to conceal that disgrace from others, which I cannot hide from myself ?

When your ladyship shall know, that, in the shocking progress to this ruin, wilful falsehoods, repeated forgeries (particularly of one letter from your ladyship, another from Miss Montague, and a third from Lord M.) and numberless perjuries, were not the least of his crimes : you will judge, that I can have no principles that will make me worthy of an alliance with ladies of yours and your noble sister's character, if I could not from my soul declare, that such an alliance can never now take place.

All the ill I wish him is, that he may reform ; and that I may be the last victim to his baseness. Perhaps this desirable wish may be obtained, when he shall see how his wickedness, his unmerited wickedness ! to a poor creature, made friendless by his cruel arts, will end.

I conclude with my humble thanks to your ladyship, for your favourable opinion of me ; and with the assurance, that I will be, while life is lent me,

Your ladyship's grateful and obliged servant,

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MRS. JUDITH NORTON.

Thursday, July 6.

MY beloved Mrs. Norton, you cannot imagine what I have suffered!—But indeed my heart is broken!—I am sure I shall not live to take possession of that independence, which you think would enable me to atone in some measure for my past conduct.

While this is my opinion, you may believe, I shall not be easy, till I can obtain a last forgiveness.

I wish to be left to take my own course, in endeavouring to procure this grace. Yet know I not, at present, what that course shall be.

I will write. But to whom is my doubt. Calamity has not yet given me the assurance to address myself to my father. My uncles (well as they once loved me) are hard-hearted. They never had their masculine passions humanised by the tender name of father. Of my brother I have no hope. I have then but my mother, and my sister, to whom I can apply.—And may I not, my dearest mamma, be permitted to lift up my trembling eye to your all-cheering, and your once more than indulgent, your fond eye, in hopes of seasonable mercy to the poor sick heart that yet beats with life drawn from your own dearer heart?—especially when pardon only, and not restoration, is implored?

Yet were I able to engage my mother's pity, would it not be a means to make her still more unhappy, than I have already made her, by the opposition she would meet with, were she to try to give force to that pity?

To my sister then, I think, I will apply—yet how hard-hearted has my sister been!—But I will not ask for protection; and yet I am in hourly dread, that I shall want protection.—All I will ask for at present (preparative to the last forgiveness I will implore) shall be only to be

freed from the heavy curse that seems to have operated as far as it can operate, as to this life—and surely, it was passion, and not intention, that carried it so very far as to the other!

But why do I thus add to your distresses?—It is not, my dear Mrs. Norton, that I have so much feeling for my own calamity, that I have none for yours: since yours is indeed an addition to my own. But you have one consolation (a very great one) which I have not:—that your afflictions, whether respecting your more or your less deserving child, rise not from any fault of your own.

But what can I do for you more than pray?—Assure yourself, that in every supplication I put up for myself, I will, with equal fervour, remember both you and your son. For I am, and ever will be,

Your truly sympathising and dutiful

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

(*Superscribed for MRS. RACHEL CLARK, &c.*)

Wednesday, July 5.

MY DEAR CLARISSA,—I have at last heard from you from a quarter I little expected.
From my mother.

She had for some time seen me uneasy and grieving; and justly supposed it was about you: and this morning dropped a hint, which made me conjecture that she must have heard something of you more than I knew. And when she found that this added to my uneasiness, she owned she had a letter in her hands of yours, dated the 29th of June, directed for me.

You may guess, that this occasioned a little warmth, that could not be wished for by either.

It is surprising, my dear, mighty surprising! that, knowing the prohibition I lay under of corresponding

with you, you could send a letter for me to our own house: since it must be fifty to one that it would fall into my mother's hands, as you find it did.

In short, she resented that I should disobey her: I was as much concerned that she should open and withhold from me my letters: and at last she was pleased to compromise the matter with me, by giving up the letter, and permitting me to write to you once or twice; she to see the contents of what I wrote. For, besides the value she has for you, she could not but have a great curiosity to know the occasion of so sad a situation as your melancholy letter shows you to be in.

Let me tell you, that that letter has almost broken my heart. Good God! what have you brought yourself to, Miss Clarissa Harlowe?—Could I have believed, that after you had escaped from the miscreant (with such mighty pains and earnestness escaped) and after such an attempt as he had made, you would have been prevailed upon not only to forgive him, but (without being married too) to return with him to that horrid house!—a house I had given you such an account of!—surprising!—What an intoxicating thing is this love?—I always feared, that you, even you, were not proof against its inconsistent effects.

You your best self have not escaped!—Indeed I see not how you could expect to escape.

What a tale have you to unfold!—You need not unfold it, my dear: I would have engaged to prognosticate all that has happened, had you but told me that you would once more have put yourself into his power, after you had taken such pains to get out of it.

Your peace is destroyed!—I wonder not at it: since now you must reproach yourself for a credulity so ill-placed.

Your intellect is touched!—I am sure my heart bleeds for you: but, excuse me, my dear, I doubt your intellect

was touched before you left Hampstead ; or you would never have let him find you out there ; or, when he did, suffer him to prevail upon you to return to the horrid brothel.

I tell you, I sent you three letters : the first of which, dated the 7th and 8th of June (for it was written at twice) came safe to your hands, as you sent me word by a few lines dated the 9th : had it not, I should have doubted my own safety ; since in it I gave you such an account of the abominable house, and threw such cautions in your way in relation to that Tomlinson, as the more surprised me that you could think of going back to it again, after you had escaped from it, and from Lovelace—O my dear !—But nothing now will I ever wonder at !

The second, dated June 10, was given into your own hand at Hampstead, on Sunday the 11th, as you was lying upon a couch, in a strange way, according to my messenger's account of you, bloated, and flush-coloured ; I don't know how.

The third was dated the 20th of June. Having not heard one word from you since the promising billet of the 9th, I own I did not spare you in it. I ventured it by the usual conveyance, by that Wilson's, having no other : so cannot be sure you received it. Indeed I rather think you might not ; because in yours, which fell into my mother's hands, you make no mention of it : and if you had had it, I believe it would have touched you too much to have been passed by unnoticed.

You have heard, that I have been ill, you say. I had a cold indeed ; but it was so slight a one, that it confined me not an hour. But I doubt not, that strange things you have heard, and been told, to induce you to take the step you took. And, till you did take that step (the going back with this villain, I mean) I knew not a more pitiable case than yours : since everybody must have excused you before, who knew how you were used at

home, and was acquainted with your prudence and vigilance. But, alas! my dear, we see that the wisest people are not to be depended upon, when love, like an *ignis fatuus*, holds up its misleading lights before their eyes.

My mother tells me, she sent you an answer, desiring you not to write to me, because it would grieve me. To be sure I am grieved; exceedingly grieved; and disappointed too, you must permit me to say. For I had always thought, that there never was such a woman at your years, in the world.

My love for you, and my concern for your honour, may possibly have made me a little of the severest: if you think so, place it to its proper account; to that love, and to that concern: which will but do justice to

Your afflicted and faithful

A. H.

P. S. My mother would not be satisfied without reading my letter.

She has so much real concern for your misfortunes, that, thinking it will be a consolation to you, and that it will oblige me, she consents that you shall write to me the particulars at large of your sad story: but it is on condition, that I show her all that has passed between us relating to yourself and the vilest of men. I have the more cheerfully complied, as the communication cannot be to your disadvantage.

You may therefore write freely, and direct to our own house.

God grant, that you may be able to clear your conduct after you had escaped from Hampstead; as all before that time was noble, generous, and prudent: the man a devil, and you a saint!—Yet I hope you can; and therefore expect it from you.

I send by a particular hand. He will call for your answer at your own appointment.

I am afraid this horrid wretch will trace out by the post-offices where you are, if not careful.

To have money, and will, and head, to be a villain, is too much for the rest of the world when they meet in one man.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Thursday, July 6.

FEW young persons have been able to give more convincing proofs than myself, how little true happiness lies in the enjoyment of our own wishes.

To produce one instance only of the truth of this observation; what would I have given for weeks past, for the favour of a letter from my dear Miss Howe, in whose friendship I placed all my remaining comfort? Little did I think, that the next letter she would honour me with, should be in such a style, as should make me look more than once at the subscription, that I might be sure (the name not being written at length) that it was not signed by another A. H. For surely thought I, this is my sister Arabella's style.

But what have I, sunk in my fortunes; my character forfeited; my honour lost (while *I* know it, I care not who knows it); destitute of friends, and even of hope; what have I to do to show a spirit of repining and expostulation to a dear friend, because she is not more kind than a sister?—

You tell me, that in your first letter you gave me such an account of the vile house I was in, and such cautions about that Tomlinson, as make you wonder how I could think of going back.

Alas, my dear! I was tricked, most vilely tricked back, as you shall hear in its place.

Without knowing the house was so very vile a house

from your intended information, I disliked the people too much, ever voluntarily to have returned to it. But had you really written such cautions about Tomlinson, and the house, as you seem to have purposed to do, they must, had they come in time, have been of infinite service to me. But not one word of either, whatever was your intention, did you mention to me, in that first of the three letters you so warmly tell me you did send me. I will enclose it to convince you.

But your account of your messenger's delivering to me your second letter, and the description he gives of me, as lying upon a couch, in a strange way, bloated, and flush-coloured, you don't know how, absolutely puzzles and confounds me.

Lord have mercy upon the poor Clarissa Harlowe! What can this mean!—Who was the messenger you sent? Was he one of Lovelace's creatures too!—Could nobody come near me but that man's confederates, either setting out so, or made so? I know not what to make of any one syllable of this! Indeed I don't.

Let me see. You say, this was before I went from Hampstead! My intellects had not then been touched!—Nor had I ever been surprised by wine (strange if I had!): how then could I be found in such a strange way, bloated, and flush-coloured; you don't know how!—Yet what a vile, what a hateful figure has your messenger represented me to have made!

But indeed I know nothing of any messenger from you.

Believing myself secure at Hampstead, I stayed longer there than I would have done, in hopes of the letter promised me in your short one of the 9th, brought me by my own messenger, in which you undertake to send for and engage Mrs. Townsend in my favour.

I wondered I heard not from you: and was told you were sick; and, at another time, that your mother and

you had had words on my account, and that you had refused to admit Mr. Hickman's visits upon it: so that I supposed at one time, that you were not able to write; at another, that your mother's prohibition had its due force with you. But now I have no doubt, that the wicked man must have intercepted your letter; and I wish he found not means to corrupt your messenger to tell you so strange a story.

It was on Sunday June 11, you say, that the man gave it me. I was at church twice that day with Mrs. Moore. Mr. Lovelace was at her house the while, where he boarded, and wanted to have lodged; but I would not permit that, though I could not help the other. In one of these spaces it must be that he had time to work upon the man. You'll easily, my dear, find that out, by enquiring the time of his arrival at Mrs. Moore's, and other circumstances of the strange way he pretended to see me in, on a couch, and the rest.

Had anybody seen me afterwards, when I was betrayed back to the vile house, struggling under the operation of wicked potions, and robbed indeed of my intellects (for this, as you shall hear, was my dreadful case) I might then, perhaps, have appeared bloated, and flush-coloured, and I know not how myself. But were you to see your poor Clarissa now (or even to have seen her at Hampstead before she suffered the vilest of all outrages) you would not think her bloated, or flush-coloured: indeed you would not.

In a word, it could not be me your messenger saw; nor (if anybody) who it was can I divine.

I will now, as briefly as the subject will permit, enter into the darker part of my sad story: and yet I must be somewhat circumstantial, that you may not think me capable of reserve or palliation. The latter I am not conscious that I need. I should be utterly inexcusable, were I guilty of the former to you. And yet, if you

knew how my heart sinks under the thoughts of a recollection so painful, you would pity me.

As I shall not be able, perhaps, to conclude what I have to write in even two or three letters, I will begin a new one with my story; and send the whole of it together, although written at different periods, as I am able.

Allow me a little pause, my dear, at this place; and to subscribe myself

Your ever affectionate and obliged

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Thursday Night.

HE had found me out at Hampstead: strangely found me out; for I am still at a loss to know by what means.

I was loth, in my billet of the 9th, to tell you so, for fear of giving you apprehensions for me; and besides, I hoped then to have a shorter and happier issue to account to you for, through your assistance, than I met with.

She then gives a narrative of all that passed at Hampstead between herself, Mr. Lovelace, Captain Tomlinson, and the women there, to the same effect with that given by Mr. Lovelace.

Mr. Lovelace, finding all he could say, and all Captain Tomlinson could urge, ineffectual, to prevail upon me to forgive an outrage so flagrantly premeditated, rested all his hopes on a visit which was to be paid me by Lady Betty Lawrence and Miss Montague.

In my uncertain situation, my prospects all so dark, I knew not to whom I might be obliged to have recourse in the last resort: and as those ladies had the best of characters, insomuch that I had reason to regret, that I

had not from the first thrown myself upon their protection (when I had forfeited that of my own friends) I thought I would not shun an interview with them, though I was too indifferent to their kinsman to seek it, as I doubted not, that one end of their visit would be to reconcile me to him.

On Monday the 12th of June, these pretended ladies came to Hampstead ; and I was presented to them, and they to me, by their kinsman.

They were richly dressed, and stuck out with jewels ; the pretended Lady Betty's were particularly very fine.

They came in a coach-and-four, hired, as was confessed, while their own was repairing in town : a pretence made, I now perceive, that I should not guess at the imposture by the want of the real lady's arms upon it. Lady Betty was attended by her woman, whom she called Morrison ; a modest country-looking person.

I had heard, that Lady Betty was a fine woman, and that Miss Montague was a beautiful young lady, genteel, and graceful, and full of vivacity—such were these impostors ; and having never seen either of them, I had not the least suspicion, that they were not the ladies they personated ; and being put a little out of countenance by the richness of their dresses, I could not help (fool that I was !) to apologise for my own.

The pretended Lady Betty then told me, that her nephew had acquainted them with the situation of affairs between us. And although she could not but say, that she was very glad that he had not put such a slight upon his lordship and them, as report had given them cause to apprehend (the reasons for which report, however, she much approved of) ; yet it had been matter of great concern to her, and to her niece Montague, and would to the whole family, to find so great a misunderstanding subsisting between us, as, if not made up, might distance all their hopes.

She could easily tell who was in fault, she said. And gave him a look both of anger and disdain; asking him, how it was possible for him to give an offence of such a nature to so charming a lady (so she called me) as should occasion a resentment so strong.

He pretended to be awed into shame and silence.

My dearest niece, said she, and took my hand (I must call you niece, as well from love, as to humour your uncle's laudable expedient) permit me to be, not an advocate, but a mediatrix for him; and not for his sake, so much as for my own, my Charlotte's, and all our family's. The indignity he has offered to you, may be of too tender a nature to be enquired into. But as he declares, that it was not a premeditated offence; whether, my dear (for I was going to rise upon it in my temper) it were or not; and as he declares his sorrow for it (and never did creature express a deeper sorrow for any offence than he); and as it is a reparable one; let us, for this one time, forgive him; and thereby lay an obligation upon this man of errors—Let us, I say, my dear: for, sir (turning to him) an offence against such a peerless lady as this, must be an offence against me, against your cousin here, and against all the virtuous of our sex.

See, my dear, what a creature he had picked out! Could you have thought there was a woman in the world who could thus express herself, and yet be vile? But she had her principal instructions from him, and those written down too, as I have reason to think: for I have recollected since, that I once saw this Lady Betty (who often rose from her seat, and took a turn to the other end of the room with such emotion as if the joy of her heart would not let her sit still) take out a paper from her stays, and look into it, and put it there again. She might oftener, and I not observe it; for I little thought that there could be such impostors in the world.

I could not forbear paying great attention to what she

said. I found my tears ready to start; I drew out my handkerchief, and was silent. I had not been so indulgently treated a great while by a person of character and distinction (such I thought her); and durst not trust to the accent of my voice.

The pretended Miss Montague joined in on this occasion; and drawing her chair close to me, took my other hand, and besought me to forgive her cousin; and consent to rank myself as one of the principals of a family, that had long, very long, coveted the honour of my alliance.

I am ashamed to repeat to you, my dear, now I know what wretches they are, the tender, the obliging, and the respectful things I said to them.

The wretch himself then came forward. He threw himself at my feet. How was I beset!—The women grasping one my right hand, the other my left: the pretended Miss Montague pressing to her lips more than once the hand she held: the wicked man on his knees, imploring my forgiveness; and setting before me my happy and my unhappy prospects, as I should forgive or not forgive him. All that he thought would affect me in his former pleas, and those of Captain Tomlinson, he repeated. He vowed, he promised, he bespoke the pretended ladies to answer for him; and they engaged their honours in his behalf.

Indeed, my dear, I was distressed, perfectly distressed. I was sorry that I had given way to this visit. For I knew not how, in tenderness to relations (as I thought them) so worthy, to treat so freely as he deserved, a man nearly allied to them: so that my arguments, and my resolutions, were deprived of their greatest force.

Then! how the wretch promised!—how he vowed!—how he entreated!—and how the women pleaded!—and they engaged themselves, and the honour of their whole family, for his just, his kind, his tender behaviour to me.

In short, my dear, I was so hard set, that I was obliged to come to a more favourable compromise with them, than I had intended. I would wait for your answer to my letter, I said: and if that made doubtful or difficult the change of measures I had resolved upon, and the scheme of life I had formed, I would then consider of the matter; and, if they would permit me, lay all before them, and take their advice upon it, in conjunction with yours, as if the one were my own aunt, and the other were my own cousin.

They shed tears upon this—of joy they called them:—but since, I believe, to their credit, bad as they are, that they were tears of temporary remorse; for the pretended Miss Montague turned about, and, as I remember, said, there was no standing it.

But Mr. Lovelace was not so easily satisfied. He was fixed upon his villanous measures perhaps; and so might not be sorry to have a pretence against me. He bit his lip—he had been but too much used, he said, to such indifference, such coldness, in the very midst of his happiest prospects.—I had on twenty occasions shown him, to his infinite regret, that any favour I was to confer upon him was to be the result of—there he stopped—and not of my choice.

This had like to have set all back again. I was exceedingly offended. But the pretended ladies interposed. The elder severely took him to task. He ought, she told him, to be satisfied with what I had said. She desired no other condition. And what, sir, said she, with an air of authority, would you commit errors, and expect to be rewarded for them?

Could I help, my dear, being pleased with them?—

Permit me here to break off. The task grows too heavy, at present, for the heart of

Your CLARISSA HARLOWE.

I was very ill, and obliged to lay down my pen. I thought I should have fainted. But am better now—so will proceed.

The pretended ladies, the more we talked, the fonder seemed to be of me. And the Lady Betty had Mrs. Moore called up; and asked her, if she had accommodations for her niece and self, her woman, and two men-servants, for three or four days?

Mr. Lovelace answered for her that she had.

She would not ask her dear niece Lovelace (permit me, my dear, whispered she, this charming style before strangers!—I will keep your uncle's secret) whether she should be welcome or not to be so near her. But for the time she should stay in these parts, she would come up every night—what say you, Niece Charlotte?

The pretended Charlotte answered, she should like to do so, of all things.

The Lady Betty called her an obliging girl. She liked the place, she said. Her cousin Leeson would excuse her. The air, and my company, would do her good. She never chose to lie in the smoky town, if she could help it. In short, my dear, said she to me, I will stay till you hear from Miss Howe; and till I have your consent to go with me to Glenham Hall. Not one moment will I be out of your company, when I can have it. Stedman, my solicitor, as the distance from town is so small, may attend me here for instructions. Niece Charlotte, one word with you, child.

They retired to the farther end of the room, and talked about their night-dresses.

The Miss Charlotte said, Morrison might be dispatched for them.

True, said the other—but I have some letters in my private box, which I must have up. And you know, Charlotte, that I trust nobody with the keys of that.

Could not Morrison bring up that box?

No. She thought it safest where it was. She had

heard of a robbery committed but two days ago at the foot of Hampstead-hill ; and she should be ruined if she lost her box.

Well then, it was but going to town to undress, and she would leave her jewels behind her, and return ; and should be easier a great deal on all accounts.

For my part, I wondered they came up with them. But that was to be taken as a respect paid to me. And then they hinted at another visit of ceremony which they had thought to make, had they not found me so inexpressibly engaging.

The severity of her raillery, however, was turned upon Mr. Lovelace, on occasion of the character of the people who kept the lodgings, which she said, I had thought myself so well warranted to leave privately.

This startled me. For having then no suspicion of the vile Tomlinson, I concluded that if the house were notorious, either he, or Mr. Mennell, would have given me or him some hints of it—nor, although I liked not the people, did I observe anything in them very culpable, till the Wednesday night before, that they offered not to come to my assistance, although within hearing of my distress (as I am sure they were) and having as much reason as I to be frighted at the fire, had it been real.

I looked with indignation upon Mr. Lovelace, at this hint.

He seemed abashed. I have not patience, but to recollect the specious looks of this vile deceiver. But how was it possible, that even that florid countenance of his should enable him to command a blush at his pleasure ? For blush he did, more than once : and the blush, on this occasion, was a deep-dyed crimson, unstrained-for, and natural, as I thought—but he is so much of the actor, that he seems able to enter into any character ; and his muscles and features appear entirely under obedience to his wicked will.

The pretended lady went on, saying, she had taken upon herself to inquire after the people, on hearing that I had left the house in disgust ; and though she heard not anything much amiss, yet she heard enough to make her wonder that he would carry his spouse, a person of so much delicacy, to a house, that, if it had not a bad fame, had not a good one.

You must think, my dear, that I liked the pretended Lady Betty the better for this. I suppose it was designed I should.

I think, Niece Charlotte, proceeded she, as my nephew has not parted with these lodgings, you and I (for, as my dear Miss Harlowe dislikes the people, I would not ask her for her company) will take a dish of tea with my nephew there, before we go out of town ; and then we shall see what sort of people they are. I have heard, that Mrs. Sinclair is a mighty forbidding creature.

With all my heart, madam. In your ladyship's company I shall make no scruple of going anywhither.

Ah, my dear Miss Howe ! I had almost forgot my resentments against the pretended nephew !—So many agreeable things said, made me think, that, if you should advise it, and if I could bring my mind to forgive the wretch for an outrage so premeditatedly vile, and could forbear despising him for that and his other ungrateful and wicked ways, I might not be unhappy in an alliance with such a family. Yet, thought I at the time, with what intermixtures does everything come to me, that has the appearance of good !—However, as my lucid hopes made me see fewer faults in the behaviour of these pretended ladies, than recollection and abhorrence have helped me since to see, I began to reproach myself, that I had not at first thrown myself into their protection.

But amidst all these delightful prospects, I must not, said the Lady Betty, forget that I am to go to town.

She then ordered her coach to be got to the door—we will all go to town together, said she, and return together. Morrison shall stay here, and see everything as I am used to have it, in relation to my apartment, and my bed; for I am very particular in some respects. My cousin Leeson's servants can do all I want to be done with regard to my night-dresses, and the like. And it will be a little airing for you, my dear, and a good opportunity for Mr. Lovelace to order what you want of your apparel to be sent from your former lodgings to Mrs. Leeson's; and we can bring it up with us from thence.

I had no intention to comply. But as I did not imagine that she would insist upon my going to town with them, I made no answer to that part of her speech.

I must here lay down my tired pen!

Recollection! heart-affecting recollection! how it pains me!

In the midst of these agreeablenesses, the coach came to the door. The pretended Lady Betty besought me to give them my company to their cousin Leeson's. I desired to be excused: yet suspected nothing. She would not be denied. How happy would a visit so condescending make her cousin Leeson!—her cousin Leeson was not unworthy of my acquaintance: and would take it for the greatest favour in the world.

I objected my dress. But the objection was not admitted. She bespoke a supper of Mrs. Moore to be ready at nine.

Mr. Lovelace, vile hypocrite, and wicked deceiver! seeing, as he said, my dislike to go, desired her ladyship not to insist upon it.

Fondness for my company was pleaded. She begged me to oblige her: made a motion to help me to my fan herself: and, in short, was so very urgent, that my feet complied against my speech, and my mind: and, being, in a manner, led to the coach by her, and made to step in.

first, she followed me; and her pretended niece, and the wretch, followed her: and away it drove.

Nothing but the height of affectionate complaisance passed all the way: over and over, what a joy would this unexpected visit give her cousin Leeson! What a pleasure must it be to such a mind as mine, to be able to give so much joy to everybody I came near!

The cruel, the savage seducer (as I have since recollected) was in rapture all the way; but yet such a sort of rapture, as he took visible pains to check.

Hateful villain! how I abhor him!—What mischief must be then in his plotting heart!—What a devoted victim must I be in all their eyes!

Though not pleased, I was nevertheless just then thoughtless of danger; they endeavouring thus to lift me up above all apprehension of that, and above myself too.

But think, my dear, what a dreadful turn all had upon me, when, through several streets and ways I knew nothing of, the coach slackening its pace, came within sight of the dreadful house of the dreadfulest woman in the world; as she proved to me.

Lord be good unto me! cried the poor fool, looking out of the coach—Mr. Lovelace!—Madam! turning to the pretended Lady Betty—madam! turning to the niece, my hands and eyes lifted up—Lord be good unto me!

What! what! what! my dear!

He pulled the string—what need to have come this way? said he.—But since we are, I will but ask a question—my dearest life, why this apprehension?

The coachman stopped: his servant, who, with one of hers was behind, alighted—Ask, said he, if I have any letters? Who knows, my dearest creature, turning to me, but we may already have one from the captain?—We will not go out of the coach!—fear nothing—why so

apprehensive?—Oh! these fine spirits!—cried the execrable insulter.

Dreadfully did my heart then misgive me: I was ready to faint. Why this terror, my life? You shall not stir out of the coach—but one question, now the fellow has drove us this way.

Your lady will faint, cried the execrable Lady Betty, turning to him.—My dearest niece! (niece I will call you, taking my hand) we must alight, if you are so ill.—Let us alight—only for a glass of water and hartshorn—indeed we must alight.

No, no, no—I am well—quite well—won't the man drive on?—I am well—quite well—indeed I am—man, drive on, putting my head out of the coach—man, drive on!—though my voice was too low to be heard.

The coach stopped at the door. How I trembled!

Dorcas came to the door, on its stopping.

My dearest creature, said the vile man, gasping, as it were for breath, you shall not alight—any letters for me, Dorcas?

There are two, sir. And here is a gentleman, Mr. Belton, sir, waits for your honour; and has done so above an hour.

I'll just speak to him. Open the door—you shan't step out, my dear—a letter perhaps from the captain already! You shan't step out, my dear.

I sighed, as if my heart would burst.

But we must step out, nephew: your lady will faint. Maid, a glass of hartshorn and water!—My dear, you must step out.—You will faint, child—we must cut your laces.—(I believe my complexion was all manner of colours by turns)—Indeed, you must step out, my dear.

He knew, he said, I should be well, the moment the coach drove from the door. I should not alight. By his soul, I should not.

Lord, lord, nephew, lord, lord, cousin, both women in a

breath, what ado you make about nothing! You persuade your lady to be afraid of alighting.—See you not, that she is just fainting?

Indeed, madam, said the vile seducer, my dearest love must not be moved in this point against her will. I beg it may not be insisted upon.

Fiddle-faddle, foolish man—what a pother is here! I guess how it is: you are ashamed to let us see, what sort of people you carried your lady among—but do you go out, and speak to your friend, and take your letters.

He stepped out; but shut the coach-door after him, to oblige me.

The coach may go on, madam, said I.

The coach shall go on, my dear life, said he—but he gave not, nor intended to give, orders that it should.

Let the coach go on! said I—Mr. Lovelace may come after us.

Indeed, my dear, you are ill!—Indeed you must alight—alight but for one quarter of an hour—alight but to give orders yourself about your things. Whom can you be afraid of in my company, and my niece's? These people must have behaved shockingly to you! Please the Lord, I'll inquire into it!—I'll see what sort of people they are!

Immediately came the old creature to the door. A thousand pardons, dear madam, stepping to the coach-side, if we have any way offended you.—Be pleased, ladies (to the other two) to alight.

Well, my dear, whispered the Lady Betty, I now find, that an hideous description of a person we never saw, is an advantage to them. I thought the woman was a monster—but, really, she seems tolerable.

I was afraid I should have fallen into fits: but still, refused to go out.—Man!—Man!—Man! cried I, gaspingly, my head out of the coach and in, by turns, half a dozen times running, drive on!—Let us go!

My heart misgave me beyond the power of my own accounting for it ; for still I did not suspect these women. But the antipathy I had taken to the vile house, and to find myself so near it, when I expected no such matter, with the sight of the old creature, all together, made me behave like a distracted person.

The hartshorn and water was brought. The pretended Lady Betty made me drink it. Heaven knows if there were anything else in it !

Besides, said she, whisperingly, I must see what sort of creatures the nieces are. Want of delicacy cannot be hid from me. You could not surely, my dear, have this aversion to re-enter a house, for a few minutes, in our company, in which you lodged and boarded several weeks, unless these women could be so presumptuously vile, as my nephew ought not to know.

Out stepped the pretended lady ; the servant, at her command, having opened the door.

Dearest madam, said the other to me, let me follow you (for I was next the door). Fear nothing : I will not stir from your presence.

Come, my dear, said the pretended lady : give me your hand ; holding out hers. Oblige me this once.

I will bless your footsteps, said the old creature, if once more you honour my house with your presence.

A crowd by this time was gathered about us ; but I was too much affected to mind that.

Again the pretended Miss Montague urged me ; standing up as ready to go out if I would give her room. Lord, my dear, said she, who can bear this crowd ?—What will people think ?

The pretended lady again pressed me, with both her hands held out—Only, my dear, to give orders about your things.

And thus pressed, and gazed at (for then I looked about me) the women so richly dressed, people whispering ; in

an evil moment, out stepped I, trembling, forced to lean with both my hands (frightened too much for ceremony) on the pretended Lady Betty's arm—O that I had dropped down dead upon the guilty threshold!

We shall stay but a few minutes, my dear!—but a few minutes! said the same specious jilt—out of breath with her joy, as I have since thought, that they had thus triumphed over the unhappy victim!

Come, Mrs. Sinclair, I think your name is, show us the way—following her, and leading me. I am very thirsty. You have frightened me, my dear, with your strange fears. I must have tea made, if it can be done in a moment. We have farther to go, Mrs. Sinclair, and must return to Hampstead this night.

It shall be ready in a moment, cried the wretch. We have water boiling.

Hasten, then.—Come, my dear, to me, as she led me through the passage to the fatal inner house—lean upon me—how you tremble!—how you falter in your steps!—dearest niece Lovelace (the old wretch being in hearing) why these hurries upon your spirits?—We'll be gone in a minute.

And thus she led the poor sacrifice into the old wretch's too-well known parlour.

Never was anybody so gentle, so meek, so low-voiced, as the odious woman; drawling out, in a puling accent, all the obliging things she could say: awed, I then thought, by the conscious dignity of a woman of quality; glittering with jewels.

The called-for tea was ready presently.

There was no Mr. Belton, I believe: for the wretch went not to anybody, unless it were while we were parleying in the coach. No such person, however, appeared at the tea-table.

I was made to drink two dishes, with milk, complaisantly urged by the pretended ladies helping me each to one. I

was stupid to their hands ; and, when I took the tea, almost choked with vapours ; and could hardly swallow.

I thought, transiently thought, that the tea, the last dish particularly, had an odd taste. They, on my palating it, observed, that the milk was London milk ; far short in goodness of what they were accustomed to from their own dairies.

I have no doubt that my own dishes, and perhaps my hartshorn, were prepared for me ; in which case it was more proper for their purpose, that they should help me, than that I should help myself. Ill before, I found myself still more and more disordered in my head ; a heavy torpid pain increasing fast upon me. But I imputed it to my terror.

Nevertheless, at the pretended ladies' motion, I went upstairs, attended by Dorcas ; who affected to weep for joy, that once more she saw my blessed face, that was the vile creature's word ; and immediately I set about taking out some of my clothes, ordering what should be put up, and what sent after me.

While I was thus employed, up came the pretended Lady Betty, in a hurrying way.—My dear, you won't be long before you are ready. My nephew is very busy in writing answers to his letters : so, I'll just whip away and change my dress, and call upon you in an instant.

O madam !—I am ready ! I am now ready !—You must not leave me here. And down I sank, affrighted, into a chair.

This instant, this instant, I will return—before you can be ready—before you can have packed up your things.—We would not be late—the robbers we have heard of may be out. Don't let us be late.

And away she hurried before I could say another word. Her pretended niece went with her, without taking notice to me of her going.

I had no suspicion yet, that these women were not

indeed the ladies they personated; and I blamed myself for my weak fears.—It cannot be, thought I, that such ladies will abet treachery against a poor creature they are so fond of. They must undoubtedly be the persons they appear to be. What folly to doubt it! The air, the dress, the dignity, of women of quality. How unworthy of them, and of my charity, concluded I, is this ungenerous shadow of suspicion.

So, recovering my stupefied spirits, as well as they could be recovered (for I was heavier and heavier; and wondered to Dorcas, what ailed me; rubbing my eyes, and taking some of her snuff, pinch after pinch, to very little purpose) I pursued my employment: but when that was over, all packed up that I designed to be packed up; and I had nothing to do but to think; and found them tarry so long; I thought I should have gone distracted. I shut myself into the chamber that had been mine; I kneeled, I prayed; yet knew not what I prayed for: then ran out again: It was almost dark night, I said: where, where, was Mr. Lovelace?

He came to me, taking no notice at first of my consternation and wildness (what they had given me made me incoherent and wild). All goes well, said he, my dear!—A line from Captain Tomlinson!

All indeed did go well for the villanous project of the most cruel and most villanous of men!

I demanded his aunt!—I demanded his cousin!—The evening, I said, was closing!—My head was very, very bad, I remember I said—and it grew worse and worse.—

Terror, however, as yet kept up my spirits; and I insisted upon his going himself to hasten them.

He called his servant. He raved at the sex for their delay: 'Twas well that business of consequence seldom depended upon such parading, unpunctual triflers!

His servant came.

He ordered him to fly to his cousin Leeson's, and to let Lady Betty and his cousin know how uneasy we both were at their delay : adding, of his own accord, desire them, if they don't come instantly, to send their coach, and we will go without them. Tell them I wonder they'll serve me so !

I thought this was considerably and fairly put. But now, indifferent as my head was, I had a little time to consider the man, and his behaviour. He terrified me with his looks, and with his violent emotions, as he gazed upon me. Evident joy-suppressed emotions, as I have since recollected. His sentences short, and pronounced as if his breath were touched. Never saw I his abominable eyes look, as then they looked—triumph in them !—fierce and wild ; and more disagreeable than the women's at the vile house appeared to me when I first saw them : and at times, such a leering, mischief-boding cast !—I would have given the world to have been a hundred miles from him. Yet his behaviour was decent—a decency, however, that I might have seen to be struggled for—for he snatched my hand two or three times, with a vehemence in his grasp that hurt me ; speaking words of tenderness through his shut teeth, as it seemed ; and let it go with a beggar-voiced humble accent, like the vile woman's just before ; half-inward ; yet his words and manner carrying the appearance of strong, and almost convulsed passion !—O my dear ! What mischiefs was he not then meditating !

I complained once or twice of thirst. My mouth seemed parched. At the time, I supposed that it was my terror (gasping often as I did for breath) that parched up the roof of my mouth. I called for water : some table-beer was brought me : beer, I suppose, was a better vehicle (if I were not dosed enough before) for their potions. I told the maid, that she knew I seldom tasted malt-liquor : yet, suspecting nothing of this nature, being extremely thirsty, I drank it, as what came next : and

instantly, as it were, found myself much worse than before; as if inebriated, I should fancy : I know not how.

His servant was gone twice as long as he needed : and just before his return, came one of the pretended Lady Betty's with a letter for Mr. Lovelace.

He sent it up to me. I read it : and then it was that I thought myself a lost creature ; it being to put off her going to Hampstead that night, on account of violent fits which Miss Montague was pretended to be seized with ; for then immediately came into my head his vile attempt upon me in this house ; the revenge that my flight might too probably inspire him with on that occasion, and because of the difficulty I made to forgive him, and to be reconciled to him ; his very looks wild and dreadful to me ; and the women of the house such as I had more reason than ever, even from the pretended Lady Betty's hint, to be afraid of : all these crowding together in my apprehensive mind, I fell into a kind of phrensy.

I have not remembrance how I was, for the time it lasted ; but I know, that in my first agitations, I pulled off my head-dress, and tore my ruffles in twenty tatters, and ran to find him out.

When a little recovered, I insisted upon the hint he had given of their coach. But the messenger, he said, had told him, that it was sent to fetch a physician, lest his chariot should be put up, or not ready.

I then insisted upon going directly to Lady Betty's lodgings.

Mrs. Leeson's was now a crowded house, he said : and as my earnestness could be owing to nothing but groundless apprehension (and O what vows, what protestations of his honour, did he then make !) he hoped I would not add to their present concern. Charlotte, indeed, was used to fits, he said, upon any great surprises, whether of joy or grief ; and they would hold her for a week together, if not got off in a few hours.

You are an observer of eyes, my dear, said the villain ; perhaps in secret insult : saw you not in Miss Montague's now and then at Hampstead, something wildish ? I was afraid for her then. Silence and quiet only do her good. Your concern for her, and her love for you, will but augment the poor girl's disorder, if you should go.

All impatient with grief and apprehension, I still declared myself resolved not to stay in that house till morning. All I had in the world, my rings, my watch, my little money, for a coach ; or, if one were not to be got, I would go on foot to Hampstead that night, though I walked it by myself.

A coach was hereupon sent for, or pretended to be sent for. Any price, he said, he would give to oblige me, late as it was ; and he would attend me with all his soul. But no coach was to be got.

Let me cut short the rest. I grew worse and worse in my head ; now stupid, now raving, now senseless. The vilest of vile women was brought to frighten me. Never was there so horrible a creature as she appeared to me at the time.

I remember, I pleaded for mercy. I remember that I said I would be his—indeed I would be his—to obtain his mercy. But no mercy found I ! My strength, my intellects, failed me—and then such scenes followed—O my dear, such dreadful scenes !—Fits upon fits (faintly indeed and imperfectly remembered) procuring me no compassion—but death was withheld from me. That would have been too great a mercy !

Thus was I tricked and deluded back by blacker hearts of my own sex, than I thought there were in the world ; who appeared to me to be persons of honour : and, when in his power, thus barbarously was I treated by this villanous man !

I was so senseless, that I dare not aver, that the horrid

creatures of the house were personally aiding and abetting. But some visionary remembrances I have of female figures, flitting, as I may say, before my sight; the wretched woman's particularly. But as these confused ideas might be owing to the terror I had conceived of the worse than masculine violence she had been permitted to assume to me, for expressing my abhorrence of her house; and as what I suffered from his barbarity wants not that aggravation; I will say no more on a subject so shocking as this must ever be to my remembrance.

I never saw the personating wretches afterwards. He persisted to the last (dreadfully invoking Heaven as a witness to the truth of his assertion) that they were really and truly the ladies they pretended to be; declaring, that they could not take leave of me, when they left the town, because of the state of senselessness and phrensy I was in. For their intoxicating, or rather stupefying, potions had almost deleterious effects upon my intellects, as I have hinted; insomuch that, for several days together, I was under a strange delirium; now moping, now dozing, now weeping, now raving, now scribbling, tearing what I scribbled as fast as I wrote it: most miserable when now and then a ray of reason brought confusedly to my remembrance what I had suffered.

*The lady next gives an account,
Of her recovery from her delirium and sleepy disorder:
Of her attempt to get away in his absence:
Of the conversations that followed, at his return, between
them:
Of the guilty figure he made:
Of her resolution not to have him:
Of her several efforts to escape:
Of her treaty with Dorcas, to assist her in it:
Of Dorcas's dropping the promissory note, undoubtedly,
as she says, on purpose to betray her:
Of her triumph over all the creatures of the house,*

assembled to terrify her ; and perhaps to commit fresh outrages upon her :

Of his setting out for M. Hall :

Of his repeated letters to induce her to meet him at the altar, on her uncle's anniversary :

Of her determined silence to them all :

Of her second escape, effected, as she says, contrary to her own expectation : that attempt being at first but the intended prelude to a more promising one, which she had formed in her mind :

And of other particulars ; which being to be found in Mr. Lovelace's letters preceding, and the letter of his friend Belford, are omitted. She then proceeds :

The very hour that I found myself in a place of safety, I took pen to write to you. When I began, I designed only to write six or eight lines, to enquire after your health : for, having heard nothing from you, I feared indeed, that you had been, and still were, too ill to write. But no sooner did my pen begin to blot the paper, but my sad heart hurried it into length. The apprehensions I had lain under, that I should not be able to get away ; the fatigue I had in effecting my escape : the difficulty of procuring a lodging for myself ; having disliked the people of two houses, and those of a third disliking me ; for you must think I made a frightened appearance—these, together with the recollection of what I had suffered from him, and my further apprehensions of my insecurity, and my desolate circumstances, had so disordered me, that I remember I rambled strangely in that letter.

In short, I thought it, on re-perusal, a half distracted one : but I then despaired (were I to begin again) of writing better : so I let it go : and can have no excuse for directing it as I did, if the cause of the incoherence in it will not furnish me with a very pitiable one.

And now, honoured madam, and my dearest Miss Howe, who are to sit in judgment upon my case, permit me to

lay down my pen with one request, which, with the greatest earnestness, I make to you both ; and that is, that you will neither of you open your lips in relation to the potions and the violences I have hinted at. Not that I am solicitous, that my disgrace should be hidden from the world, or that it should not be generally known, that the man has proved a villain to me : for this, it seems, everybody but myself expected from his character. But suppose, as his actions by me are really of a capital nature, it were insisted upon, that I should appear to prosecute him and his accomplices in a court of justice, how do you think I could bear that ?

But since my character, before the capital enormity, was lost in the eye of the world ; and that from the very hour I left my father's house ; and since all my own hopes of worldly happiness are entirely over ; let me slide quietly into my grave ; and let it not be remembered, except by one friendly tear, and no more, dropped from your gentle eye, mine own dear Anna Howe, on the happy day that shall shut up all my sorrows, that there was such a creature as

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Saturday, July 8.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sunday, July 9.

MAY heaven signalise its vengeance, in the face of all the world, upon the most abandoned and profligate of men !—and in its own time, I doubt not but it will.—And we must look to a world beyond this for the reward of your sufferings !

The letter you sent me inclosed as mine, of the 7th of June, is a villanous forgery. The hand, indeed, is astonishingly like mine ; and the cover, I see, is actually my cover : but yet the letter is not so exactly imitated, but

that (had you had any suspicions about his vileness at the time) you, who so well know my hand, might have detected it.

In short, this vile forged letter, though a long one, contains but a few extracts from mine. Mine was a very long one. He has omitted everything, I see, in it, that could have shown you what a detestable house the house is; and given you suspicions of the vile Tomlinson.—You will see this, and how he has turned Miss Lardner's information, and my advices to you (execrable villain!) to his own horrid ends, by the rough draught of the genuine letter, which I shall inclose.

Apprehensive for both our safeties from the villany of such a daring and profligate contriver, I must call upon you, my dear, to resolve upon taking legal vengeance of the infernal wretch. And this not only for our own sakes, but for the sakes of innocents who otherwise may yet be deluded and outraged by him.

She then gives the particulars of the report made by the young fellow whom she sent to Hampstead with her letter; and who supposed he had delivered it into her own hand; and then proceeds:

I am astonished, that the vile wretch, who could know nothing of the time my messenger (whose honesty I can vouch for) would come, could have a creature ready to personate you! Strange, that the man should happen to arrive just as you were gone to church (as I find was the fact, on comparing what he says with your hint that you were at church twice that day) when he might have got to Mrs. Moore's two hours before!—But had you told me, my dear, that the villain had found you out, and was about you!—you should have done that—yet I blame you upon a judgment founded on the event only!

I inclose not only the rough draught of my long letter mentioned above; but the heads of that which the young

fellow thought he delivered into your own hands at Hampstead. And when you have perused them, I will leave you to judge, how much reason I had to be surprised, that you wrote me not an answer to either of those letters; one of which you owned you had received (though it proved to be his forged one); the other delivered into your own hands, as I was assured; and both of them of so much concern to your honour; and still how much more surprised I must be, when I received a letter from Mrs. Townsend, dated June 15, from Hampstead, importing,—That Mr. Lovelace, who had been with you several days, had, on the Monday before, brought Lady Betty and his cousin, richly dressed, and in a coach-and-four, to visit you: who, with your own consent, had carried you to town with them—to your former lodgings; where you still were: That the Hampstead women believed you to be married; and reflected upon me as a fomentor of differences between man and wife: That he himself was at Hampstead the day before: viz., Wednesday the 14th; and boasted of his happiness with you: That he declared that you were entirely reconciled to your former lodgings:—And that, finally, the women at Hampstead told Mrs. Townsend, that he had very handsomely discharged theirs.

I own to you, my dear, that I was so much surprised and disgusted at these appearances against a conduct till then unexceptionable, that I was resolved to make myself as easy as I could, and wait till you should think fit to write to me. But I could rein in my impatience but for a few days; and on the 20th of June I wrote a sharp letter to you; which I find you did not receive.

What a fatality, my dear, has appeared in your case, from the very beginning till this hour! Had my mother permitted——

But can I blame her; when you have a father and mother living, who have so much to answer for?—So

much!—as no father and mother, considering the child they have driven, persecuted, exposed, renounced—ever had to answer for!

But again I must execrate the abandoned villain—Yet, as I said before, all words are poor, and beneath the occasion.

But, for the future, if you approve of it, I will send my letters by the usual hand (Collins's) to be left at the Saracen's Head on Snow Hill: Whither you may send yours (as we both used to do, to Wilson's) except such as we shall think fit to transmit by the post: which I am afraid, after my next, must be directed to Mr. Hickman, as before: Since my mother is for fixing a condition to our correspondence, which, I doubt, you will not comply with, though I wish you would. This condition I shall acquaint you with by-and-bye.

Meantime, begging excuse for all the harsh things in my last, of which your sweet meekness and superior greatness of soul have now made me most heartily ashamed, I beseech you, my dearest creature, to believe me to be,

Your truly sympathising and
unalterable Friend,

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Tuesday, July 11.

FORGIVE you, my dear!—Most cordially do I forgive you—Will you forgive me for some sharp things I wrote in return to yours of the 5th? You could not have loved me, as you do, nor had the concern you have always shown for my honour, if you had not been utterly displeased with me, on the appearance which my conduct wore to you when you wrote that letter. I most heartily thank you, my best and only love,

for the opportunity you gave me of clearing it up ; and for being generously ready to acquit me of intentional blame, the moment you had read my melancholy narrative.

I am far from thinking myself out of the reach of this man's further violence. But what can I do ? Whither can I fly ?—Perhaps my bad state of health (which must grow worse, as recollection of the past evils, and reflections upon them, grow heavier and heavier upon me) may be my protection. Once, indeed, I thought of going abroad ; and had I the prospect of many years before me, I would go.—But, my dear, the blow is given.—Nor have you reason, now, circumstanced as I am, to be concerned that it is. What a heart must I have, if it be not broken !—And indeed, my dear friend, I do so earnestly wish for the last closing scene, and with so much comfort find myself in a declining way, that I even sometimes ungratefully regret that naturally healthy constitution, which used to double upon me all my enjoyments.

O my dear ! what would I give to obtain a revocation of my father's malediction ! A reconciliation is not to be hoped for. You, who never loved my father, may think my solicitude on this head a weakness : But the motive for it, sunk as my spirits at times are, is not always weak.

Adieu, my dearest friend !—May you be happy !—And then your Clarissa cannot be wholly miserable !

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Wednesday Night, July 12.



WRITE, my dearest creature, I cannot but write, to express my concern on your dejection. Let me beseech you, my charming excellence, let me beseech you, not to give way to it.

Comfort yourself, on the contrary, in the triumphs of a virtue unsullied ; a will wholly faultless. Who could have

withstood the trials that you have surmounted?—Your cousin Morden will soon come. He will see justice done you, I make no doubt, as well with regard to what concerns your person as your estate. And many happy days may you yet see; and much good may you still do, if you will not heighten unavoidable accidents into guilty despondency.

My mother, at my earnest importunity, has just given me leave to write, and to receive your letters—but fastened this condition upon the concession, that yours must be under cover to Mr. Hickman (this with a view, I suppose, to give him consideration with me); and upon this further condition, that she is to see all we write.—“When girls are set upon a point,” she told one, who told me again, “it is better for a mother, if possible, to make herself of their party, than to oppose them; since there will be then hopes that she will still hold the reins in her own hands.”

Pray let me know what the people are with whom you lodge?—Shall I send Mrs. Townsend to direct you to lodgings either more safe or more convenient for you?

Be pleased to write to me by Rogers; who will wait on you for your answer, at your own time.

Adieu, my dearest creature. Comfort yourself, as you would in the like unhappy circumstances comfort

Your own

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Thursday, July 13.

YOUR messenger has now indeed seen me. I talked with him on the cheat put upon him at Hampstead: and am sorry to have reason to say, that had not the poor young man been very simple, and very self-sufficient, he had not been so grossly deluded.

I think I cannot be more private, than where I am.

I hope I am safe. All the risk I run, is in going out, and returning from morning prayers ; which I have two or three times ventured to do ; once at Lincoln's Inn chapel, at eleven ; once at St. Dunstan's, Fleet Street, at seven in the morning, in a chair both times ; and twice at six in the morning, at the neighbouring church in Covent Garden. The wicked wretches I have escaped from, will not I hope come to church to look for me ; especially at so early prayers ; and I have fixed upon the privatest pew in the latter church to hide myself in ; and perhaps I may lay out a little matter in an ordinary gown, by way of disguise ; my face half hid by my mob. —I am very careless, my dear, of my appearance now. Neat and clean, takes up the whole of my attention.

The man's name at whose house I lodge, is Smith—a glove maker, as well as seller. His wife is the shop-keeper. A dealer also in stockings, ribbons, snuff, and perfumes. A matron-like woman, plain-hearted, and prudent. The husband an honest, industrious man. And they live in good understanding with each other : a proof with me, that their hearts are right ; for where a married couple live together upon ill terms, it is a sign, I think, that each knows something amiss of the other, either with regard to temper or morals, which if the world knew as well as themselves, it would perhaps as little like them, as such people like each other. Happy the marriage, where neither man nor wife has any wilful or premeditated evil in their general conduct to reproach the other with ! —For even persons who have bad hearts will have a veneration for those who have good ones.

Two neat rooms, with plain, but clean furniture, on the first floor, are mine ; one they call the dining-room.

There is, up another pair of stairs, a very worthy widow lodger, Mrs. Lovick by name ; who, although of low fortunes, is much respected, as Mrs. Smith assures me, by people of condition of her acquaintance, for her piety, prudence,

and understanding. With her I propose to be well acquainted.

At present, my head is much disordered. I have not indeed enjoyed it with any degree of clearness, since the violence done to that, and to my heart too, by the wicked arts of the abandoned creatures I was cast among.

All I will at present add, are my thanks to your mother for her indulgence to us. Due compliments to Mr. Hickman; and my request, that you will believe me to be, to my last hour, and beyond it, if possible, my beloved friend, and my dearer self (for what is now my self?)

Your obliged and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday Night, July 13.

COLLINS sets not out to-morrow. Some domestic occasion hinders him. Rogers is but now returned from you, and cannot well be spared. Mr. Hickman is gone upon an affair of my mother's, and has taken both his servants with him, to do credit to his employer: so I am forced to venture this by the post, directed by your assumed name.

I am to acquaint you, that I have been favoured with a visit from Miss Montague and her sister, in Lord M.'s chariot-and-six. My lord's gentleman rode here yesterday, with a request that I would receive a visit from the two young ladies, on a very particular occasion; the greater favour, if it might be the next day.

As I had so little personal knowledge of either, I doubted not but it must be in relation to the interests of my dear friend; and so consulting my mother, I sent them an invitation to favour me (because of the distance) with their company at dinner; which they kindly accepted.

I hope, my dear, since things have been so very bad,

that their errand to me will be as agreeable to you, as anything that can now happen. They came in the name of Lord M. and Lady Sarah and Lady Betty his two sisters, to desire my interest to engage you to put yourself into the protection of Lady Betty; who will not part with you till she sees all the justice done you that now can be done.

Lady Sarah had not stirred out for a twelvemonth before; never since she lost her agreeable daughter whom you and I saw at Mrs. Benson's: but was induced to take this journey by Lady Betty, purely to procure you reparation, if possible. And their joint strength, united with Lord M.'s, has so far succeeded, that the wretch has bound himself to them, and to these young ladies, in the solemnest manner, to wed you in their presence, if they can prevail upon you to give him your hand.

This consolation you may take to yourself, that all this honourable family have a due (that is, the highest) sense of your merit, and greatly admire you. The horrid creature has not spared himself in doing justice to your virtue; and the young ladies gave us such an account of his confessions, and self-condemnation, that my mother was quite charmed with you; and we all four shed tears of joy, that there is one of our sex (I, that that one is my dearest friend) who has done so much honour to it, as to deserve the exalted praises given you by a wretch so self-conceited; though pity for the excellent creature mixed with our joy.

He promises by them to make the best of husbands and my Lord, and Lady Sarah, and Lady Betty, are all three to be guarantees that he will be so. Noble settlements, noble presents, they talked of: they say they left Lord M. and his two sisters talking of nothing else but of those presents and settlements, how most to do you honour, the greater in proportion for the indignities you have suffered.

I made a great many objections for you—all, I believe, that you could have made yourself had you been present. But I have no doubt to advise you, my dear (and so does my mother), instantly to put yourself into Lady Betty's protection, with a resolution to take the wretch for your husband. All his future grandeur (he wants not pride) depends upon his sincerity to you ; and the young ladies vouch for the depth of his concern for the wrongs he has done you.

All his apprehension is, in your readiness to communicate to every one, as he fears, the evils you have suffered ; which he thinks will expose you both. But had you not revealed them to Lady Betty, you had not had so warm a friend ; since it is owing to two letters you wrote to her, that all this good, as I hope it will prove, was brought about. But I advise you to be more sparing in exposing what is past, whether you have thoughts of accepting him or not : for what, my dear, can that avail now, but to give a handle to vile wretches to triumph over your friends ; since every one will not know how much to your honour your very sufferings have been ?

Your melancholy letter brought by Rogers, with his account of your indifferent health, confirmed to him by the woman of the house, as well as by your looks, and by your faintness while you talked with him, would have given me inexpressible affliction, had I not been cheered by this agreeable visit from the young ladies. I hope you will be equally so on my imparting the subject of it to you.

Indeed, my dear, you must not hesitate. You must oblige them. The alliance is splendid and honourable. Very few will know anything of his brutal baseness to you. All must end, in a little while, in a general reconciliation ; and you will be able to resume your course of doing the good to every deserving object which procured you blessings wherever you set your foot.

Adieu, my dearest friend. Be happy : and hundreds will then be happy of consequence. Inexpressibly so, I am sure, will then be

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sunday Night, July 16.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—Why would you permit a mind so much devoted to your service to labour under such an impatience as you must know it would labour under, for want of an answer to a letter of such consequence to you, and therefore to me, as was mine of Thursday night?—Rogers told me on Thursday, you were so ill ; your letter sent by him was so melancholy !—Yet you must be ill indeed, if you could not write something to such a letter ; were it but a line, to say you would write as soon as you could. Sure you have received it. The master of our nearest post-office will pawn his reputation that it went safe : I gave him particular charge of it.

God send me good news of your health, of your ability to write ; and then I will chide you—indeed I will—as I never yet did chide you.

I suppose your excuse will be, that the subject required consideration—Lord ! my dear, so it might : but you have so right a mind, and the matter in question is so obvious, that you could not want half an hour to determine—then you intended, probably, to wait Collins's call for your letter as on to-morrow !—suppose—Miss !—(indeed I am angry with you ! suppose) something were to happen, as it did on Friday, that he should not be able to go to town to-morrow ?—How, child, could you serve me so !—I know not how to leave off scolding you !

I have ordered him to go directly (without stopping at

the Saracen's Head Inn) to you at your lodgings. Matters are now in so good a way, that he safely may.

Ever-faithful, ever-affectionate,

ANNA HOWE.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE.

Tuesday Morning, July 18.

MADAM,—I take the liberty to write to you, by this special messenger. In the phrensy of my soul I write to you, to demand of you, and of any of your family who can tell, news of my beloved friend ; who, I doubt, has been spirited away by the base arts of one of the blackest—O help me to a name bad enough to call him by ! her piety is proof against self-attempts. It must, it must be he, the only wretch, who could injure such an innocent ; and now—who knows what he has done with her !

If I have patience, I will give you the occasion of this distracted vehemence.

I wrote to her the very moment you and your sister left me. But being unable to procure a special messenger, as I intended, was forced to send by the post. I urged her (you know I promised that I would : I urged her) with earnestness, to comply with the desires of all your family. Having no answer, I wrote again on Sunday night ; and sent it by a particular hand, who travelled all night ; chiding her for keeping a heart so impatient as mine in such cruel suspense, upon a matter of so much importance to her ; and therefore to me. And very angry I was with her in my mind.

But, judge my astonishment, my distraction, when last night, the messenger, returning post-haste, brought me word, that she had not been heard of since Friday morning ! and that a letter lay for her at her lodgings, which came by the post ; and must be mine !

She went out about six that morning ; only intending, as they believed, to go to morning prayers at Covent Garden Church, just by her lodgings, as she had done divers times before—went on foot !—left word she should be back in an hour—very poorly in health !

Lord, have mercy upon me ! what shall I do !—I was a distracted creature all last night !

O madam ! you know not how I love her !—my own soul is not dearer to me, than my Clarissa Harlowe !—nay, she is my soul—for I now have none—only a miserable one, however—for she was the joy, the stay, the prop of my life. Never woman loved woman as we love one another. It is impossible to tell you half her excellencies. It was my glory and my pride, that I was capable of so fervent a love of so pure and matchless a creature—but now—who knows, whether the dear injured has not all her woes, her undeserved woes, completed in death ; or is not reserved for a worse fate !—this I leave to your inquiry—for—your—(shall I call the man—your ?) relation I understand is still with you.

Surely, my good ladies, you were well authorised in the proposals you made in presence of my mother ! surely he dare not abuse your confidence, and the confidence of your noble relations ! I make no apology for giving you this trouble, nor for desiring you to favour with a line by this messenger

Your almost distracted

ANNA HOWE.

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

M. Hall, Saturday Night, July 15.



ALL undone, undone, by Jupiter !—Zounds, Jack, what shall I do now ! A curse upon all my plots and contrivances !—But I have it—in the very heart and soul of me, I have it !

Thou toldest me, that my punishments were but beginning—canst thou, O fatal prognosticator! canst thou tell me, where they will end?

Thy assistance I bespeak. The moment thou receivest this, I bespeak thy assistance. This messenger rides for life and death—and I hope he'll find you at your town lodgings; if he meet not with you at Edgeware; where, being Sunday, he will call first.

This cursed, cursed woman, on Friday dispatched man and horse with the joyful news (as she thought it would be to me) in an exulting letter from Sally Martin, that she had found out my angel as on Wednesday last; and on Friday morning, after she had been at prayers at Covent Garden Church—praying for my reformation perhaps—got her arrested by two sheriff's officers, as she was returning to her lodgings, who (villains!) put her into a chair they had in readiness, and carried her to one of the cursed fellows' houses.

She has arrested her for £150 pretendedly due for board and lodgings: a sum (besides the low villany of the proceeding) which the dear soul could not possibly raise; all her clothes and effects, except what she had on and with her when she went away, being at the old devil's.

And here, for an aggravation, has the dear creature lain already two days; for I must be gallanting my two aunts and my two cousins, and giving Lord M. an airing after his lying-in—pox upon the whole family of us! and returned not till within this hour: and now returned to my distraction, on receiving the cursed tidings, and the exulting letter.

Hasten, hasten, dear Jack; for the love of God, hasten to the injured charmer! My heart bleeds for her—she deserved not this! I dare not stir. It will be thought done by my contrivance—and if I am absent from this place, that will confirm the suspicion.

Damnation seize quick this accursed woman!—yet she

thinks she has made no small merit with me. Unhappy, thrice unhappy circumstance!—at a time too, when better prospects were opening for the sweet creature!

Hasten to her!—clear me of this cursed job. Most sincerely, by all that's sacred, I swear you may!—yet have I been such a villanous plotter, that the charming sufferer will hardly believe it; although the proceeding be so dirtily low.

Set her free the moment you see her: without conditioning, free!—On your knees, for me, beg her pardon: and assure her, that, wherever she goes, I will not molest her: no, nor come near her, without her leave: and be sure allow not any of the damned crew to go near her—only, let her permit you to receive her commands from time to time. You have always been her friend and advocate. What would I now give, had I permitted you to have been a successful one!

Let her have all her clothes and effects sent her instantly, as a small proof of my sincerity. And force upon the dear creature, who must be moneyless, what sums you can get her to take. Let me know how she has been treated. If roughly, woe be to the guilty!

They had nothing to do, when they had found her, but to wait my orders how to proceed.

A line! a line! a kingdom for a line! with tolerable news, the first moment thou canst write!—This fellow waits to bring it.

MISS CHARLOTTE MONTAGUE TO MISS HOWE.

M. Hall, Tuesday afternoon.

HEAR MISS HOWE,—Your letter has infinitely disturbed us all.

This wretched man has been half distracted ever since Saturday night.

We knew not what ailed him, till your letter was brought.

Vile wretch, as he is, he is however innocent of this new evil.

Indeed he is, he must be ; as I shall more at large acquaint you.

But will not now detain your messenger.

Only to satisfy your just impatience, by telling you, that the dear young lady is safe, and, we hope, well.

A horrid mistake of his general orders has subjected her to the terror and disgrace of an arrest.

Poor dear Miss Harlowe !—her sufferings have endeared her to us, almost as much as her excellencies can have endeared her to you.

But she must be now quite at liberty.

He has been a distracted man, ever since the news was brought him ; and we knew not what ailed him.

But that I said before.

My Lord M., my lady Sarah Sadleir, and my lady Betty Lawrence, will all write to you this very afternoon.

And so will the wretch himself.

And send it by a servant of their own, not to detain yours.

I know not what I write.

But you shall have all the particulars, just, and true, and fair, from,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful and obedient servant,

CH. MONTAGUE.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Sunday Night, July 16.



WHAT a cursed piece of work hast thou made of it, with the most excellent of women ! Thou mayst be in earnest, or in jest, as thou wilt ; but the poor lady will not be long either thy sport, or the sport of fortune !

I will give thee an account of a scene that wants but her affecting pen to represent it justly; and it would wring all the black blood out of thy callous heart.

Thou only, who art the author of her calamities, shouldst have attended her in her prison. I am unequal to such a task: nor know I any other man but would.

This last act, however unintended by thee, yet a consequence of thy general orders, and too likely to be thought agreeable to thee, by those who know thy other villanies by her, has finished thy barbarous work. And I advise thee to trumpet forth everywhere, how much in earnest thou art to marry her, whether true or not.

Thou mayst safely do it. She will not live to put thee to the trial; and it will a little palliate for thy enormous usage of her, and be a means to make mankind, who know not what I know of the matter, herd a little longer with thee, and forbear to hunt thee to thy fellow-savages in the Libyan wilds and deserts.

Your messenger found me at Edgeware, expecting to dinner with me several friends, whom I had invited three days before. I sent apologies to them, as in a case of life and death; and speeded to town to the wicked woman's: for how knew I but shocking attempts might be made upon her by the cursed wretches; perhaps by your connivance, in order to mortify her into your measures?

Little knows the public what villanies are committed by vile wretches, in these abominable houses, upon innocent creatures drawn into their snares.

Finding the lady not there, I posted away to the officer's, although Sally told me, that she had been just come from thence; and that she had refused to see her, or (as she sent down word) anybody else; being resolved to have the remainder of that Sunday to herself, as it might, perhaps, be the last she should ever see.

I had the same thing told me, when I got thither.

I sent up to let her know, that I came with a commission to set her at liberty. I was afraid of sending up the name of a man known to be your friend. She absolutely refused to see any man, however, for that day, or to answer further to anything said from me.

Having therefore informed myself of all that the officer, and his wife, and servant, could acquaint me with, as well in relation to the horrid arrest, as to her behaviour, and the women's to her; and her ill state of health; I went back to Sinclair's, as I will still call her, and heard the three women's story: from all which, I am enabled to give you the following shocking particulars: which may serve till I can see the unhappy lady herself to-morrow, if then I gain admittance to her. You will find, that I have been very minute in my inquiries.

Your villain it was that set the poor lady, and had the impudence to appear, and abet the sheriff's officers in the cursed transaction. He thought, no doubt, that he was doing the most acceptable service to his blessed master. They had got a chair; the head ready up, as soon as service was over. And as she came out of the church, at the door fronting Bedford Street, the officers, stepping to her, whispered, that they had an action against her.

She was terrified, trembled, and turned pale.

Action! said she. What is that?—I have committed no bad action!—Lord bless me! men, what mean you?

That you are our prisoner, madam.

Prisoner, sirs!—What—how—why—what have I done?

You must go with us. Be pleased, madam, to step into this chair.

With you!—with men! Must go with men! I am not used to go with strange men!—Indeed you must excuse me!

We can't excuse you: we are sheriff's officers. We have a writ against you. You must go with us, and you shall know at whose suit.

Suit! said the charming innocent; I don't know what you mean. Pray, men, don't lay hands upon me; they offering to put her into the chair. I am not used to be thus treated—I have done nothing to deserve it.

She then spied thy villain—O thou wretch, said she, where is thy vile master?—Am I again to be his prisoner? Help, good people!

A crowd had before begun to gather.

My master is in the country, madam, many miles off. If you please to go with these men, they will treat you civilly.

The people were most of them struck with compassion. A fine young creature!—a thousand pities! cried some. While some few threw out vile and shocking reflections! But a gentleman interposed, and demanded to see the fellows' authority.

They showed it. Is your name Clarissa Harlowe, madam? said he.

Yes, yes, indeed, ready to sink, my name was Clarissa Harlowe:—but it is now Wretchedness!—Lord be merciful to me! what is to come next?

You must go with these men, madam, said the gentleman: they have authority for what they do.

He pitied her, and retired.

Indeed you must, said one chairman.

Indeed you must, said the other.

Can nobody, joined in another gentleman, be applied to, who will see that so fine a creature is not ill used?

Thy villain answered, orders were given particularly for that. She had rich relations. She need but ask and have. She would only be carried to the officer's house, till matters could be made up. The people she had lodged with, loved her: but she had left her lodgings privately.

O! had she those tricks already? cried one or two.

She heard not this—but said—Well, if I must go, I

must—I cannot resist—but I will not be carried to the woman's!—I will rather die at your feet, than be carried to the woman's.

You won't be carried there, madam, cried thy fellow.

Only to my house, madam, said one of the officers.

Where is that?

In High Holborn, madam.

I know not where High Holborn is: but *anywhere*, except to the woman's.—But am I to go with men only?

Looking about her, and seeing the three passages, to wit, that leading to Henrietta Street, that to King Street, and the fore-right one to Bedford Street, crowded, she started—Anywhere—anywhere, said she, but to the woman's! And stepping into the chair, threw herself on the seat, in the utmost distress and confusion—Carry me, carry me out of sight—Cover me—cover me up—for ever—were her words.

Thy villain drew the curtains: she had not power: and they went away with her through a vast crowd of people.

Here I must rest. I can write no more at present. Only, Lovelace, remember, all this was to a Clarissa!!!

The unhappy lady fainted away when she was taken out of the chair at the officer's house.

Several people followed the chair to the very house, which is in a wretched court. Sally was there; and satisfied some of the inquirers, that the young gentlewoman would be exceedingly well used: and they soon dispersed.

Dorcas was also there; but came not in her sight. Sally, as a favour, offered to carry her to her former lodgings: but she declared, they should carry her thither a corpse, if they did.

Very gentle usage the women boast of: so would a vulture, could it speak, with the entrails of its prey upon its rapacious talons. Of this you'll judge, from what I have to recite.

She asked, what was meant by this usage of her?

People told me, said she, that I must go with the men :— that they had authority to take me : so I submitted. But now, what is to be the end of this disgraceful violence ?

The end, said the vile Sally Martin, is, for honest people to come at their own.

Bless me ! have I taken away anything that belongs to those who have obtained this power over me ?—I have left very valuable things behind me ; but have taken nothing away that is not my own.

And who do you think, Miss Harlowe ; for I understand, said the cursed creature, you are not married ; who do you think is to pay for your board and your lodgings ; such handsome lodgings ! for so long a time as you were at Mrs. Sinclair's ?

Lord have mercy upon me ! Miss Martin (I think you are Miss Martin) !—And is this the cause of such a disgraceful insult upon me in the open streets ?

And cause enough, Miss Harlowe (fond of gratifying her jealous revenge, by calling her Miss)—one hundred and fifty guineas, or pounds, is no small sum to lose—and by a young creature, who would have bilked her lodgings.

You amaze me, Miss Martin !—What language do you talk in ?—Bilk my lodgings !—What is that ?

She stood astonished, and silent for a few moments.

But recovering herself, and turning from her to the window, she wrung her hands (the cursed Sally showed me how !); and lifting them up—Now, Lovelace ! now indeed do I think I ought to forgive thee !—But who shall forgive Clarissa Harlowe !—O my sister !—O my brother !—Tender mercies were your cruelties to this !

After a pause, her handkerchief drying up her falling tears, she turned to Sally : now, have I nothing to do but acquiesce—only let me say, that if this aunt of yours, this Mrs. Sinclair, or this man, this Mr. Lovelace, come near me ; or if I am carried to the horrid house (for that I

suppose is the design of this new outrage); God be merciful to the poor Clarissa Harlowe!—Look to the consequence!—Look, I charge you, to the consequence!

The vile wretch told her, it was not designed to carry her anywhither against her will: but, if it were, they should take care not to be frightened again by a penknife.

She cast up her eyes to heaven, and was silent—and went to the farthest corner of the room, and, sitting down, threw her handkerchief over her face.

Sally asked her several questions; but not answering her, she told her she would wait upon her by-and-bye, when she had found her speech.

She ordered the people to press her to eat and drink. She must be fasting—nothing but her prayers and tears, poor thing! were the merciless devil's words, as she owned to me.—Dost think I did not curse her?

She went away; and, after her own dinner, returned.

The unhappy lady, by this devil's account of her, then seemed either mortified into meekness, or to have made a resolution not to be provoked by the insults of this cursed creature.

Sally inquired, in her presence, whether she had eat or drank anything; and being told by the woman, that she could not prevail upon her to taste a morsel, or drink a drop, she said, This is wrong, Miss Harlowe! very wrong!—Your religion, I think, should teach you that starving yourself is self-murder.

She answered not.

The wretch owned, she was resolved to make her speak.

She asked, if Mabell should attend her till it were seen what her friends would do for her, in discharge of the debt? Mabell, said she, has not yet earned the clothes you were so good as to give her.

Am I not worth an answer, Miss Harlowe?

I would answer you (said the sweet sufferer, without any emotion) if I knew how.

I have ordered pen, ink, and paper to be brought you, Miss Harlowe. There they are. I know you love writing. You may write to whom you please. Your friend Miss Howe will expect to hear from you.

I have no friend, said she. I deserve none.

Rowland, for that is the officer's name, told her she had friends enough to pay the debt, if she would write.

She would trouble nobody; she had no friends; was all they could get from her, while Sally stayed: but yet spoken with a patience of spirit, as if she enjoyed her griefs.

The insolent creature went away, ordering them in the lady's hearing to be very civil to her, and to let her want for nothing. Now had she, she owned, the triumph of her heart over this haughty beauty, who kept them all at such distance in their own house!

What thinkest thou, Lovelace, of this!—this wretch's triumph was over a Clarissa!

About six in the evening, Rowland's wife pressed her to drink tea. She said, she had rather have a glass of water; for her tongue was ready to cleave to the roof of her mouth.

The woman brought her a glass, and some bread and butter. She tried to taste the latter; but could not swallow it: but eagerly drank the water; lifting up her eyes in thankfulness for that!!!

The divine Clarissa, Lovelace—reduced to rejoice for a cup of cold water!—By whom reduced!

About nine o'clock she asked, if anybody were to be her bedfellow?

Their maid, if she pleased; or, as she was so weak and ill, the girl should sit up with her, if she chose she should.

She chose to be alone both night and day, she said. But might she not be trusted with the keys of the room where she was to lie down; for she should not put off her clothes!

That, they told her, could not be.

She was afraid not, she said.—But indeed she would not get away, if she could.

They told me that they had but one bed, besides that they lay in themselves (which they would fain have had her accept of) and besides that their maid lay in, in a garret, which they called a hole of a garret: and that that one bed was the prisoner's bed; which they made several apologies to me about. I suppose it is shocking enough.

But the lady would not lie in theirs. Was she not a prisoner, she said?—Let her have the prisoner's room.

Yet they owned that she started, when she was conducted thither. But recovering herself, Very well, said she—why should not all be of a piece?—why should not my wretchedness be complete?

She found fault that all the fastenings were on the outside, and none within; and said, she could not trust herself in a room where others could come in at their pleasure, and she not go out. She had not been used to it!!!

Dear, dear soul!—my tears flow as I write. Indeed, Lovelace, she had not been used to such treatment!

They assured her, that it was as much their duty to protect her from other persons' insults as from escaping herself.

Then they were people of more honour, she said, than she had of late been used to.

She asked, if they knew Mr. Lovelace?

No, was their answer.

Have you heard of him?

No.

Well then, you may be good sort of folks in your way.

Pause here a moment, Lovelace!—and reflect—I must.

Again they asked her, if they should send any word to her lodgings?

These are my lodgings now; are they not?—was all her answer.

She sat up in a chair all night, the back against the door ; having, it seems, thrust a broken piece of a poker through the staples where a bolt had been on the inside.

Next morning Sally and Polly both went to visit her.

She had begged of Sally the day before, that she might not see Mrs. Sinclair, nor Dorcas, nor the broken-toothed servant called William.

Polly would have ingratiated herself with her ; and pretended to be concerned for her misfortunes. But she took no more notice of her than of the other.

They asked, if she had any commands ?—if she had, she only need to mention what they were, and she should be obeyed.

None at all, she said.

How did she like the people of the house ? Were they civil to her ?

Pretty well, considering she had no money to give them.

Would she accept of any money ? They could put it to her account.

She would contract no debts.

Had she any money about her ?

She meekly put her hand in her pocket, and pulled out half-a-guinea and a little silver. Yes, I have a little.—But here should be fees paid, I believe. Should there not ? I have heard of entrance-money to compound for not being stripped. But these people are very civil people, I fancy ; for they have not offered to take away my clothes.

They have orders to be civil to you.

It is very kind.

But we two will bail you, Miss, if you will go back with us to Mrs. Sinclair's.

Not for the world !

Hers are very handsome apartments.

The fitter for those who own them !

These are very sad ones.

The fitter for me !

You may be very happy yet, Miss, if you will.

I hope I shall.

If you refuse to eat or drink, we will give bail, and take you with us.

Then I will try to eat and drink. Anything but go with you.

Will you not send to your new lodgings ? The people will be frightened.

So they will, if I send. So they will, if they know where I am.

But have you no things to send for from thence ?

There is what will pay for their lodgings and trouble : I shall not lessen their security.

But perhaps letters or messages may be left for you there.

I have very few friends ; and to those I have, I will spare the mortification of knowing what has befallen me.

We are surprised at your indifference, Miss Harlowe. Will you not write to any of your friends ?

No.

Why, you don't think of tarrying here always ?

I shall not live always.

Do you think you are to stay here as long as you live ?

That's as it shall please God, and those who have brought me hither.

Should you like to be at liberty ?

I am miserable !—what is liberty to the miserable, but to be more miserable !

How miserable, Miss ?—You may make yourself as happy as you please.

I hope you are both happy.

We are.

May you be more and more happy !

But we wish you to be so too.

I never shall be of your opinion, I believe, as to what happiness is.

What do you take our opinion of happiness to be ?

To live at Mrs. Sinclair's.

Perhaps, said Sally, we were once as squeamish and narrow-minded as you.

How came it over with you ?

Because we saw the ridiculousness of prudery.

Do you come hither to persuade me to hate prudery, as you call it, as much as you do ?

We came to offer our service to you.

It is out of your power to serve me.

Perhaps not.

It is not in my inclination to trouble you.

You may be worse offered.

Perhaps I may.

You are mighty short, Miss.

As I wish your visit to be, ladies.

They owned to me, that they cracked their fans, and laughed.

Adieu, perverse beauty !

Your servant, ladies.

Adieu, haughty airs !

You see me humbled ——

As you deserve, Miss Harlowe. Pride will have a fall.

Better fall, with what you call pride, than stand with meanness.

Who does !

I had once a better opinion of you, Miss Horton !— indeed you should not insult the miserable.

Neither should the miserable, said Sally, insult people for their civility.

I should be sorry if I did.

Mrs. Sinclair shall attend you by-and-by, to know if you have any commands for her.

I have no wish for any liberty, but that of refusing to see her, and one more person.

What we came for, was to know if you had any proposals to make for your enlargement ?

Then, it seems, the officer put in. You have very good friends, madam, I understand. Is it not better that you make it up ? Charges will run high. A hundred and fifty guineas are easier paid than two hundred. Let these ladies bail you, and go along with them ; or write to your friends to make it up.

Sally said, there is a gentleman who saw you taken, and was so much moved for you, Miss Harlowe, that he would gladly advance the money for you, and leave you to pay it when you can.

See, Lovelace, what cursed devils these are ! This is the way, we know, that many an innocent heart is thrown upon keeping, and then upon the town. But for these wretches thus to go to work with such an angel as this !—How glad would have been the devilish Sally, to have had the least handle to report to thee a listening ear, or patient spirit, upon this hint !

Sir, said she, with high indignation, to the officer, did not you say last night, that it was as much your business to protect me from the insults of others, as from escaping ?—Cannot I be permitted to see whom I please ; and to refuse admittance to those I like not ?

Your creditors, madam, will expect to see you.

Not, if I declare I will not treat with them.

Then, madam, you will be sent to prison.

Prison, friend !—What dost thou call thy house !

Not a prison, madam.

Why these iron-barred windows then ? Why these double locks, and bolts all on the outside, none on the in ?

And down she dropped into her chair, and they could not get another word from her. She threw her handker-

chief over her face, as once before, which was soon wet with tears ; and grievously, they own, she sobbed.

Gentle treatment, Lovelace !—Perhaps thou, as well as these wretches, wilt think it so !

Sally then ordered a dinner, and said, they would soon be back again, and see that she eat and drank, as a good Christian should, comporting herself to her condition, and making the best of it.

After the women had left her, she complained of her head and her heart ; and seemed terrified with apprehensions of being carried once more to Sinclair's.

Refusing anything for breakfast, Mrs. Rowland came up to her, and told her (as these wretches owned they had ordered her, for fear she should starve herself) that she must and should have tea, and bread and butter : and that, as she had friends who could support her, if she wrote to them, it was a wrong thing, both for herself and them, to starve herself thus.

If it be for your own sakes, said she, that is another thing : let coffee, or tea, or chocolate, or what you will, be got : and put down a chicken to my account every day, if you please, and eat it yourselves. I will taste it, if I can. I would do nothing to hinder you. I have friends will pay you liberally, when they know I am gone.

They wondered, they told her, at her strange composure in such distresses.

They were nothing, she said, to what she had suffered already from the vilest of all men. The disgrace of seizing her in the street ; multitudes of people about her ; shocking imputations wounding her ears ; had indeed been very affecting to her. But that was over.—Everything soon would !—And she should be still more composed, were it not for the apprehensions of seeing one man, and one woman ; and being tricked or forced back to the vilest house in the world.

Then were it not better to give way to the two gentle-

women's offer to bail her?—They could tell her, it was a very kind proffer; and what was not to be met with every day.

She believed so.

The ladies might, possibly, dispense with her going back to the house to which she had such an antipathy. Then the compassionate gentleman, who was inclined to make it up with her creditors on her own bond—it was strange to them she hearkened not to so generous a proposal.

Did the two ladies tell you who the gentleman was?—Or, did they say any more on that subject?

Yes, they did: and hinted to me, said the woman, that you had nothing to do, but to receive a visit from the gentleman, and the money, they believed, would be laid down on your own bond or note.

She was startled.

I charge you, said she, as you will answer it one day to my friends, that you bring no gentleman into my company. I charge you don't. If you do, you know not what may be the consequence.

They apprehended no bad consequence, they said, in doing their duty: and if she knew not her own good, her friends would thank them for taking any innocent steps to serve her, though against her will.

Don't push me upon extremities, man!—Don't make me desperate, woman!—I have no small difficulty, notwithstanding the seeming composure you just now took notice of, to bear, as I ought to bear, the evils I suffer. But if you bring a man or men to me, be the pretence what it will—

She stopped there, and looked so earnestly, and so wildly, they said, that they did not know but she would do some harm to herself, if they disobeyed her; and that would be a sad thing in their house, and might be their ruin. They therefore promised, that no man should be brought to her, but by her own consent.

Mrs. Rowland prevailed on her to drink a dish of tea, and taste some bread and butter, about eleven on Saturday morning: which she probably did, to have an excuse not to dine with the women when they returned.

But she would not quit her prison-room, as she called it, to go into their parlour.

Unbarred windows, and a lightsomer apartment, she said, had too cheerful an appearance for her mind.

Sally came again at dinner-time, to see how she fared, as she told her; and that she did not starve herself: and, as she wanted to have some talk with her, if she gave her leave, she would dine with her.

I cannot eat.

You must try, Miss Harlowe.

And, dinner being ready just then, she offered her hand, and desired her to walk down.

No; she would not stir out of her prison-room.

These sullen airs won't do, Miss Harlowe: indeed they won't.

She was silent.

You will have harder usage than any you have ever yet known, I can tell you, if you come not into some humour to make matters up.

She was still silent.

Come, miss, walk down to dinner. Let me entreat you, do. Miss Horton is below: she was once your favourite.

She waited for an answer: but received none.

We came to make some proposals to you, for your good; though you affronted us so lately. And we would not let Mrs. Sinclair come in person, because we thought to oblige you.

That is indeed obliging.

Come, give me your hand, Miss Harlowe: you are obliged to me, I can tell you that: and let us go down to Miss Horton.

Excuse me: I will not stir out of this room.

Would you have me and Miss Horton dine in this filthy bedroom ?

It is not a bedroom to me. I have not been in bed; nor will, while I am here.

And yet you care not, as I see, to leave the house.—And so you won't go down, Miss Harlowe ?

I won't, except I am forced to it.

Well, well, let it alone. I shan't ask Miss Horton to dine in this room, I assure you. I will send up a plate.

And away the little saucy toad fluttered down.

When they had dined, up they came together.

Well, miss, you would not eat anything, it seems ?—Very pretty sullen airs these !—No wonder the honest gentleman had such a hand with you.

She only held up her hands and eyes; the tears trickling down her cheeks.

Insolent devils !—How much more cruel and insulting are bad women, even than bad men !

Methinks, miss, said Sally, you are a little soily, to what we have seen you. Pity such a nice lady should not have changes of apparel ! Why won't you send to your lodgings for linen, at least ?

I am not nice now.

Miss looks well and clean in anything, said Polly. But, dear madam, why won't you send to your lodgings ? Were it but in kindness to the people ? They must have a concern about you. And your Miss Howe will wonder what's become of you ; for, no doubt, you correspond.

She turned from them, and, to herself, said, too much ! too much !—She tossed her handkerchief, wet before with her tears, from her, and held her apron to her eyes.

Don't weep, miss ! said the vile Polly.

Yet do, cried the viler Sally, if it be a relief. Nothing, as Mr. Lovelace once told me, dries sooner than tears. For once I too wept mightily.

I could not bear the recital of this with patience. Yet I cursed them not so much as I should have done, had I not had a mind to get from them all the particulars of their gentle treatment: and this for two reasons; the one, that I might stab thee to the heart with the repetition; the other, that I might know upon what terms I am likely to see the unhappy lady to-morrow.

Well, but, Miss Harlowe, cried Sally, do you think these forlorn airs pretty? You are a good Christian, child. Mrs. Rowland tells me, she has got you a Bible-book—O there it lies!—I make no doubt, but you have doubled down the useful places, as honest Matt. Prior says.

Then rising, and taking it up—ay, so you have—the Book of Job! One opens naturally here, I see—my mamma made me a fine Bible-scholar.—Ecclesiasticus too!—That's Apocrypha, as they call it—you see, Miss Horton, I know something of the book.

They proposed once more to bail her, and to go home with them. A motion which she received with the same indignation as before.

Sally told her, that she had written in a very favourable manner, in her behalf, to you; and that she every hour expected an answer; and made no doubt, that you would come up with the messenger, and generously pay the whole debt, and ask her pardon for neglecting it.

This disturbed her so much, that they feared she would have fallen into fits. She could not bear your name, she said. She hoped, she should never see you more: and were you to intrude yourself, dreadful consequences might follow.

Surely, they said, she would be glad to be released from her confinement.

Indeed she should, now they had begun to alarm her with his name, who was the author of all her woes: and who, she now saw plainly, gave way to this new outrage, in order to bring her to his own infamous terms.

Why then, they asked, would she not write to her friends, to pay Mrs. Sinclair's demand ?

Because she hoped she should not long trouble anybody ; and because she knew, that the payment of the money, if she were able to pay it, was not what was aimed at.

Sally owned, that she told her, that, truly, she had thought herself as well descended, and as well educated, as herself, though not entitled to such considerable fortunes. And had the impudence to insist upon it to me to be truth.

She had the insolence to add, to the lady, that she had as much reason as she, to expect Mr. Lovelace would marry her ; he having contracted to do so before he knew Miss Clarissa Harlowe : and that she had it under his hand and seal too—or else he had not obtained his end : therefore it was not likely she should be so officious as to do his work against herself, if she thought Mr. Lovelace had designs upon her, like what she presumed to hint at : that, for her part, her only view was, to procure liberty to a young gentlewoman, who made those things grievous to her, which would not be made such a rout about by anybody else—and to procure the payment of a just debt to her friend Mrs. Sinclair.

She besought them to leave her. She wanted not these instances, she said, to convince her of the company she was in : and told them, that, to get rid of such visitors, and of the still worse she was apprehensive of, she would write to one friend to raise the money for her ; though it would be death for her to do so ; because that friend could not do it without her mother, in whose eye it would give a selfish appearance to a friendship that was above all sordid alloys.

They advised her to write out of hand.

But how much must I write for ? What is the sum ? Should I not have had a bill delivered me ? God knows, I

took not your lodgings. But he that could treat me as he has done, could do this!

Don't speak against Mr. Lovelace, Miss Harlowe. He is a man I greatly esteem (cursed toad!) And, 'bating that he will take his advantage, where he can, of us silly credulous women, he is a man of honour.

She lifted up her hands and eyes, instead of speaking: and well she might! For any words she could have used, could not have expressed the anguish she must feel, on being comprehended in the US.

She must write for one hundred and fifty guineas, at least: two hundred, if she were short of money, might as well be written for.

Mrs. Sinclair, she said, had all her clothes. Let them be sold, fairly sold, and the money go as far as it would go. She had also a few other valuables; but no money (none at all) but the poor half guinea, and the little silver they had seen. She would give bond to pay all that her apparel, and the other matters she had, would fall short of. She had great effects belonging to her of right. Her bond would, and must, be paid, were it for a thousand pounds. But her clothes she should never want. She believed, if not too much undervalued, those, and her few valuables, would answer everything. She wished for no surplus, but to discharge the last expenses; and forty shillings would do as well for those as forty pounds. Let my ruin, said she, lifting up her eyes, be large! Let it be complete, in this life!—For a composition, let it be complete—And there she stopped.

Early on Sunday morning, both devils went to see how she did. They had such an account of her weakness, lowness, and anguish, that they forbore (out of compassion, they said, finding their visits so disagreeable to her) to see her. But their apprehension of what might be the issue was, no doubt, their principal consideration: Nothing else could have softened such flinty bosoms.

They sent for the apothecary Rowland had had to her, and gave him, and Rowland, and his wife and maid, strict orders, many times repeated, for the utmost care to be taken of her—No doubt, with an Old Bailey forecraft. And they sent up to let her know what orders they had given: But that, understanding she had taken something to compose herself they would not disturb her.

She had scrupled, it seems, to admit the apothecary's visit over-night, because he was a man. Nor could she be prevailed upon to see him, till they pleaded their own safety to her.

They went again, from church (Lord, Bob, these creatures go to church!): But she sent them down word, that she must have all the remainder of the day to herself.

When I first came, and told them of thy execrations for what they had done, and joined my own to them, they were astonished. The mother said, she had thought she had known Mr. Lovelace better; and expected thanks, and not curses.

While I was with them, came back halting and cursing, most horribly, their messenger; by reason of the ill-usage he had received from you, instead of the reward he had been taught to expect for the supposed good news that he carried down.—A pretty fellow! art thou not, to abuse people for the consequences of thy own faults?

Dorcas, whose acquaintance this fellow is, and who recommended him for the journey, had conditioned with him, it seems, for a share in the expected bounty from you. Had she been to have had her share made good, I wish thou hadst broken every bone in his skin.

Under what shocking disadvantages, and with this addition to them, that I am thy friend and intimate, am I to make a visit to this unhappy lady to-morrow morning! In thy name too!—Enough to be refused, that I am of a sex, to which, for thy sake, she has so justifiable an aversion: Nor, having such a tyrant of a father, and such an

implacable brother, has she reason to make an exception in favour of any of it on their accounts.

It is three o'clock. I will close here; and take a little rest: What I have written will be a proper preparative for what I shall offer by-and-by.

J. BELFORD.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Monday, July 17.

ABOUT six this morning I went to Rowland's. Mrs. Sinclair was to follow me, in order to dismiss the action; but not to come in sight.

Rowland, upon enquiry, told me, that the lady was extremely ill; and that she had desired, that no one but his wife or maid should come near her.

I said, I must see her. I had told him my business over night; and I must see her.

His wife went up: but returned presently, saying, she could not get her to speak to her; yet that her eyelids moved; though she either would not, or could not, open them, to look up at her.

Oons, woman, said I, the lady may be in a fit: The lady may be dying.—Let me go up. Show me the way.

A horrid hole of a house, in an alley they call a court; stairs wretchedly narrow, even to the first-floor rooms: And into a den they led me, with broken walls, which had been papered, as I saw by a multitude of tacks, and some torn bits held on by the rusty heads.

The floor indeed was clean, but the ceiling was smoked with variety of figures, and initials of names, that had been the woful employment of wretches who had no other way to amuse themselves.

A bed at one corner, with coarse curtains tacked up at the feet to the ceiling; because the curtain-rings were broken off; but a coverlid upon it with a cleanish look,

though plaguily in tatters, and the corners tied up in tassels, that the rents in it might go no further.

The windows dark and double-barred ; the tops boarded up to save mending ; and only a little four-paned eyelet-hole of a casement to let in air ; more, however, coming in at broken panes, than could come in at that.

Four old turkey-worked chairs, bursten-bottomed, the stuffing staring out.

An old, tottering, worm-eaten table, that had more nails bestowed in mending it to make it stand, than the table cost fifty years ago, when new.

On the mantel-piece was an iron shove-up candle-stick, with a lighted candle in it, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, four of them, I suppose, for a penny.

Near that, on the same shelf, was an old looking-glass, cracked through the middle, breaking out into a thousand points ; the crack given it, perhaps, in a rage, by some poor creature, to whom it gave the representation of its heart's woes in his face.

The chimney had two half-tiles in it on one side, and one whole one on the other ; which showed it had been in better plight ; but now the very mortar had followed the rest of the tiles in every other place, and left the bricks bare.

An old half-barred stove-grate was in the chimney ; and in that a large stone-bottle without a neck, filled with baleful yew, as an ever-green, withered southernwood, dead sweet-briar, and sprigs of rue in flower.

To finish the shocking description, in a dark nook stood an old broken-bottomed cane couch, without a squab, or coverlid, sunk at one corner, and unmortified by the failing of one of its worm-eaten legs, which lay in two pieces under the wretched piece of furniture it could no longer support.

And this, thou horrid Lovelace, was the bedchamber of the divine Clarissa !

I had leisure to cast my eye on these things : for, going up softly, the poor lady turned not about at our entrance ; nor, till I spoke, moved her head.

She was kneeling in a corner of the room, near the dismal window, against the table, on an old bolster (as it seemed to be) of the cane couch, half covered with her handkerchief ; her back to the door ; which was only shut to (no need of fastenings !) ; her arms crossed upon the table, the fore-finger of her right hand in her Bible. She had perhaps been reading in it, and could read no longer. Paper, pens, ink, lay by her book, on the table. Her dress was white damask, exceeding neat ; but her stays seemed not tight-laced. I was told afterwards, that her laces had been cut, when she fainted away at her entrance into this cursed place ; and she had not been solicitous enough about her dress, to send for others. Her head-dress was a little discomposed ; her charming hair, in natural ringlets, as you have heretofore described it, but a little tangled, as if not lately combed, irregularly shading one side of the loveliest neck in the world ; as her disordered, rumped handkerchief did the other. Her face (O how altered from what I had seen it ! Yet lovely in spite of all her griefs and sufferings !) was reclined, when we entered, upon her crossed arms ; but so, as not more than one side of it to be hid.

When I surveyed the room around, and the kneeling lady, sunk with majesty too in her white flowing robes (for she had not on a hoop) spreading the dark, though not dirty, floor, and illuminating that horrid corner ; her linen beyond imagination white, considering that she had not been undressed ever since she had been here ; I thought my concern would have choked me. Something rose in my throat, I know not what, which made me, for a moment, guggle, as it were, for speech : which, at last, forcing its way, Con—con—confound you both, said I to the man and woman, is this an apartment for such a lady ? And could

the cursed devils of her own sex, who visited this suffering angel, see her, and leave her, in so damned a nook ?

Sir, we would have had the lady to accept of our own bedchamber ; but she refused it. We are poor people—and we expect nobody will stay with us longer than they can help it.

You are people chosen purposely, I doubt not, by the damned woman who has employed you : And if your usage of this lady has been but half as bad as your house, you had better never to have seen the light.

Up then raised the charming sufferer her lovely face ; but with such a significance of woe overspreading it, that I could not, for the soul of me, help being visibly affected.

She waved her hand two or three times towards the door, as if commanding me to withdraw ; and displeased at my intrusion ; but did not speak.

Permit me, madam—I will not approach one step farther without your leave—Permit me, for one moment, the favour of your ear !

No—no—go, go ; man, with an emphasis—And would have said more ; but, as if struggling in vain for words, she seemed to give up speech for lost, and dropped her head down once more, with a deep sigh, upon her left arm ; her right, as if she had not the use of it (numbed, I suppose) self-moved, dropping down on her side.

O that thou hadst been there ! and in my place !—But by what I then felt, in myself, I am convinced, that a capacity of being moved by the distresses of our fellow-creatures, is far from being disgraceful to a manly heart. With what pleasure, at that moment, could I have given up my own life, could I but first have avenged this charming creature, and cut the throat of her destroyer, as she emphatically calls thee, though the friend that I best love ! And yet, at the same time, my heart and my eyes gave way to a softness, of which (though not so hardened a wretch as thou) it was never before so susceptible.

I dare not approach you, dearest lady, without your leave : but on my knees I beseech you to permit me to release you from this damned house, and out of the power of the accursed woman, who was the occasion of your being here !

She lifted up her sweet face once more, and beheld me on my knees. Never knew I before what it was to pray so heartily.

Are you not—are you not Mr. Belford, sir ? I think your name is Belford ?

It is, madam, and I ever was a worshipper of your virtues, and an advocate for you ; and I come to release you from the hands you are in.

And in whose to place me ?—O leave me, leave me ! Let me never rise from this spot ! Let me never, never more believe in man !

This moment, dearest lady, this very moment, if you please, you may depart whithersoever you think fit. You are absolutely free, and your own mistress.

I had now as lieve die here in this place, as anywhere. I will owe no obligation to any friend of him in whose company you have seen me. So, pray, sir, withdraw.

Then turning to the officer, Mr. Rowland I think your name is ? I am better reconciled to your house than I was at first. If you can but engage that I shall have nobody come near me but your wife (no man !) and neither of those women who have sported with my calamities ; I will die with you, and in this very corner. And you shall be well satisfied for the trouble you have had with me.—I have value enough for that—for, see, I have a diamond ring ; taking it out of her bosom ; and I have friends will redeem it at a high price, when I am gone.

But for you, sir, looking at me, I beg you to withdraw. If you mean me well, God, I hope, will reward you for your good meaning ; but to the friend of my destroyer will I not owe an obligation.

You will owe no obligation to me, nor to **anybody**. You have been detained for a debt you do not owe. The action is dismissed; and you will only be so good **as to give me your hand into the coach, which stands as near to this house as it could draw up.** And I will either **leave you at the coach-door, or attend you whithersoever you please, till I see you safe where you would wish to be.**

Will you then, sir, compel me to be beholden to you?

You will inexpressibly oblige me, madam, to **command me to do you either service or pleasure.**

Why then, sir (looking at me)—but why do you mock me in that humble posture! Rise, sir! I cannot *speak to you else.*

I arose.

Only, sir, take this ring. I have a sister, who will be glad to have it, at the price it shall be valued at, *for the former owner's sake!*—Out of the money she gives, let this man be paid; handsomely paid: and I have a few *valuables more at my lodging (Dorcas, or the man William, can tell where that is); let them, and my clothes at the wicked woman's, where you have seen me, be sold for the payment of my lodging first, and next of your friend's debts, that I have been arrested for; as far as they will go; only reserving enough to put me into the ground, anywhere, or anyhow, no matter.* Tell your friend, I wish it may be enough to satisfy the whole demand; but if it be not, he must take it up himself; or if he think fit to draw for it on Miss Howe, she will repay it, and with interest, if he insist upon it.—And this, sir, if you promise to perform, you will do me, as you offer, both pleasure and service: and say you will, and take the ring, and withdraw. If I want to say anything more to you (you seem to be a humane man) I will let you know—and so, sir, God bless you.

I approached her, and was going to speak—

Don't speak, sir: here's the ring.

I stood off.

And won't you take it? Won't you do this last office for me?—I have no other person to ask it of; else, believe me, I would not request it of you. But take it or not, laying it upon the table—you must withdraw, sir: I am very ill. I would fain get a little rest, if I could. I find I am going to be bad again.

And offering to rise, she sunk down through excess of weakness and grief, in a fainting fit.

Why, Lovelace, wast thou not present thyself? Why dost thou commit such villainies, as even thou art afraid to appear in; and yet putttest a weaker heart and head upon encountering with them?

The maid coming in just then, the woman and she lifted her up on the decrepit couch; and I withdrew with this Rowland; who wept like a child, and said, he never in his life was so moved.

Yet so hardened a wretch art thou, that I question whether thou wilt shed a tear at my relation.

They recovered her by hartshorn and water. I went down meanwhile; for the detestable woman had been below some time. O how did I curse her! I never before was so fluent in curses.

She tried to wheedle me; but I renounced her; and, after she had dismissed the action, sent her away crying, or pretending to cry, because of my behaviour to her.

You will observe, that I did not mention one word to the lady about you. I was afraid to do it. For 'twas plain, that she could not bear your name: your friend, and the company you have seen me in, were the words nearest to naming you, she could speak: and yet I wanted to clear your intention of this brutal, this sordid-looking villainy.

I sent up again, by Rowland's wife, when I heard that the lady was recovered, beseeching her to quit that devilish

place; and the woman assured her, that she was at full liberty to do so; for that the action was dismissed.

But she cared not to answer her: and was so weak and low, that it was almost as much out of her power as inclination, the woman told me, to speak.

I would have hastened away for my friend Doctor H, but the house is such a den, and the room she was in such a hole, that I was ashamed to be seen in it by a man of his reputation, especially with a woman of such an appearance, and in such uncommon distress; and I found there was no prevailing on her to quit it for the people's bed-room, which was neat and lightsome.

The strong room she was in, the wretches told me, should have been in better order, but that it was but the very morning that she was brought in, that an unhappy man had quitted it; for a more eligible prison, no doubt; since there could hardly be a worse.

Being told, that she desired not to be disturbed, and seemed inclined to doze, I took this opportunity to go to her lodgings in Covent garden; to which Dorcas (who first discovered her there, as Will was the setter from church) had before given me a direction.

The man's name is Smith, a dealer in gloves, snuff, and such petty merchandize: his wife the shopkeeper: he a maker of the gloves they sell. Honest people, it seems.

I thought to have got the woman with me to the lady; but she was not within.

I talked with the man, and told him what had befallen the lady; owing, as I said, to a mistake of orders; and gave her the character she deserved; and desired him to send his wife the moment she came in, to the lady; directing him whither; not doubting, that her attendance would be very welcome to her: which he promised.

He told me, that a letter was left for her there on Saturday: and, about half an hour before I came, another su-

perscribed by the same hand ; the first, by the post ; the other, by a countryman ; who, having been informed of her absence, and of all the circumstances they could tell him of it, posted away, full of concern, saying, that the lady he was sent from would be ready to break her heart at the tidings.

I thought it right to take the two letters back with me ; and, dismissing my coach, took a chair, as a more proper vehicle for the lady, if I (the friend of her destroyer) could prevail upon her to leave Rowland's.

And here being obliged to give way to an indispensable avocation, I will make thee taste a little, in thy turn, of the plague of suspense ; and break off, without giving thee the least hint of the issue of my further proceedings. I know, that those least bear disappointment, who love most to give it. In twenty instances, hast thou afforded me proof of the truth of this observation. And I matter not thy raving.

Another letter, however, shall be ready, send for it as soon as thou wilt. But, were it not, have I not written enough to convince thee, that I am

Thy ready and obliging friend,

J. BELFORD ?

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Monday, July 17.

CURSE upon thy hard heart, thou vile caitiff !
How hast thou tortured me, by thy designed
abruption ! 'Tis impossible that Miss Harlowe
should have ever suffered as thou hast made me suffer,
and as I now suffer !

That sex is made to bear pain. It is a curse, that the first of it entailed upon all her daughters, when she brought the curse upon us all. And they love those best, whether man or child, who give them most—but to stretch upon

thy damned tenter-hooks such a spirit as mine—no rack, no torture, can equal my torture !

But I lose time ; yet know not how to employ it till this fellow returns with the sequel of thy soul-harrowing intelligence !

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Monday Night, July 17.

ON my return to Rowland's, I found that the apothecary was just gone up. Mrs. Rowland being above with him, I made the less scruple to go up too, as it was probable, that to ask for leave would be to ask to be denied ; hoping also, that the letters I had with me would be a good excuse.

She was sitting on the side of the broken couch, extremely weak and low ; and, I observed, cared not to speak to the man : and no wonder ; for I never saw a more shocking fellow, of a profession tolerably genteel, nor heard a more illiterate one prate—physician in ordinary to this house, and others like it, I suppose !

As I am in black, he took me, at my entrance, I believe, to be a doctor ; and slunk behind me with his hat upon his two thumbs, and looked as if he expected the oracle to open, and give him orders.

The lady looked displeas'd, as well at me as at Rowland, who followed me, and at the apothecary. It was not, she said, the least of her present misfortunes, that she could not be left to her own sex ; and to her option to see whom she pleas'd.

I besought her excuse ; and winking for the apothecary to withdraw (which he did) told her, that I had been at her new lodgings, to order everything to be got ready for her reception, presuming she would choose to go thither : that I had a chair at the door : that Mr. Smith and his wife (I nam'd their names, that she should not have room

for the least fear of Sinclair's) had been full of apprehensions for her safety: that I had brought two letters, which were left there for her; one by the post, the other that very morning.

This took her attention. She held out her charming hand for them; took them, and, pressing them to her lips—from the only friend I have in the world! said she, kissing them again; and looking at the seals, as if to see whether they had been opened. I can't read them, said she, my eyes are too dim; and put them into her bosom.

I besought her to think of quitting that wretched hole.

Whither could she go, she asked, to be safe and uninterrupted for the short remainder of her life; and to avoid being again visited by the creatures who had insulted her before?

I gave her the solemnest assurances, that she should not be invaded in her new lodgings by anybody; and said, that I would particularly engage my honour, that the person who had most offended her, should not come near her, without her own consent.

Your honour, sir! Are you not that man's friend!

I am not a friend, madam, to his vile actions to the most excellent of women.

Do you flatter me, sir? Then are you a man. But oh, sir, your friend, holding her face forward with great earnestness, your barbarous friend, what has he not to answer for!

There she stopped: her heart full; and putting her hand over her eyes and forehead, the tears trickled through her fingers: resenting thy barbarity, it seemed, as Cæsar did the stab from his distinguished Brutus!

Though she was so very much disordered, I thought I would not lose this opportunity to assert your innocence of this villainous arrest.

There is no defending the unhappy man in any of hi-

vile actions by you, madam ; but of this last outrage, by all that's good and sacred, he is innocent.

O wretches ! what a sex is yours !—Have you all one dialect ? Good and sacred !—If, sir, you can find an oath, or a vow, or an adjuration, that my ears have not been twenty times a day wounded with, then speak it, and I may again believe a man.

I was excessively touched at these words, knowing thy baseness, and the reason she had for them.

But say you, sir ; for I would not, methinks, have the wretch capable of this sordid baseness !—say you, that he is innocent of this last wickedness ? Can you truly say that he is ?

By the great God of heaven !

Nay, sir, if you swear, I must doubt you !—If you yourself think your word insufficient, what reliance can I have on your oath ! O that this my experience had not cost me so dear ! But were I to live a thousand years, I would always suspect the veracity of a swearer. Excuse me, sir ; but is it likely, that he who makes so free with his God, will scruple anything that may serve his turn with his fellow-creature ?

This was a most affecting reprimand !

Madam, said I, I have a regard, a regard a gentleman ought to have, to my word : and whenever I forfeit it to you—

Nay, sir, don't be angry with me. It is grievous to me to question a gentleman's veracity. But your friend calls himself a gentleman—you know not what I have suffered by a gentleman ! And then again she wept.

I would give you, madam, demonstration, if your grief and your weakness would permit it, that he has no hand in this barbarous baseness : and that he resents it as it ought to be resented.

Well, well, sir (with quickness), he will have his account to make up somewhere else ; not to me. I should not be

sorry to find him able to acquit his intention on this occasion. Let him know, sir, only one thing, that, when you heard me in the bitterness of my spirit, most vehemently exclaim against the undeserved usage I have met with from him, that even then, in that passionate moment, I was able to say (and never did I see such an earnest and affecting exaltation of hands and eyes), "Give him, good God! repentance and amendment; that I may be the last poor creature who shall be ruined by him! And, in thine own good time, receive to thy mercy the poor wretch who had none on me!"

By my soul, I could not speak. She had not her Bible before her for nothing.

I was forced to turn my head away, and to take out my handkerchief.

What an angel is this! Even the gaoler, and his wife and maid, wept.

Again, I wish thou hadst been there, that thou mightest have sunk down at her feet, and begun that moment to reap the effect of her generous wishes for thee; undeserving, as thou art, of anything but perdition!

I represented to her, that she would be less free where she was from visits she liked not, than at her own lodging. I told her, that it would probably bring her, in particular, one visitor, who, otherwise, I would engage (but I durst not swear again, after the severe reprimand she had just given me) should not come near her, without her consent. And I expressed my surprise, that she should be unwilling to quit such a place as this; when it was more than probable, that some of her friends, when it was known how bad she was, would visit her.

She said, the place, when she was first brought into it, was indeed very shocking to her: but that she had found herself so weak and ill, and her griefs had so sunk her, that she did not expect to have lived till now: that therefore all places had been alike to her; for to die in a prison

was to die; and equally eligible as to die in a palace: but that, since she feared she was not so soon to be released, as she had hoped; since she was suffered to be so little mistress of herself here; and since she might, by removal, be in the way of her dear friend's letters: she would hope, that she might depend upon the assurances I gave her, of being at liberty to return to her last lodgings; and that I was too much of a gentleman, to be concerned in carrying her back to the house she had so much reason to abhor; and to which she had been once before most vilely betrayed, to her ruin.

I assured her, in the strongest terms (but swore not) that you were resolved not to molest her: and, as a proof of the sincerity of my professions, besought her to give me directions (in pursuance of my friend's express desire) about sending all her apparel, and whatever belonged to her, to her new lodgings.

She seemed pleased; and gave me instantly out of her pocket her keys; asking me, if Mrs. Smith, whom I had named, might not attend me; and she would give her further directions? To which I cheerfully assented; and then she told me, that she would accept of the chair I had offered her.

I withdrew; and took the opportunity to be civil to Rowland and his maid; for she found no fault with their behaviour, for what they were; and the fellow seems to be miserably poor. I sent also for the apothecary, who is as poor as the officer (and still poorer, I dare say, as to the skill required in his business), and satisfied him beyond his hopes.

The lady, after I had withdrawn, attempted to read the letters I had brought her. But she could read but a little way in one of them, and had great emotions upon it.

She told the woman she would take a speedy opportunity to acknowledge her civilities and her husband's,

and to satisfy the apothecary; who might send her his bill to her lodgings.

She gave the maid something; probably the only half-guinea she had: and then with difficulty, her limbs trembling under her, and supported by Mrs. Rowland, got down stairs.

I offered my arm: she was pleased to lean upon it. I doubt, sir, said she, as she moved, I have behaved rudely to you: but, if you knew all, you would forgive me.

I know enough, madam, to convince me, that there is not such purity and honour in any woman upon earth; nor any one that has been so barbarously treated.

She looked at me very earnestly. What she thought I cannot say; but, in general, I never saw so much soul in a woman's eyes, as in hers.

I ordered my servant (whose mourning made him less observable as such, and who had not been in the lady's eye) to keep the chair in view; and to bring me word, how she did, when set down. The fellow had the thought to step into the shop just before the chair entered it, under pretence of buying snuff; and so enabled himself to give me an account, that she was received with great joy by the good woman of the house; who told her, she was but just come in; and was preparing to attend her in High Holborn.—O Mrs. Smith, said she, as soon as she saw her, did you not think I was run away? You don't know what I have suffered since I saw you. I have been in a prison!—Arrested for debts I owe not!—But, thank God, I am here! Will you permit your maid—I have forgot her name already—

Catharine, madam—

Will you let Catharine assist me to bed?—I have not had my clothes off since Thursday night.

What she further said the fellow heard not, she leaning upon the maid, and going up-stairs.

But dost thou not observe what a strange, what an un

common openness of heart reigns in this lady? She had been in a prison, she said, before a stranger in the shop, and before the maid-servant: and so, probably, she would have said, had there been twenty people in the shop.

The disgrace she cannot hide from herself, as she says in her letter to Lady Betty, she is not solicitous to conceal from the world!

But this makes it evident to me, that she is resolved to keep no terms with thee. And yet to be able to put up such a prayer for thee, as she did in her prison; does not this show, that revenge has very little sway in her mind; though she can retain so much proper resentment?

I was resolved to lose no time in having everything which belonged to the lady at the cursed woman's sent her. Accordingly, I took coach to Smith's, and procured the lady (to whom I sent up my compliments, and inquiries how she bore her removal), ill as she sent me down word she was, to give proper directions to Mrs. Smith: whom I took with me to Sinclair's; and who saw everything looked out, and put into the trunks and boxes they were first brought in, and carried away in two coaches.

Had I not been there, Sally and Polly would each of them have taken to herself something of the poor lady's spoils. This they declared: and I had some difficulty to get from Sally a fine Brussels lace head, which she had the confidence to say she would wear for Miss Harlowe's sake. Nor should either I or Mrs. Smith have known she had got it, had she not been in search after the ruffles belonging to it.

I ordered the abandoned women to make out your account. They answered, that they would do with a vengeance. Indeed they breathe nothing but revenge. For now they say, you will assuredly marry; and your example will be followed by all your friends and companions—as the old one says, to the utter ruin of her poor house.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Tuesday, July 18.



RENEWED my inquiries after the lady's health, in the morning, by my servant: and, as soon as I had dined, I went myself.

I had but a poor account of it: yet sent up my compliments. She returned me thanks for all my good offices; and her excuses, that they could not be personal just then, being very low and faint: but if I gave myself the trouble of coming about six this evening, she should be able, she hoped, to drink a dish of tea with me, and would then thank me herself.

I am very proud of this condescension; and think it looks not amiss for you, as I am your avowed friend. Methinks I want fully to remove from her mind all doubts of you in this last villainous action: and who knows then what your noble relations may be able to do for you with her, if you hold your mind? For your servant acquainted me with their having actually engaged Miss Howe in their and your favour, before this cursed affair happened. And I desire the particulars of all from yourself, that I may the better know how to serve you.

She has two handsome apartments, a bedchamber and dining-room, with light closets in each. She has already a nurse (the people of the house having but one maid); a woman whose care, diligence, and honesty, Mrs. Smith highly commends. She has likewise the benefit of the voluntary attendance, and love, as it seems, of a widow gentlewoman, Mrs. Lovick her name, who lodges over her apartment, and of whom she seems very fond, having found something in her, she thinks, resembling the qualities of her worthy Mrs. Norton.

About seven o'clock this morning, it seems, the lady was so ill, that she yielded to their desires to have an apothecary

cary sent for—not the fellow, thou mayst believe, she had had before at Rowland's ; but one Mr. Goddard, a man of skill and eminence ; and of conscience too ; demonstrated as well by general character, as by his prescriptions to this lady : for, pronouncing her case to be grief, he ordered, for the present, only innocent julaps, by way of cordial ; and, as soon as her stomach should be able to bear it, light kitchen diet ; telling Mrs. Lovick, that that, with air, moderate exercise, and cheerful company, would do her more good than all the medicines in his shop.

This has given me, as it seems it has the lady (who also praises his modest behaviour, paternal looks, and genteel address) a very good opinion of the man ; and I design to make myself acquainted with him ; and, if he advises to call in a doctor, to wish him, for the fair patient's sake, more than the physician's (who wants not practice) my worthy friend Dr. H——, whose character is above all exception, as his humanity, I am sure, will distinguish him to the lady.

You see I am in a way to oblige you : you see how much she depends upon my engaging for your forbearing to intrude yourself into her company : let not your flaming impatience destroy all ; and make me look like a villain to a lady who has reason to suspect every man she sees to be so. Upon this condition, you may expect all the services that can flow from true friendship, and from

Your sincere well-wisher,

J. BELFORD.

Tuesday Night.

I am just come from the lady. I was admitted into the dining-room, where she was sitting in an elbow-chair, in a very weak and low way. She made an effort to stand up, when I entered ; but was forced to keep her seat. You'll excuse me, Mr. Belford : I ought to rise, to thank you for all your kindness to me. I was to blame to be so loth to

leave that sad place ; for I am in heaven here, to what I was there : and good people about me too ! I have not had good people about me for a long, long time before ; so that (with a half-smile) I had begun to wonder whither they were all gone.

Her nurse and Mrs. Smith, who were present, took occasion to retire : and, when we were alone, You seem to be a person of humanity, sir, said she : you hinted, as I was leaving my prison, that you were not a stranger to my sad story. If you know it truly, you must know that I have been most barbarously treated ; and have not deserved it at the man's hands by whom I have suffered.

I told her, I knew enough to be convinced, that she had the merit of a saint, and the purity of an angel : and was proceeding, when she said, No flighty compliments ! No undue attributes, sir !

I disclaimed all intention of compliment : all I had said, and what I should say, was, and should be, the effect of sincere veneration. My unhappy friend's account of her had entitled her to that.

I then mentioned your grief, your penitence, your resolutions of making her all the amends that were possible now to be made her : and, in the most earnest manner, I asserted your innocence as to the last villainous outrage.

Her answer was to this effect—it is painful to me to think of him. The amends you talk of, cannot be made. This last violence you speak of, is nothing to what preceded it. That cannot be atoned for ; nor palliated : this may : and I shall not be sorry to be convinced, that he cannot be guilty of so very low a wickedness. Yet, after his vile forgeries of hands—after his baseness in imposing upon me the most infamous persons as ladies of honour of his own family—what are the iniquities he is not capable of ?

I would then have given her an account of the trial you

stood with your friends : your own previous resolutions of marriage, had she honoured you with the requested four words : all your family's earnestness to have the honour of her alliance : and the application of your two cousins to Miss Howe, by general consent, for that young lady's interest with her : but, having just touched upon these topics, she cut me short, saying, that was a cause before another tribunal : Miss Howe's letters to her were upon that subject ; and she would write her thoughts to her as soon as she was able.

I then attempted more particularly to clear you of having any hand in the vile Sinclair's officious arrest ; a point she had the generosity to wish you cleared of : and, having mentioned the outrageous letter you had written to me on this occasion, she asked, if I had that letter about me ?

I owned I had.

She wished to see it.

This puzzled me horribly : for you must needs think, that most of the free things, which, among us rakes, pass for wit and spirit, must be shocking stuff to the ears or eyes of persons of delicacy of that sex : and then such an air of levity runs through thy most serious letters ; such a false bravery, endeavouring to carry off ludicrously the subjects that most affect thee ; that those letters are generally the least fit to be seen, which ought to be most to thy credit.

Something like this I observed to her ; and would fain have excused myself from showing it : but she was so earnest, that I undertook to read some parts of it, resolving to omit the most exceptionable.

I know thou'lt curse me for that ; but I thought it better to oblige her than to be suspected myself ; and so not have it in my power to serve thee with her, when so good a foundation was laid for it ; and when she knows as bad of thee as I can tell her.

Thou rememberest the contents, I suppose, of thy furious letter. Her remarks upon the different parts of it which I read to her, were to the following effect :

Upon thy two first lines, "All undone ! undone, by Jupiter ! Zounds, Jack, what shall I do now ! A curse upon all my plots and contrivances !" thus she expressed herself :

" O how light, how unaffected with the sense of its own crimes, is the heart that could dictate to the pen this libertine froth !"

The paragraph which mentions the vile arrest, affected her a good deal.

At that part, "Canst thou, O fatal prognosticator ! tell me where my punishments will end ?" she sighed : and when I came to that sentence, "Praying for my reformation, perhaps"—is that there ? said she, sighing again. Wretched man !—And shed a tear for thee. By my faith, Lovelace, I believe she hates thee not ! She has at least a concern, a generous concern, for thy future happiness ! What a noble creature hast thou injured !

She made a very severe reflection upon me, on reading these words—"On your knees, for me, beg her pardon"—"You had all your lessons, sir," said she, "when you came to redeem me—you was so condescending as to kneel : I thought it was the effect of your own humanity, and good-natured earnestness to serve me—excuse me, sir, I knew not, that it was in consequence of a prescribed lesson."

This concerned me not a little ; I could not bear to be thought such a wretched puppet, such a Joseph Leman, such a Tomlinson—I endeavoured therefore, with some warmth, to clear myself of this reflection ; and she again asked my excuse : "I was avowedly," she said, "the friend of a man, whose friendship, she had reason to be sorry to say, was no credit to anybody." And desired me to proceed.

I did ; but fared not much better afterwards : for,

On that passage where you say, “I had always been her friend and advocate,” this was her unanswerable remark : “I find, sir, by this expression, that he had always designs against me ; and that you all along knew that he had : would to heaven, you had had the goodness to have contrived some way, that might not have endangered your own safety, to give me notice of his baseness, since you approved not of it ! But you gentlemen, I suppose, had rather see an innocent fellow-creature ruined, than be thought capable of an action, which, however generous, might be likely to loosen the bands of a wicked friendship !”

After this severe, but just reflection, I would have avoided reading the following, although I had unawares begun the sentence (but she held me to it) : What would I now give, had I permitted you to have been a successful advocate ! And this was her remark upon it—“So, sir, you see, if you had been the happy means of preventing the evils designed me, you would have had your friend’s thanks for it, when he came to his consideration. This satisfaction, I am persuaded, every one, in the long run, will enjoy, who has the virtue to withstand, or prevent, a wicked purpose. I was obliged, I see, to your kind wishes—but it was a point of honour with you to keep his secret ; the more indispensable with you, perhaps, the viler the secret.”

I passed over thy charge to me, to curse them by the hour ; and thy names of Dragon and Serpents, though so applicable ; since, had I read them, thou must have been supposed to know from the first, what creatures they were ; vile fellow as thou wert, for bringing so much purity among them ! and I closed with thy own concluding paragraph, a line ! a line ! a kingdom for a line ! &c. However telling her (since she saw that I omitted some sentences) that there were further vehemences in it ; but as they were

better fitted to show to me the sincerity of the writer, than for so delicate an ear as hers to hear, I chose to pass them over.

You have read enough, said she—he is a wicked, wicked man!—I see he intended to have me in his power at any rate; and I have no doubt of what his purposes were, by what his actions have been. You know his vile Tomlinson, I suppose—you know—but what signifies talking?—never was there such a premeditatedly false heart in man (nothing can be truer, thought I!): what has he not vowed! what has he not invented! and all for what?—only, to ruin a poor young creature, whom he ought to have protected; and whom he had first deprived of all other protection?

She arose, and turned from me, her handkerchief at her eyes: and, after a pause, came towards me again—“I hope, said she, I talk to a man who has a better heart: and I thank you, sir, for all your kind, though ineffectual, pleas in my favour formerly, whether the motives for them were compassion, or principle, or both. That they were ineffectual, might very probably be owing to your want of earnestness; and that, as you might think, to my want of merit. I might not, in your eye, deserve to be saved!—I might appear to you a giddy creature, who had run away from her true and natural friends; and who therefore ought to take the consequence of the lot she had drawn.”

I was afraid, for thy sake, to let her know how very earnest I had been: but assured her, that I had been her zealous friend; and that my motives were founded upon a merit, that, I believed, was never equalled: that, however indefensible Mr. Lovelace was, he had always done justice to her virtue: that to a full conviction of her untainted honour it was owing, that he so earnestly desired to call so inestimable a jewel his—and was proceeding, when she again cut me short—

Enough, and too much of this subject, sir!—if he will never more let me behold his face, that is all I have now to ask of him.—Indeed, indeed, clasping her hands, I never will, if I can, by any means not criminally desperate, avoid it.

What could I say for thee?—there was no room, however, at that time, to touch this string again, for fear of bringing upon myself a prohibition, not only of the subject, but of ever attending her again.

It is my opinion (if thou holdest thy purposes to marry) that thou canst not do better, than to procure thy real aunts, and thy real cousins, to pay her a visit, and to be thy advocates : but, if they decline personal visits, letters from them, and from my lord M. supported by Miss Howe's interest, may, perhaps, effect something in thy favour.

But these are only my hopes, founded on what I wish for thy sake. The lady, I really think, would choose rather death than thee : and the two women are of opinion, though they know not half of what she has suffered, that her heart is actually broken.

At taking my leave, I tendered my best services to her, and besought her to permit me frequently to inquire after her health.

She made me no answer, but by bowing her head.

MR. BELFORD TO ROBERT LOVELACE, ESQ.

Wednesday, July 19.

THIS morning I took chair to Smith's ; and, being told, that the lady had a very bad night, but was up, I sent for her worthy apothecary ; who on his coming to me, approving of my proposal of calling in Dr. H. ; I bid the women acquaint her with the designed visit.

It seems, she was at first displeas'd ; yet withdrew her



objection : but, after a pause, asked them, what she should do ? she had effects of value, some of which she intended, as soon as she could, to turn into money ; but, till then, had not a single guinea to give the doctor for his fee.

Mrs. Lovick said, she had five guineas by her : they were at her service.

She would accept of three, she said, if she would take that (pulling a diamond ring from her finger) till she repaid her ; but on no other terms.

Having been told, I was below with Mr. Goddard, she desired to speak one word with me, before she saw the doctor.

She was sitting in an elbow-chair, leaning her head on a pillow ; Mrs. Smith and the widow on each side her chair ; her nurse, with a phial of hartshorn, behind her ; in her own hand, her salts.

Raising her head at my entrance, she inquired, if the doctor knew Mr. Lovelace ?

I told her, no ; and that I believed you never saw him in your life.

Was the doctor my friend ?

He was ; and a very worthy and skilful man. I named him for his eminence in his profession : and Mr. Goddard said, he knew not a better physician.

I have but one condition to make before I see the gentleman ; that he refuse not his fees from me. If I am poor, sir, I am proud. I will not be under obligation. You may believe, sir, I will not. I suffer this visit, because I would not appear ungrateful to the few friends I have left, nor obstinate to such of my relations, as may some time hence, for their private satisfaction, inquire after my behaviour in my sick hours. So, sir, you know the condition. And don't let me be vexed : I am very ill ; and cannot debate the matter.

Seeing her so determined, I told her, if it must be so, it should.

Then, sir, the gentleman may come. But I shall not be able to answer many questions. Nurse, you can tell him, at the window there, what a night I have had, and how I have been for two days past. And Mr. Goddard, if he be here, can let him know what I have taken. Pray let me be as little questioned, as possible.

The doctor paid his respects to her, with the gentlemanly address for which he is noted : and she cast up her sweet eyes to him, with that benignity which accompanies her every graceful look.

I would have retired ; but she forbid it.

He took her hand, the lily not of so beautiful a white : indeed, madam, you are very low, said he : but, give me leave to say, that you can do more for yourself, than all the faculty can do for you.

He then withdrew to the window. And, after a short conference with the women, he turned to me, and to Mr. Goddard, at the other window : we can do nothing here, speaking low, but by cordials and nourishment. What friends has the lady ? she seems to be a person of condition ; and, ill as she is, a very fine woman.—A single lady I presume ?

I whisperingly told him she was. That there were extraordinary circumstances in her case ; as I would have apprised him, had I met with him yesterday : that her friends were very cruel to her ; but that she could not hear them named without reproaching herself ; though they were much more to blame than she.

I knew I was right, said the doctor. A love case, Mr. Goddard ! a love case, Mr. Belford ! there is one person in the world, who can do her more service, than all the faculty.

Mr. Goddard said, he had apprehended her disorder was in her mind ; and had treated her accordingly : and then told the doctor what he had done : which he approving of, again taking her charming hand, said, my good young



lady, you will require very little of our assistance. You must, in a great measure, be your own doctress. Come, dear madam (forgive me the familiar tenderness; your aspect commands love, as well as reverence; and a father of children, some of them older than yourself, may be excused for his familiar address) cheer up your spirits. Resolve to do all in your power to be well; and you'll soon grow better.

You are very kind, sir, said she. I will take whatever you direct. My spirits have been hurried. I shall be better, I believe, before I am worse. The care of my good friends here, looking at the women, shall not meet with an ungrateful return.

The doctor wrote. He would fain have declined his fee. As her malady, he said, was rather to be relieved by the soothing of a friend, than by the prescriptions of a physician, he should think himself greatly honoured to be admitted rather to advise her in the one character, than to prescribe to her in the other.

She answered, that she should be always glad to see so humane a man: that his visits would keep her in charity with his sex: but that, were she to forget that he was her physician, she might be apt to abate of the confidence in his skill, which might be necessary to effect the amendment that was the end of his visits.

We all withdrew together; and the doctor and Mr. Goddard having a great curiosity to know something more of her story, at the motion of the latter we went into a neighbouring coffee house, and I gave them, in confidence, a brief relation of it; making all as light for you as I could; and yet you'll suppose, that, in order to do but common justice to the lady's character, heavy must be that light.

Three o'clock, Afternoon.

I just now called again at Smith's; and am told she is somewhat better; which she attributed to the soothing

of her doctor. She expressed herself highly pleased with both gentlemen ; and said, that their behaviour to her was perfectly paternal.—

Paternal, poor lady !—never having been, till very lately, from under her parents' wings, and now abandoned by all her friends, she is for finding out something paternal and maternal in every one (the latter qualities in Mrs. Lovick and Mrs. Smith) to supply to herself the father and mother her dutiful heart pants after.

Mrs. Smith told me, that, after we were gone, she gave the keys of her trunks and drawers to her and the widow Lovick, and desired them to take an inventory of them ; which they did, in her presence.

They also informed me, that she had requested them to find her a purchaser for two rich dressed suits ; one never worn, the other not above once or twice.

This shocked me exceedingly—perhaps it may thee a little !—her reason for so doing, she told them, was, that she should never live to wear them : that her sister, and other relations, were above wearing them : that her mother would not endure in her sight anything that was hers : that she wanted the money : that she would not be obliged to anybody, when she had effects by her for which she had no occasion : and yet, said she, I expect not that they will fetch a price answerable to their value.

They were both very much concerned, as they owned ; and asked my advice upon it : and the richness of her apparel having given them a still higher notion of her rank than they had before, they supposed she must be of quality ; and again wanted to know her story.

I told them, that she was indeed a woman of family and fortune : I still gave them room to suppose her married : but left it to her to tell them all in her own time and manner : all I would say, was, that she had been very vilely treated ; deserved it not ; and was all innocence and purity.

You may suppose, that they both expressed their astonishment, that there could be a man in the world, who could ill treat so fine a creature.


As to disposing of the two suits of apparel, I told Mrs. Smith, that she should pretend, that, upon inquiry, she had found a friend who would purchase the richest of them; but (that she might not mistrust) would stand upon a good bargain. And having twenty guineas about me, I left them with her, in part of payment; and bid her pretend to get her to part with it for as little more as she could induce her to take.

I am setting out for Edgeware with poor Belton.—I shall return to-morrow; and leave this in readiness for your messenger, if he call in my absence.

Adieu.

MISS HOWE TO MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday, July 20.

HAT, my dearest creature, have been your sufferings!—What must have been your anguish on so disgraceful an insult, committed in the open streets, and in the broad day!

But whatever you do, my dear, you must not despond! Indeed you must not despond! Hitherto you have been in no fault: but despair would be all your own; and the worst fault you can be guilty of.

I cannot bear to look upon another hand instead of yours. My dear creature, send me a few lines, though ever so few, in your own hand, if possible.—For they will revive my heart; especially if they can acquaint me of your amended health.

I expect your answer to my letter of the 13th. We all expect it with impatience.

His relations are persons of so much honour—they are so very earnest to rank you among them—the wretch is so

very penitent : everyone of his family says he is—your own are so implacable—your last distress, though the consequence of his former villainy, yet neither brought on by his direction, nor with his knowledge ; and so much resented by him—that my mother is absolutely of opinion, that you should be his—especially if, yielding to my wishes, as expressed in my letter, and those of all his friends, you would have complied, had it not been for this horrid arrest.

I will inclose the copy of the letter I wrote to Miss Montague last Tuesday, on hearing that nobody knew what was become of you ; and the answer to it, under-written and signed by Lord M., Lady Sarah Sadleir, and Lady Betty Lawrence, as well as by the young ladies ; and also by the wretch himself.

I own, that I like not the turn of what he has written to me ; and before I will further interest myself in his favour, I have determined to inform myself, by a friend, from his own mouth, of his sincerity, and whether his whole inclination be in his request to me, exclusive of the wishes of his relations. Yet my heart rises against him, on the supposition that there is the shadow of a reason for such a question, the woman Miss Clarissa Harlowe.—But I think, with my mother, that marriage is now the only means left to make your future life tolerably easy—happy there is no saying.—His disgraces, in that case, in the eye of the world itself, will be more than yours : and to those who know you, glorious will be your triumph.

I am obliged to accompany my mother soon to the Isle of Wight. My aunt Harman is in a declining way, and insists upon seeing us both—and Mr. Hickman too, I think.

His sister, of whom we had heard so much, with her lord, were brought the other day to visit us. She strangely likes me, or says she does.

I can't say, but that I think she answers the excellent character we have heard of her.

It would be death to me to set out for the little island, and not see you first; and yet my mother (fond of exerting an authority that she herself, by that exertion, often brings into question) insists, that my next visit to you must be a congratulatory one, as Mrs. Lovelace.

When I know what will be the result of the questions to be put in my name to that wretch, and what is your mind on my letter of the 13th, I shall tell you more of mine.


The bearer promises to make so much dispatch, as to attend you this very afternoon. May he return with good tidings to

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

MISS CLARISSA HARLOWE TO MISS HOWE.

Thursday Afternoon.

OU pain me, my dearest Miss Howe, by the ardor of your noble friendship. I will be very brief, because I am not well; yet a good deal better than I was; and because I am preparing an answer to yours of the 13th. But, beforehand, I must tell you, my dear, I will not have that man—don't be angry with me.—But indeed I won't. So let him be asked no questions about me, I beseech you.

I do not despond, my dear. I hope I may say, I will not despond. Is not my condition greatly mended? I thank Heaven it is!

I am no prisoner now in a vile house. I am not now in the power of that man's devices. I am not now obliged to hide myself in corners for fear of him. One of his intimate companions is become my warm friend, and engages to keep him from me, and that by his own consent. I am among honest people. I have all my clothes and effects restored to me. The wretch himself bears testimony to my honour.

Indeed I am very weak and ill : but I have an excellent physician, Dr. H., and as worthy an apothecary, Mr. Goddard. — Their treatment of me, my dear, is perfectly paternal!—My mind too, I can find, begins to strengthen : and methinks, at times, I find myself superior to my calamities.

I shall have sinkings sometimes. I must expect such. And my father's maledict—but you will chide me for introducing that, now I am enumerating my comforts.

But I charge you, my dear, that you do not suffer my calamities to sit too heavy upon your own mind. If you do, that will be to new-point some of those arrows, that have been blunted, and lost their sharpness.

If you would contribute to my happiness, give way, my dear, to your own ; and to the cheerful prospects before you !

You will think very meanly of your Clarissa, if you do not believe, that the greatest pleasure she can receive in this life, is in your prosperity and welfare. Think not of me, my only friend, but as we were in times past : and suppose me gone a great, great way off ! A long journey ! —How often are the dearest of friends, at their country's call, thus parted—with a certainty for years—with a probability for ever !

Love me still, however. But let it be with a weaning love. I am not what I was, when we were inseparable lovers, as I may say.—Our views must now be different. Resolve, my dear, to make a worthy man happy, because a worthy man must make you so.—And so, my dearest love, for the present adieu !—Adieu, my dearest love !—But I shall soon write again, I hope !

MR. LOVELACE TO JOHN BELFORD, ESQ.

Friday Night, July 21.



AM exceedingly disturbed at the lady's ill health. It is entirely owing to the cursed arrest. She was absolutely triumphant over me and the whole crew before. Thou believest me guiltless of that : so, I hope, does she.—The rest, as I have often said, is a common case ; only a little uncommonly circumstanced ; that's all : why, then, all these severe things from her, and from thee ?

As to selling her clothes, and her laces, and so forth, it has, I own, a shocking sound with it. What an implacable as well as unjust set of wretches are those of her unkindredly kin who have money of hers in their hands, as well as large arrears of her own estate ; yet withhold both, avowedly to distress her ! But may she not have money of that proud and saucy friend of hers, Miss Howe, more than she wants ?—And should I not be overjoyed, thinkest thou, to serve her ?—What then is there in the parting with her apparel, but female perverseness ?—And I am not sure, whether I ought not to be glad, if she does this out of spite to me.—Some disappointed fair ones would have hanged, some drowned themselves. My beloved only revenges herself upon her clothes. Different ways of working has passion in different bosoms, as humours or complexion induce.—Besides, dost think I shall grudge to replace, to three times the value, what she disposes of ? So Jack, there is no great matter in this !

Thou seest how sensible she is of the soothings of the polite doctor : this will enable thee to judge how dreadfully the horrid arrest, and her gloomy father's curse, must have hurt her. I have great hope, if she will but see me, that my behaviour, my contrition, my soothings, may have some happy effects upon her.

But thou art too ready to give me up. Let me seriously tell thee, that, all excellence as she is, I think the earnest interposition of my relations; the implored mediation of that little fury Miss Howe; and the commissions thou actest under from myself; are such instances of condescension and high value in them, and such contrition in me, that nothing farther can be done.—So here let the matter rest for the present, till she considers better of it.

As for thy resolution of repenting and marrying; I would have thee consider which thou wilt set about first. If thou wilt follow my advice, thou shalt make short work of it: let matrimony take place of the other; for then thou wilt, very possibly, have repentance come tumbling in fast upon thee, as a consequence, and so have both in one.

END OF VOL. II.





