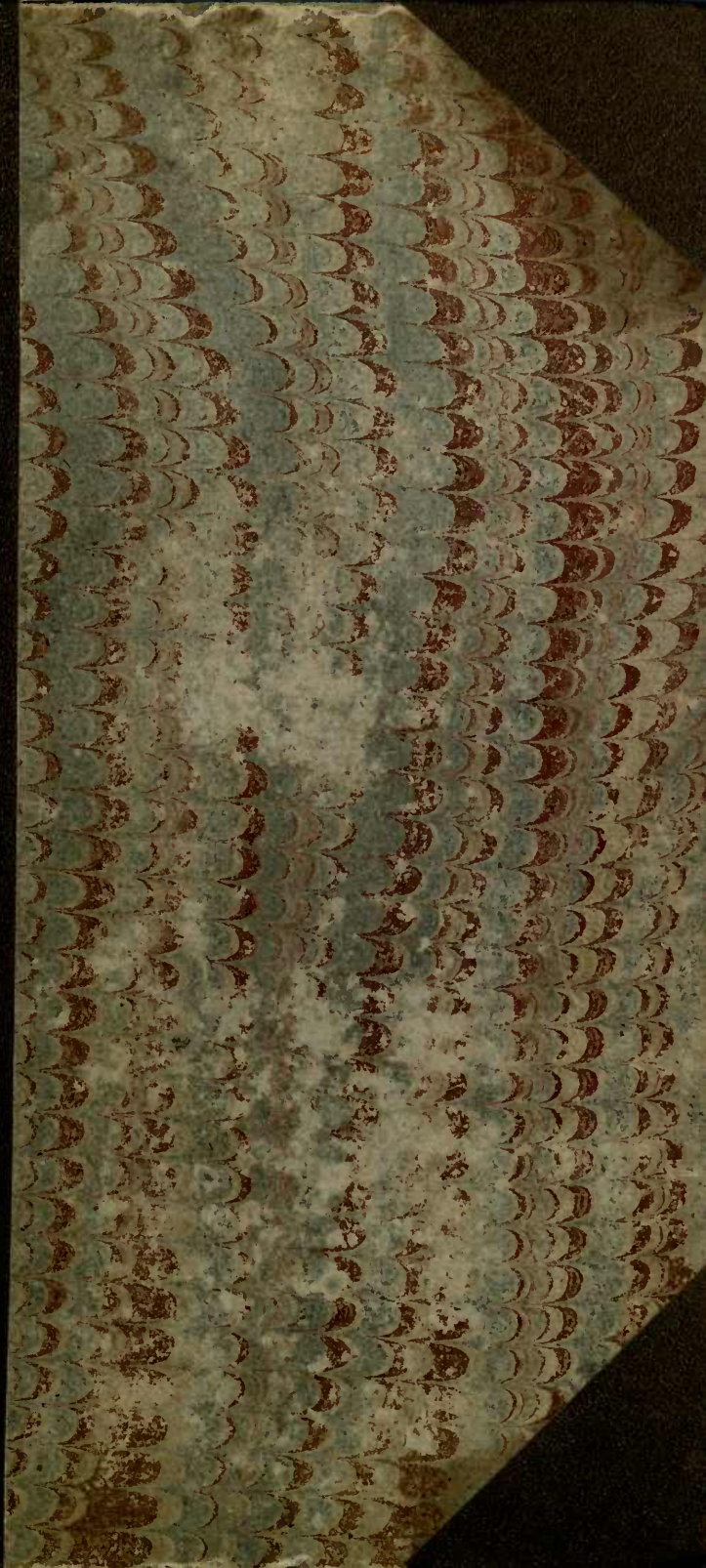


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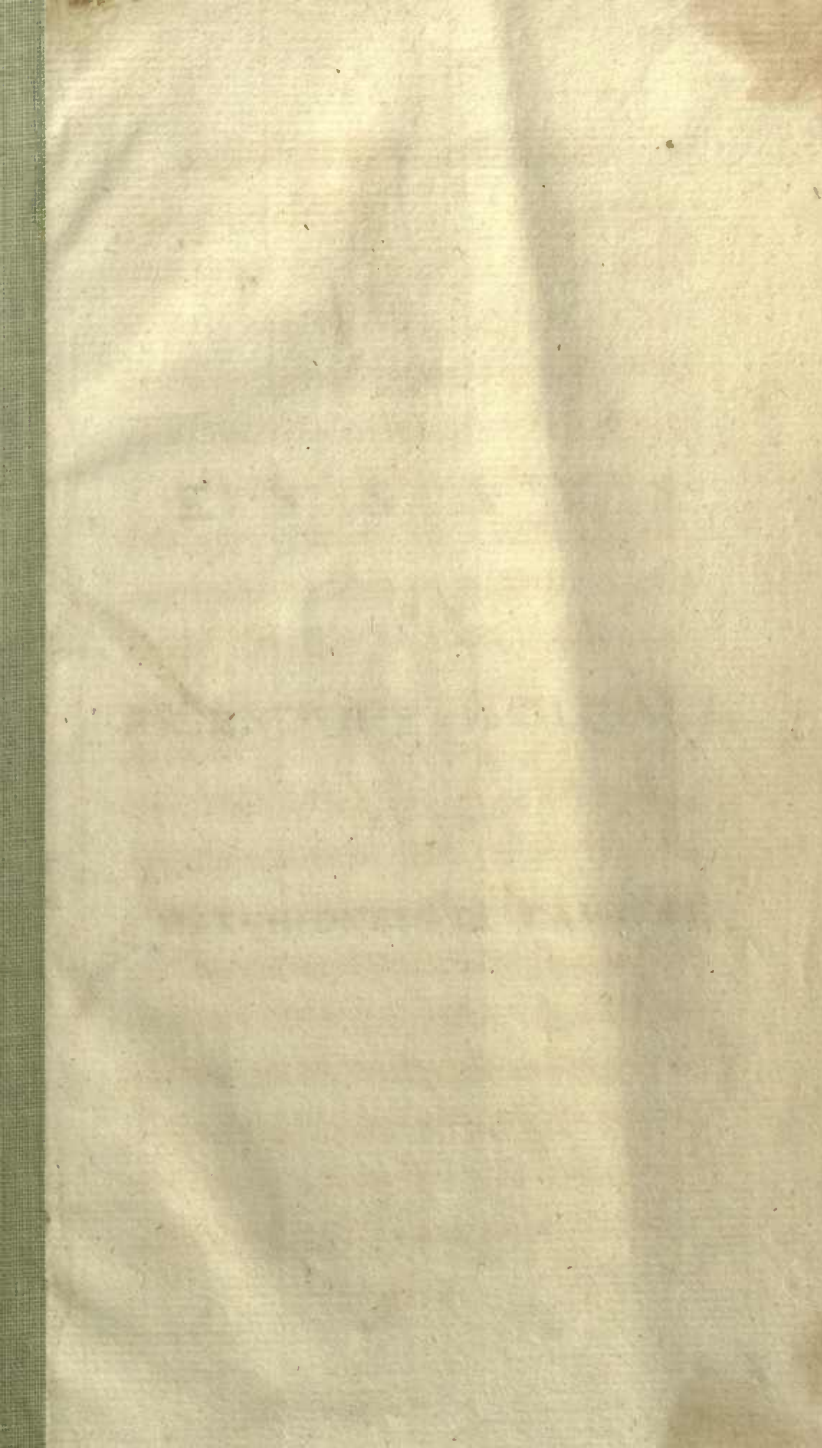


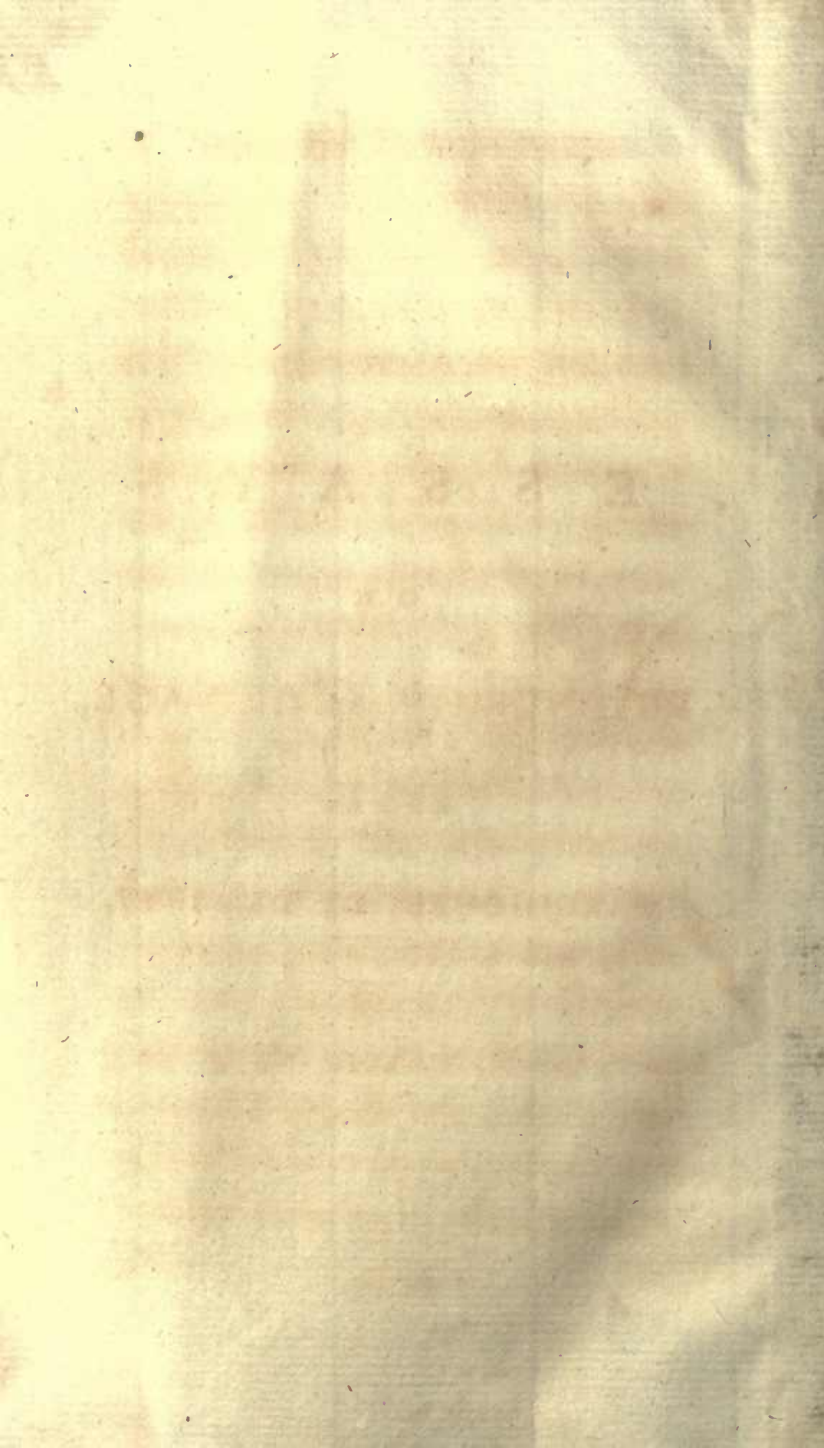
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E S S A Y S

O N

FRIENDSHIP AND OLD-AGE,

BY THE

MARCHIONESS DE LAMBERT.

F. S. A.

O. N.

FRIENDSHIP AND OBLIGATION

BY JOHN

M. B. HOWES

E S S A Y S

O N

FRIENDSHIP AND OLD-AGE,

BY THE

MARCHIONESS DE LAMBERT.

Que tout ce qu'elle dit est grace ;
Tout ce qu'elle pense, raison. LA MOTTE.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,

BY A L A D Y.

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

T O

WILLIAM MELMOTH, Esq.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. DODSLEY, PALL-MALL.

M. DCC. LXXX.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

T O

WILLIAM MELMOTH, ESQ.

DEAR SIR,

AS you have led me, though not intentionally, into those perils, that attend a novice in publication, I flatter myself you will pardon the liberty I take in recommending the two following little essays to your protection.

A 3

In

1697816

In perusing your elegant translation of Lælius, I was mortified to find, that in speaking of the distinguished modern writers on Friendship, you had omitted the name of the amiable Marchioness de Lambert, whose essay on the subject I had read with infinite pleasure, and perhaps with that partiality, which women generally discover towards an author of their own sex.

My regard for this excellent moralist, tempted me, upon this occasion, to enquire in what dress she had been presented to our country; and the only translation of these treatises that I could discover, appeared to me so very unworthy of the original,
that

that I could not help feeling a desire to give the English reader a more adequate idea of their merit.—How far I have been able to succeed, I am now to learn from the Public, as I dare not utterly confide in the approbation of a few partial friends. Let me honestly confess, that I not only engaged in a new version of the essays in question, because they appeared to me not so well translated as some of her other works, but from an ambition of placing her treatises on Friendship and Old-Age by the side of your *Lælius* and *Cato*: happy, were I able to enrich my translation with such biographical and critical remarks, as give to your's so considerable a portion of original me-

8 INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

rit! but I must content myself with barely relating, in this preface, the few particulars, which I have been able to collect concerning my author, from the writers of her country.

The Marchioness de Lambert was the only daughter of Stephen de Marguenot, Seigneur de Courcelles, and born in the year 1647: she lost her father when she was yet an infant; a circumstance that proved, in its consequences, the occasion of her early and uncommon progress in literature; for by the second marriage of her mother she fell under the care of the celebrated Bachaumont, who wrote, in conjunction with the sprightly poet La Chappelle, the pleasant motley
composition

composition in prose and verse, which bears the name of these lively friends. He was, as Voltaire has remarked, one of the most amiable and accomplished characters of his age, and cultivated, with great pleasure and affection, that early passion for letters, which his little daughter-in-law soon began to display. Under the care of so engaging a preceptor, she acquired that fund of elegant and useful knowledge, which afforded her such considerable support in all the vicissitudes of a long life, and which has secured to her a lasting reputation in the republic of letters.

At the age of nineteen she was
married

married to Henry de Lambert, Marquis de Saint Bris, lieutenant-general, and governor of Luxemburg, who died in 1686, leaving her a son and daughter, on whose education she exerted the utmost powers of her affectionate mind, which are beautifully displayed in her two essays of advice, addressed to her children.

On the death of her husband, she was persecuted with long and vexatious law-suits, in which her whole fortune was at stake, and in the conduct of which she is said to have given most striking proofs of a masculine understanding. As these were happily terminated in her favor, she passed
the

the remainder of her life in great affluence, and chiefly in Paris, where she died at the age of eighty-six, in the year 1733.

It is singular, that this lady, who in general possessed such solidity of judgment, should, in one instance, be under the influence of a vulgar prejudice, and consider it as unbecoming a woman of her rank to appear in the character of an author. Her admirable essays to her children were first published in a clandestine manner, and their appearance in the world gave her so much disquietude, that, as she declares herself, in one of her letters, she exerted her utmost efforts to suppress them; and we may justly say of her, what Pope
says

says of Shakespeare, though on a very different occasion,

“ She grew immortal in her own despite.”

Her extreme desire to prevent the circulation of her writings, was owing, indeed, in some degree, to the great share of natural modesty which she possessed, and still more, I apprehend, to a painful dread of that raillery to which every French lady was exposed, who ventured to engage deeply in any literary pursuits, after the appearance of Moliere's admirable comedy of the Femmes Savantes, in 1672, which was, indeed, supposed to glance a little at the hotel de Lambert*.

Our

* This is asserted in a few remarks prefixed to the Femmes Savantes, in the last octavo

Our author had, however, the spirit to become the champion of her sex, in a little essay which she composed for the perusal of her friends, entitled, “New Reflections on Women.” She here combats, with great vivacity and judgment, the dangerous ridicule of Moliere; and observes, that the wit of this comic writer had proved as prejudicial to female understanding in France, as the pleasantries of Cervantes had to heroic valour in

two editions of Moliere; but the circumstance appears to me improbable, as this comedy was first represented a few years after the marriage of Madame de Lambert—and her literary assemblies did not, I believe, attract the notice of the public till towards the latter period of her life.

Spain.

Spain. Nor does she seem to have exaggerated the ill effects of that ridicule which she so warmly opposed, and of which she was so perfect a judge. A living French author, of considerable reputation, has represented this comedy of Moliere in the same point of view, in a very entertaining essay concerning the character, manners, and understanding of women in different ages. Having alluded to the play of Moliere, he proceeds with the following remarks:—“Some

“ women, after this, applied

“ themselves to letters, and some

“ cultivated the sciences; but the

“ example was far from general.

“ In

“ In the most enlightened of
“ ages, knowledge was deemed
“ unpardonable in females. A
“ taste for letters was considered
“ as a kind of incongruity in
“ the Great, and as pedantry in
“ Women. This secret contempt,
“ worthy of our most barbarous
“ ancestors, must have imposed
“ particular restraint on that sex,
“ which is most under the influ-
“ ence of opinion. Some women
“ braved this prejudice, but such
“ conduct was even censured as
“ criminal. As all things that
“ are excellent have their ex-
“ cesses, and as a *bon mot* fails
“ not to operate as a reason, in
“ blending what is ridiculous
“ with what is useful, it became
“ an

“ an easy matter to discredit
 “ knowledge in women. Boi-
 “ leau and Moliere fortified the
 “ prejudice, by the authority of
 “ their genius.

“ Thus, in the age of Lewis the
 “ XIVth, women were reduced
 “ to conceal themselves in the
 “ pursuit of instruction, and to
 “ be as much ashamed of know-
 “ ledge, as they would have been
 “ of an intrigue in ages less po-
 “ lished. Some, however, had
 “ the resolution to free them-
 “ selves from that ignorance
 “ which was imposed on them
 “ as a duty; but the greater
 “ number concealed this hardi-
 “ ness of spirit, or, if they were
 “ suspected, took every measure
 “ to

“ to avoid conviction, and al-
 “ lowed Friendship only to be
 “ their confident or their accom-
 “ plice.”

This was particularly the case with Madame de Lambert; who, having defended her sex with great spirit, in the essay I have mentioned, could not be prevailed on to publish that defence; and in a letter to Monsieur de St. Hyacinthe, then in London, she expresses her concern at its having stolen into the world. She thanks him, at the same time, for an English translation of her work which he had sent her, and justifies herself in the following manner, in answer to a very singular observation of her transla-

B

tor,

tor, Mr. Lockman. “ He says
 “ in his preface, that what I have
 “ written on women is my apolo-
 “ gy—I have never had occasion
 “ to make any. He accuses me of
 “ having a tender and a feeling
 “ soul. I deny not the charge ;
 “ it remains only to enquire to
 “ what I have applied it.”

I must observe, for the honor
 of my author, that few persons,
 of any country, could have less
 reason to apprehend such an en-
 quiry, as it is universally allowed
 that her whole life was animated
 by that spirit of tenderness and
 virtue, which still charm us in
 her writings. One of the most
 striking proofs of the high esteem
 in which she was held by her
 con-

contemporaries, is found in a letter of the amiable Fenelon, to their common friend Monsieur de Sacy, in which he speaks both of her compositions and her character in terms of the warmest admiration.

Voltaire happily observes, speaking of our author, in his Age of Lewis the XIVth,—“her
 “ treatise on Friendship proves
 “ that she deserved herself to
 “ have friends.” There are also many passages in her letters, which equally prove what exalted ideas she entertained of this noble sentiment, and how truly formed her own heart was, both to feel and inspire it.

One passage in particular I cannot help mentioning, as it presents a striking picture of her own feelings, and preserves a pleasing anecdote of an amiable Prince, the accomplished but short-lived disciple of the virtuous Fenelon. In writing to her friend, on the death of the Duke of Burgundy, she exclaims, “How great is
 “ your private loss, my dear
 “ Sacy!—I must acquaint you
 “ with a circumstance that re-
 “ lates to you, and which, per-
 “ haps, you are yet to learn. I
 “ had a friend in the household
 “ of the Prince, who, enchanted
 “ with his virtues, was continu-
 “ ally speaking of them to me.
 “ He

“ He has told me, that as the
“ Prince was one day coming out
“ of his chamber, where he had
“ read your treatise on Friendship,
“ he said to him—I have just
“ been reading a book, which has
“ made me feel the misfortune
“ of our rank. We cannot hope
“ to have friends! We must re-
“ nounce the most engaging sen-
“ timent in life. He felt, my
“ dear Sacy, the necessity of
“ friendship. The sentiments of
“ nature had their full influence
“ over his heart, and majesty dis-
“ appeared before them. He
“ would have had friends, and
“ he would not have chosen them
“ from the crowd of his flatter-
“ ers.”

I have inserted this passage, both because the letter is omitted in the common English translation of my author's works, and because it shews she was superior to the little meanness of jealousy towards a rival, who had written on the same subject with herself. In her intimacy with Monsieur de Sacy, she displayed all the delicacy of the most refined friendship; and Monsieur d'Alembert makes such pleasing mention of their mutual regard, in his eulogy on this writer, that I am tempted to hazard a translation of the passage.

“ The talents of Monsieur de
 “ Sacy, the reputation which he
 “ had acquired, the mildness of
 “ his

“ his character, and his manners,
“ procured his admission into an
“ enchanting society, which is
“ still remembered in our days,
“ after a period of more than
“ forty years; I mean that of the
“ Marchioness de Lambert. This
“ lady assembled at her house
“ many celebrated writers, at the
“ head of whom were Fontenelle
“ and La Motte, who united phi-
“ losophy to the charms of lite-
“ rature, politeness to talents,
“ and reciprocal esteem to emu-
“ lation. Madame de Lambert,
“ who was accused of an exces-
“ sive partiality for wit, and who
“ honored this reproach of fools,
“ with an attention it hardly de-
“ served from her, answered it,

“ by admitting into this little
 “ academy, more splendid than
 “ numerous, such characters of
 “ the court, as were most distin-
 “ guished by their station and
 “ their birth. In this assembly
 “ they did not listen to, or rather
 “ they were not acquainted with
 “ that rigid and unjust philoso-
 “ phy, which, by imposing on
 “ women a silence humiliating
 “ to themselves, and melancholy
 “ to us, obliges them to conceal
 “ their understanding and their
 “ knowledge, with as much soli-
 “ titude as their most secret senti-
 “ ments and affections. They be-
 “ lieved, on the contrary, and they
 “ had the good fortune to expe-
 “ rience perpetually, in the pre-
 “ sence

“ fence of Madame de Lambert,
“ that a woman of virtue, deli-
“ cacy, and sentiment, animated
“ with genius, and every pleasing
“ accomplishment, was the prin-
“ cipal tie, and the most at-
“ tractive charm of a society so
“ happily composed; a rare as-
“ semblage of elegance and
“ knowledge, of imagination and
“ judgment, of politeness and
“ learning. It was in the midst
“ of this society that Monsieur
“ de Sacy composed his essay on
“ Friendship. He addressed it
“ to Madame de Lambert; and
“ he was, indeed, much more her
“ friend, than the other men of
“ letters whom she assembled.
“ The intimacy of these were
only

“ only agreeable to her, that of
 “ Monsieur de Sacy was much
 “ more, it was necessary to her
 “ happiness. If the wit of Fon-
 “ tenelle and La Motte afforded
 “ her more resources of amuse-
 “ ment, she found in Monsieur
 “ de Sacy a sensibility more con-
 “ genial with her heart, and a
 “ soul more in unison with her
 “ own. Under the eyes of this
 “ worthy friend, she principally
 “ composed her excellent book,
 “ entitled, Advice from a Mother
 “ to her Son and Daughter; a
 “ work in which delicacy of taste
 “ is united to that of sentiment;
 “ knowledge of the world, to the
 “ most touching lessons of vir-
 “ tue; and the lively graces of
 “ style,

“stile, to the most natural ex-
 “pressions of maternal tender-
 “ness.”

Among the smaller productions of our author, there are three very pleasing portraits of Monsieur de Sacy, Fontenelle, and La Motte, drawn with equal delicacy and discernment; and among the Letters of the latter, in the 10th volume of his works, there are several which give a lively picture of the chosen society which frequented the house of my author, particularly one from herself to the Duchess of Maine, who had expressed the most eager desire to be admitted into her weekly assembly. Fontenelle suggested the pleasantry
 of

of addressing the Duchefs, before ſhe was admitted to their parties, in the name of the day in which the company aſſembled. La Motte, who had received particular compliments from her, was prevailed on to write as their ſecretary; and to his letter Madame de Lambert added the following:

“MADAME DE LAMBERT TO THE
 “DUCHESS OF MAINE.

“BEHOLD, Madam, the ho-
 “norable Tuesday, which comes
 “to pay its homage to your Se-
 “rene Highneſs. The great Fon-
 “tenelle, adorned with all his
 “talents, equally the favorite of
 “the ſerious and the ſportive
 “ Muſe,

“ Muse, whose reputation is un-
 “ bounded; secretary, and almost
 “ president of our academies,
 “ throws himself at your feet.

“ The inflexible La Motte,
 “ who has endeavored to abolish
 “ the adoration of Homer, and
 “ who has never burnt a grain of
 “ incense on his altar, throws a
 “ profusion of flowers on your’s.

“ The Mentor of a great
 “ Prince, who instructs better
 “ than Minerva, who has lent
 “ new graces to Cicero, and is
 “ less his translator than his rival,
 “ prostrates himself before your
 “ Serene Highness.

“ The amiable Abbé de Brage-
 “ lonne, cherished by the Graces
 “ and the Muses, and so extolled

“ by

“ by you, is received into that
 “ band which celebrates your
 “ praises.

“ The exact, the precise, or
 “ rather precision itself ; in
 “ short, the great geometrician,
 “ Monsieur de Mairan, comes to
 “ renew that homage which he
 “ has already had the honor to
 “ pay you.

“ You see, Madam, that all
 “ our great men place their
 “ glory in honoring you. It is
 “ but just that the academy,
 “ which is so deeply indebted
 “ to you, should make to your
 “ Serene Highness their acknow-
 “ ledgments in form. Our lan-
 “ guage improves only when you
 “ speak it, or when it speaks of
 “ you.

“ I shall

“ I shall expect you, Madam,
“ with all the sollicitude of that
“ respectful attachment, with
“ which I am,

“ M A D A M,

“ Your most humble, and
“ Most obedient Servant.”

“ *Paris, August 23, 1726.*”

The answer of the Duchess
expresses, in a lively manner,
the most flattering esteem for our
author. Thus possessed of ge-
neral regard, and equally honor-
ed by the applause of grandeur
and of wit, she passed her latter
days in the most refined pleasures
of

of select society, and those superior delights which attend the exercise of every generous virtue. All these, however, were much checquered by the infirmities of a tender constitution—by the common maladies of old-age, and still more by the death of her daughter, which happened two years before her own.

I have now given you the best account that I have been able to collect, of an author whom I never review without enthusiastic admiration: but I can assure you, I am so far from being vain of the performance, that I have still an earnest desire to see more justice done to her instructive character,

character, by a much abler hand.

As you have mentioned her friend Monsieur de Sacy with honor, in the advertisement to your *Lælius*, allow me to hope, that in your next edition of that work, you will not omit the name of the Marchioness de Lambert.

I am not singular in this wish, but share it with many friends, who are equally admirers with me, both of your writings and of her's; and particularly one, who has given me leave to close my preface with the following Stanzas—but before I transcribe them, allow me to assure you,

C

that

that I am, with the truest esteem
for your literary talents, and still
more for your private virtues,

DEAR SIR,

Your sincere Friend,

and obedient Servant,

E. H.

T O

WILLIAM MELMOTH, Esq;

On his omitting the name of the *Marchioness de Lambert*, in his account of the celebrated Modern Writers on Friendship.

HASTE, gentle MELMOTH,
Beauty's friend,
Whose spirit glories to commend
Each talent she displays;
And nobly scorns that Cynic pride,
Which oft to Woman has deny'd
The palm of letter'd praise :

O haste ! thy hard neglect retrieve,
 For which the wounded Graces grieve,
 And mourn their LAMBERT's lot;
 To think her page, to them so dear,
 Is, by the critic they revere,
 Contemptuously forgot.

But, as the voice of Fame will own,
 For such offences to atone
 Thou hast the happy power :
 As the poor annual decays,
 This rhyme may perish, but thy praise
 Is a perennial flower.

Then in thy soft Virgilian prose,
 That with poetic sweetness flows,
 Whose beauties will outlive
 The ruder verse I vainly frame,
 To lovely LAMBERT's injur'd name
 Full retribution give !

Thy TULLY, whom all eyes confess
So graceful in thy English dress,
 To Man confines his aim,
When he makes age forget its ills,
Or in the patriot soul instills
 True Friendship's kindred flame :

But LAMBERT, Learning's softer pride,
Her sex's unassuming guide,
 Exerts a nicer art ;
Her precept from Caprice withdraws,
And forms to philosophic laws
 The lighter female heart.

'Tis her's to teach the vain coquette
To bear, unwounded by regret,
 The loss of youthful grace ;
And in the cultur'd mind display
Charms, that compensate and o'erpay
 The ruins of her face :

For well she estimates, above
 The scorching beams of blazing Love,
 Friendship's serener fires ;
 Wisely she moulds the mind of youth ;
 Sweet moralist ! who teaches truth,
 Yet teaching never tires.

Oh Eloquence ! we own thy power :
 Thy Tully is the richest flower,
 That can the sense regale :
 But must the Rose engross our eye ?
 And can we pass unheeding by
 The Lily of the vale ?

No, MELMOTH ! tho' a rival coast,
 Tho' Gallia may this Lily boast,
 Its sweets thou wilt not wrong :
 Open to Merit's just complaint,
 Thou wilt in happier colours paint
 The subject of my song ;

That

That mind, where, tender as the dove,
The spirit of maternal love
Was fondly seen to brood,
And with soft Virtue's sweetest tone,
With gentle grace, to Man unknown,
The Moralist endu'd.

To generous admiration fir'd,
Contemporary Wits conspir'd
To praise her glowing page:
And France, exulting, ranks her name
With those who constitute the fame
Of her Augustan age.

Britain applauds so just a meed:
Let Female worth, she cries, succeed,
Where'er that worth may shine!
Let France unenvy'd boast her share
Of glory from her letter'd Fair,
Since MONTAGU is mine!

E S S A Y

O N

FRIENDSHIP

YOU are under some obligation to my dear Sir, to console me for the loss of our female friend. I esteem as a loss every diminution in friendship since, in general, every sentiment that begins to languish expires. I examine myself with severity, and I am persuaded that I give more to friendship

E S S A Y
O N
F R I E N D S H I P.

YOU are under some obligation, my dear Sir, to console me for the loss of our female friend. I esteem as a loss every diminution in friendship; since, in general, every sentiment that begins to languish, expires. I examine myself with severity, and I am persuaded that I give more to friendship than

than others, and yet it vanishes. Do, therefore, I entreat you, tell me, without reserve, to whom I am to impute it, as my complaints must certainly have an object.—Is the fault in myself, or in my friends, or in the manners of the times? In short, correct me where I fail, and console me for what I lose.

The farther we advance in life, the more we feel the necessity of friendship. In proportion as reason improves, as the imagination encreases in brilliancy, and as the heart becomes pure and refined, the more the sentiment of friendship appears requisite to our happiness. Behold, therefore, such reflections as the leisure of my

retirement has led me to throw together on the subject. In all ages friendship has been considered as one of the first blessings of life:—'Tis a sentiment which is born with us, and the first movement of every heart is to unite itself to some other; nevertheless, it is a general lamentation, and all the world exclaims—“There are no friends.” The whole circle of past ages hardly furnishes three or four examples of a perfect union. Since then all men are agreed concerning the charms of friendship, why do they not comprehend their common interest, and unite to enjoy it? Mankind, in growing depraved, become blind to their own advantage.

Wisdom

Wisdom and truth, in enlightening our understandings, make our self-love more adroit and penetrating, and teach us that it is our real interest to attach ourselves to virtue, and that virtue brings with it all the gentle and engaging pleasures of friendship. Let us examine, then, what are the charms and the advantages of friendship, that we may seek them; what its true characteristic, that we may know it; and what its duties, that we may discharge them.

The advantages of friendship manifest themselves sufficiently; all nature exclaims with one voice, that they are of all blessings the most desirable:—without it, life
has

has no charms. Man is made up of wants, and when left to himself, feels a void, which friendship only is capable of filling. Harrassed in perpetual agitation and disquietude, he can find repose only in the bosom of friendship. An ancient says, that Love is the son of Poverty and the God of Riches : of Poverty, because he is by profession a beggar ; and of the God of Riches, because he is naturally profuse :—why may we not assign to Friendship the same origin ? When she is lively, she requires sympathy ; tender and delicate characters feel the wants of the heart more than others feel the common necessities of life. On the other hand, from her

generosity

generosity of nature she deserves to be acknowledged as the daughter of the God of Riches; for those have no pretensions to the noble name of friendship, who shrink from her severer duties in the hour of adversity. In short, feeling minds seek to unite themselves by sentiment; for as the heart was made for affection, it becomes lifeless the moment you refuse it the pleasure of loving and being beloved. Load men with possessions, with riches, and honors, and deprive them of the sweets of friendship; all the charms of life disappear.

Your reasonable characters deny themselves to love: women, from attachment to duty—men,
from

from the fear of chusing unwisely. — You are attracted towards friendship; you are hurried into love. Friendship is often built upon the ruins of love; and such friendship is most tender, most lively, and most assiduous. All the delicacies of love are found in the connection of which I speak. Friendship, in its infancy, is subject to illusion: Novelty pleases by promising much, and whatever awakens hope is of high estimation. Illusion is a sentiment which transports us beyond the truth, by obscuring our reason. You see in the persons that begin to please you, every perfection; and the imagination, which always acts
under

under the dominion of the heart, lends to the beloved object the merit which it wants.—We love our friends much more for the qualities that we give them credit for, than for those which they have displayed. There are also friendships which seem to depend on the stars; sympathetic connections, and undiscovered ties, which unite and bind us so firmly that we neither want vows nor protestations: Confidence takes the lead of language. When Montaign describes to us his sentiments towards his friend, “we fought each other” says he, “upon report, and our names had already embraced before we became acquainted. It was

“ was on a festival that I first
 “ saw him, and we both found
 “ ourselves in an instant so united,
 “ so well known, and so intimate,
 “ that nothing could be more
 “ dear than we were to each
 “ other ; and when I ask myself
 “ whence arises that joy, that
 “ ease, that repose, which I feel
 “ when I see him ? all I can say
 “ is, 'Tis he—'tis I.” We enjoy
 in friendship the purest sweets
 of love : the pleasure of con-
 fidence, the charm of exposing
 our soul to our friend—to read
 in his very heart—to see it
 without a shadow of disguise ;
 to discover our own weaknes-
 ses, for we must think aloud
 before our friend. Those only

would

D

who

who have enjoyed the enchanting pleasure of friendship, know what delight there is in passing whole days together—how light, how rapid, the hours in the presence of those we love! what a resource is the asylum of friendship! By her we escape from the world, which is generally deceitful, false, and inconstant.

But one of the great advantages of friendship, is the aid of good counsels: however rational we may be, we have still occasion for a director, as we ought to distrust our reason, which frequently delivers us its own language, the mere dictates of passion. 'Tis a great support to
know

know we have a guide to correct and reform us. The ancients understood all the advantages of friendship; but they have so overcharged their portraits of it, that they are looked upon merely as fine ideas, which exist not in nature. As men love to fly from great models, and to reject great examples, because they require much from us, they agree to treat them as chimeras; but in this we misunderstand our own interest. In withdrawing ourselves from the obligations of friendship, we lose all its advantages: it is a commerce, it is a kind of partnership, in which the most worthy advances the largest sum, and thinks himself happy in propor-

tion to that advance. We divide our fortune with our friend; riches, credit, attentions, services, all belong to him, except our honor. It has appeared to me, to the disgrace of our age, that offering our fortune to our friend is considered as the last effort of friendship; there are trials far superior to this.

But one of the greatest advantages of friendship, is to find in our friend a just model; for we desire the esteem of those we love, and that desire leads us to imitate those virtues which may insure it. Seneca recommends to his friend, to chuse from amongst the great men the most respectable character, to act always as if he
was

was present, and to render him an account of every action. Our friend is this exalted character to keep us in awe—nothing can insure our conduct so effectually, both with regard to ourselves and others, as a respectable friend. It is not allowed us to be imperfect in his eyes; neither do we often see virtue connected with vice. We do not love to see those who constantly scrutinize and condemn us—we must be certain of our own integrity, to dare to give ourselves certain friends. Pyrrhus said, “Save me from my friends, I fear only them.” Pliny having lost his friend, “I fear,” said he, “I shall slacken in the road of virtue;

“ I have lost my guide, and the
“ witness of my life.” — In short,
perfect friendship puts us under
the necessity of being virtuous;
as it can only be maintained be-
tween estimable persons, it forces
us to resemble them, that we
may preserve their regard. You
will find then in friendship the
security of good advice, the emu-
lation of good example, sympathy
in your sorrows, assistance in your
wants, without being asked, wait-
ed for, or purchased.

Let us now see what are the
true characteristics of friendship,
that we may know it. The prin-
cipal merit which should be re-
quired in our friends, is virtue :
It is that which assures us they
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are capable of friendship, and worthy of it: expect nothing from your connections, when they have not this foundation. In these days, it is not our tastes, but our wants, which unite us. It is not the union of hearts, or of the understanding, that is sought for in these intimacies. Thus we see them at an end as soon as they are begun. There can be no rupture without some degree of disgrace, as there must be some fault on one side or the other: there is no escaping the shame of being mistaken in our opinion, and of being obliged to retract it. We form intimacies without any exertion of our judgment, and we dissolve them without re-

flection ; what can be more contemptible ? Chuse your friend out of a thousand ; nothing is more important than such a choice, since upon it your happiness depends : as, on the contrary, nothing is more melancholy than to be connected with the unworthy, to have all the shame of a separation to undergo, or the mortification of continuing united with persons of no merit. We should also remember, that our friends stamp our characters ; we are discovered in them, and we thus present a kind of portrait of ourselves to the public, and a confession of what we are. We should tremble, if we reflected what we hazard in acknowledging

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ing a friend. Would you be esteemed? live with persons that are estimable; we should therefore be well acquainted before we engage ourselves.

The first mark, which assures us that any person is worthy of friendship, is virtue; after that, we must seek for friends that are free, and unenslaved by the passions: those whom ambition possesses, are little capable of this tender sentiment; still less capable are those who are in the chains of love. Love carries away with him all the vivacity of friendship; it is a turbulent passion, and friendship is a gentle and well-regulated sentiment. Love gives the soul an

an intoxicating kind of joy, which is sometimes followed by extreme discontent. The other is a reasonable delight, always pure and always equal; nothing can obstruct or weary it—it nourishes the soul.

Moreover, if you are attached to a person of merit, has not that person all your confidence? The friendship of a lover is too insipid; he may, indeed, afford you some degree of attention, and some services; but as to sentiment, he has none left to bestow.

The recompence of virtuous love is friendship; it is not, however, a common passion, but love of the purest and most exalted nature,

ture, which leads to this reward. Persons of a frivolous and dissipated turn are by no means suited to friendship; for every object with them carries away some portion of that sentiment and solicitude which should be the property of friendship.

Though it has been always said, that we should give to friendship a foundation more solid than mere sensibility, yet if inclination is not concerned, we are not deeply engaged. The fancy admits not of conviction. If the heart is not affected, we advance neither rapidly nor far. Virtue and inclination united to form those ancient friendships, whose memory has descended to
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our days. Montaign, who describes to us the rise of his sentiments towards his friend, says he was smitten as one in love:—he was in a situation to relish friendship. Freed from passions, and devoted to reason, there remained to him no other enjoyment.

Persons recovered from violent passions, and who are restored to themselves, from a conviction of *the little value* of things in general, are most proper for true friendship. Those who are free, and disengaged from the million of frivolous amusements, attach themselves to you by sentiment; but however insensible to their own wants, they fail not to feel and to alleviate those of their friends,

friends. We never live in such a degree of independence, as to be able to dispense with reciprocal assistance; but good offices should follow friendship, not friendship good offices. Friendship also requires conformity, equality of age, or what approaches to it, and a similarity of inclinations and pursuits. Persons elevated to a splendid station, and intoxicated with prosperity; those dissipated minds which are caressed by fortune, are by no means proper for friendship. Kings are also deprived of this sweet sentiment; they can never enjoy the certainty of being beloved for their own sakes: it is always the king, and seldom the man :

man : I would not accept the first of dignities at this price. All things are a burthen, without the succour of friendship. There never was a king, except Agefilaus, who suffered for having made himself too much beloved. It is a noble dominion, to reign over every heart. Persons of distinction are more eager to amass riches, than to acquire friends. Where is the person who thinks of gaining hearts by essential services; of seeking after, and assisting neglected merit; of preparing, in the heart of a friend, an asylum for himself in the season of disgrace? The greater part of our acquisitions are for others; this alone is for ourselves.

A purity of morals is also necessary in friendship. The risque is too great in uniting ourselves with a person of an irregular conduct.

You see clearly that all the virtues are essential to perfect friendship.—Retirement is proper to cultivate this sentiment. Solitude is the friend of wisdom. The habitation of peace and truth is within ourselves.—“It is the mark of a well-formed mind,” says one of the ancients, “to know how to live well with one’s self. How pleasant is this system of life, when it is thoroughly understood, and successfully pursued!” Friendship demands an entire possession

possession of the whole mind: in retirement, this sentiment becomes more necessary and less divided. Moreover, we are generally such to others as we are to ourselves. The wise know how to establish peace within themselves, and can communicate it to others. Seneca says, "I have advanced so far in improvement, that I have learnt to be a friend to myself." Whoever can live with themselves, may live with others. Mild and gentle characters diffuse a soft charm over all that approach them. Retirement secures innocence, and renders friendship more requisite. Some witness of our conduct is necessary, to estimate

estimate our good qualities, as without such, we advance faintly in the road of virtue. When you esteem your friend to a certain degree, you place all your glory in his approbation. If you are happy, you would divide your happiness with him: and indeed, all valuable possessions become insipid when unobserved.

I believe that extreme youth is by no means suited to the pleasures of perfect friendship: we see many young persons fancy, and call themselves friends; but the bonds of their union are pleasures, and pleasures are not ties worthy of friendship. “You
“are at the age,” says Seneca to his friend, “when the violent
E “passions

“passions are no more; only the
 “gentler ones remain:—we can
 “now enjoy the noble pleasure of
 “friendship.”

What renders friendship most certain and most solid, is virtue; absence from the world; love of solitude; and purity of manners; a life which restores us to wisdom and to ourselves; an elevated spirit (for there is a refinement and dignity in perfect friendship, to which minds of an ordinary level can never rise); but, above all, a purity of heart. The qualities of the heart are much more necessary than those of the understanding. The understanding may amuse, but it is the heart that attaches. Those who are
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influenced by self-love, are unworthy of it: they only think of taking from the fund of friendship, whereas the virtuous are only desirous of adding to it. The avaricious are unacquainted with a sentiment so noble. True friendship is liberal: avarice forms an unfurmountable obstacle to every virtue. The sentiment of avarice retards, or, to speak more properly, stifles every good inclination. There is not a virtue which does not exact something from its possessor; but the avaricious mind is always inclined to draw every thing from others. We must give without a chance of return; we must risque the danger

danger of encountering ingratitude.

There are three seasons in friendship;—the beginning, the continuance, and the end. As the commencement of friendship abounds with sentiments, and as a rising amity is supported by some illusion—nothing is painful in these first moments; all is pleasure: but it often happens that fancy dies away, and this energy of sentiment is impaired by habitude. The illusion disappears, and we are reduced to call reason to our support, a dry and cold counsellor, at best.

Of our friendship, as of our
love,

love, we should not be too lavish. There is a degree of allowable œconomy; but how is it possible to restrain ourselves in the enjoyment of a pleasure that has the sanction of innocence? However, as there is nothing in life so pleasing as a lively friendship, the parties should equally co-operate towards the preservation of a state so desirable; for happiness is nothing more than a constant succession of pleasing sensations and agreeable ideas. We feel the present—we imagine the future. Friendship fills both these periods, and supports both the sentiments. To the present, she gives perceptible delight; to the future,

the brilliant visions of hope: but as it has been observed, that all sensibility is liable to decay, and that the purest hearts cannot engage to preserve always the quickness of a growing friendship; they may therefore be sometimes inconstant, but never unfaithful. The vivacity of inclination fades away, but the love of duty remains. Such are to be pitied, for they have lost a pleasing sentiment. Why have we not the power of insuring it? Let us therefore give to friendship the more solid foundation of esteem, which, built on the knowledge of merit, is not liable to change. The bandage on the eyes of love, should be ever removed from those

those of friendship: it is her nature to be quick-sighted, to examine before she forms her engagements, and to attach herself only to personal merit; for those alone are worthy of her regard, who possess in themselves a just title to her affection.

After having made a proper choice, we must be steady; not esteem our friends with a variable regard, but with an unshaken attachment; for when sensibility would escape, and carry esteem away with it, justice should interfere to retain it. We must not allow ourselves to pry into the defects of our friends; still less to speak of them. We should respect friendship but as she is

given us as an assistant to virtue, and not as the companion of vice.

We must caution those we regard, when we see them led astray; if they resist, we must fortify ourselves with that strength and authority which arise from the prudence of wise counsel, and the purity of honest intentions. We should hazard even the offending them, by our resolution in speaking truth: though the terms of it should be softened according to the nature of their necessity; for few have strength of mind sufficient to submit to that truth which is to reform them. But while we blame them in private, we must defend them in public, and not suffer, if possible, their

their reputation to be doubtful.

What then, it may be asked, is the boundary of friendship? It extends to the utmost pale of religion; duty and honor are the only bounds which ought to confine it; and there are many things, which the delicacy of honor allows us not to execute for ourselves, which are yet permitted, and even laudable, in the service of our friends. Diogenes used to say, "When I borrow of my friend, it is my own money that I ask him for." Such a confidence is the noblest panegyric on both the parties.

Whatever your advantages may be, in the articles of virtue, talents,

lents, or fortune, they give you no claim to an ostentatious superiority. It has been made a question, if we may entrust another with the secret of our friend. The case admits not of deliberation ; a secret is a trust of which we cannot dispose, because it is not our own.

It now remains to enquire, in what manner we ought to conduct ourselves when friendship begins to languish and change. As this union is formed between human beings, we must make an allowance for the failings of humanity. Many things must be overlooked on both sides, if we wish to give permanency to friendship. The most virtuous
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are most inclined to pardon—
 “You will render your friend
 “faithful,” says one of the an-
 cients, “in believing him to be
 “so. We give some title to of-
 “fend, to that person whom we
 “think capable of offence.”

Ordinary friendship is never willing to confess itself in the wrong; delicate friendship imputes every failing to herself; happy in being able to save our friend from every painful sensation, we would indulge him in the pleasure of forgiving us, and save him from the humiliating necessity of asking pardon. But for this purpose we must be connected with a noble spirit, possessing resolution to bear the in-
 spection

spection of its own failings, and even to assume such as do not belong to it.

If your friend stands in need of being guided and governed for his own advantage, you must preserve a gentle hand, and never suffer him to feel his dependence. Nothing is more at variance with friendship, than those self-sufficient characters, who endeavour to pry into your defects, and delight to display them; such a discovery is a triumph to them, as it fortifies their sway, and encreases your dependence. Avoid every thing that irritates, and in exhortations beware of using any asperity of language: there are terms of reproach which ought never to be admitted,

admitted, since they give such wounds to the heart as no time can close.

From the moment you find your anger begin to kindle, have a guard upon yourself; recollect that passion always commits a trespass upon justice. But there are some, who have no sooner committed one offence, than they persevere to an hundred, and know not where to stop; they punish you for faults which they themselves have committed, and are incapable of forgiveness: when such have been deficient, you must not fancy that you can convince them of it; their understanding is the slave of their injustice:—you must not reproach them;

them; but if you would punish them, and avenge yourself with dignity, observe a still greater nicety of behaviour; seek occasions to shew them kindness; as it is your conduct which should reproach them, and not your discourse.

However ingenious self-love may be in concealing our failings from us, there are moments sacred to truth, in which she makes herself visible. The kindness we have shewn in the season of friendship, must be forgotten at the time of separation; and those who do not feel themselves paid for their services by the pleasure which they have had in performing them, cannot be said to have
given;

given; they have only lent, or fold. In short, we must fly in the pursuit of friendship, and the esteem of our friends, and not be apprehensive of doing too much.

If we are so unfortunate as to have made an improper choice, we must support it, and by that means punish ourselves for our imprudence, and for the rashness of our attachment. Disagreements are disadvantageous to all parties. After having done all in your power to prevent them, as it will often happen that you are connected with obstinate persons, who only see you through the medium of their own perversity, all is ineffectual. Nothing is more distressing, than to encounter those

violent and inflammatory characters, who have only just understanding sufficient to defend their own absurdity; whatever steps you pursue, you will receive from them nothing but reproach. Let it not be the object of your ambition to reduce them to reason; but to subdue yourself: you must retire, and let your innocence tranquillize and console you.

Do not think, that when a separation has taken place, you have no further duties to fulfil; here begin the most difficult of duties, and those in which integrity alone can support you: respect is due to past friendship, call not the world to be witness of your quarrels,

quarrels, and never speak of them but when you are forced to it in your own justification ; even then, we ought not to aggravate the failings of our faithless friend. It is an ill sight to the public, and a disgraceful part to yourself, to appear in open dissension. Reflect that all eyes are upon you—that your judges are all your enemies, either from ignorance of your real worth, or from envy, if they are acquainted with it, or from prejudice and natural malignity. Whatever has been imparted to your confidence in the season of friendship, must never be revealed ; remember that a secret is a debt of ancient friendship, which you owe to yourself.

In short, the duties which you discharge in the season of friendship, are for the person beloved; but after a rupture they are for yourself. In the season of affection, we all know how to conduct ourselves; we need only to follow our feelings: but when this is at an end, it is the voice of duty and reason which we must attend to and obey.

Few persons know how to conduct themselves in anger; the generality preserve no moderation. How melancholy is it to give lessons upon such a misfortune—to contemplate, amidst the enjoyments of friendship, the danger of their escaping us!—nevertheless, we should reflect that we are
threatened

threatened with such a calamity, and that the most valuable friends may possess such dispositions as have a strong tendency to produce dissension. We must pass lightly over ideas of this kind, or they would ruin the pleasures of the most perfect amity.

Some persons think there are no duties to discharge beyond the grave; very few are capable of being friends to the dead: tho' there is no funeral so truly noble as the tears and lamentations of our friends; and the most glorious sepulchre is in their hearts: nevertheless, we are not to believe that the tears which we shed through sensibility, and frequent-

ly from the bitter sense of our own loss, can acquit us towards them. There are duties which we still owe to their name, their reputation, and their family; they must live in our hearts by tenderness, in our memory by recollection, in our discourse by commendations, and in our conduct by an imitation of their virtues.

If I have given precepts for behaviour, when these ties are either broke or slackened, I am by no means of opinion that we ought to love our friend as if we were one day to hate him; my heart has never listened to the doctrines of Machiavel, it is very
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far from conducting itself by his maxims. Those who know me, are convinced, that in friendship I have hardly the proper degree of reserve; never am I cautioned by my own feelings to distrust my friends: those who think after the fashion of the vulgar, consider me as a kind of dupe: I only save myself from the humiliation of the character, by rejoicing in the comfort which it affords. Thus the prudence from which I have hitherto collected these maxims, has not yet passed into my heart; but custom, the world, and my own experience, have but too well instructed me, that in friendship the best acquired, and

the most deserved, we must treasure up a fund of constancy and virtue, to be able to support the loss of it.

It has been asked, if friendship can subsist between persons of different sexes? This is indeed rare and difficult, but it is the kind of friendship which affords the highest delight; most difficult, because it requires most virtue and circumspection. Women who have only the common ideas of love, are not worthy of it: and men who only seek in women the ordinary pleasures of the sex, without supposing that they may possess qualities of the mind and heart more attractive than

than those of beauty ; such men are not formed for the friendship of which I speak. Let us therefore attach ourselves by the ties of virtue and of personal merit ; connections of this kind sometimes begin in love, and terminate in friendship. When women are faithful to the virtue of their sex, friendship being the recompence of virtuous love, they may flatter themselves with the hopes of it. From the manner in which love is treated at this time, it frequently terminates in an open quarrel, shame being generally the punishment of vice. When women oppose their duty to their affection, and offer you

the charms and sentiments of friendship; when, moreover, you discover in them the same merit as in men, can you do better than connect yourself with them? It is certain, that of all unions it is the most enchanting; there is always a degree of vivacity, which is not to be found between persons of the same sex—above all, the failings that disunite, such as envy or competition, of whatever nature it may be, is not to be found in this sort of connection. Women have the misfortune of not being able to depend on friendship with each other: the multiplicity of their failings forms an insurmountable impediment; they

they unite from necessity, and never from inclination. To what account, then, may they venture to turn that fund of sentiment which they possess? Those who have denied themselves to love, are naturally led into friendship, and men are considerable gainers by this measure; for when women have not exhausted the sensibility of their hearts by the passions, their friendship is peculiarly interesting and tender; for it must be confessed (to the glory, or to the disgrace of women) that they alone are capable of giving all that poignancy to sentiment, which

which they generally give.— Men speak to the understanding, women to the heart. Moreover, as nature has placed invincible attractions and ties between persons of different sex, we find every preparation for friendship. The works of nature are always the most perfect; those in which she has not the principal share, are the least engaging. In the friendship of which I speak, we feel that it is her work; these secret ties, these sympathies, this sweet inclination, which there is no resisting; all are comprized in it. A blessing so desirable,

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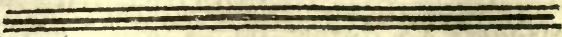
is always the recompence of merit ; but we ought to watch over ourselves, lest a virtue should change imperceptibly into passion.

ESSAYS

ON

OLD AGE

EVERY necessary assistance has been given to men for the improvement of their reason, and for their instruction in the great science of happiness, in every stage of their lives. Cicero has written a treatise on Old Age, to put them in a situation to extract some advantages from a period



E S S A Y

O N

O L D - A G E .

EVERY necessary assistance has been given to men for the improvement of their reason, and for their instruction in the great science of happiness, in every stage of their lives. Cicero has written a treatise on Old-Age, to put them in a situation to extract some advantages from
a period,

a period, in which every thing seems to desert us.

Attention is directed to the improvement of men alone; but as to women, at all seasons of life they are left to themselves: their education is neglected in their youth; in the sequel they are deprived of consolation and support for their old-age.

Thus the greatest part of women live without thought, without self-examination: in youth they are vain and dissipated, in old-age weak and forsaken. We arrive at each season, without knowing either how to conduct ourselves in it, or to enjoy it: when it is past, we see the use we might have made of it; but

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as regret is unprofitable when it serves not to reform us, let us turn to our advantage the time that remains. I support myself by my own reflections, and as I approach that age when all things forsake us, I wish my reason to afford me a compensation for what I lose.

All the world has a dread of old-age ; it is regarded as a season given up to pain and vexation, in which all pleasures disappear. Every one loses in advancing in life, and the women more than the men. As all their merit consists in exterior graces, and as time destroys them, they are left entirely destitute ; for there are very few women whose
merit

merit is more lasting than their beauty. Let us try if it be not possible to replace it; and, since there is no blessing so trivial that it may not be turned to some advantage in the hands of a dextrous person, let us endeavour to render the season of old-age profitable, by making it conducive to our happiness and perfection.

Let us examine the duties of old-age; the respect and propriety which are due to that period: and let us enquire into the advantages which may be drawn from it, that we may enjoy them. Life does not consist so much in the space of time, as in the use we are able to make of it.

it. We should lay down a plan, and follow it with exactness; for to be ever changing our resolutions and our conduct, is mangling our existence. We shorten it by our instability, and lengthen it by an uniformity of conduct.

These reflections, my child, which belong to my situation at present, will be one day your's. Prepare for yourself an happy old-age, by a youth of innocence. Recollect that the pleasurable age is but a flower, which you will see faded. The graces will desert you, and health will disappear. Old-age will come, and destroy the roses in your cheeks. Young as you are, that which

travels with such rapidity, is not far from you.

We have, in growing old, the common evils of humanity. The infirmities of the body and the mind are attendants on advanced life. *Old-age*, says Montaign, *impresses more wrinkles on the mind than on the face.* The passions may be said to lie in wait for us during the whole course of our lives. There seem to be ambuscades of them, through which we must necessarily pass. *From the torrid passions*, says Montaign, *we retreat to the temperate.*

Melancholy reflections are in the train of old-age. They dry up the sources of joy and pleasure. They make us disgusted

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with

with the present, and dread the future. They render us insensible to every thing but pain.

All these misfortunes are common to both sexes; but there are some which are peculiar to women. As there are different characters, there are different kinds of pain to suffer, and measures to pursue. Women are either libertine or virtuous. These two characters are varied with infinite discriminations, and there are many shades and degrees in both. As to those, who are born without tenderness or attractions, and who have neither made nor received any impression; they enjoy a tranquillity and a regularity of life, and have less to

lose, as they advance in years, than those who are susceptible of sentiment, and calculated to inspire it. Nevertheless, these have many uneasinesses to suffer, and imperfections to struggle with. They ought to be on their guard against melancholy. We become enemies to joy, which our interest should lead us to cherish in ourselves, and which we ought not to censure in others. But we must chuse our pleasures, or rather our amusements; what is allowable and graceful at one age, is unbecoming at another.

Avarice is also one of the weaknesses belonging to the latter period of life. As every thing fails, we wish for something

thing to lean on ; and we attach ourselves to riches as our support. Nevertheless, if we could reason properly, we should see that we have no real occasion for them, and that we ensure more comfort by sharing them with others, than by amassing them for ourselves.

But let us return to women of gaiety ; they have most to lose in growing old, and a more difficult part to act. As there are various sorts of them, so there are different kinds of conduct to observe. For those who have shown no discretion, and who have been unfaithful to the prejudices, and to the virtues of their sex, they lose infinitely

on the failure of pleasures; for these being the only ties which united them to men, their connection must be dissolved. For those who have known how to respect themselves, who have been able to join probity and friendship to love; these are still connected with men by the virtues of society; for virtue alone has a right to unite us. Feeling characters have more to undergo. The heart does not exhaust itself like the senses. Attachment to our duties is often followed by a long and painful sensibility. Love indemnifies himself on the sentiments of the heart, for what the senses have refused him. The more the
sentiments

sentiments are restrained, the more lively they become. Inclination grows weaker by indulgence, and the passions of women wear out like those of men. In short, there is a period in the lives of women, which becomes a crisis. It is the conduct which they observe, and the part that they take at that time, which gives the last finish to their reputation, and upon which depends the repose of their whole lives.

Women support themselves in youth by a vivacity of constitution, which hurries them towards such objects as gratify their senses, and which delivers them to the passions, either

allowable or forbidden. The novelty of the scene, which excites and nourishes their curiosity, supports them. For those who have beauty and attractions, they enjoy the advantage of their own figure, and the impression which they make on others. Their self-love is always gratified by what they find in themselves, and by the affection which they inspire.

What authority is more instantaneous, more sweet, and more absolute, than that of beauty? Majesty and power have dominion only over external objects, that of beauty reaches the soul. There is hardly an amiable woman

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man that has not enjoyed these triumphs. Moreover, what a fund of amusements does not the desire of pleasing supply? All the apparatus of gallantry, allowable in a young person, dress, diversions; all these pleasures are the occupations of a certain age. What activity do the passions not inspire? Can we be agitated more forcibly than by their power? The events of female life depend on them, and great establishments have often been the consequence and the reward of a sentiment.

All these things are connected with each other; they relate to the heart, and constitute an active and busy life, even for those who have not made an improper use

of

of their liberty. All this vanishes at an after-period, when, if you wish to try the sensibility of the heart, you find it alive only to pain. There comes a season in which you must lead a sort of life suitable to the decency and dignity of your age. You must give up all that is called lively pleasure. It often happens that you have lost all taste for amusements: they can no longer employ your hours; you have even lost your real friends, and the time is past for you to make others. The estate of beauty is love, and the recompence of virtuous love is friendship; and you are very fortunate, when all your best years have procured you one or

two real friends. In short, you quit each season of life as soon as you begin to be acquainted with it, and you enter quite a novice into another. All exterior objects afford you no further support, or are prohibited to you. Within yourself you find nothing but infirmities of body, and melancholy reflections in the mind, nothing but disgust. You must break all commerce with sentiment. We feel our ties when they ought to be dissolved. Devotion has been called the play-thing; but I consider it as the staff of age; it is a becoming sentiment, and the only one necessary. The yoke of religion is not a burden, but a support.

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But let us proceed to the duties of old-age. In all the seasons of life we have duties to discharge, both to others and to ourselves, and those which we owe to others double as we grow old. When we can no longer diffuse the charm of cheerfulness over society, it has a stronger claim on us for intrinsic virtues. In youth others will attend to you. In old-age you must attend to others: participation is expected from us, and our failure is not forgiven. With our youth we lose the privilege of erring. It is no longer permitted us to be in the wrong. We have no longer that seducing charm, and we are judged with severity. The first graces of youth

youth have a lustre which covers every thing. The errors in judgment are pardoned, and have the merit of simplicity.

In growing old, we must observe, above all, propriety in our conversation and in our dress. Nothing is more ridiculous than making it appear, by studied ornaments, that you wish to recall the departing graces. An avowed old-age is least old. The greatest misfortune of women who have been lovely, is their forgetting that they are so no more.

We must also plan out for ourselves a suitable mode of life. It is not living as we ought to live, under the dominion of our passions and fantasies ; we only live as becomes

us, when we live according to reason. We must also pay attention to our society, and only unite with persons of similar age and dispositions. Shews and public places ought to be prohibited, or at least we should visit them but rarely. Nothing is less decent, than to display there a countenance which has lost its graces. When you can no longer adorn those scenes, it is time to quit them. The advantages of understanding are but ill supported, when contrasted with the brilliancy of youth. They serve but to make you feel too severely what you have lost: nothing suits us then so well as home; our self-love suffers less there than in other places. There are, however,

ever, allowable amusements, and all that is called pleasure is not forbidden.

Let us examine what we owe to ourselves; our sentiments and our conduct ought to be different from what it has been in our earliest years. You owe to the world the obligations of politeness; but you owe to yourself such sentiments as are allowable and innocent, from a sense of your own dignity; for we must live upon good terms with ourselves. It is necessary also for our own repose; but it ought to be considered, that there are sentiments, from which to be divorced, affects the very soul. You neither know their price, nor

nor the use which should be made of them, till they are to be given up. In a more advanced age, the taste becomes more delicate upon those points which wound, and more exquisite upon those which please. Love is the first of pleasures, and the sweetest of errors; but when youth has forsaken you, the pains double, and the pleasures diminish.

What constitutes the misfortune of a certain season is, that we wish to preserve, and to carry sentiments into an age in which they ought not to appear. Is that the fault of the season? is it not rather our own? Our manners make the misfortune, not old-age. Every season must be a burden to those who

have not within themselves the powers of rendering life happy. We must with docility submit ourselves to the pains of our age, and of our situation. Nature makes a kind of agreement with men ; she only gives them life upon conditions : she gives us nothing as our property ; she does no more than lend. We must not revolt at the natural progress of humanity. A philosopher who had lived to a hundred and seven years, was asked if he did not find life tiresome ? He replied, I have no reason to complain of my old-age, as I never made an ill use of my youth. When the morals are pure and innocent in early life, old-age is mild and tran-

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quill. It is the long habit of virtue, which is the support and consolation of an advanced age. When you have practised this in youth, you reap the fruit of it in the last season; but we ascribe to that season the misfortunes which our own irregularities have brought upon us.

The wants of the heart are infinite, those of nature are limited. Happy is that old-age in which the heart is devoted to heaven. Devotion is a proper sentiment for women, and becoming to both sexes. Old-age, without religion, is burdensome. All the exterior pleasures abandon us. We even fly from ourselves. The best of blessings, health and youth,

are vanished. The past supplies you with regret, the present escapes you, and the future makes you tremble. The infidel sees only pains prepared for him: the philosopher, only annihilation.

Behold the termination of the most brilliant life in the world ! The last act is always tragical ; but how great the gain, to change the idea of annihilation for that of eternity ! If we live in a manner to render it blessed, how beautiful the prospect of an eternity of bliss ! but the greatest part of mankind suffer their life to pass away without a thought of ascertaining their real situation. Who would believe that these very men, who are so zealous upon

that which regards their glory or their fortune, when they think it in danger, are tranquil and indolent concerning the knowledge of their being; that they will suffer themselves to be effeminately led on to death, without informing themselves whether what they have been told are chimæras or truths; that they should travel on their road, and see advancing towards them death, eternity, and everlasting punishments and rewards, without reflecting that these great truths concern and interest them? Can we, without foresight and without fear, proceed to the trial of so great an event? This is, nevertheless, the state in which the ge-

nerality of men live; and for those few who have taken the good or the bad side, how many are there who never think of it? For those who are so happy as to be affected by religion, their piety consoles them. It is also most easy to practise.

All the chains that attach us to life are nearly broken. It is the work of nature, more than that of our reason, to detach us from it. The bandage of illusion is fallen, and we see things as they are. A knowledge of the world is dearly purchased, and those who are best acquainted with it know, that it is only good to take leave of.

Substantial blessings are always wanting in this deceitful world, and we often find it deficient even in transient pleasures. We shall draw nothing so valuable from the world as we shall from devotion. She has many resources

Resignation is requisite in every period of life, but the practice of it is most necessary in old-age, as we are sustaining losses continually. But as sentiment is less lively, we attach ourselves less to things. We must follow nature imperceptibly, without revolting against her. She is the best guide we can have. We live but to lose, and to wear ourselves from the objects of our regard.

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We must expect a change both in ourselves and in others, and on these occasions we should shew such indulgence to others as we wish to receive on the appearance of a similar change in ourselves.

But our losses are frequently to our advantage. Worthy minds will rejoice in being freed from the fetters of voluptuousness.

We are to blame therefore our morals, and not our period of life, for what we suffer. We should submit mildly to the laws of our condition: we are all made to grow weak, to grow old, and to die. Nothing is more idle than to struggle against the effects of time. He is our superior in

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strength. In youth we all live as it were in the future. Life is spent in desire, and to the future we trust for our joys and repose. In old-age we must seize them in the instant. Montaign says, that he turns every thing to advantage. I feel, says he, as other men do, but not quite in so transient a manner. In proportion as life becomes shorter, I would encrease my relish for what remains. I would stop the rapidity of its flight by the eagerness of my grasp. We must support old-age by every prop. I make all things contribute to my aid, and both wisdom and folly will have enough to do in assisting
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me with their alternate good offices under this latter period of life.

One of the duties of old age, is the management of time. The less that remains to us, the more valuable we ought to consider it. The time of Christians is the price with which they purchase eternity. Without wasting it, therefore, in the pursuit of vain sciences, which are above us, let us make the proper use of our situation, and justly estimate the reach of our understanding.

We are less limited in the article of enjoyment, than in that of knowledge: we have indeed as much light as is necessary and proper for our well-being; but we engage

engage in the vain pursuit of truths which were not designed for our apprehension; but before we enter into inquiries which are above our reach, we ought to know the limits of our understanding. What is the rule that ought to determine our persuasion? We must learn to separate opinion from real knowledge; to have the strength to pause and to doubt; when we see nothing clearly; and to have the resolution to bear the ignorance of truths which are beyond our comprehension. But to check our presumption, and to weaken our confidence; let us reflect that the two principles of our knowledge, *non est in opinione habet non est in intellectu*

ledge, your reason and your senses, are deficient in sincerity, and very apt to mislead us. The senses overpower reason by surprize, and the reason deceives them in its turn. Behold your two guides, who both lead us astray. Reflections like these inspire us with disgusts for mere speculative truths; let us then employ our time in attainments which will contribute to our happiness and perfection. ; clearly
So There is hardly any age, which has not in its disposal a certain portion of blessings: — to the first period, belong the dively pleasures of the senses and imagination; to the second, those of ambition and opinion; and to the

the last, the possession of reason and tranquillity. Serenity of soul is the most necessary disposition for happiness. When the soul is not shaken by a multitude of sensations, it is in a better state to make the most of those blessings which present themselves, and gains as much by the improvement of its relish, as it loses by the failure of its objects.

It has been considered as the duty of old-age to think of death. I believe it is useful to reflect upon it, for the regulation of our lives, and to detach ourselves from the world. But it is not necessary to have it always in contemplation,

contemplation, to afflict us. The idea is afflicting from the first opening of the scene. How beautiful soever the drama, the curtain must fall. The noblest lives terminate in the same manner. A little dust is thrown over us, and we are plunged into eternity. Montaign does not agree with me. He would rather disarm death, by familiarizing the mind to its terrors. We must hope that Heaven will support us in our closing scene. It should be our only aim to engage its protection, by a life of innocence and virtue. We should also be careful not to set too high a value on life. It has always

ways attractions sufficient to attach us, and misfortunes enough to reconcile us to its loss. A philosopher answered a man, who asked him if he should destroy himself—You have no reflection upon a point of so much importance. Great men do not measure life by the duration in point of time, but by its proportion of glory. An exemplary death throws a lustre upon life; a weak one dishonors it. To form a complete judgment of any one, we ought to have seen him acting the last part.

Life is in itself short, and we make it more so, by our levity and irregularities. The short time we

exist,

exist, we live less for ourselves than for the passions which torment us. Whoever subtracts from their existence the portion of time allotted for sleep, and other necessities, for the disorders of mind and body, will discover, that little remains to us for happiness; and out of a long life, we shall with difficulty extract some years of it.

It has been said, we ought to finish our lives before our death, that is to say, our projects. To finish our life, is to have worn out our inclination for it; for with respect to our projects, as long as we live we must amuse ourselves with hopes, and we exist less
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in the present than in the future. Life would be short, if hope did not give it extent. The present, says Pascal, is never our aim: the past and the present are our means; the future alone is our object. Thus we do not exist, but we hope to do so. We should, however, make haste to live. It is not wise to say, I shall live to-morrow. The Philosophers say, Learn to live; and the Christians, Learn every day how to die.

One of the advantages of old-age is liberty. Pisistratus asked Solon, who opposed him, on what he grounded his liberty? Upon my old-age, he replied, which has no longer any thing to fear.

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them, and to know ourselves; to profit from our own faults, which instruct us as much as those of others. We begin to see our error, in having set so high a value upon men. Often do they teach us, to our cost, to place no dependence upon any thing. Infidelity disengages us; the falsity of pleasure undeceives us. Old-age delivers us also from the tyranny of the passions, and convinces us, that there is a considerable pleasure in discovering that we can exist without them, and a high degree of delight, in feeling ourselves superior to their controul. — Nature supplies us
with

with tastes and desires conformable to our present situation. In youth, we conceive a false idea of old-age : these are fears which we contract ourselves. It is not nature that inspires them, because, during the period we are in, we dread the passions of another period, which is a stranger to us.

Nature is full of admirable resources—she conducts and governs us almost without our knowing it, and has the art of assisting us under every inconvenience. Deprivations are no longer felt, when desire is extinguished. All our inclinations pass away, even to that of life itself. It is to be wished that

all the passions should expire before us—this is to have finished our life before we die. In this season, reason is restored to us. She resumes all her rights. We begin to live when we begin to obey her—for they whose thoughts, whose hopes, and even whose reason, is at the mercy of fortune, and of their own fantasies, they can assure themselves of nothing, having nothing for their support. It is melancholy to arrive at the end of life without having made any provision of real blessings, which never decay. Nevertheless, men employ themselves entirely in amassing such possessions as they must necessarily

family lose, without reflecting that those perishable commodities do not belong to us. Experience is also one of the advantages of the last season. We are instructed by the past—even our errors reform, and restore to us our reason, which is seldom preserved in prosperity; for those persons, who have been always happy, have seldom deserved to be so. But there are troubles that arise from fortune and from chance, and others, which flow from irregularity of morals. These corrupt the mind and destroy the health; for the sequel of an irregular youth, is a miserable old-age, and frequently we employ the first

part of our lives to render the remainder of them wretched.

The slavery of the passions is a kind of imprisonment, in which the soul is impaired and weakened. When we are delivered from them, the soul enlarges and expands. At a certain age, we are no longer to be ensnared by the pleasures of the imagination. We know how deceitful they are, and that all the passions promise more than they give. Those which are only supported by illusion, are misplaced and odious at a certain age. Ambition, extended too far, degenerates into folly; and love, by displaying itself to public view, becomes the object of ridicule.

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There comes a season in our lives, which is sacred to truth.—which is destined to make things appear according to their just value. Youth, and the passions, give a false colouring to every thing—we are then restored to pleasures of genuine simplicity—we begin to consult and to rely on our own sentiments concerning happiness. We must in some degree, accommodate ourselves to the customs of life—but we should not surrender to them either our liberty or our judgment.

Nothing is more glorious than to make an honourable retreat, and to secure to ourselves an interval of

leisure between life and death. Death, says Montaigne, is no social business, but the act of an individual. In old-age, we ought rather to be avaricious than prodigal of our society. It has been said of a man, that he took the counsel of his old-age, and retired. We owe the first and the second season to our country, and the last to ourselves. To live in perpetual employment, is to travel rapidly through life. Tranquillity lengthens our existence. The world steals us from ourselves and solitude restores us.—The world is composed of a herd, which are ever flying from themselves. Solitude, says an exalted character,

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is the infirmary of souls; retire then within yourself, but prepare for yourself a good reception. Unite the opposite sentiments of shame and respect, and, discarding the littleness of self-love, learn to reverence your own character.

The general practice is quite the reverse; but how melancholy to retain this self-love, and to see ourselves dying every instant! It is essential to our interest, to wean ourselves from this selfish affection, to break part of these fetters, and make at least some advance towards freedom—to close every avenue that might conduct us back into the world,
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and not even cast a look towards it. O happy existence, which finds itself delivered from every species of slavery! in which we relinquish all things—not from a transitory disgust, but from a confirmed judgment, supported by the conviction of the small value of things in general. It is this knowledge which reconciles us with wisdom, which makes old-age palatable to us, if I may hazard such an expression.

It belongs only to liberal souls to make a proper estimate of life and death—such alone as are full of resources can extract enjoyment from these declining years. Weak minds endure them; but minds
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of superior strength convert them to advantage. It has been said, that there was no spectacle more worthy of a God, than a virtuous man struggling with adversity. We may say the same thing of a man abandoned to himself, struggling with old-age, infirmity, and death. In retirement, which is the asylum of age, we enjoy an uninterrupted calm. Innocent days bring with them nights of tranquillity, and while you associate with the dead, they instruct, direct, and console you—these are certain and constant friends, devoid of caprice or jealousy. In short, it has been said, that the most pleasing period in

the life of man is the close of it.

As we advance, we learn also to submit ourselves to the laws of necessity : that free-will, so strong and unruly, becomes weak, and is insensibly extinguished. We have too often proved, that resistance is ineffectual, and leaves us nothing but the dishonor of unsuccessful rebellion. We often wish for what is contrary to our interest, and it frequently happens, that what we have supposed prejudicial, turns out to our advantage. We no longer know what we ought to wish for. We have no longer the strength to desire. We find it much easier
to

to submit, than to change the order of the world. Internal peace does not reside in the senses, but in the will. It is preserved in the midst of affliction, as long as the will remains firm and submissive. Our peace does not consist so much in an exemption from sufferings, as in a mild resignation under them. We ought to consider every possession, which is out of our reach, as strangers to us. It is from regarding things as our due and property, that we suffer by their deprivation. Impossibility alone, can fix the imagination of man. Persons of judgment employ themselves in considering the limits

which are prescribed, by reason
and nature.

In short, all things are at peace,
when they are in their natural or-
der. The soul of man can repose
only in the bosom of his God.

When we resign ourselves to his
guidance, resignation and regula-
rity restore us to that peace which
our resistance had deprived us of.

The only secure asylum for man,
is in the love and in the fear of
his Creator.

F I N I S.

L E T T E R S

TO AND FROM

THE COUNTESS DU BARRY,

The last Mistress of LEWIS XV. of France;

CONTAINING

Her Correspondence with the PRINCES OF THE BLOOD,
MINISTERS OF STATE, and Others:

INCLUDING

The HISTORY of that FAVOURITE,

AND

Several curious ANECDOTES of the Court of VERSAILLES
during the last six Years of that Reign.

WITH

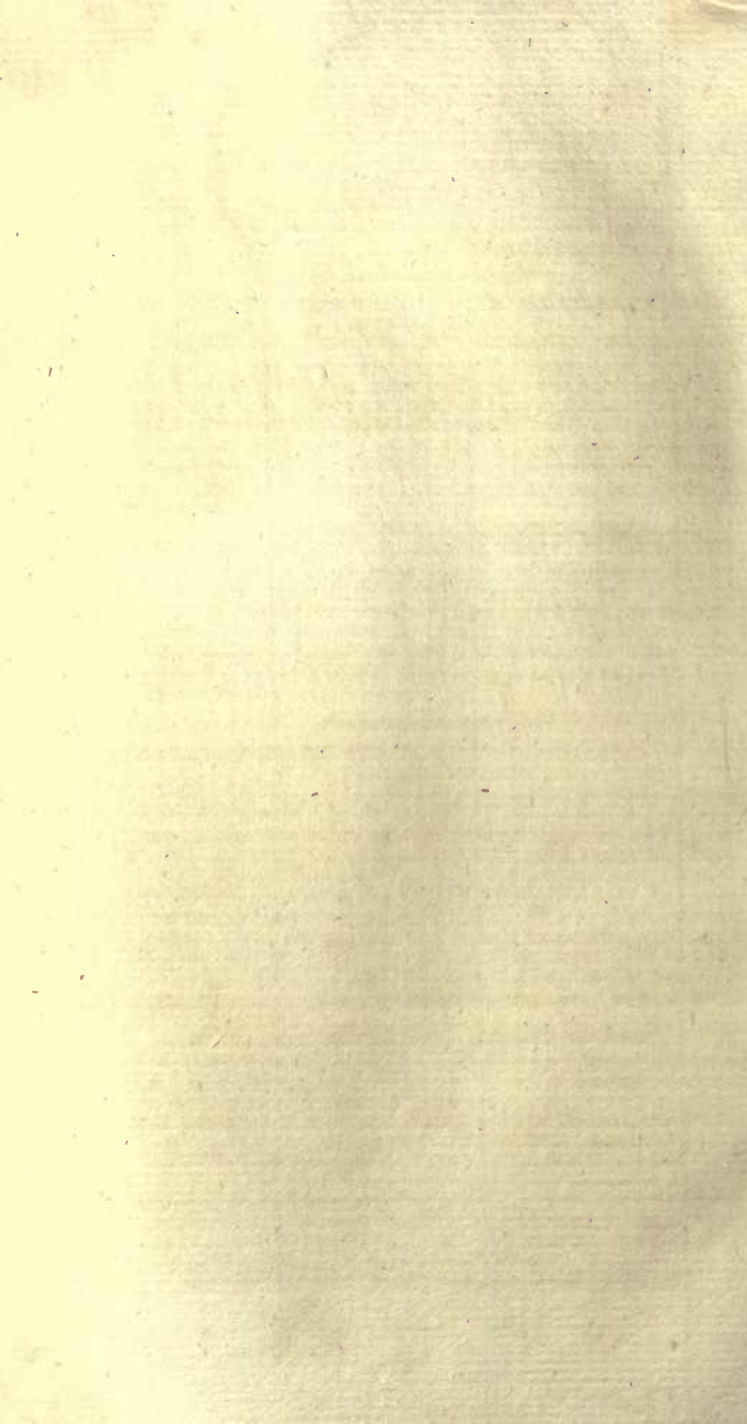
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