



OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

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TO THE LI-
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DEVELOPS THE
CHIEF SOURCE
OF COMMUNITY
INFORMATION
INSPIRATION
AND COMMON
IDEALS

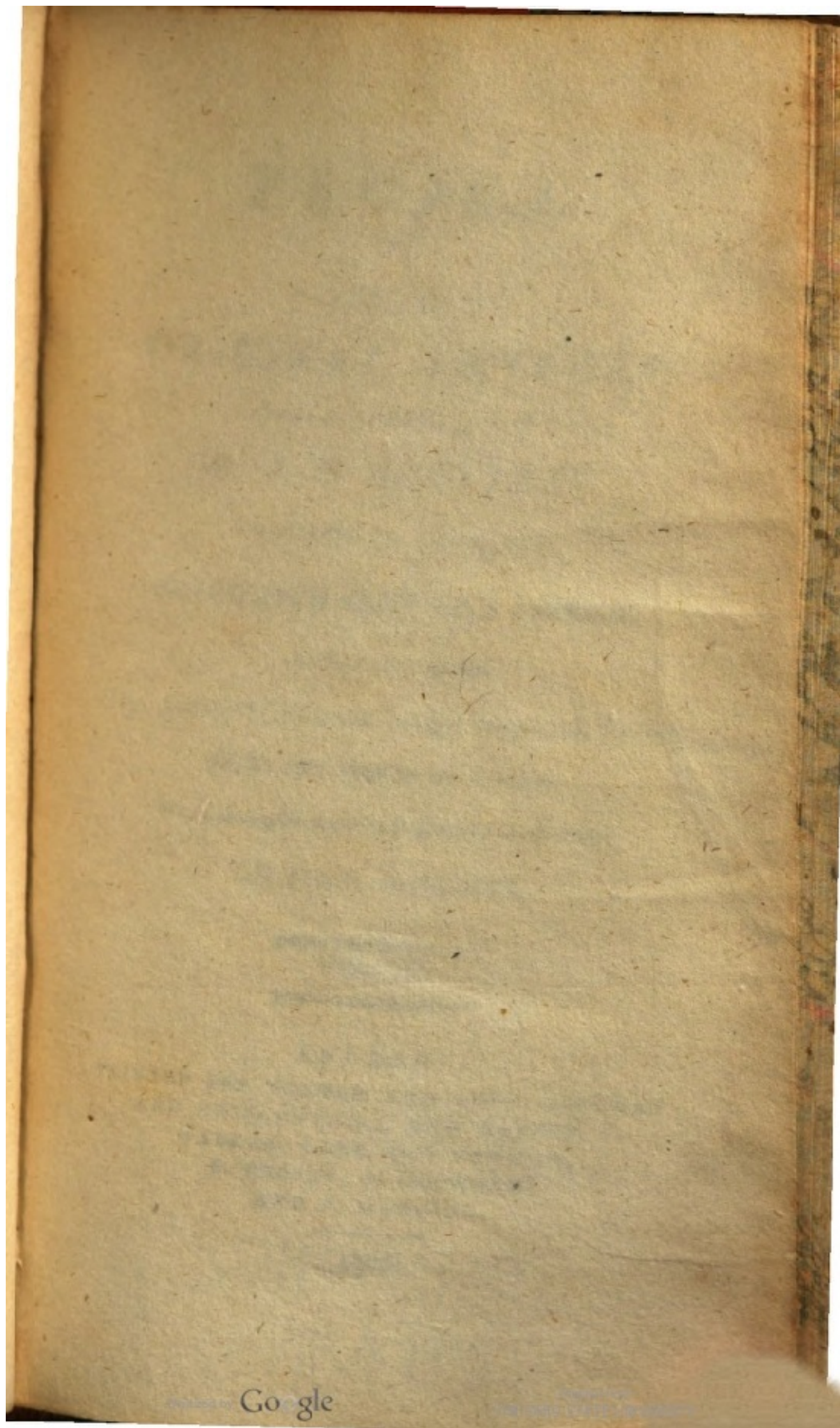
WILLIAM OXLEY
THOMPSON

THIS BOOK THE GIFT OF

Mr. William T. Morrey

4 Vols

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ELOISA,
OR
A SERIES OF
ORIGINAL LETTERS.

COLLECTED AND PUBLISHED BY

Mr. J. J. ROUSSEAU,

CITIZEN OF GENEVA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

THE ADVENTURES OF LORD B— AT ROME,

BEING THE SEQUEL OF ELOISA.

(Found among the Author's Papers after his Decease.)

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E L O I S A.

LETTER CXX.

FROM MRS. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

How tedious is your stay! This going backward and forward is very disagreeable. How many hours are lost before you return to the place where you ought to remain for ever, and, therefore, how much worse is it for you ever to go away! The idea of seeing you for so short a time takes from the pleasure of your company.— Do not you perceive, that by residing at your own house and mine alternately, you are in fact at home in neither, and cannot you contrive some means by which you may make your abode in both at once?

What are we doing, my dear cousin? How many precious moments we lose, when we have none to waste! Years steal upon us; youth begins to vanish; life slides away imperceptibly; its momentary bliss is in our possession, and we refuse to enjoy it! Do you recollect the time when we were yet girls, those early days so agreeable and delightful, which no other time of life affords, and which the mind with so much difficulty forgets? How often, when we were obliged to

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part for a few days, or even for a few hours, have we sadly embraced each other, and vowed that when we were our own mistresses we would never be asunder! We are now our own mistresses, and yet we pass one half of the year at a distance from each other. Is then our affection weaker? My dear and tender friend, we are both sensible how much time, habit, and your kindness have rendered our attachment more strong and indissoluble. As to myself, your absence daily becomes more insupportable, and I can no longer live for a moment without you. The progress of our friendship is more natural than it appears to be; it is founded not only on a similarity of character, but of condition. As we advance in years, our affections begin to centre in one point. We every day lose something that was dear to us, which we can never replace—Thus we perish by degrees, till at length, being wholly devoted to self love, we lose life and sensibility, even before our existence ceases. But a susceptible mind arms itself with all its force against this anticipated death: when a chillness begins to seize the extremities, it collects all the genial warmth of nature round its own centre; the more connexions it loses, the closer it cleaves to those which remain, and all its former ties are combined to attach it to the last object.

This is what, young as I am, I seem to experience. Ah! my dear, my poor heart has been too

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susceptible of tender impressions ! It was so early exhausted, that it grew old before its time ; and so many different affections have absorbed it to that degree, that it has no room for any new attachments. You have known me in the successive capacities of a daughter, a friend, a mistress, a wife, and a mother. You know how every character has been dear to me ! Some of these connexions are utterly destroyed, others are weakened. My mother, my affectionate mother is no more ; tears are the only tribute I can pay to her memory, and I do but half enjoy the most agreeable sensations of nature. As to love, it is wholly extinguished, it is dead for ever, and has left a vacancy in my heart which will never be filled up again. We have lost your good and worthy husband, whom I loved as the dear part of yourself, and who was so well deserving of your friendship and tenderness. If my boys were grown up, maternal affection might supply these vacancies, but that affection, like all others, has need of participation, and what return can a mother expect from a child only four or five years old ? Our children are dear to us long before they are sensible of our love, or capable of returning it ; and yet how much we want to express the extravagance of our fondness to some one who can enter into our affection ! My husband loves them, but not with that degree of sensibility I could wish ;

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he is not intoxicated with fondness as I am ! his tenderness for them is too rational : I would have it to be more lively and more like my own. In short, I want a friend, a mother who can be as extravagantly fond of my children, and her own, as myself. In a word the fondness of a mother makes the company of a friend more necessary to me, that I may enjoy the pleasure of talking continually about my children, without being troublesome. I feel double the pleasure in the caresses of my little Marcellinus, when I see that you share it with me. When I embrace your daughter I fancy that I press you to my bosom. We have observed a hundred times, on seeing our little cherubs at play together, that the union of our affections has so united them, that we have not been able to distinguish to which of us they severally belonged.

This is not all : I have powerful reasons for desiring to have you always near me, and your absence is painful to me in more respects than one. Think on my aversion to all hypocrisy, and reflect on the continual reserve in which I have lived upwards of six years towards the man whom I love above all others in the world. My odious secret oppresses me more and more, and my duty to reveal it seems every day more indispensable. The more I am prompted by honour to disclose it, the more I am obliged by prudence to conceal it. Consider what a horrid state it is, for a wife to

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carry mistrust, falsehood, and fear, even to her husband's arms; to be afraid of opening her heart to him who is master of it, and to conceal one half of my life, to ensure the peace of the other. Good God! from whom do I conceal my secret thoughts, and hide the recesses of a soul with which he has so much reason to be satisfied?— From my Wolmar, my husband! and the most worthy husband with which Heaven ever rewarded the virtue of unsullied chastity. Having deceived him once, I am obliged to continue the deceit, and bear the mortification of finding myself unworthy of all the kindness he expresses.— My heart is afraid to receive any testimony of his esteem, his most tender caresses make me blush, and my conscience interprets all his marks of respect and attention into symptoms of reproach and disdain. It is a cruel pain constantly to harbour this remorse, which tells me that he mistakes the object of his esteem. Ah! if he but knew me, he would not use me thus tenderly! No, I cannot endure this horrid state: I am never alone with that worthy man, but I am ready to fall on my knees before him, to confess my fault, and to expire at his feet with grief and shame.

Nevertheless, the reasons which at first restrained me, acquire fresh strength every day, and every motive which might induce me to make the declaration, conspires to enjoin me silence. When I

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consider the peaceable and tranquil state of our family, I cannot reflect without horror what an irreparable disturbance might be occasioned by a single word. After six years passed in perfect union, shall I venture to disturb the peace of so good and discreet a husband, who has no other will than that of his happy wife, no other pleasure than to see order and tranquillity throughout his family? Shall I afflict with domestic broils an aged father, who appears to be so contented, and so delighted with the happiness of his daughter and his friend? Shall I expose my dear children, those lovely and promising infants, to have their education neglected and shamefully slighted, to become the melancholy victims of family discord, between a father inflamed with just indignation, tortured with jealousy, and an unfortunate and guilty mother, always bathed in tears? I know what M. Wolmar is, now he esteems his wife; but how do I know what he will be when he no longer regards her? Perhaps he seems calm and moderate, because his predominant passion has had no room to display itself. Perhaps he would be as violent in the impetuosity of his anger, as he is gentle and composed, now he has nothing to provoke him.

If I owe such regard to every one about me, is not something likewise due to myself? Does not a virtuous and regular course of life for six years obliterate, in some measure, the errors of

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youth, and am I still obliged to undergo the punishment of a failing which I have so long lamented? I confess, my dear cousin, that I look backwards with reluctance; the reflection humbles me to that degree, that it dispirits me, and I am too susceptible of shame, to endure the idea, without falling into a kind of despair. I must reflect on the time which has passed since my marriage, in order to recover myself. My present situation inspires me with a confidence of which those disagreeable reflections would deprive me. I love to nourish in my breast these returning sentiments of honour, the rank of a wife and mother exalts my soul, and supports me against the remorse of my former condition. When I view my children and their father about me, I fancy that every thing breathes an air of virtue, and they banish from my mind the disagreeable remembrance of my former frailties. Their innocence is the security of mine; they become dearer to me, by being the instruments of my reformation; and I think on the violation of honour with such horror, that I can scarce believe myself the same person who formerly was capable of forgetting its precepts. I perceive myself so different from what I was, so confirmed in my present state, that I am almost induced to consider what I have to declare, as a confession which

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Such is the state of anxiety and uncertainty in which I am continually fluctuating in your absence. Do you know what may be the consequence of this one day or other? My father is soon to set out for Berne, and is determined not to return till he has put an end to a tedious lawsuit; not being willing to leave us the trouble of concluding it, and perhaps doubting our zeal in the prosecution of it. In the mean time, between his departure and his return, I shall be alone with my husband, and I perceive that it will then be impossible for me to keep the fatal secret any longer. When we have company, you know M. Wolmar often chooses to retire, and take a solitary walk: he chats with the peasants; he inquires into their situation; he examines the conditions of their grounds; and assists them, if they require it, both with his purse and his advice. But when we are alone, he never walks without me; he seldom leaves his wife and children, but enters into their little amusements with such an amiable simplicity, that on these occasions I always feel a more than common tenderness for him. In these tender moments, my reserve is in so much more danger, as he himself frequently gives me opportunities of throwing it aside, and has a hundred times held conversation with me which seemed to excite me to confidence. I perceive that soon-

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er or later, I must disclose my mind to him ; but since you would have the confession concerted between us, and made with all the precaution which discretion requires, return to me immediately, or I can answer for nothing.

My dear friend, I must conclude, and yet what I had to add is of such importance, that you must allow me a few words more. You are not only of service to me when I am with my children and my husband, but above all when I am alone with poor Eloisa : solitude is more dangerous, because it grows agreeable to me, and I court it without intending it. It is not, as you are sensible, that my heart still smarts with the pain of its former wounds —no, they are cured—I perceive that they are—I am very certain, I dare believe myself virtuous. I am under no apprehensions about the present ; it is the time past which torments me. There are some reflections as dreadful as the original sensation ; the recollection moves us ; we are ashamed to find that we shed tears, and we do but weep the more. They are tears of compassion, regret, and repentance ; love has no share in them : I no longer harbour the least spark of love ; but I lament the mischiefs it has occasioned ; I bewail the fate of a worthy man, who has been bereft of peace, and perhaps of life, by gratifying an indiscreet passion. Alas ! he has undoubtedly perished in this long and dangerous

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voyage, which he undertook out of despair. If he was living, he would send us tidings from the farthest part of the world; near four years have elapsed since his departure. They say the squadron on board of which he is has suffered a thousand disasters; that it hath lost three fourths of its crew; that several ships have gone to the bottom, and that no one can tell what is become of the rest. He is no more! he is no more! A secret foreboding tells me so. The unfortunate wretch has not been spared any more than so many others. The distresses of his voyage, and melancholy, still more fatal than all, have shortened his days. Thus vanishes every thing which glitters for a while on earth. The reproach of having occasioned the death of a worthy man was all that was wanting to complete the torments of my conscience. With what a soul was he endued! how susceptible of the tenderest love! He deserved to live!

I try in vain to dissipate these melancholy ideas; but they return every minute, in spite of me. Your friend requires your assistance, to enable her to banish, or to moderate them; and since I cannot forget this unfortunate man, I had rather talk of him with you, than think of him by myself.

You see how many reasons concur to make your company continually necessary to me. If you, who have been more discreet and fortunate,

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are not moved by the same reasons, yet does not your inclination persuade you of the same necessity? If it is true that you will never marry again, having so little satisfaction in your family, what house can be more convenient for you than mine? For my part, I am in pain, as I know what you endure in your own; for, notwithstanding your dissimulation, I am no stranger to your manner of living, and I am not to be duped by those gay airs which you affected to display at Clarens. You have often reproached me with my failings; and I have a very great one to reproach you with in your turn; which is, that your grief is too solitary and confined. You get into a corner to indulge your affliction, as if you were ashamed to weep before your friend. Clara, I do not like this. I am not ungenerous like you; I do not condemn your tears. I would not have you cease at the end of two or ten years, or while you live, to honour the memory of so tender a husband; but I blame you, that after having passed the best of your days in weeping with your Eloisa, you rob her of the pleasure of weeping in her turn with you, and of washing away, by more honourable tears, the scandal of those which she shed in your bosom. If you are ashamed of your grief, you are a stranger to real affliction! If you find a kind of pleasure in it, why will you not let me partake of it? Are you ignorant that

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a participation of affections communicates a soft and affecting quality to melancholy, which content never feels? And was not friendship particularly designed to alleviate the evils of the wretched, and lessen their pains?

Such, my dear, are the reflections you ought to indulge; to which I must add, that when I propose your coming to live with me, I make the proposal no less in my husband's name than my own. He has often expressed his surprise, and even been offended, that two such intimates as we should live asunder: he assures me that he has told you so, and he is not a man who talks inadvertently. I do not know what resolution you will take with respect to these proposals; I have reason to hope that it will be such as I could wish. However it be, mine is fixed and unalterable.— I have not forgotten the time when you would have followed me to England. My incomparable friend! it is now my turn. You know my dislike of the town, my taste for the country, for rural occupations, and how strongly a residence of three years has attached me to my house at Clarendon. You are no stranger likewise to the trouble of removing a whole family, and you are sensible that it would be abusing my father's good nature to oblige him to move so often. Therefore, if you will not leave your family, and come to govern mine, I am determined to take a house at Lausanne, where we will all live with you.—

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Prepare yourself, therefore; every thing requires it; my inclination, my duty, my happiness. The security of my honour, the recovery of my reason, my condition, my husband, my children, myself, I owe all to you; I am indebted to you for all the blessings I enjoy; I see nothing but what reminds me of your goodness, and without you I am nothing. Come then, my much loved friend, my guardian angel; come and enjoy the work of your own hands; come and gather the fruits of your benevolence. Let us have but one family, as we have but one soul to cherish it; you shall superintend the education of my sons, and I will take care of your daughter; we will share the maternal duties between us, and make our pleasure double. We will raise our minds together to the contemplation of that Being, who purified mine by means of your endeavours; and having nothing more to hope for in this life, we will quietly wait for the next, in the bosom of innocence and friendship.

LETTER CXXI.

ANSWER.

GOOD Heaven! my dear cousin, how I am delighted with your letter! Thou lovely preacher! . . . Lovely indeed: but in the preaching strain nevertheless. What a charming peroration! A perfect model of ancient oratory. The Athenian

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architect! That florid speaker!
 You remember him In your old Plutarch
 Pompous descriptions, superb temple! . .
 When he had finished his harangue, comes ano-
 ther; a plain man; with a grave, sober, and un-
 affected air . . . who answered as your cousin
 Clara might do . . . with a low, hollow, and
 deep tone . . . *All that he has said, I will do.*
 —Here he ended, and the assembly rang with ap-
 plause! Peace to the man of words. My dear
 we may be considered in the light of these two ar-
 chitects; and the temple in question is that of
 Friendship.

But let us recapitulate all the fine things you
 have said to me. First, that we loved each
 other; secondly, that my company was necessary
 to you; thirdly, that yours was necessary to me,
 likewise; and lastly, that as it was in our power
 to live together the rest of our days, we ought to
 do it. And you have really discovered all this
 without a guide. In truth thou art a woman of
 vast eloquence! Well, but let me tell you how
 I was employed on my part, while you was com-
 posing this sublime epistle. After that I will
 leave you to judge, whether what you say, or
 what I do, is most to the purpose.

I had no sooner lost my husband, than you sup-
 plied the vacancy he had left in my heart. While
 he was living, he shared my affections with you:
 when he was gone, I was yours entirely, and, as

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you observe, with respect to the conformity of friendship and maternal affection, my daughter was an additional tie to unite us. I not only determined, from that time, to pass my days with you, but I formed a more enlarged plan. The more effectually to blend our two families into one, I proposed, on a supposition that all circumstances prove agreeable, to marry my daughter some day or other to your eldest son, and the name of husband, assumed in jest, seemed to be a lucky omen of his taking it one day in earnest.

With this view, I endeavoured immediately to put an end to the trouble of a contested inheritance; and finding that my circumstances enabled me to sacrifice some part of my claim in order to settle the rest, I thought of nothing but placing my daughter's fortune in some sure funds, where it might be secure from any apprehensions of a law-suit. You know that I am whimsical in most things; my whim in this was to surprise you. I intended to come into your room one morning early, with my child in one hand, and the parchment in the other; and to have presented them both to you, with a fine compliment on committing to your care the mother, the daughter, and their effects, that is to say, my child's fortune. Govern her, I proposed, to have said, as best suits the interest of your son; for, from henceforwards, it is your concern and his; for my own part, I shall trouble myself about her no longer.

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Full of this pleasing idea, it was necessary for me to open my mind to somebody who might assist me to execute my project. Guess now whom I chose for a confidant? One M. Wolmar. Should you not know him? "My husband, cousin." Yes, your husband, cousin. The very man from whom you make such a difficulty of concealing a secret, which it is of consequence to him never to know, is he who has kept a secret from you, the discovery of which would have given you so much pleasure. This was the true subject of all that mysterious conversation between us, about which you used to banter us with so much humour. You see what hypocrites these husbands are. Is it not very droll in them to accuse us of dissimulation? But I required much more of your husband. I perceived that you had the same plan which I had in view, but you kept it more to yourself, as one who did not care to communicate her thoughts, till she was led to the discovery. With an intent, therefore, to make your surprize more agreeable, I would have had him, when you proposed our living together, to have seemed as if he disapproved of your eagerness, and to have given his consent with reluctance. To this he made me an answer, which I well remember, and which you ought never to forget: for since the first existence of husbands, I doubt whether any one of them ever made such an answer before. It was as follows: "My dear

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" little cousin, I know Eloisa I know
 " her well better than she imagines,
 " perhaps, her generosity of heart is so
 " great, that what she desires ought not be re-
 " fused, and her sensibility is too strong to bear
 " a denial, without being afflicted. During
 " these five years that we have been married, I
 " do not know that I have given her the least
 " uneasiness; and I hope to die without ever
 " being the cause of her feeling a moment's
 " inquietude." Cousin, reflect on this: this is
 the husband whose peace of mind you are inces-
 santly meditating to disturb.

For my part, I had less delicacy, or more
 gentleness of disposition, and I so naturally divert-
 ed the conversation to which your affection so fre-
 quently led you, that as you could not tax me
 with coldness or indifference towards you, you
 took it into your head that I had a second mar-
 riage in view, and that I loved you better than
 any thing, except a husband. You see, my dear
 child, your most inmost thoughts do not escape
 me. I guess your meaning, I penetrate your de-
 signs; I enter into the bottom of your soul, and
 for that reason I have always adored you. This
 suspicion, which so opportunely led you into a
 mistake, appeared to me well worth encouraging.
 I took upon me to play the part of the coquet-
 tish widow, which I acted so well as to deceive
 even you. It is a part for which I have more ta-

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lents than inclination. I skilfully employed that piquant air which I know how to put on, and with which I have entertained myself in making a jest of more than one young coxcomb. You have been absolutely the dupe of my affectation, and you thought me in haste to supply the place of a man, to whom of all others it would be most difficult to fit a successor. But I am too ingenuous to play the counterfeit long, and your apprehensions were soon removed. But to confirm you the more, I will explain to you my real sentiments on that head.

I have told you an hundred times, when I was a maid, that I was never designed for a wife. Had my determination depended on myself alone, I should never have married. But our sex cannot purchase liberty but by slavery; and, before we can become our own mistresses, we must begin by being servants. Though my father did not confine me, I was not without uneasiness in my family. To free myself from that vexation, therefore, I married Mr. Orbe. He was such a worthy man, and loved me with such tenderness, that I most sincerely loved him in my turn. Experience gave me a more advantageous opinion of marriage than I had conceived of it, and effaced those ill impressions I had received from Chaillot. Mr. Orbe made me happy, and did not repent his endeavours. I should have discharged my duty with any other, but I should have vexed him, and

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I am sensible that nothing but so good a husband could have made me a tolerable wife. Would you think that even this afforded me matter of complaint? My dear, we loved each other too affectionately; we were never gay. A slighter friendship would have been more sprightly; I should even have preferred it; and I think I should have chosen to have lived with less content, if I could have laughed oftener.

Add to this, that the particular circumstances of your situation gave me uneasiness. I need not remind you of the dangers to which an unruly passion exposed you. I reflect on them with horror. If you had only hazarded your life, perhaps I might have retained some remains of gaiety; but terror and grief pierced my soul, and till I saw you married, I did not enjoy one moment of real pleasure. You are no stranger to my affliction at that time; you felt it. It had great influence over your good disposition, and I shall always bless those fortunate tears, which were probably the occasion of your return to virtue.

In this manner I passed all the time that I lived with my husband. Since it has pleased the Almighty to take him from me, judge whether I can hope to find another so much to my mind, and whether I have any temptation to make the experiment? No, cousin, matrimony is too serious a state for me; its gravity does not suit with my humour; it makes me dull, and sits awkward-

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ly upon me; not to mention that all constraint whatever is intolerable to me. Consider, you who know me, what charms can an attachment have in my eyes, during which, for seven years together, I have not laughed seven times heartily! I do not propose, like you, to turn matron at eight-and-twenty. I find myself a smart little widow, likely to get a husband still, and I think that if I were a man, I should have no objection to such a one as myself. But to marry again, cousin! Hear me; I sincerely lament my poor husband; I would have given up one half of my days, to have passed the other half with him; and, nevertheless, could he return to life, I should take him again for no other reason, than because I had taken him before.

I have declared to you my real intentions. If I have not been able to put them in execution, notwithstanding M. Wolmar's kind endeavours, it is because difficulties seem to increase, as my zeal to surmount them strengthens. But my zeal will always gain the ascendancy, and, before the summer is over, I hope to return to you for the remainder of my days.

I must now vindicate myself from the reproach of concealing my uneasiness, and choosing to weep alone: I do not deny it; and this is the way I spend the most agreeable time I pass here. I never enter my house, but I perceive some traces which remind me of him who made it agreeable

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to me. I cannot take a step, I cannot view a single object, without perceiving some signs of his tenderness and goodness of heart; and would you have my mind to be unaffected? When I am here, I am sensible of nothing but the loss I have sustained. When I am near you, I view all the comfort I have left. Can you make your influence over my disposition a crime in me? If I weep in your absence, and laugh in your company, whence proceeds the difference? Ungrateful woman! it is because you alleviate all my afflictions, and I cannot grieve while I enjoy your society.

You have said a great deal in favour of our long friendship; but I cannot pardon you for omitting a circumstance, that does me most honour; which is, that I love you, though you eclipse me! Eloisa, you were born to rule. Your empire is more despotic than any in the world. It extends even over the will, and I am sensible of it more than any one: How happens it, my Eloisa? We are both in love with virtue; honour is equally dear to us; our talents are the same; I have very near as much spirit as you; and am not less handsome: I am sensible of all this, and yet, notwithstanding all, you prescribe to me, you overcome me, you cast me down, your genius crushes mine, and I am nothing before you. Even while you were engaged in an attachment with which you reproached yourself, and that I,

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who had not copied your failing, might have taken the lead in my turn, yet the ascendancy still remained in you. The frailty I condemned in you appeared to me almost in the light of a virtue; I could scarce forbear admiring in you what I should have censured in another. In short, even at that time, I never accosted you without a sensible emotion of involuntary respect; and it is certain, that nothing but your gentleness and affability of manners could entitle me to the rank of your friend: by nature, I ought to be your servant. Explain this mystery if you can; for my part, I am at a loss how to solve it.

But, after all, I do in some measure conceive the reason, and I believe that I have explained it before now. The reason is, that your disposition enlivens every one round you, and gives them a kind of new existence, for which they are bound to adore you, since they derive it entirely from you. It is true, I have done you some signal services; you have so often acknowledged them, that it is impossible for me to forget them. I cannot deny but that, without my assistance, you had been utterly undone. But what did I do, more than return the obligation I owed you? Is it possible to have a long acquaintance with you, without finding one's mind impressed with the charms of virtue, and the delights of friendship? Do not you know that you have power to arm in your defence every one who approaches you, and that

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I have no advantage whatever over others, but that of being, like the guards of Sesostris, of the same age and sex, and of having been brought up with you. However it be, it is some comfort to Clara, that though she is of less estimation than Eloisa, yet, without Eloisa, she would be of less value still; and, in short, to tell you the truth, I think that we stood in great need of each other and that we should both have been losers if fate had parted us.

I am chiefly concerned, lest, while my affairs detain me here, you should discover your secret, which you are every minute ready to disclose. Consider, I entreat you, that there are solid and powerful reasons for concealing it, and that nothing but a mistaken principle can tempt you to reveal it. Besides, our suspicion that it is no longer a secret to him who is most interested in the discovery, is an additional argument against making any declaration without the greatest circumspection. Perhaps your husband's reserve may serve as an example and a lesson to us: for in such cases there is very often a great difference between pretending to be ignorant of a thing, and being obliged to know it. Stay, therefore, I beseech you, till we consult once more on this affair. If your apprehensions were well grounded, and your lamented friend was no more, the best resolution you could take, would be to let your history and his misfortunes be buried to-

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gether. If he is alive, as I hope he is, the case may be different; but let us wait till we are sure of the event. In every state of the case, do not you think that you ought to pay some regard to the advice of an unfortunate wretch, whose evils all spring from you?

With respect to the danger of solitude, I conceive, and cannot condemn your fears, though I am persuaded that they are ill-founded. Your past terrors have made you fearful; but I presage better of the time present, and you would be less apprehensive, if you had more reason to be so. But I cannot approve of your anxiety with regard to the fate of our poor friend. Now your affections have taken a different turn, believe me, he is as dear to me as to yourself. Nevertheless, I have forebodings quite contrary to yours, and more agreeable to reason. Lord B—— has heard from him twice, and wrote to me on the receipt of the last letter, to acquaint me that he was in the South-Seas, and had already escaped all the dangers you apprehend. You know all this as well as I, and yet you are as uneasy as if you were a stranger to these particulars. But there is a circumstance you are ignorant of, and of which I must inform you; it is, that the ship on which he is on board was seen two months ago off the Canaries, making sail for Europe. This is the account my father received from Holland, which he did not fail to transmit to me; for it is

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his custom to be more punctual in informing me concerning public affairs, than in acquainting me with his own private concerns. My heart tells me that it will not be long before we hear news of our philosopher, and that your tears will be dried up, unless, after having lamented him as dead, you should weep to find him alive. But, thank God, you are no longer in danger from your former weakness.

*Deh ! fosse or qui quel miser pur un poco,
Ch' e gia di piangere e di viver lasso !*

Alas ! what fears should heighten your concern,
So us'd in listless solitude to mourn !

This is the sum of my answer. Your affectionate friend proposes and shares with you the agreeable expectation of a lasting reunion. You find that you are neither the first, nor the only author of this project ; and that the execution of it is more forward than you imagine. Have patience, therefore, my dear friend, for this summer. It is better to delay our meeting for some time, than to be under the necessity of parting again.

Well, good madam, have not I been as good as my word, and is not my triumph complete ? Come, fall on your knees, kiss this letter with respect, and humbly acknowledge, that, once in her life, at least, Eloisa Wolmar has been outdone in friendship.

LETTER CXXII.

TO MRS. ORBE.

MY dear cousin, my benefactress, my friend! I come from the extremities of the earth, and bring a heart still full of affection for you. I have crossed the line four times; have traversed the two hemispheres; have seen the four quarters of the globe; its diameter has been between us: I have been quite round it, and yet could not escape from you one moment. It is in vain to fly from the object of our adoration: the image, more fleet than the winds, pursues us from the end of the world; and, wherever we transport ourselves, we bear with us the idea by which we are animated. I have endured a great deal; I have seen others suffer more. How many unhappy wretches have I seen perish! Alas! they rated life at a high price! And yet I survived them . . . Perhaps my condition was less to be pitied; the miseries of my companions affected me more than my own. I am wretched here (said I to myself), but there is a corner of the earth where I am happy and tranquil; and the prospect of felicity, beside the lake of Geneva, made me amends for what I suffered on the ocean. I have the pleasure, on my return, to have my hopes confirmed: Lord B—— informs me, that you both enjoy health and peace; and that if you in particular have lost the agreeable distinction of a wife,

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you nevertheless retain the title of a friend and mother, which may contribute to your happiness.

I am at present too much in haste to send you a detail of my voyage in this letter. I dare hope that I shall soon have a more convenient opportunity; mean time I must be content to give you a slight sketch, rather to excite than gratify your curiosity. I have been near four years in making this immense tour, and returned in the same ship in which I set sail; the only one of the whole squadron which we have brought back to England.

I have seen South-America, that vast continent, which, for want of arms, has been obliged to submit to the Europeans, who have made it a desert, in order to secure their dominion. I have seen the coasts of Brasil from whence Lisbon and London draw their treasures, and where the miserable natives tread upon gold and diamonds, without daring to lay hands on them for their own use. I crossed, in mild weather, those stormy seas under the Antarctic circle, and met with the most horrible tempests in the Pacific Ocean.

*E in mar dubbioso sotto ignoto polo
Provai l'onde fallaci, e l'vento infido.*

Have brav'd the unknown seas, where, near the pole,
Blow faithless winds, and waves deceitful roll.

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I have seen, at a distance, the abode of those supposed giants, who are no otherwise greater than the rest of their species, than as they are more courageous, and who maintain their independence more by a life of simplicity and frugality, than by their extraordinary stature. I made a residence of three months in a desert and delightful island, which afforded an agreeable and lively representation of the primitive beauty of nature, and which seems to be fixed at the extremity of the world, to serve as an asylum to innocence and persecuted love; but the greedy European indulges his brutal disposition, in preventing the peaceful Indian from residing there, and does justice on himself, by not making it his own abode.

I have seen, in the rivers of Mexico and Peru, the same scenes as at Brasil; I have seen the few wretched inhabitants, the sad remains of two powerful nations, loaded with irons, ignomy, and misery, weeping in the midst of their precious metals, and reproaching Heaven for having lavished such treasures upon them. I have seen the dreadful conflagration of a whole city, which perished in the flames, without having made any resistance or defence. Such is the right of war among the intelligent, humane, and refined Europeans! They are not satisfied with doing the enemy all the mischief from whence they can reap any advantage, but they reckon as clear

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gain all the destruction they can make among his possessions. I have coasted along almost the whole western part of America, not without being struck with admiration, on beholding fifteen hundred leagues of coast, and the greatest sea in the world, under the dominion of a single potentate, who may be said to keep the keys of one hemisphere.

After having crossed this vast sea I beheld a new scene on the other continent. I have seen the most numerous and most illustrious nation in the world in subjection to a handful of banditti; I have had near intercourse with this famous people, and I do not wonder that they are slaves.—As often conquered as attacked, they have always been a prey to the first invader, and possibly will be so to the end of the world. They are well suited to their servile state, since they have not the courage even to complain. They are learned, lazy, hypocritical, and deceitful: they talk a great deal, without saying any thing to the purpose; they are full of spirit without any genius; they abound in signs, but are barren in ideas; they are polite, full of compliments, dexterous, crafty, and knavish; they comprise all the duties of life in trifles; all morality in grimace, and have no other idea of humanity, than what consists in bows and salutations. I landed upon a second desert island, more unknown, more delight-

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ful still than the first, and where the most cruel accident had like to have confined us for ever. I was the only one, perhaps, whom so agreeable an exile did not terrify : am I not doomed to be an exile every where? In this place of terror and delight I saw the attempts of human industry to disengage a civilized being from a solitude where he wants nothing, and plunge him into an abyss of new necessities.

On the vast ocean, where one would imagine men would be glad to meet with their own species, I have seen two great ships sail up to each other, join, attack, and fight together with fury, as if that immense space was too little for either of them. I have seen them discharge flames and bullets against each other. In a fight which was not of long duration, I have seen the picture of hell. I have heard the triumphant shouts of the conqueror drown the cries of the wounded, and the groans of the dying. I blushed to receive my share of an immense plunder ; but received it in the nature of a trust, and as it was taken from the wretched, to the wretched it shall be restored.

I have seen Europe transported to the extremities of Africa, by the labours of that avaricious, patient, and industrious people, who by time and perseverance have surmounted difficulties which all the heroism of other nations could never overcome. I have seen those immense and miserable countries, which seem destined to no other pur-

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pose than to cover the earth with herds of slaves. At their vile appearance, I turned away my eyes, out of disdain, horror, and pity; and on beholding one fourth part of my fellow creatures transformed into beasts, for the service of the rest, I could not forbear lamenting that I was a man.

Lastly, I beheld, in my fellow travellers, a bold and intrepid people, whose freedom and example retrieved, in my opinion, the honour of the species; a people who despised pain and death, and who dreaded nothing but hunger and disquiet. In their commander, I beheld a captain, a soldier, a pilot, a prudent and great man, and to say still more perhaps, a friend worthy of Lord B—. But, throughout the whole world, I have never met with any resemblance of Clara Orbe, or Eloisa Etange, or found one who could recompense a heart truly sensible of their worth for the loss of their society.

How shall I speak of my cure? It is from you that I must learn how far it is perfect. Do I return more free and more discreet than I departed! I dare believe that I do, and yet I cannot affirm it. The same image has constant possession of my heart; you know how impossible it is for me ever to efface it; but her dominion over me is more worthy of her, and, if I do not deceive myself, she holds the same empire in my

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heart as in your own. Yes, my dear cousin, her virtue has subdued me; I am now, with regard to her, nothing more than a most sincere and tender friend; my adoration of her is of the same nature with yours; or rather, my affections do not seem to be weakened, but rectified; and, however nicely I examine, I find them to be as pure as the object which inspires them. What can I say more, till I am put to the proof, by which I may be able to form a right judgment of myself? I am honest and sincere; I will be what I ought to be; but how shall I answer for my affections, when I have so much reason to mistrust them? Have I power over the past? How can I avoid recollecting a thousand passions which have formerly distracted me? How shall my imagination distinguish what is, from what has been? And how shall I consider her as a friend, whom I never yet saw but as a mistress? Whatever you may think of the secret motive of my eagerness, it is honest and rational, and merits your approbation. I will answer beforehand, at least for my intentions. Permit me to see you, and examine me yourself, or allow me to see Eloisa, and I shall then know my own heart.

I am to attend Lord B—— into Italy. Shall I pass close by your house, and not see you? Do you think this possible? Alas! if you are so cruel to require it, you ought not to be obeyed! But, why should you desire it? Are you not

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the same Clara, as kind and compassionate as you are virtuous and discreet, who condescended from her infancy to love me, and who ought to love me still more, now that I am indebted to her for every thing*? No, my dear and lovely friend, such a cruel denial will not become you; nor will it be just to me: it shall not put the finishing stroke to my misery. Once more, once more in my life, I will lay my heart at your feet. I will see you, you shall consent to an interview. I will see Eloisa likewise, and she too shall give her consent. You are both of you too sensible of my regard for her. Can you believe me capable of making this request, if I found myself unworthy to appear in her presence? She has long since bewailed the effects of her charms, ah! let her for once behold the fruits of her virtue!

P. S.—Lord B——'s affairs detain him here for some time: if I may be allowed to see you, why should not I get the start of him, to be with you the sooner?

* What great obligations has he to her, who occasioned all the misfortunes of his life?—Yes, mistaken querist! he is indebted to her for the honour, the virtue, and peace of his beloved Eloisa: he owes her every thing.

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LETTER CXXIII.

FROM MR. WOLMAR.

THOUGH we are not yet acquainted, I am commanded to write to you. The most discreet and most beloved wife has lately disclosed her heart to her happy husband. He thinks you worthy to have been the object of her affections, and he makes you an offer of his house. Peace and innocence reign in this mansion; you will meet with friendship, hospitality, esteem, and confidence. Examine your heart, and if you find nothing there to deter you, come without any apprehensions. You will not depart from him, without leaving behind you at least one friend, by name

WOLMAR.

P. S.—Come, my friend, we expect you with eagerness. I hope I need not fear a denial.

ELOISA.

LETTER CXXIV.

FROM MRS. ORBE.

In which the preceding Letter was enclosed.

WELCOME, welcome, a thousand times, dear St. Preux! for I intend that you shall retain that

name, at least among us. I suppose it will be sufficient to tell you, that you will not be excluded, unless you mean to exclude yourself. When you find, by the enclosed letter, that I have done more than you required of me, you will learn to put more confidence in your friends, and not to reproach them on account of those inquietudes which they participate when they are under the necessity of making you uneasy. Mr. Wolmar has a desire to see you; he makes you an offer of his house, his friendship, and his advice; this is more than requisite to quiet my apprehensions with regard to your journey, and I should injure myself, if I mistrusted you one moment. Mr. Wolmar goes farther, he pretends to accomplish your cure, and he says that neither Eloisa, you, nor I, can be perfectly happy till it is complete. Though I have great confidence in his wisdom, and more in your virtue, yet I cannot answer for the success of this undertaking. This I know, that, considering the disposition of his wife, the pains he proposes to take is out of pure generosity to you.

Come then, my worthy friend, in all the security of an honest heart, and satisfy the eagerness with which we all long to embrace you, and to see you easy and contented; come to your native land, and in the midst of your friends rest yourself after all your travels, and forget all the hardships

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you have undergone. The last time you saw me I was a grave matron, and my friend was on the brink of the grave; but now, as she is well, and I am once more single, you will find me as gay and almost as handsome as ever. One thing, however, is very certain, that I am not altered with respect to you, and you may travel many times round the world, and not find one who has so sincere a regard for you as your, &c.

LETTER CXXV.

TO LORD B——.

JUST risen from my bed: 'tis yet the dead of night. I cannot rest a moment. My heart is so transported, that I can scarce confine it within me. You, my lord, who have so often rescued me from despair, shall be the worthy confidant of the first pleasure I have tasted for many a year.

I have seen her, my lord! my eyes have beheld her! I have heard her voice. I have pressed her hand with my lips. She recollected me; she received me with joy; she called me her friend, her dear friend; she admitted me into her house: I am happier than ever I was in my life. I lodge under the same roof with her, and while I am writing to you, we are scarce thirty paces asunder.

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My ideas are too rapid to be expressed; they crowd upon me all at once, and naturally impede each other. I must pause a while to digest my narrative into some kind of method.

After so long an absence, I had scarce given way to the first transports of my heart, while I embraced you as a friend, my deliverer, and my father, before you thought of taking a journey to Italy. You made me wish for it, in hopes of relief from the burden of being useless to you. As you could not immediately dispatch the affairs which detained you in London, you proposed my going first, that I might have more time to wait for you here. I begged leave to come hither; I obtained it, set out, and though Eloisa made the first advances towards an interview, yet the pleasing reflection that I was going to meet her was checked by the regret of leaving you. My lord, we are now even; this single sentiment has cancelled my obligations to you.

I need not tell you that my thoughts were all the way taken up with the object of my journey; but I must observe one thing, that I began to consider that same object, which had never quitted my imagination, quite in another point of view. Till then I used to recall Eloisa to my mind, sparkling, as formerly, with all the charms of youth. I had always beheld her lovely eyes enlivened by that passion with which she inspired me. Every feature which I admired, seemed, in

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my opinion, to be a surety of my happiness. My affection was so interwoven with the idea of her person, that I could not separate them. Now I was going to see Eloisa married, Eloisa a mother, Eloisa indifferent! I was disturbed when I reflected how much an interval of eight years might have impaired her beauty. She had had the small-pox, she was altered, how great might that alteration be! My imagination obstinately refused to allow any blemish in that lovely face. I reflected likewise on the expected interview between us, and what kind of reception I might expect. The first meeting presented itself to my mind under a thousand different appearances, and this momentary idea crossed my imagination a thousand times a day.

When I perceived the top of the hills, my heart beat violently, and told me, There she is! I was affected in the same manner at sea, on viewing the coasts of Europe. I felt the same emotions at Meillerie, when I discovered the house of the Baron d'Etange. The world, in my imagination, is divided only into two regions, *that* where she is, and *that* where she is not. The former dilates as I remove from her, and contracts when I approach her, as a spot where I am destined never to arrive. It is at present confined to the walls of her chamber. Alas! that place alone is inhabited; all the rest of the universe is an empty space.

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The nearer I drew to Switzerland, the more I was agitated. That instant in which I discovered the lake of Geneva from the heights of Jura, was a moment of rapture and ecstasy. The sight of my country, that beloved country, where a deluge of pleasures had overflowed my heart; the pure and wholesome air of the Alps; the gentle breeze of the country, more sweet than the perfumes of the East; that rich and fertile spot, that unrivalled landscape, the most beautiful that ever struck the eye of man, that delightful abode, to which I found nothing comparable in the vast tour of the globe; the aspect of a free and happy people; the mildness of the season, the serenity of the climate: a thousand pleasing recollections, which recalled to my mind the pleasures I had enjoyed: all these circumstances together threw me into a kind of transport which I cannot describe, and seemed to collect the enjoyment of my whole life into one happy moment. Having crossed the lake, I felt a new impression, of which I had no idea. It was a certain emotion of fear, which checked my heart, and disturbed me in spite of all my endeavours. This dread, of which I could not discover the cause, increased as I drew nearer to the town; it abated my eagerness to get thither, and rose to such a height, that my expedition gave me as much uneasiness as my delay had occasioned me before. When I came to Vevai, I felt a sensa-

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tion which was very far from being agreeable. I was seized with a violent palpitation, which stopped my breath, so that I spoke with a trembling and broken accent. I could scarce make myself understood when I inquired for M. Wolmar; for I durst not mention his wife. They told me he lived at Clarens. This information eased my breast from a pressure equal to five hundred weight, and considering the two leagues I had to travel farther as a kind of respite, I was rejoiced at a circumstance which at any other time would have made me uneasy; but I learnt with concern that Mrs. Orbe was at Lausanne. I went into an inn to recruit my strength, but could not swallow a morsel: and when I attempted to drink, I was almost suffocated, and could not empty a glass but at several sips. When I saw the horses put to, my apprehensions were doubled. I believe I should have given any thing in the world to have had one of the wheels broken by the way. I no longer saw Eloisa: my disturbed imagination presented nothing but confused objects before me; my soul was in a general tumult. I had experienced grief and despair, and should have preferred them to that horrible state. In a few words, I can assure you, that I never in my life underwent such cruel agitation as I suffered in this little way, and I am persuaded that I could not have supported it a whole day.

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at the gate, and finding that I was not in a condition to walk, I sent the postillion to acquaint M. Wolmar that a stranger wanted to speak with him. He was taking a walk with his wife. They were acquainted with the message, and came round another way, while I kept my eyes fixed on the avenue, and waited in a kind of trance, in expectation of seeing somebody come from thence.

Eloisa had no sooner perceived me than she recollected me. In an instant, she saw me, she shrieked, she ran, she leaped into my arms. At the sound of her voice I started, I revived, I saw her, I felt her. O my lord! O my friend! I cannot speak. . . . Her look, her shriek, her manner inspired me with confidence, courage, and strength in an instant. In her arms I felt warmth, and breathed new life. A sacred transport kept us for some time closely embraced in deep silence; and it was not till after we recovered from this agreeable delirium that our voices broke forth in confused murmurs, and our eyes intermingled tears. M. Wolmar was present; I knew he was, I saw him, but what was I capable of seeing? No, though the whole universe had been united against me; though a thousand torments had surrounded me, I would not have detached my heart from the least of those caresses, those tender offerings of a pure and sacred friendship, which we will bear with us to Heaven.

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When the violent impetuosity of our first meeting began to abate, Mrs. Wolmar took me by the hand, and turning towards her husband she said to him, with a certain air of candour and innocence which instantly affected me, "Though he is my old acquaintance, I do not present him to you, but I receive him from you, and he will hereafter enjoy my friendship no longer than he is honoured with yours."—"If new friends (said M. Wolmar, embracing me) express less natural ardour than those of long standing, yet they will grow old in their turn, and will not yield to any in affection." I received his embraces; but my heart had quite exhausted itself, and I was entirely passive.

After this short scene was over, I observed, by a side-glance, that they had put up my chaise, and taken off my trunk. Eloisa held by my arm, and I went with them towards the house, almost overwhelmed with pleasure, to find they were determined I should remain their guest.

It was then, that upon a more calm contemplation of that lovely face, which I imagined might have grown homely, I saw with an agreeable, yet sad surprise, that she was really more beautiful and sparkling than ever. Her charming features are now more regular; she is grown rather fatter, which is an addition to the resplendent fairness of her complexion. The

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small-pox has left some slight marks on her cheeks scarce perceptible. Instead of that mortifying bashfulness which formerly used to make her cast her eyes downwards, you may perceive in her chaste looks the security of virtue allied with gentleness and sensibility; her countenance, though not less modest, is less timid; an air of greater freedom, and more liberal grace, has succeeded that constrained carriage which was compounded of shame and tenderness; and if a sense of her failing rendered her then more bewitching, a consciousness of her purity now renders her more celestial.

We had scarce entered the parlour, when she disappeared, and returned in a minute. She did not come alone. Who do you think she brought with her? Her children! Those two lovely little ones, more beautiful than the day; in whose infant faces you might trace all the charms and features of their mother. How was I agitated at this sight? It is neither to be described nor conceived. A thousand different emotions seized me at once. A thousand cruel and delightful reflections divided my heart. What a lovely sight! What bitter regrets! I found myself distracted with grief, and transported with joy. I saw, if I may be allowed the expression, the dear object of my affections multiplied before me. Alas! I perceived at the same time too convincing a proof that I had no longer any interest

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She led them towards me. "Behold (said she, with an affecting tone, that pierced my soul) behold the children of your friend; they will hereafter be your friends. Henceforward I hope you will be theirs." And immediately the two little creatures ran eagerly to me, took me by the hand, and so overwhelmed me with their innocent caresses, that every motion of my soul centered in tenderness. I took them both in my arms, and pressing them against my throbbing breast, "Dear and lovely little creatures (said I, with a sigh) you have an arduous task to perform. May you resemble the authors of your being; may you imitate their virtues; and by your own, hereafter administer comfort to their unfortunate friends." Mrs. Wolmar in rapture threw herself round my neck a second time, and seemed disposed to repay me, by *her* embraces, those caresses which *I* had bestowed on her two sons. But how different was this from our first embrace! I perceived the difference with astonishment. It was the mother of a family whom I now embraced. I saw her surrounded by her husband and children: and the scene struck me with awe. I discovered an air of dignity in her countenance, which had not affected me till now: I found myself obliged to pay her a different kind of respect; her familiarity was almost uneasy to me; lovely

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as she appeared to me, I could have kissed the hem of her garment with a better grace than I saluted her cheek. In a word, from that moment I perceived that either she or I were no longer the same, and I began in earnest to have a good opinion of myself.

M. Wolmar at length took me by the hand, and conducted me to the apartment which had been prepared for me. "This (said he, as he entered) is your apartment: it is not destined to the use of a stranger: it shall never belong to another, and hereafter, if you do not occupy it, it shall remain empty." You may judge whether such a compliment was not agreeable to me; but as I had not yet deserved it, I could not hear it without confusion. M. Wolmar, however, spared me the trouble of an answer. He invited me to take a turn in the garden. His behaviour there was such as made me less reserved, and assuming the air of a man who was well acquainted with my former indiscretions, but who entirely confided in my integrity, he conversed with me as a father would speak to his child; and by conciliating my esteem, made it impossible for me ever to deceive him. No, my lord, he is not mistaken in me; I shall never forget that it is incumbent on me to justify his and your good opinion. But why should my heart reject his favours? Why should the man whom I am bound to love be the husband of Eloisa?

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That day seemed destined to put me to every kind of proof which I could possibly undergo. After we had joined Mrs. Wolmar, her husband was called away to give some necessary orders, and I was left alone with her:

I then found myself involved in fresh perplexity, more painful and more unexpected than any which I had yet experienced. What should I say to her? How could I address her? Should I presume to remind her of our former connexions, and of those times which were so recent in my memory? Should I suffer her to conclude that I had forgot them, or that I no longer regarded them? Think what a punishment it must be to treat the object nearest your heart as a stranger? What infamy, on the other hand, to abuse hospitality so far as to entertain her with discourse to which she could not now listen with decency? Under these various perplexities I could not keep my countenance; my colour went and came; I durst not speak, nor lift up mine eyes, nor make the least motion; and I believe that I should have remained in this uneasy situation till her husband's return, if she had not relieved me. For her part, this *tête-à-tête* did not seem to embarrass her in the least. She preserved the same manner and deportment as before, and continued to talk to me with the same freedom; she only, as I imagined, endeavoured to affect more ease and gaiety, tempered with a look, not timid or tender, but

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soft and affectionate, as if she meant to encourage me to recover my spirits, and lay aside a reserve which she could not but perceive.

She talked to me of my long voyages; she inquired into particulars; into those especially which related to the dangers I had escaped, and the hardships I had endured: for she was sensible, she said, that she was bound in friendship to make me some reparation. “Ah, Eloisa! (said I, in a plaintive accent) I have enjoyed your company but for a moment; would you send me back to the Indies already?”—“No (she answered with a smile) but I would go thither in my turn.”

I told her that I had given you a detail of my voyage, of which I had brought her a copy for her perusal. She then inquired after you with great eagerness. I gave her an account of you which I could not do without recounting the troubles I had undergone, and the uneasiness I had occasioned you. She was affected; she began to enter into her own justification in a more serious tone, and to convince me that it was her duty to act as she had done. M. Wolmar joined us in the middle of her discourse, and what confounded me was, that she proceeded in the same manner as if he had not been there. He could not forbear smiling, on discovering my astonishment. After she concluded, “You see (said he) an instance of the sincerity which reigns in this house.

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If you mean to be virtuous, learn to copy it: it is the only request I have to make, and the only lesson I would teach you. The first step towards vice is to make a mystery of actions innocent in themselves, and whoever is fond of disguise, will sooner or later have reason to conceal himself.— One moral precept may supply the place of all the rest, which is this: neither to say or do any thing which you would not have all the world see and hear.—For my part, I have always esteemed that Roman above all other men, who wished that his house was built in such a manner, that the world might see all his transactions.

“ I have two proposals (he continued) to make to you. Choose freely that which you like best, but accept either the one or the other.” Then taking his wife’s hand and mine, and closing them together, he said, “ Our friendship commences from this moment; this forms the dear connexion, and may it be indissoluble. Embrace her as your sister and your friend; treat her as such constantly; the more familiar you are with her, the better I shall esteem you: but either behave, when alone, as if I was present; or in my presence as if I was absent. This is all I desire. If you prefer the latter, you may choose it without any inconvenience; for as I reserve to myself the right of intimating to you any thing which displeases me, so long as I am silent in that respect you may be certain that I am not offended.”

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I should have been greatly embarrassed by this discourse two hours before, but M. Wolmar began to gain such an ascendancy over me, that his authority already grew somewhat familiar to me. — We all three entered once more into indifferent conversation, and every time I spoke to Eloisa, I did not fail to address her by the style of *Madam*. “Tell me sincerely (said her husband, at last, interrupting me) in your *tête-à-tête* party just now, did you call her *Madam*?” — “No (answered I, somewhat disconcerted)” — “Such politeness (he replied) is nothing but the mask of vice; where virtue maintains its empire, it is unnecessary; and I discard it. Call my wife *Eloisa* in my presence, or *Madam* when you are alone; it is indifferent to me.” I began to know what kind of a man I had to deal with, and I resolved always to keep my mind in such a state as to bear his examination.

My body drooping with fatigue, stood in need of refreshment, and my spirits required rest; I found both one and the other at table. After so many years absence and vexation, after such tedious voyages, I said to myself, in a kind of rapture, I am in company with Eloisa, I see her, I talk with her; I sit at a table with her; she views me without inquietude, and entertains me without apprehensions. Nothing interrupts our mutual satisfaction. Gentle and precious innocence, I never be-

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fore relished thy charms, and to-day, for the first time, my existence ceases to be painful.

At night, when I retired to rest, I passed by their chamber; I saw them go in together; I proceeded to my own in a melancholy mood, and this moment was the least agreeable to me of any I that day experienced.

Such, my lord, were the occurrences of this first interview, so passionately wished for, and so dreadfully apprehended. I have endeavoured to collect myself since I have been alone; I have compelled myself to self examination; but as I am not yet recovered from the agitation of the preceding day, it is impossible for me to judge of the true state of my mind. All that I know for certain, is, that if the nature of my affection for her is not changed, at least the mode of it is altered, for I am always anxious to have a third person between us, and I now dread being alone with her as much as I longed for it formerly.

I intend to go to Lausanne in two or three days, for as yet I have but half seen Eloisa, not having seen her cousin; that dear and amiable friend, to whom I am so much indebted, and who will always share my friendship, my services, my gratitude, and all the affections of my soul. On my return I will take the first opportunity to give you a further account. I have need of your advice, and shall keep a strict eye over my con-

duct. I know my duty, and will discharge it. However agreeable it may be to fix my residence in this house, I am determined, nay I have sworn, that when I grow too fond of my abode, I will quit it immediately.

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

MRS. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

IF you had been kind enough to have staid with us as long as we desired, you would have had the pleasure of embracing your friend before your departure. He came hither the day before yesterday, and wanted to visit you to-day; but the fatigue of his journey confines him to his room, and this morning he was let blood. Besides, I was fully determined, in order to punish you, not to let him go so soon; and unless you will come hither, I assure you that it will be a long time before you shall see him. You know it would be very improper to let him see the *inseparables* asunder.

In truth, Clara, I cannot tell what idle apprehensions bewitched my mind with respect to his coming hither, and I am ashamed to have opposed it with such obstinacy. As much as I dreaded the sight of him, I should now be sorry not to have seen him, for his presence has banished those

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fears which yet disturbed me, and which, by fixing my attention constantly on him, might at length have given me just cause of uneasiness. I am so far from being apprehensive of the affection I feel for him, that I believe I should mistrust myself more was he less dear to me; but I love him as tenderly as ever, though my love is of a different nature. It is by comparing my present sensations with those which his presence formerly occasioned, that I derive my security, and the difference of such opposite sentiments is perceived in proportion to their vivacity.

With regard to him, though I knew him at the first glance, he nevertheless appeared to be greatly altered; and what I should formerly have thought impossible, he seems, in many respects, to be changed for the better. On the first day, he discovered many symptoms of perplexity, and it was with great difficulty that I concealed mine from him. But it was not long before he recovered that free deportment and openness of manner which becomes his character. I had always seen him timid and bashful; the fear of offending me, and perhaps the secret shame of acting a part unbecoming a man of honour, gave him an air of meanness and servility before me, which you have more than once very justly ridiculed. Instead of the submission of a slave, at present he has the respectful behaviour of a friend, who knows how to honour the object of his esteem. He now com-

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municates his sentiments with freedom and honesty; he is not afraid lest his severe maxims of virtue should clash with his interest; he is not apprehensive of injuring himself or affecting me, by praising what is commendable in itself, and one may perceive in all he says the confidence of an honest man, who can depend upon himself, and who derives that approbation from his own conscience, which he formerly sought for only in my looks. I find, also, that experience has cured him of that dogmatical and peremptory air which men are apt to contract in their closets; that he is less forward to judge of mankind, since he has observed them more; that he is less ready to establish general propositions, since he has seen so many exceptions; and that, in general, the love of truth has banished the spirit of system: so that he is become less brilliant, but more rational; and one receives much more information from him, now he does not affect to be so wise.

His figure likewise is altered, but nevertheless not for the worse; his countenance is more open, his deportment more stately; he has contracted a kind of martial air in his travels, which becomes him the better, as the lively and spirited gesture he used to express when he was in earnest is now turned into a more grave and sober demeanor. He is a seaman, whose appearance is

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cold and phlegmatic, but whose discourse is fiery and impetuous. Though he is turned of thirty, he has the look of a young man, and joins all the spirit of youth to the dignity of manhood. His complexion is entirely altered; he is almost as black as a Negroe, and very much marked with the small-pox. My dear, I must own the truth; I am uneasy whenever I view those marks, and I catch myself looking at them very often in spite of me.

I think I can discover that if I am curious in examining him, he is not less attentive in viewing me. After so long an absence, it is natural to contemplate each other with a kind of curiosity; but if this curiosity may be thought to retain any thing of our former eagerness, yet what difference is there in the manner as well as the motive of it! If our looks do not meet so often, we nevertheless view each other with more freedom. We seem to examine each other alternately by a kind of tacit agreement. Each perceives, as it were, when it is the other's turn, and looks a different way, to give the other an opportunity. Though free from the emotions I formerly felt, yet how is it possible to behold with indifference one who inspired the tenderest passion, and who, to this hour, is the object of the purest affection? Who knows whether self-love does not endeavour to justify past errors? Who knows, whether, though no longer blinded

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by passion, we do not both flatter ourselves, by secretly approving our former choice? Be it as it may, I repeat it without a blush, that I feel a more tender affection for him, which will endure to the end of my life. I am so far from reproaching myself for harbouring these sentiments, that I think they deserve applause; I should blush not to perceive them, and consider it as a defect in my character, and the symptom of a bad disposition. With respect to him, I dare believe, that next to virtue he loves me beyond any thing in the world. I perceive that he thinks himself honoured by my esteem; I in my turn will regard him in the same light, and will merit its continuance. Yes! if you saw with what tenderness he careffes my children; if you knew what pleasure he takes in talking of you, you would find, Clara, that I am still dear to him.

What increases my confidence in the opinion we both entertain of him, is that M. Wolmar joins with us, and, since he has seen him, believes, from his own observations, all that we have reported to his advantage. He has talked of him much these two evenings past, congratulating himself on account of the measures he has taken, and rallying me for my opposition. "No (said he, yesterday), we will not suffer so worthy a man to mistrust himself; we will teach him to have more confidence in his own virtue, and,

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perhaps, we may one day or other reap the fruits of our present endeavours with more advantage than you imagine. For the present, I must tell you that I am pleased with his character, and that I esteem him particularly for one circumstance, which he little suspects, that is, the reserve with which he behaves towards me. The less friendship he expresses for me, the more he makes me his friend; I cannot tell you how much I dreaded lest he should load me with caresses. This was the first trial I prepared for him: there is yet another by which I intend to prove him: and after that I shall cease all further examination.” —“As to the circumstance you mentioned (said I) it only proves the frankness of his disposition; for he would never resolve to put on a pliant and submissive air before my father, though it was so much his interest, and I so often entreated him to do it. I saw with concern that his behaviour deprived him of the only resource, and yet could not dislike him for not being able to play the hypocrite on any occasion.” —“The case is very different (replied my husband): there is a natural antipathy between your father and him, founded on the opposition of their sentiments. With regard to myself, who have no symptoms or prejudices, I am certain that he can have no natural aversion to me. No one can hate me; a man without passions cannot inspire any one with an aversion towards him: but I deprived him of the

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object of his wishes, which he will not readily forgive. He will, however, conceive the stronger affection for me, when he is perfectly convinced that the injury I have done him does not prevent me from looking upon him with an eye of kindness. If he caressed me now, he would be a hypocrite; if he never caresses me, he will be a monster."

Such, my dear Clara, is the situation we are in, and I begin to think that Heaven will bless the integrity of our hearts, and the kind intentions of my husband. But I am too kind to you in entering into all these details; you do not deserve that I should take such pleasure in conversing with you; but I am determined to tell you no more, and if you desire further information, you must come hither to receive it.

P. S.—I must acquaint you nevertheless with what has passed with respect to the subject of this letter. You know with what indulgence M. Wolmar received the late confession which our friend's unexpected return obliged me to make. You saw with what tenderness he endeavoured to dry up my tears, and dispel my shame. Whether, as you reasonably conjectured, I told him nothing new, or whether he was really affected by a proceeding which nothing but sincere repentance could dictate, he has not only continued

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to live with me as before, but he even seems to have increased his attention, his confidence, and esteem, as if he meant, by his kindness, to repay the confusion which my confession cost me. My dear Clara, you know my heart; judge then what an impression such a conduct must make!

As soon as I found that he was determined to let our old friend come hither, I resolved, on my part, to take the best precautions I could contrive against myself: which was, to choose my husband himself for my confidant; to hold no particular conversations which I did not communicate to him, and to write no letter which I did not show to him. I even made it a part of my duty to write every letter as if it was not intended for his inspection, and afterwards to show it to him. You will find an article in this which was penned on this principle; if while I was writing I could not forbear thinking that he might read it, yet my conscience bears witness that I did not alter a single word on that account; but when I showed him my letter, he bantered me, and had not the civility to read it.

I confess that I was somewhat piqued at his refusal; as if he had doubted my honour. My emotion did not escape his notice, and this most open and generous man soon removed my apprehension. "Confess (said he) that you have said less concerning me than usual in that letter." I owned; was it decent to say much of him, when

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I intended to show him what I had written?—
 “ Well (he replied, with a smile) I had rather
 that you would talk of me more, and not know
 what you say of me.” Afterwards, he continued,
 in a more serious tone: “ Marriage (said he) is
 too grave and solemn a state to admit of that free
 communication which tender friendship allows.
 The latter connexion often happily contributes
 to moderate the rigour of the former; and it may
 be reasonable in some cases for a virtuous and dis-
 creet woman to seek for that comfort, intelli-
 gence, and advice from a faithful confidant,
 which it might not be proper for her to desire of
 her husband. Though nothing passes between
 you but what you would choose to communicate,
 yet take care not to make it a duty, lest that duty
 should become a restraint upon you, and your cor-
 respondence grow less agreeable, by being more
 diffusive. Believe me, the open-hearted sincerity
 of friendship is restrained by the presence of a
 witness, whoever it be. There are a thousand
 secrets of which three friends ought to partici-
 pate; but which cannot be communicated but
 between two. You may impart the same things
 to your friend and to your husband, but you do
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 will be, that your letters will be addressed more
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from restraint either with one or the other. It is as much for my own interest as for your's that I urge these reasons. Do not you perceive that you are already, with good reason, apprehensive of the indelicacy of praising me to my face? Why will you deprive yourself of the pleasure of acquainting your friend how tenderly you love your husband, and me of the satisfaction of supposing, that, in your most private intercourses, you take delight in speaking well of me! Eloisa! Eloisa! (he added, pressing my hand, and looking at me with tenderness) why will you demean yourself, by taking precautions so unworthy of you, and will you never learn to make a true estimate of your own worth?"

My dear friend, it is impossible to tell you how this incomparable man behaves to me: I no longer blush in his presence. Spite of my frailty, he lifts me above myself, and, by dint of reposing confidence in me, teaches me to deserve it.

LETTER CXXVII.

THE ANSWER.

IMPOSSIBLE! our traveller returned, and have I not yet seen him at my feet, loaded with the spoils of America? But it is not him, I assure you, whom I accuse of this delay; for I am sensible it

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is as grievous to him as to me: but I find that he has not so thoroughly forgotten his former state of fervility as you pretend, and I complain less of his neglect, than of your tyranny. It is very extraordinary in you, indeed, to desire such a prude as I am to make the first advances, and run to salute a swarthy pock-fretten face, which has passed four times under the line. But you make me smile to see you in such haste to scold, for fear I should begin first. I should be glad to know what pretence you have to make such an attempt? Quarrelling is my talent. I take pleasure in it, I acquit myself to a miracle, and it becomes me; but you, my dear cousin, are a mere novice at this work. If you did but know how graceful you appear in the act of confession, how lovely you look with a supplicating eye, and an air of confusion, instead of scolding, you would spend your days in asking pardon, were it only out of coquetry.

For the present, you must ask my pardon in every respect. A fine project truly, to choose a husband for a confidant, and a more obliging precaution indeed for a friendship so sacred as our's! Thou faithless friend, and pusillanimous woman! on whom can you depend, if you mistrust yourself and me? Can you, without offence to both, considering the sacred tie under which you live, suspect your own inclinations and my indulgence. I am amazed that the very idea of admitting a

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third person into the tittle-tattle secrets of two women did not disgust you? As for my part, I love to prattle with you at my ease, but if I thought that the eye of man ever pryed into my letters, I should no longer have any pleasure in corresponding with you; such a reserve would insensibly introduce a coldness between us, and we should have no more regard for each other than two indifferent women. To what inconveniences your silly distrust would have exposed us, if your husband had not been wiser than you.

He acted very discreetly in not reading your letter. Perhaps he would have been less satisfied with it than you imagine, and less than I am myself, who am better capable of judging of your present condition, by the state in which I have seen you formerly. All those contemplative sages who have passed their lives in the study of the human heart, are less acquainted with the real symptoms of love than the most shallow woman, if she has any sensibility. M. Wolmar would immediately have observed, that our friend was the subject of your whole letter, and he would not have seen the postscript, in which you do not once mention him. If you had written this postscript ten years ago, my dear, I cannot tell how you would have managed, but your friend would certainly have been crowded into some corner, especially as there was no husband to overlook it.

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M: Wolmar would have observed further with what attention you examined his guest, and the pleasure you take in describing his person; but he might devour Plato and Aristotle, before he would know that we *look at* a lover, but do not *examine* him. All examination requires a degree of indifference, which we never feel when we behold the object of our passion.

In short, he would imagine that all the alterations you remark might have escaped another, and I, on the contrary, was afraid of finding that they had escaped you. However your guest may be altered from what he was, he would appear the same, if your affections were not altered. You turn away your eyes whenever he looks at you; this is a very good symptom. You *turn them away*, cousin? You do not now *cast them down*? Surely you have not mistaken one word for another. Do you think that our philosopher would have perceived this distinction?

There is another circumstance very likely to disturb a husband; it is a kind of tenderness and affection which still remains in your style, when you speak of the object who was once so dear to you. One who reads your letters, or hears you speak, ought to be well acquainted with you, not to be mistaken with regard to your sentiments; he ought to know that it is only a friend of whom you are speaking, or that you speak in the same manner of all your friends; but as to that, it is

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the natural effect of your disposition, with which your husband is too well acquainted to be alarmed. How is it possible but that, in a mind of such tenderness, pure friendship will bear some resemblance to love? Pray observe, my dear cousin, that all I say to you on this head ought to inspire you with fresh courage: your conduct is discreet, and that is a great deal; I used to trust only to your virtue, but I begin now to rely on your reason; I consider your cure at present, though not perfect, yet as easy to be accomplished, and you have now made a sufficient progress, to render you inexcusable, if you do not complete it.

Before I came to your postscript, I remarked the passage which you had the sincerity not to suppress or alter, though conscious that it would be open to your husband's inspection. I am certain, that if he had read it, it would, if possible, have doubled his esteem for you; nevertheless it would have given him no great pleasure. Upon the whole, your letter was very well calculated to make him place an entire confidence in your conduct, but at the same time it tended to give him uneasiness with respect to your inclinations. I own, those marks of the small-pox, which you view so much, give me some apprehensions; love never yet contrived a more dangerous disguise.— I know that this would be of no consequence to any other; but always remember, Eloisa, that

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she who was not to be seduced by the youth and fine figure of her lover, was lost when she reflected on the sufferings he had endured for her.— Providence, no doubt, intended that he should retain the marks of that distemper, to exercise your virtue, and that you should be freed from them, in order to put his to the proof.

I come now to the principal subject of your letter; you know that on the receipt of our friend's, I flew to you immediately; it was a matter of importance. But at present, if you knew in what difficulties that short absence has involved me, and how many things I have to do at once, you would be sensible how impossible it is for me to leave my house again, without exposing myself to fresh inconveniences, and putting myself under a necessity of passing the winter here again, which is neither for your interest or mine. Is it not better to deprive ourselves of the pleasures of a hasty interview of two or three days, that we may be together for six months? I imagine, likewise, that it would not be improper for me to have a little particular and private conversation with our philosopher; partly to sound his inclinations and confirm his mind; partly to give him some useful advice with regard to the conduct he should observe towards your husband, and even towards you; for I do not suppose that you can talk to him with freedom on that subject, and I can perceive, even from your letter, that he has need of

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counsel. We have been so long used to govern him, that we are in conscience responsible for his behaviour; and till he has regained the free use of his reason, we must supply the deficiency. For my own part, it is a charge I shall always undertake with pleasure; for he has paid such deference to my advice as I shall never forget; and since my husband is no more, there is not a man in the world whom I esteem and love so much as himself. I have likewise reserved for him the pleasure of doing me some little services here. I have a great many papers in confusion, which he will help me to regulate, and I have some troublesome affairs in hand, in which I shall have occasion for his diligence and understanding. As to the rest, I do not propose to detain him above five or six days at most, and perhaps I may send him to you the next day. For I have too much vanity to wait till he is seized with impatience to return, and I have too much discernment to be deceived in that case.

Do not fail, therefore, as soon as he is recovered, to send him to me; that is, to let him come, or I shall give over all raillery. You know very well, that if I laugh whilst I cry, and yet am not the less in affliction, so I laugh likewise at the same time that I scold, and yet am not the less in a passion. If you are discreet, and do things with a good grace, I promise you that I will send him back to you with a pretty little present, which

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will give you pleasure, and a great deal of pleasure; but if you suffer me to languish with impatience, I assure you that you shall have nothing.

P. S.—Apropos; tell me, does our seaman smoke? Does he swear? Does he drink brandy? Does he wear a great cutlass? Has he the look of a Buccaneer? Oh! how I long to see what sort of an air a man has who comes from the Antipodes!

LETTER CXXVIII.

CLARA TO ELOISA.

HERE! take back your slave, my dear cousin.—He has been mine for these eight days past, and he bears his chains with so good a grace, that he seems formed for captivity. Return me thanks that I did not keep him still eight days longer; for, without offence to you, if I had kept him till he began to grow tired of me, I should not have sent him back so soon. I therefore detained him without any scruple; but I was so scrupulous, however, that I durst not let him lodge in my house. I have sometimes perceived in myself that hautiness of soul, which disdains servile ceremonies, and which is so consistent with virtue. In this instance, however, I have been more reserved

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than usual, without knowing why: and all that I know for certain is, that I am more disposed to censure than to applaud my reserve.

But can you guess what induced our friend to stay here so patiently? First, he had the pleasure of my company, and I presume that circumstance alone was sufficient to make him patient. Then he saved me a great deal of confusion, and was of service to me in my business; a friend is never tired of such offices. A third reason, which you have probably conjectured, though you pretend not to know it, is, that he talked to me about you; and if we subtract the time employed in this conversation from the whole time which he has passed here, you will find that there is very little remaining to be placed to my account. But what an odd whim to leave you, in order to have the pleasure of talking of you! Not so odd as may be imagined. He is under constraint in your company; he must be continually upon his guard; the least indiscretion would become a crime, and in those dangerous moments, minds endued with sentiments of honour never fail to recollect their duty; but when we are remote from the object of our affections, we may indulge ourselves with feasting our imaginations. If we stifle an idea when it becomes criminal, why should we reproach ourselves for having entertained it when it was not so?—Can the pleasing recollection of innocent pleasures ever be a crime? This,

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I imagine, is a way of reasoning, which you will not acquiesce in, but which, nevertheless, may be admitted. He began, as I may say, to run over the whole course of his former affections. The days of his youth passed over a second time in our conversation. He renewed all his confidence in me; he re-called the happy time, in which he was permitted to love you; he painted to my imagination all the charms of an innocent passion— Without doubt he embellished them!

He said little of his present condition with regard to you, and what he mentioned rather denoted respect and admiration, than love; so that I have the pleasure to think that he will return, much more confident as to the nature of his affections than when he came hither. Not but that, when you are the subject, one may perceive at the bottom of that susceptible mind a certain tenderness, which friendship alone, though not less affecting, still expresses in a different manner; but I have long observed, that it is impossible to see you, or to think of you, with indifference; and if to that general affection which the sight of you inspires, we add the more tender impression which an indelible recollection must have left upon his mind, we shall find that it is difficult, and almost impossible, that, with the most rigid virtue, he should be otherwise than he is. I have fully interrogated him, carefully observed him, and watched him narrowly; I have examined him

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with the utmost attention. I cannot read his inmost thoughts, nor do I believe them more intelligible to himself: but I can answer, at least, that he is struck with a sense of his duty and of yours, and that the idea of Eloisa abandoned and contemptible, would be more horrid than his own annihilation. My dear cousin, I have but one piece of advice to give you, and I desire you to attend to it—avoid any detail concerning what is passed, and I will take upon me to answer for the future.

With regard to the restitution which you mentioned, you must think no more of it. After having exhausted all the reasons I could suggest, I entreated him, pressed him, conjured him, but in vain. I pouted, I even kissed him, I took hold of both his hands, and would have fallen on my knees to him, if he would have suffered me, but he would not so much as hear me. He carried the obstinacy of his humour so far, as to swear that he would sooner consent never to see you again, than part with your picture. At last, in a fit of passion, he made me feel it. It was next his heart. “There (said he, with a sigh that almost stopped his breath), there is the picture, the only comfort I have left, and of which nevertheless you would deprive me: be assured that it shall never be torn from me, but at the expence of my life.” Believe me, Eloisa, we had better be discreet, and suffer him to keep the picture.

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After all, where is the importance? His obstinacy will be his punishment.

After he had thoroughly unburdened and eased his mind, he appeared so composed, that I ventured to talk to him about his situation. I found that neither time nor reason had made any alteration in his system, and that he confined his whole ambition to the passing his life in the service of Lord B——. I could not but approve such honourable intentions, so consistent with his character, and so becoming that gratitude which is due to such unexhausted kindness. He told me that you were of the same opinion; but that M. Wolmar was silent. A sudden thought strikes me. From your husband's singular conduct, and other symptoms, I suspect that he has some secret design upon our friend, which he does not disclose. Let us leave him to himself, and trust to his discretion. The manner in which he behaves sufficiently proves, that, if my conjecture is right, he meditates nothing but what will be for the advantage of the person about whom he has taken such uncommon pains.

You gave a very just description of his figure and of his manners, which proves that you have observed him more attentively than I should have imagined. But do not you find that his continued anxieties have rendered his countenance more expressive than it used to be? Notwithstanding the account you gave me, I was afraid

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to find him tinctured with that affected politeness, those apish manners, which people seldom fail to contract at Paris, and which, in the round of trifles which employ an indolent day, are vainly displayed under different modes. Whether it be that some minds are not susceptible of this polish, or whether the sea air entirely effaced it, I could not discover in him the least marks of affectation; and all the zeal he expressed for me seemed to flow entirely from the dictates of his heart. He talked to me about my poor husband; but instead of comforting me, he chose to join with me in bewailing him, and never once attempted to make any fine speeches on the subject. He caressed my daughter, but instead of admiring her as I do, he reproached me with her failings, and, like you, complained that I spoiled her; he entered into my concerns with great zeal, and was seldom of my opinion in any respect. Moreover, the wind might have blown my eyes out, before he would have thought of drawing a curtain; I might have been fatigued to death in going from one room to another, before he would have had gallantry enough to have stretched out his hand, covered with the skirt of his coat, to support me: my fan lay upon the ground yesterday for more than a second, and he did not fly from the bottom of the room, as if he was going to snatch it out of the fire. In the morning, before he came to visit me, he never

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once sent to inquire how I did. When we are walking together, he does not affect to have his hat nailed upon his head, to show that he knows the pink of the mode*. At table, I frequently asked him for his snuff-box, which he always gave me in his hand, and never presented it upon a plate, like a *fine gentleman*; or rather like a footman. He did not fail to drink my health twice at least at dinner, and I will lay a wager, that if he stays with us this winter, we shall see him sit round the fire with us, and warm himself like an old cit. You laugh, cousin; but show me one of our gallants newly arrived from Paris, who preserves the same manly deportment.— As to the rest, I think you must allow that our philosopher is altered for the worse in one respect, which is, that he takes rather more notice of people who speak to him, which he cannot do but to your prejudice; nevertheless, I hope that I shall be able to reconcile him to Madam Belon.

* At Paris, they pique themselves on rendering society easy and commodious; and this ease is made to consist of a great number of rules, equally important with the above. In good company, every thing is regulated according to form and order. All these ceremonies are in and out of fashion as quick as lightning. The science of polite life consists in being always upon the watch, to seize them as they fly, to affect them, and show that we are acquainted with the mode of the day.

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For my part, I think him altered for the better, because he is more serious than ever. My dear, take great care of him till my arrival. He is just the man I could wish to have the pleasure of plaguing all day long.

Admire my discretion; I have taken no notice yet of the present I sent you, and which is an earnest of another to come. But you have received it before you opened my letter, and you know how much, and with what reason I idolize it; you, whose avarice is so anxious about this present, you must acknowledge that I have performed more than I promised. Ah! the dear little creature! While you are reading this, she is already in your arms; she is happier than her mother; but in two months time I shall be happier than she, for I shall be more sensible of my felicity. Alas! dear cousin, do not you possess me wholly already? Where you and my daughter are, what part of me is wanting? There she is, the dear little infant; take her as your own; I give her up; I put her into your hands; I consign all maternal authority over to you; correct my failings; take that charge upon yourself, of which I acquitted myself so little to your liking: henceforward, be as a mother to her, who is one day to be your daughter-in-law; and to render her dearer to me still, make another Eloisa of her if possible. She is like you in the face already; as to her temper, I guess that she will be grave

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and thoughtful ; when you have corrected those little caprices which I have been accused of encouraging, you will find that my daughter will give herself the airs of my cousin ; but she will be happier than Eloisa in having less tears to shed, and less struggles to encounter. Do you know that she cannot be any longer without her little M——, and that it is partly for that reason I send her back ? I had a conversation with her yesterday, which threw our friend into an immoderate fit of laughing. First, she leaves me without the least regret ; I, who am her humble servant all day long, and can deny her nothing she asks for ; and you, of whom she is afraid, and who answer her *No* twenty times a day ; you, by way of excellence, are her little mamma, whom she visits with pleasure, and whose denials she likes better than all my fine presents : when I told her that I was going to send her to you, she was transported, as you may imagine ; but to perplex her, I told her that you in return was to send me little M—— in her stead, and that was not agreeable to her. She was quite at a nonplus, and asked what I would do with him. I told her that I would take him to myself : she began to pout. “ Harriet (said I) won’t you give up your little M—— to me ? ” — “ No (said she, somewhat coldly). “ No ? But if I won’t give him up neither, who shall settle it between us ? ” — “ Mam-

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ma, my little mamma shall settle it."—"Then I shall have the preference, for you know she will do whatever I desire."—"Oh, but mamma will do nothing but what is right!"—"And do you think I should desire what's wrong?" The fly little jade began to smile. "But after all (I continued) for what reason should she refuse to give me little M——?"—"Because he is not fit for you."—"And why is he not fit for me? (Another arch smile, as full of meaning as the former.) Tell me honestly, is it not because you think me too old for him?"—"No, mamma, but he is too young for you." This from a child but seven years old. . . .

I amused myself with piquing her still further. "My dear Harriet (said I, assuming a serious air) I assure you that he is not fit for you neither." "Why so?" (she cried, as if she had been suddenly alarmed.)—"Because he is too giddy for you."—"Oh, mamma, is that all? I will make him wise."—"But if unfortunately he should make you foolish."—"Then, mamma, I should be like you."—"Like me, impertinence?"—"Yes, mamma, you are saying all day that you are foolishly fond of me."—"Well, then, I will be foolishly fond of him, that is all."

I know you don't approve of this pretty prattle, and that you will soon know how to check it. Neither will I justify it, though I own it delights me; but I only mention it, to convince

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you that my daughter is already in love with her little M——, and that if he is two years younger, she is not unworthy of that authority which she may claim by right of seniority. I perceive likewise, by opposing your example and my own to that of your poor mother's, that where the woman governs the house is not the worse managed. Farewell, my dear friend; farewell, my constant companion! The time is approaching, and the vintage shall not be gathered without me.

LETTER CXXIX.

TO LORD B——.

WHAT pleasures, too late enjoyed (alas! enjoyed too late) have I tasted these three weeks past! How delightful to pass one day in the bosom of calm friendship, secure from the tempests of impetuous passion! What a pleasing and affecting scene, my lord, is a plain and well-regulated family, where order, peace, and innocence reign throughout; where, without pomp or retinue, every thing is assembled which can contribute to the real felicity of mankind! The country, the retirement, the season, the vast body of water which opens to my view, the wild prospect of the mountains, every thing conspires to recall to my mind the delightful island of Tinian. I flatter

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myself that the earnest prayers which I there so often repeated are now accomplished. I live here agreeably to my taste, and enjoy society suitable to my liking. I only want the company of two persons to complete my happiness, and I hope to see them here soon.

In the mean time, till you and Mrs. Orbe come to perfect those charming and innocent pleasures which I begin to relish here, I will endeavour, by way of detail, to give you an idea of that domestic economy which proclaims the happiness of the master and mistress, and communicates their felicity to every one under their roof. I hope that my reflections may one day be of use to you, with respect to the project you have in view, and this hope encourages me to pursue them.

I need not give you a description of Clarens house. You know it. You can tell how delightful it is; what interesting recollections it presents to my mind; you can judge how dear it must be to me, both on account of the present scenes it exhibits, and of those which it recalls to my mind. Mrs. Wolmar, with good reason, prefers this abode to that of Etange, a superb and magnificent castle, but old, inconvenient, and gloomy, its situation being far inferior to the country round Clarens.

Since Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar have fixed their residence here, they have converted to use every

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thing which served only for ornament : it is no longer a house for show, but for convenience. They have shut up a long range of rooms, to alter the inconvenient situation of the doors ; they have cut off others that were over-sized, that the apartments might be better distributed. Instead of rich and antique furniture, they have substituted what is neat and convenient. Every thing here is pleasant and agreeable ; every thing breathes an air of plenty and propriety, without any appearance of pomp and luxury. There is not a single room, in which you do not immediately recollect that you are in the country, but in which, nevertheless, you will find all the conveniences you meet with in town. The same alterations are observable without doors. The yard has been enlarged at the expence of the coach-houses. Instead of an old tattered billiard-table, they have made a fine press, and the spot which used to be filled with screaming peacocks, which they have parted with, is converted into a dairy. The kitchen-garden was too small for the kitchen ; they have made another out of a flower-garden, but so convenient, and so well laid out, that the spot, thus transformed, looks more agreeable to the eye than before. Instead of the mournful yews which covered the wall, they have planted good fruit-trees. In the room of the useless Indian *black-berry*, fine young mul-

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berry-trees now begin to shade the yard, and they have planted two rows of walnut-trees quite to the road, in the place of some old linden-trees which bordered the avenue. They have throughout substituted the useful in the room of the agreeable, and yet the agreeable has gained by the alteration. For my own part, at least, I think that the noises in the yard, such as the crowing of the cocks, the lowing of the cattle, the harness of the carts, the rural repasts, the return of the husbandmen, and all the train of rustic economy, give the house a more lively, animated, and gay appearance, than it had in its former state of mournful dignity.

Their estate is not out upon lease, but they are their own farmers, and the cultivation of it employs a great deal of their time, and makes a great part both of their pleasure and profit. The manor of Etange is nothing but meadow, pasture, and wood: but the produce of Clarens consists of vineyards, which are considerable objects, and in which the difference of culture produces more sensible effects than in corn; which is a further reason why, in point of economy, they should prefer the latter as a place of residence. Nevertheless, they generally go to Etange every year at harvest-time, and M. Wolmar visits it frequently. It is a maxim with them, to cultivate their lands to the utmost they will produce, not for the sake of extraordinary profit, but as the

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means of employing more hands. M. Wolmar maintains, that the produce of the earth is in proportion to the number of hands employed; the better it is tilled, the more it yields; and the surplus of its produce furnishes the means of cultivating it still further; the more it is stocked with men and cattle, the greater abundance it yields for their support. No one can tell, says he, where this continual and reciprocal increase of produce and of labour may end. On the contrary, land neglected loses its fertility, the fewer men a country produces, the less provision it furnishes, the scarcity of inhabitants is the reason why it is insufficient to maintain the few it has, and in every country which tends to depopulation, the people will sooner or later die of famine.

Therefore, having a great deal of land, which they cultivate with the utmost industry, they require, besides the servants in the yard, a great number of day-labourers, which procures them the pleasure of maintaining a great number of people without any inconvenience to themselves. In the choice of their labourers, they always prefer their neighbours, and those of the same place, to strangers and foreigners. Though by this means they may sometimes be losers in not choosing the most robust, yet this loss is soon made up by the affection which this preference inspires

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in those whom they choose, by the advantage likewise of having them always about them, and of being able to depend on them at all times, though they keep them in pay but part of the year.

They always make two prices with these labourers. One is a strict payment of right, the current price of the country, which they engage to pay them when they hire them. The other, which is more liberal, is a payment of generosity; it is bestowed only as they are found to deserve it, and it seldom happens that they do not earn the surplus; for M. Wolmar is just and strict, and never suffers institutions of grace and favour to degenerate into custom and abuse. Over these labourers there are overseers, who watch and encourage them. These overseers work along with the rest; and are interested in their labour, by a little augmentation which is made to their wages from every advantage that is reaped from their industry. Besides, M. Wolmar visits them almost every day himself, sometimes often in a day, and his wife loves to take these walks with him. In times of extraordinary business, Eloisa every week bestows some little gratifications to such of the labourers, or other servants, as, in the judgment of their master, have been most industrious for the past week. All these means of promoting emulation, though seemingly expensive, when used with

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justice and discretion, insensibly make people laborious and diligent; and in the end bring in more than is disbursed; but, as they turn to no profit, but by time and perseverance, few people know any thing of them, or are willing to make use of them.

But the most effectual method of all, which is peculiar to Mrs. Wolmar, and which they who are bent on economy seldom think of, is that of gaining the hearts of those good people, by making them the objects of her affection. She does not think it sufficient to reward their industry, by giving them money, but she thinks herself bound to do further services to those who have contributed to hers. Labourers, domestics, all who serve her, if it be but for a day, become her children; she takes part in their pleasures, their cares, and their fortune; she inquires into their affairs; and makes their interest her own; she engages in a thousand concerns for them, she gives them her advice, she composes their differences, and does not show the affability of her disposition in smooth and fruitless speeches, but in real services, and continual acts of benevolence. They, on their parts, leave every thing, to serve her, on the least motion. They fly when she speaks to them; her look alone animates their zeal; in her presence they are contented; in her absence they talk of her, and are eager to be employed. Her

charms, and her manner of conversing, do a great deal, but her gentleness and her virtues more. Ah! my lord, what a powerful and adorable empire is that of benevolent beauty!

With respect to their personal attendants, they have within doors eight servants, three women and five men, without reckoning the Baron's valet-de-chambre, or the servants in the out-houses.— It seldom happens that people who have but few servants are ill served; but from the uncommon zeal of these servants, one would conclude that each thought himself charged with the business of the other seven, and from the harmony among them, one would imagine that the whole business was done by one man. You never see them in the out-houses idle and unemployed, or playing in the court-yard, but always about some useful employment; they assist in the yard, in the cellar, and in the kitchen. The gardener has nobody under him but them, and what is most agreeable, you see them do all this cheerfully, and with pleasure.

They take them young, in order to form them to their minds. They do not follow the maxim here, which prevails at Paris and London, of choosing domestics ready formed, that is to say, complete rascals, runners of quality, who, in every family they go through, catch the failings both of master and man, and make a trade of serving every body, without being attached to any

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one. There can be neither honesty, fidelity, or zeal, among such fellows, and this collection of rabble serves to ruin the masters, and corrupt the children, in all wealthy families. Here, the choice of domestics is considered as an article of importance. They do not regard them merely as mercenaries, from whom they only require a stipulated service, but as members of a family, which, should they be ill chosen, might be ruined by that means. The first thing they require of them is to be honest, the next is to love their master, and the third to serve him to his liking; but where a master is reasonable, and a servant intelligent, the third is the consequence of the two first. Therefore they do not take them from town, but from the country. This is the first place they live in, and it will assuredly be the last if they are good for any thing. They take them out of some numerous family overstocked with children, whose parents come to offer them of their own accord. They choose them young, well made, healthy, and of a pleasant countenance. M. Wolmar interrogates and examines them, and then presents them to his wife. If they prove agreeable to both, they are received at first upon trial, afterwards they are admitted among the number of servants, or more properly the children of the family, and they employ some days in teaching them their duty with a great deal of care and patience. The service is so sim-

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ple, so equal and uniform, the master and mistress are so little subject to whims and caprice, and the servants so soon conceive an affection for them, that their business is soon learnt. Their condition is agreeable; they find conveniences which they had not at home; but they are not suffered to be enervated by idleness, the parent of vice. They do not allow them to become gentlemen, and to grow proud in their service. They continue to work as they did with their own family; in fact, they do but change their father and mother, and get more wealthy parents. They do not, therefore, hold their old rustic employments in contempt. Whenever they leave this place, there is not one of them who had not rather turn peasant, than take any other employment. In short, I never saw a family, where every one acquits himself so well in his service, and thinks so little of the trouble of servitude.

Thus, by training up their servants themselves, in this discreet manner, they guard against the objection which is so very trifling, and so frequently made, viz. "I shall only bring them up for the service of others." Train them properly, one might answer, and they will never serve any one else. If, in bringing them up, you solely regard your own benefit, they have a right to consult their own interest in quitting you; but if you seem to consider their advantage, they will remain constantly attached to you. It is the in-

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tion alone which constitutes the obligation, and he who is indirectly benefited by an act of kindness, wherein I meant to serve myself only, owes me no obligation whatever.

As a double preventive against this inconvenience, Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar take another method, which appears to me extremely prudent. At the first establishment of their household, they calculated what number of servants their fortune would allow them to keep, and they found it to amount to fifteen or sixteen; in order to be better served, they made a reduction of half that number; so that, with less retinue, their service is more exactly attended. To be more effectually served still, they have made it the interest of their servants to continue with them a long time. When a domestic first enters into their service, he receives the common wages; but those wages are augmented every year by a twentieth part; so that, at the end of twenty years, they will be more than doubled, and the charge of keeping these servants will be nearly the same, in proportion to the master's circumstances. But there is no need of being a deep algebraist to discover that the expence of this augmentation is more in appearance than reality; that there will be but few to whom double wages will be paid, and that if they were paid to all the servants, yet the benefit of having been well served for twenty years past, would more than compensate the extraordinary

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expencc. You perceive, my lord, that this is a certain expedient of making servants grow continually more and more careful, and of attaching them to you, by attaching yourself to them. There is not only prudence, but justice, in such a provision. Is it reasonable that a new-comer, who has no affection for you, and who is perhaps an unworthy object, should receive the same salary, at his first entrance into the family, as an old servant, whose zeal and fidelity have been tried in a long course of services, and who, besides, being grown in years, draws near the time when he will be incapable of providing for himself? The latter reason, however, must not be brought into the account, and you may easily imagine that such a benevolent master and mistress do not fail to discharge that duty, which many, who are devoid of charity, fulfil out of ostentation; and you may suppose that they do not abandon those whose infirmities or old age render them incapable of service.

I can give you a very striking instance of their attention to this duty. The Baron d'Etange, being desirous to recompense the long services of his valet-de-chambre, by procuring him an honourable retreat, had the interest to procure for him the L. S. E. E. an easy and lucrative post. Eloisa has just now received a most affecting letter from this old servant, in which he entreats her to get him excused from accepting this em-

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ployment, " I am in years (says he) : I have lost all my family ; I have no relations but my master and his family ; all my hope is to end my days quietly in the house where I have passed the greatest part of them. Often, dear madam, as I have held you in my arms when but an infant, I prayed to Heaven that I might one day hold your little ones in the same manner. My prayers have been heard ; do not deny me the happiness of seeing them grow and prosper like you. I, who have been accustomed to a quiet family, where shall I find such another place of rest in my old age ? Be so kind to write to the Baron in my behalf. If he is dissatisfied with me, let him turn me off, and give me no employment ; but if I have served him faithfully for these forty years past, let him allow me to end my days in his service and yours—he cannot reward me better." It is needless to inquire whether Eloisa wrote to the Baron or not. I perceive that she would be as unwilling to part with this good man, as he would be to leave her. Am I wrong, my lord, when I compare a master and mistress, thus beloved, to good parents, and their servants to obedient children ? You find that they consider themselves in this light.

There is not a single instance in this family of a servant's giving warning. It is even very seldom that they are threatened with a dismissal. A menace of this kind alarms them in proportion

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as their service is pleasant and agreeable. The best subjects are always the soonest alarmed, and there is never any occasion to come to extremities but with such as are not worth regretting.— They have likewise a rule in this respect. When M. Wolmar says I discharge you, they may then implore Mrs. Wolmar to intercede for them, and through her intercession may be restored; but if she gives them warning, it is irrevocable, and they have no favour to expect. This agreement between them is very well calculated both to moderate the extreme confidence which her gentleness might beget in them, and the violent apprehensions they might conceive from his inflexibility. Such a warning, nevertheless, is excessively dreaded from a just and dispassionate master; for besides that they are not certain of obtaining favour, and that the same person is never pardoned twice, they forfeit the right which they acquire from their long service, by having had warning given, and when they are restored, they begin a new service as it were. This prevents the old servants from growing insolent, and makes them more circumspect, in proportion as they have more to lose.

The three maid-servants are the chambermaid, the governess, and the cook. The latter is a country girl, very proper and well qualified for the place, whom Mrs. Wolmar has instructed in cookery: for in this country, which is as yet in

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some measure in a state of simplicity, young ladies learn to do that business themselves, that when they keep house, they may be able to direct their servants; and consequently are less liable to be imposed upon by them. B—— is no longer the chamber-maid; they have sent her back to Etange, where she was born; they have again intrusted her with the care of the castle, and the superintendance of the receipts, which makes her in some degree comptroller of the household.— M. Wolmar entreated his wife to make this regulation; but it was a long time before she could resolve to part with an old servant of her mother's, though she had more than one reason to be displeas'd with her. But after their last conference, she gave her consent and B—— is gone. The girl is handy and honest, but babbling and indiscreet. I suspect that she has, more than once, betrayed the secrets of her mistress, that M. Wolmar is sensible of it, and to prevent her being guilty of the same indiscretion with respect to a stranger, he has prudently taken this method to avail himself of her good qualities, without running any hazard from her failings. She who is taken in her room, is that Fanny of whom you have often heard me speak with so much pleasure. Notwithstanding Eloisa's prediction, her favours, her father's kindness, and yours, this deserving and discreet woman has not been happy in her connexion. Claude Annet, who endured adver-

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fity so bravely, could not support a more prosperous state. When he found himself at ease, he neglected his business, and his affairs being quite embarrassed, he fled the country, leaving his wife with an infant, whom she has since lost. Eloisa having taken her home, instructed her in the business of a chamber-maid, and I was never more agreeably surpris'd than to find her settled in her employment the first day of my arrival. M. Wolmar pays great regard to her, and they have both intrusted her with the charge of superintending their children, and of having an eye likewise over their governess, who is a simple credulous country lass, but attentive, patient, and tractable; so that, in short, they have omitted no precaution to prevent the vices of the town from creeping into a family, where the master and mistress are strangers to them, and will not suffer them under their roof.

Though there is but one table among all the servants, yet there is but little communication between the men and women, and this they consider as a point of great importance. M. Wolmar is not of the same opinion with those masters who are indifferent to every thing which does not immediately concern their interests, and who only desire to be well served, without troubling themselves about what their servants do besides. He thinks, on the contrary, that they who regard nothing but their own service cannot be well served.

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Too close a connexion between the two sexes frequently occasions mischief. The disorders of most families arise from the rendezvous which are held in the chambermaid's apartment. If there is one whom the steward happens to be fond of, he does not fail to seduce her at the expence of his master. A good understanding among the men or among the women is not alone sufficiently firm to produce any material consequences.— But it is always between the men and the women that those secret monopolies are established, which in the end ruined the most wealthy families.— They pay a particular attention, therefore, to the discretion and modesty of the women, not only from principles of honesty and morality, but from well judged motives of interest. For, whatever some may pretend, no one who does not love his duty can discharge it as he ought; and none ever loved their duty who were devoid of honour.

They do not, to prevent any dangerous intimacy between the two sexes, restrain them by positive rules, which they might be tempted to violate in secret, but without any seeming intention, they establish good customs, which are more powerful than authority itself. They do not forbid any intercourse between them, but it is contrived in such a manner that they have no occasion or inclination to see each other. This is effected by making their business, their habits,

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their tastes, and their pleasures, entirely different. To maintain the admirable order which they have established, they are sensible that in a well regulated family there should be as little correspondence as possible between the two sexes. They who would accuse their master of caprice, was he to enforce such a rule by way of injunction, submit, without regret, to a manner of life which is not positively prescribed to them, but which they themselves conceive to be the best and most natural. Eloisa insists that it must be so in fact; she maintains that neither love nor conjugal union is the result of a continual commerce between the sexes. In her opinion, husband and wife were designed to live together, but not to live in the same manner. They ought to act in concert, but not to do the same things. The kind of life, says she, which would delight the one would be insupportable to the other; the inclinations which nature has given them are as different as the occupations she has assigned them: they differ in their amusements as much as in their duties. In a word, each contributes to the common good by different ways, and the proper distribution of their several cares and employments is the strongest tie that cements their union.

For my own part, I confess that my observations are much in favour of this maxim. In fact, is it not the general practice, except among the

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French, and those who imitate them, for the men and women to live separately? If they see each other, it is rather by short interviews, and as it were by stealth, as the Spartans visited their wives, than by an indiscreet and constant intercourse, sufficient to confound and destroy the wisest bounds of distinction which nature has set between them. We do not, even among the savages, see men and women intermingle indiscriminately. In the evening, the family meet together; every one passes the night with his wife; when the day begins, they separate again, and the two sexes enjoy nothing in common, but their meals at most. This is the order which, from its universality, appears to be most natural, and even in those countries where it is perverted, we may perceive some vestiges of it remaining. In France, where the men have submitted to live after the fashion of the women, and to be continually shut up in a room with them, you may perceive, from their involuntary motions, that they are under confinement. While the ladies sit quietly, or loll upon their couch, you may perceive the men get up, go, come, and sit down again, perpetually restless, as if a kind of mechanical instinct continually counteracted the restraint they suffered, and prompted them, in their own despite, to that active and laborious life for which nature intended them. They are the only people in the world where the men *stand* at the

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theatre, as if they went into the pit to relieve themselves of the fatigue of having been sitting all day in a dining-room. In short they are so sensible of the irksomeness of this effeminate and sedentary indolence, that in order to chequer it with some degree of activity at least, they yield their places at home to strangers, and go to other men's wives, in order to alleviate their disgust!

The example of Mrs. Wolmar's family contributes greatly to support the maxim she establishes.—Every one, as it were, being confined to their proper sex, the women there live in a great measure apart from the men. In order to prevent any suspicious connexions between them, her great secret is to keep both one and the other constantly employed, for their occupations are so different, that nothing but idleness can bring them together. In the morning each apply to their proper business, and no one is at leisure to interrupt the other. After dinner, the men are employed in the garden, the yard, or in some other rural occupation: the women are busy in the nursery till the hour comes at which they take a walk with the children, and sometimes indeed with the mistress, which is very agreeable to them, as it is the only time in which they take the air. The men, being sufficiently tired with their day's work, have seldom any inclination to walk, and therefore rest themselves within doors.

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Every Sunday, after evening service, the women meet again in the nursery, with some friend or relation, whom they invite in their turns by Mrs. Wolmar's consent. There they have a little collation prepared for them by Eloisa's direction; and she permits them to chat, sing, run, or play at some little game of skill, fit to please children, and such as they may bear a part in themselves. The entertainment is composed of syllabubs, cream, and different kinds of cakes, with such other little viands as suit the taste of women and children. Wine is almost excluded; and the men, who are rarely admitted of this little female party, never are present at this collation, which Eloisa seldom misses. I am the only man who has obtained this privilege. Last Sunday, with great importunity, I got leave to attend her there. She took great pains to make me consider it as a very singular favour. She told me aloud that she granted it for that once only, and that she had even refused M. Wolmar himself. You may imagine whether this difficulty of admission does not flatter female vanity a little, and whether a footman would be a welcome visitor where his master is excluded.

I made a most delicious repast with them.— Where will you find such cream-cakes as we have here? Imagine what they must be, made in a dairy where Eloisa presides, and eaten in her com-

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pany. Fanny presented me with some cream, some seed-cake, and other little comfits. All was gone in an instant. Eloisa smiled at my appetite. "I find (said she, giving me another plate of cream) that your appetite does you credit every where, and that you make as good a figure among a club of females, as you do among the Valaisans."—"But I do not (answered I) make the repast with more impunity; the one may be attended with intoxication as well as the other; and reason may be as much distracted in a nursery as in a wine cellar." She cast her eyes down without making any reply, blushed, and began to play with her children. This was enough to sting me with remorse. This, my lord, was the first indiscretion, and I hope it will be the last.

There was a certain air of primitive simplicity in this assembly, which affected me very sensibly. I perceived the same cheerfulness in every countenance, and perhaps more openness than if there had been men in company. The familiarity which was observable between the mistress and her servants, being founded on sincere attachment and confidence, only served to establish respect and authority; and the services rendered and received appeared like so many testimonies of reciprocal friendship. There was nothing, even to the very choice of the collation, but what contributed to make this assembly engaging. Milk

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and sugar are naturally adapted to the taste of the fair-sex, and may be deemed the symbols of innocence and sweetness, which are their most becoming ornaments. Men, on the contrary, are fond of high flavours, and strong liquors; a kind of nourishment more suitable to the active and laborious life for which nature has designed them; and when these different tastes come to be blended, it is an infallible sign that the distinction between the two sexes is inordinately confounded. In fact, I have observed that, in France, where the women constantly intermix with the men, they have entirely lost their relish for milk meats, and the men have in some measure lost their taste for wine; and in England, where the two sexes are better distinguished, the proper taste of each is better preserved. In general I am of opinion that you may very often form some judgment of people's disposition, from their choice of food.—The Italians, who live a great deal on vegetables, are soft and effeminate. You Englishmen, who are great eaters of meat, have something harsh in your rigid virtue, and which savours of barbarism. The Swiss, who is naturally of a calm, gentle, and cold constitution, but hot and violent when in a passion, is fond both of one and the other, and drinks milk and wine indiscriminately. The Frenchman, who is pliant and changeable, lives upon all kinds of food, and conforms himself to

every taste. Eloisa herself, may serve as an instance: for though she makes her meals with a keen appetite, yet she does not love meat, ragouts, or salt, and never yet tasted wine by itself. Some excellent roots, eggs, cream, and fruit, compose her ordinary diet, and was it not for fish, of which she is likewise very fond, she would be a perfect Pythagorean.

To keep the women in order would signify nothing, if the men were not likewise under proper regulations; and this branch of domestic economy, which is not of less importance, is still more difficult; for the attack is generally more lively than the defence: the guardian of human nature intended it so. In the common wealth, Citizens are kept in order by principles of morality and virtue: but how are we to keep servants and mercenaries under proper regulations, otherwise than by force and restraint? The art of a master consists in disguising this restraint under the veil of pleasure and interest, that what they are obliged to do may seem the result of their own inclination. Sunday being a day of idleness, and servants having a right of going where they please, when business does not require their duty at home, that one day often destroys all the good examples and lessons of the other six. The habit of frequenting public houses, the converse and maxims of their comrades, the company of loose women, soon render them unserviceable to their masters, and unprofit-

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To remedy this inconvenience, they endeavour to keep them at home by the same motives which induce them to go abroad. Why do they go abroad ? To drink and play at a public-house. They drink and play at home. All the difference is, that the wine costs them nothing, that they do not get drunk, and that there are some winners at play without any losers. The following is the method taken for this purpose.

Behind the house is a shady walk, where they have fixed the lists. There, in the summer time, the livery servants and the men in the yard meet every Sunday, after sermon time, to play in little detached parties, not for money, for it is not allowed, nor for wine, which is given them ; but for a prize, furnished by their master's generosity, which is generally some piece of goods or apparel fit for their use. The number of games in proportion to the value of the prize, so that when the prize is somewhat considerable, as a pair of silver buckles, a neckcloth, a pair of silk stockings, a fine hat, or any thing of that kind, they have generally several bouts to decide it. They are not confined to one particular game, but they change them, that one man, who happens to excel in a particular game, may not carry off all the

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prizes, and that they may grow stronger and more dexterous by a variety of exercises. At one time, the contest is who shall first reach a mark at the other end of the walk; at another time it is who shall throw the same stone farthest; then again it is who shall carry the same weight longest. Sometimes they contend for a prize, by shooting at a mark. Most of these games are attended with some little preparations, which serve to prolong them, and render them entertaining. Their master and mistress often honour them with their presence; they sometimes take their children with them; nay, even strangers resort thither, excited by curiosity, and they desire nothing better than to bear a share in the sport; but none are ever admitted without M. Wolmar's approbation, and the consent of the players, who would not find their account in granting it readily. This custom has imperceptibly become a kind of show, in which the actors, being animated by the presence of the spectators, prefer the glory of applause to the lucre of the prize.— As these exercises make them more active and vigorous, they set a greater value on themselves, and, being accustomed to estimate their importance from their own intrinsic worth, rather than from their possessions, they prize honour, notwithstanding they are footmen, beyond money.

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trifling in appearance, and which is always despised by little minds; but it is the prerogative of true genius to produce great effects by inconsiderable means. M. Wolmar has assured me that these little institutions, which his wife first suggested, scarce stood him in fifty crowns a year. "But (said he) how often do you think I am repaid this sum in my housekeeping and my affairs in general, by the vigilance and attention with which I am served by these faithful servants, who derive all their pleasures from their master; by the interest they take in a family which they consider as their own; by the advantage I reap in their labours, from the vigour they acquire at their exercises; by the benefit of keeping them always in health, in preserving them from those excesses which are common to men in their station, and from those disorders which frequently attend such excesses; by securing them from any propensity to knavery, which is an infallible consequence of irregularity, and by confirming them in the practice of honesty; in short, by the pleasure of having such agreeable recreations within ourselves at such a trifling expence? If there are any among them, either man or woman, who do not care to conform to our regulations, but prefer the liberty of going where they please, on various pretences, we never refuse to give them leave: but we consider this licentious turn as a

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very suspicious symptom, and we are always ready to mistrust such dispositions. Thus these little amusements, which furnish us with good servants, serve also as a direction to us in the choice of them."—I must confess, my lord, that except in this family I never saw the same men made good domestics for personal service, good husbandmen for tilling the ground, good soldiers for the defence of their country, and honest fellows in any station into which fortune may chance to throw them.

In the winter, their pleasures vary, as well as their labours. On a Sunday, all the servants in the family, and even the neighbours, men and women indiscriminately, meet after service-time in a hall where there is a good fire, some wine, fruits, cakes, and a fiddle, to which they dance. Mrs. Wolmar never fails to be present, for some time at least, in order to preserve decorum and modesty by her presence, and it is not uncommon for her to dance herself, though among her own people. When I was first made acquainted with this custom, it appeared to me not quite conformable to the strictness of Protestant morals. I told Eloisa so; and she answered me to the following effect:

“Pure morality is charged with so many severe duties, that if it is overburdened with forms, which are in themselves indifferent, they will always be of prejudice to what is really essential.

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This is said to be the case with the monks in general, who, being slaves to rules totally immaterial, are utter strangers to the meaning of honour and virtue. This defect is less observable among us, though we are not wholly exempt from it. Our churchmen, who are as much superior to other priests in knowledge, as our religion is superior to all others in purity, do nevertheless maintain some maxims, which seem to be rather founded on prejudice than reason. Of this kind, is that which condemns dancing and assemblies, as if there were more harm in dancing than singing, as if each of these amusements were not equally a propensity of nature, and as if it were a crime to divert ourselves publicly with an innocent and harmless recreation. For my own part, I think, on the contrary, that every time there is a concourse of the two sexes, every public diversion becomes innocent, by being public; whereas, the most laudable employment becomes suspicious in a *tête-à-tête* party*. Man and women were formed for each other; their union by marriage is the end of nature. All false religion is at war with nature; our's, which conforms

* In my letter to M. D'Alembert, concerning the theatres, I have transcribed the following passage, and some others; but as I was then preparing this edition, I thought it better to wait this publication, till I took notice of the quotation.

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to and rectifies natural propensity, proclaims a divine institution which is most suitable to mankind. Religion ought not to increase the embarrassment which civil regulations throw in the way of matrimony, by difficulties which the Gospel does not create, and which are contrary to the true spirit of Christianity. Let any one tell me where young people can have an opportunity of conceiving a mutual liking, and of seeing each other with more decorum and circumspection than in an assembly, where the eyes of the spectators being constantly upon them, oblige them to behave with peculiar caution? How can we offend God by an agreeable and wholesome exercise, suitable to the vivacity of youth; an exercise which consists in the art of presenting ourselves to each other with grace and elegance, and wherein the presence of the spectator imposes a decorum which no one dares to violate? Can we conceive a more effectual method to avoid imposition with respect to person at least, by displaying ourselves with all our natural graces and defects before those whose interest it is to know us thoroughly, ere they oblige themselves to love us? —Is not the obligation of reciprocal affection greater than that of self-love, and is it not an attention worthy of a pious and virtuous pair, who propose to marry, thus to prepare their hearts for that mutual love which Heaven prompts?

“What is the consequence, in those places

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where people are under a continual restraint, where the most innocent gaiety is punished as criminal, where the young people of different sexes dare not meet in public, and where the indiscreet severity of the pastor preaches nothing, in the name of God, but servile constraint, sadness, and melancholy? They find means to elude an insufferable tyranny, which nature and reason disavow. When gay and sprightly youth are debarred from lawful pleasures, they substitute others more dangerous in their stead. Private parties, artfully concerted, supply the place of public assemblies. By being obliged to concealment, as if they were criminal, they at length become so in fact. Harmless joy loves to display itself in the face of the world, but vice is a friend to darkness; and innocence and secrecy never subsist long together. My dear friend (said she, grasping my hand, as if she meant to convey her repentance, and communicate the purity of her own heart to mine) who can be more sensible of the importance of this truth than ourselves? What sorrow and troubles, what tears and remorse we might have prevented for so many years past, if we could but have foreseen how dangerous a private intercourse was to that virtue which we always loved!

“ Besides (said Mrs. Wolmar, in a softer tone, it is not in a numerous assembly where we are

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seen and heard by all the world, but in private parties, where secrecy and freedom is indulged, that our morals are in danger. It is from this principle, that, whenever my domestics meet, I am glad to see them all together. I even approve of their inviting such young people in the neighbourhood whose company will not corrupt them; and I hear with pleasure, that, when they mean to commend the morals of any of our young neighbours, they say—He is admitted at Mr. Wolmar's. We have a further view in this. Our men-servants are all very young, and, among the women, the governess is yet single; it is not reasonable that the retired life they lead with us should debar them of an opportunity of forming an honest connexion. We endeavour, therefore, in these little meetings, to give them this opportunity, under our inspection, that we may assist them in their choice; and thus, by endeavouring to make happy families, we increase the felicity of our own.

“ I ought now to justify myself for dancing with these good people, but I rather choose to pass sentence on myself in this respect, and frankly confess that my chief motive is the pleasure I take in the exercise. You know that I always resembled my cousin in her passion for dancing; but after the death of my mother, I bade adieu to the ball, and all public assemblies; I kept my resolution, even to the day of my

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marriage, and will keep it still, without thinking it any violation to dance now and then in my own house with my guests and my domestics. It is an exercise very good for my health during the sedentary life which we are obliged to live here in winter. I find it an innocent amusement; for after a good dance my conscience does not reproach me. It amuses M. Wolmar likewise, and all my coquetry in this particular is only to please him. I am the occasion of his coming into the ball-room; the good people are best satisfied when they are honoured with their master's presence; and they express a satisfaction when they see me amongst them. In short, I find that such occasional familiarity forms an agreeable connexion and attachment between us, which approaches nearer the natural condition of mankind, by moderating the meanness of servitude, and the rigour of authority."

Such, my lord, are the sentiments of Eloisa with respect to dancing, and I have often wondered how so much affability could consist with such a degree of subordination, and how she and her husband could so often stoop to level themselves with their servants, and yet the latter never be tempted to assume equality in their turn. I question if any Asiatic monarchs are attended in their palaces with more respect than Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar are served in their own house. I never knew any commands less imperious than

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theirs, or more readily executed ; if they ask for any thing, their servants fly ; if they excuse their failings, they themselves are nevertheless sensible of their faults. I was never better convinced how much the force of what is said depends on the mode of expression.

This has led me into a reflection on the affected gravity of masters ; which is, that it is rather to be imputed to their own failings, than to the effects of their familiarity, that they are despised in their families, and that the insolence of servants is rather an indication of a vicious than of a weak master: for nothing gives them such assurances, as the knowledge of his vices, and they consider all discoveries of that kind as so many dispensations, which free them from their obedience to a man whom they can no longer respect.

Servants imitate their masters, and by copying them awkwardly, they render those defects more conspicuous in themselves, which the polish of education, in some measure, disguised in the others. At Paris, I used to judge of the ladies of my acquaintance, by the air and manners of their waiting-women, and this rule never deceived me. Besides that, the lady's woman, when she becomes the confidant of her mistress's secrets, makes her buy her discretion at a dear rate, she likewise frames her conduct according to her lady's sentiments, and discloses all her maxims, by an awk-

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ward imitation. In every instance, the master's example is more efficacious than his authority; it is not natural to suppose that their servants will be honefter than themselves. It is to no purpose to make a noise, to swear, to abuse them, to turn them off, to get a new set; all this avails nothing towards making good servants. When they who do not trouble themselves about being hated and despised by their domestics, nevertheless imagine that they are well served, the reason of their mistake is, that they are contented with what they see, and satisfied with an appearance of diligence, without observing the thousand secret prejudices they suffer continually, and of which they cannot discover the source. But where is the man so devoid of honour, as to be able to endure the contempt of every one round him? Where is the woman so abandoned, as not to be susceptible of insults? How many ladies, both at Paris and in London, who think themselves greatly respected, would burst into tears if they heard what was said of them in their anti-chambers? Happily for their peace, they comfort themselves by taking these Arguses for weak creatures, and by flattering themselves that they are blind to those practices which they do not even deign to hide from them. They likewise in their turn discover, by their sullen obedience, the contempt they have for their mistresses. Masters and servants be-

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The behaviour of servants seems to me to be the most certain and nice proof of the master's virtue; and I remember, my lord, to have formed a good opinion of yours at Valais, without knowing you, purely because, though you spoke somewhat harshly to your attendants, they were not the less attached to you, and that they expressed as much respect for you in your absence, as if you had been within hearing. It has been said that no man is a hero in the eyes of his valet-de-chambre; perhaps not; but every worthy man will enjoy his servant's esteem, which sufficiently proves that heroism is only a vain phantom, and that nothing is solid but virtue. The power of its empire is particularly observable here in the lowest commendations of the servants. Commendations the less to be suspected, as they do not consist of vain eulogiums, but of an artless expression of their feelings. As they cannot suppose from any thing which they see, that other masters are not like theirs, they therefore do not commend them on account of those virtues which they conceive to be common to masters in general, but, in the simplicity of their hearts, they thank God for having sent the rich to make those under them happy, and to be a comfort to the poor.

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that it cannot subsist without some degree of discontent. Nevertheless, they respect their master, and say nothing. If any murmurings escape them against their mistress, they are more to her honour than encomiums would be. No one complains that she is wanting in kindness to them, but that she pays so much regard to others; no one can endure that his zeal should be put in competition with that of his comrades, and as every one imagines himself foremost in attachment, he would be first in favour. This is their only complaint, and their greatest injustice.

There is not only a proper subordination among those of inferior station, but a perfect harmony among those of equal rank; and this is not the least difficult part of domestic economy.— Amidst the clashings of jealousy and self-interest, which make continual divisions in families not more numerous than this, we seldom find servants united but at the expence of their masters. If they agree, it is to rob in concert; if they are honest, every one shows his importance at the expence of the rest: they must either be enemies or accomplices, and it is very difficult to find a way of guarding, at the same time, both against their knavery and their dissensions. The masters of families, in general, know no other method but that of choosing the alternative between these two inconveniences. Some, preferring interest to honour, foment a quarrelsome disposition

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among their servants, by means of private reports, and think it a masterpiece of prudence to make them superintendants and spies over each other. Others, of a more indolent nature, rather choose that their servants should rob them, and live peaceably among themselves; they pique themselves upon discountenancing any information which a faithful servant may give them out of pure zeal. Both are equally to blame. The first, by exciting continual disturbances in their families, which are incompatible with good order and regularity, get together a heap of knaves and informers, who are busy in betraying their fellow-servants, that they may hereafter perhaps betray their masters. The second, by refusing any information with regard to what passes in their families, countenance combinations against themselves, encourage the wicked, dishearten the good, and only maintain a pack of arrogant and idle rascals, at a great expence, who, agreeing together at their master's cost, look upon their services as a matter of favour, and their thefts as perquisites*.

* I have narrowly examined into the management of great families, and have found it impossible for a master who has twenty servants, to know whether he has one honest man among them, and not to mistake the greatest rascal perhaps to be that one. This alone would give me an aversion to riches. The rich lose one of the sweetest pleasures of life, the pleasure of confidence and esteem. They purchase all their gold at a dear rate!

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It is a capital error in domestic as well as in civil economy, to oppose one vice to another, or to attempt an equilibrium between them, as if that which undermines the foundations of all order could ever tend to establish regularity.— This mistaken policy only serves to unite every inconvenience. When particular vices are tolerated in a family, they do not reign alone. Let one take root, a thousand will soon spring up. They presently ruin the servants who harbour them, undo the master who tolerates them, and corrupt or injure the children who remark them with attention. What father can be so unworthy as to put any advantage whatever in competition with this last inconvenience? What honest man would choose to be master of a family, if it was impossible for him to maintain peace and fidelity in his house at the same time, and if he must be obliged to purchase the attachment of his servants at the expence of their mutual good understanding?

Who does not see, that in this family, they have not even an idea of any such difficulty? so much does the union among the several members proceed from the attachment to the head.— It is here we may perceive a striking instance, how impossible it is to have a sincere affection for a master without loving every thing that belongs to him; a truth which is the real foundation of

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Christian charity. Is it not very natural that the children of the same father should live together like brethren? This is what they tell us every day at church, without making us feel the sentiment; and this is what the domestics in this family feel, without being told it.

This disposition to good fellowship is owing to a choice of proper subjects. M. Wolmar, when he hires his servants, does not examine whether they suit his wife and himself, but whether they suit each other, and if they were to discover a settled antipathy between two of the best servants, it would be sufficient for them to discharge one: for, says Eloisa, in so small a family, a family where they never go abroad, but are constantly before each other, they ought to agree perfectly among themselves. They ought to consider it as their father's house, where all are of the same family. One who happens to be disagreeable to the rest is enough to make them hate the place; and that disagreeable object being constantly before their eyes, they would neither be easy themselves, nor suffer us to be quiet.

After having made the best assortment in their power, they unite them, as it were, by the services which they oblige each to render the other, and they contrive that it shall be the real interest of every one to be beloved by his fellow servants. No one is so well received who solicits a favour for himself, as when he asks it for another; so

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that whoever has any thing to request, endeavours to engage another to intercede for him; and this they do with greater readiness, since, whether their master grants or refuses the favour requested, he never fails to acknowledge the merit of the person interceding. On the contrary, both he and Mrs. Wolmar always reject the solicitations of those who only regard themselves. Why, say they, should I grant what is desired in your favour, who have never made me any request in favour of another? Is it reasonable that you should be more favoured than your companions, because they are more obliging than you? They do more: they engage them to serve each other in private without any ostentation, and without assuming any merit. This is the more easily accomplished, as they know that their master, who is witness of their discretion, will esteem them the more; thus self-interest is a gainer, and self-love no loser. They are so convinced of this general disposition to oblige, and they have such confidence in each other, that when they have any favour to ask, they frequently mention it at table, by way of conversation; very often, without further trouble, they find that the thing has been requested and granted, and as they do not know whom to thank, their obligation is to all.

It is by this, and such like methods, that they beget an attachment among them, resulting from,

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and subordinate to, the zeal they have for their master. Thus, far from leaguings together to his prejudice, they are only united for his service. However it may be their interest to love each other, they have still stronger motives for pleasing him; their zeal for his service gets the better of their mutual good-will, and each considering himself as injured by losses which may make their master less able to recompense a faithful servant, they are all equally incapable of suffering any individual to do him wrong unnoticed. This principle of policy, which is established in this family, seems to have somewhat sublime in it; and I cannot sufficiently admire how Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar have been able to transform the vile function of an informer into an office of zeal, integrity, and courage, as noble, or at least as praise-worthy, as it was among the Romans.

They began by subverting, or rather by preventing, in a plain and perspicuous manner, and by affecting instances, that servile and criminal practice, that mutual toleration at the master's cost, which a worthless servant never fails to inculcate to a good one, under the mask of a charitable maxim. They made them understand, that the precept which enjoins us to hide our neighbour's faults relates to those only which do injury to no one; that if they are witnesses to any injustice which injures a third person, and do not discover it, they are guilty of it themselves; and

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that as nothing can oblige us to conceal such faults in others, but a consciousness of our own defects, therefore no one would choose to countenance knaves, if he was not a knave himself. Upon these principles, which are just in general as between man and man, but more strictly so with respect to the close connexion between master and servant, they hold it here as an incontestable truth, that whoever sees their master wronged, without making a discovery, is more guilty than he who did the wrong; for he suffers himself to be misled by the prospect of advantage, but the other, in cold blood, and without any view of interest, can be induced to secrecy by no other motive than a thorough disregard of justice, an indifference towards the welfare of the family he serves, and a hidden desire of copying the example he conceals. Therefore, even where the fault is considerable, the guilty party may nevertheless sometimes hope for pardon, but the witness who conceals the fact is infallibly dismissed, as a man of bad disposition.

In return, they receive no accusation which may be suspected to proceed from injustice and calumny; that is to say, they admit of none in the absence of the accused. If any one comes to make a report against his fellow servant, or to prefer a personal complaint against him, they ask him whether he is sufficiently informed, that is to say, whether he has entered into any previous inqui-

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ry with the person whom he is going to accuse? If he answers in the negative, they ask him how he can judge of an action, when he is not acquainted with the motives to it? The fact, say they, may depend on some circumstance to which you are a stranger; there may be some particulars which may serve to justify or excuse it, and which you know nothing of. How can you presume to condemn any one's conduct, before you know by what motives it is directed? One word of explanation would probably have rendered it justifiable in your eyes. Why then do you run the risk of condemning a man's action wrongfully, and of exposing me to participate of your injustice? If he assures them that he has entered into a previous explanation with the accused; why then, say they, do you come without him, as if you was afraid that he would falsify what you are going to relate? By what right do you neglect taking the same precaution with respect to me, which you think proper to use with regard to yourself? Is it reasonable to desire me to judge of a fact from your report, of which you refuse to judge yourself by the testimony of your own eyes; and would not you be answerable for the partial judgment I might form, if I was to remain satisfied with your bare deposition? In the end, they direct them to summon the party accused; if they consent, the matter is soon decided; if they refuse, they dismiss them with a severe re-

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This rule is so well known, and so well established, that you never hear a servant in this family speak ill of his absent comrade, for they are all sensible that it is the way to pass for a liar and a coward. When any one of them accuses another, it is openly, frankly, and not only to his face, but in the presence of all his fellow servants, that they who are witnesses to their accusation, may be vouchers of their integrity. In case of any personal disputes among them, the difference is generally made up by mediators, without troubling Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar; but when the interest of the master is at stake, the matter cannot remain a secret; the guilty party must either accuse himself, or be accused. These little pleadings happen very seldom, and never but at table, in the rounds which Eloisa makes every day while her people are at dinner or supper, which M. Wolmar pleasantly calls her general sessions. After having patiently attended to the accusation and the defence, if the affairs regard her interest, she thanks the accuser for his zeal. I am sensible, says she, that you have a regard for your fellow-servant; you have always spoken well of him, and I commend you, because the love of your duty and of justice has prevailed over your private af-

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fections ; it is thus that a faithful servant and an honest man ought to behave. If the party accused is not in fault, she always subjoins some compliment to her justification of his innocence. But if he is really guilty, she in some measure spares his shame before the rest. She supposes that he has something to communicate in his defence, which he does not choose to declare in public; she appoints an hour to hear him in private, and it is then that she or her husband talk to him as they think proper. What is very remarkable, is that the most severe of the two is not most dreaded, and that they are less afraid of M. Wolmar's solemn reprimand, than of Eloisa's affecting reproaches. The former speaking the language of truth and justice, humbles and confounds the guilty; the latter strikes them with the most cruel remorse, by convincing them with what regret she is forced to withdraw her kindness from them. She sometimes extorts tears of grief and shame from them, and it is not uncommon for her to be moved herself when she sees them repent, in hopes that she may not be obliged to abide by her word.

They who judge of these concerns by what passes in their own families, or among their neighbours, would probably deem them frivolous or tiresome. But you, my Lord, who have such high notions of the duties and enjoyments of a master of a family, and who are sensible what an ascen-

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dancy natural disposition and virtue have over the human heart, you perceive the importance of these minutiae, and know on what circumstances their success depends. Riches do not make a man rich, as is well observed in some romance. The wealth of a man is not in his coffers, but in the use he makes of what he draws out of them; for our possessions do not become our own, but by the uses to which we allot them, and abuses are always more inexhaustible than riches; whence it happens that our enjoyments are not in proportion to our expences, but depend on the just regulation of them. An idiot may toss ingots of gold into the sea, and say he has enjoyed them; but what comparison is there between such an extravagant enjoyment, and that which a wise man would have derived from the least part of their value? Order and regularity, which multiply and perpetuate the use of riches, are alone capable of converting the enjoyment of them into felicity. But if real property arises from the relation which our possessions bear to us, if it is rather the use than the acquisition of riches which confers it, what can be more proper subjects of attention for a master of a family than domestic economy, and the prudent regulation of his household, in which the most perfect correspondences more immediately concern him, and where the

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Are the most wealthy the most happy? No. How then does wealth contribute to felicity? But every well-regulated family is emblematic of the master's mind. Gilded ceilings, luxury, and magnificence, only serve to show the vanity of those who display such parade; whereas, whenever you see order without melancholy, peace without slavery, plenty without profusion, you may say, with confidence, the master of this house is a happy being.

For my own part, I think the most certain sign of true content is a domestic and retired life, and that they who are continually resorting to others in quest of happiness do not enjoy it at home. A father of a family, who amuses himself at home, is rewarded for his continual attention to domestic concerns, by the constant enjoyment of the most agreeable sensations of nature. He is the only one who can be properly said to be master of his own happiness, because, like Heaven itself, he is happy in desiring nothing more than he enjoys. Like the Supreme Being, he does not wish to enlarge his possessions, but to make them really his own, under proper directions, and by using them conformably to the just relations of things: if he does not enrich himself by new acquisitions, he enriches himself by the true enjoyment of what he possesses. He once only enjoyed the in-

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come of his lands, he now enjoys the lands themselves, by overlooking their culture, and surveying them from time to time. His servant was a stranger to him: he is now part of his enjoyment; his child: he makes him his own. Formerly he had only power over his servant's actions; now he has authority over his inclinations. He was his master only by paying him wages? now he rules by the sacred dominion of benevolence and esteem. Though fortune spoils him of his wealth, she can never rob him of those affections which are attached to him; she cannot deprive a father of his children; all the difference is, that he maintained them yesterday, and that they will support him to-morrow. It is thus that we may learn the true enjoyment of our riches, of our family, and of ourselves; it is thus, that the minutiae of a family become agreeable to a worthy man who knows the value of them; it is thus, that far from considering these little duties as troublesome, he makes them a part of his happiness, and derives the glory and pleasure of human nature from these noble and affecting offices.

If these precious advantages are despised, or little known, and if the few who endeavour to acquire them seldom obtain them, the reason, in both cases, is the same. There are many simple and sublime duties, which few people can relish

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and fulfil. Such are those of the master of a family, for which the air and bustle of the world give him a disgust, and which he never discharges properly when he is only inflamed by motives of avarice and interest. Some think themselves excellent masters, and are only careful economists; their income may thrive, and their family nevertheless be in a bad condition. They ought to have more enlarged views to direct an administration of such importance, so as to give it a happy issue. The first thing to be attended to in the due regulation of a family, is to admit none but honest people, who will not have any secret intention to disturb that regularity. But are honesty and servitude so compatible, that we may hope to find servants who are honest men? No, my lord, if we would have them, we must not inquire for them, but we must make them; and none who are not men of integrity themselves are capable of making others honest. It is to no purpose for a hypocrite to affect an air of virtue; he will never inspire any one with an affection for it, and if he knew how to make virtue amiable, he would be in love with it himself. What do formal lessons avail, when daily example contradicts them, unless to make us suspect that the moralist means to sport with our credulity? What an absurdity are they guilty of who exhort us to do as they say, and not as they act themselves!—He who does not act up to what he says, never

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speaks to any effect; for the language of the heart is wanting, which alone is persuasive and affecting. I have sometimes heard conversations of this kind held in a gross manner before servants, in order to read them lectures, as they do children sometimes, in an indirect way. Far from having any reason to imagine that they were the dupes of such artifice, I have always observed them smile in secret at their master's folly, who must have taken them for blockheads, by making an awkward display of sentiments before them, which they knew were none of his own.

All these idle subtleties are unknown in this family, and the grand art by which the master and mistress make their servants what they would desire them to be, is to appear themselves before them what they really are. Their behaviour is always frank and open, because they are not in any fear lest their actions should belie their professions. As they themselves do not entertain principles of morality different from those which they inculcate to others, they have no occasion for any extraordinary circumspection in their discourse; a word blundered out unseasonably does not overthrow the principles they have laboured to establish. They do not indiscreetly tell all their affairs, but they openly proclaim all their maxims. Whether at table, or abroad, in private, or in public, their sentiments are still the same;

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they ingeniously deliver their opinions on every subject, and without their having any individual in view, every one is instructed by their conversation. As their servants never see them do any thing but what is just, reasonable, and equitable, they do not consider justice as a tax on the poor, as a yoke on the unhappy, and as one of the evils of their condition. The care they take never to let the labourers come in vain, and lose their day's work in seeking after their wages, teaches their servants to set a just value on time. When they see their master so careful of other men's time, each concludes that his own time must be of consequence, and therefore deems idleness the greatest crime he can be guilty of. The confidence which their servants have in their integrity gives that force to their regulations which makes them observed, and prevents abuses. They are not afraid, when they come to receive their weekly gratuities, that their mistresses should partially determine the youngest and most active to have been the most diligent. An old servant is not apprehensive lest they should start some quibble, to save the promised augmentation to their wages. They can never hope to take advantage of any division between their master and mistress, in order to make themselves of consequence, and to obtain from one what the other has refused. They who are unmarried are not afraid lest they should oppose their settlement, in order to detain them

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longer, and by that means make their service a prejudice to them. If a strange servant was to tell the domestics of this family, that master and servants are in a state of war with each other; that when the latter do the former all the injury they can, they only make lawful reprisals: that masters, being usurpers, liars, and knaves, there can consequently be no harm in using them as they use their prince, the people, or individuals, and in returning those injuries with dexterity, which they offer openly—one who should talk in this manner would not be attended to; they would not give themselves the trouble to controvert or obviate such sentiments; they who give rise to them are the only persons whose business it is to refute them.

You never perceive any sullenness or discontent in the discharge of their duty, because there is never any haughtiness or capriciousness in the orders they receive; nothing is required of them but what is reasonable and expedient, and their master and mistress have too much respect for the dignity of human nature, even in a state of servitude, to put them upon any employment which may debase them. Moreover, nothing here is reckoned mean but vice, and whatever is reasonable and necessary is deemed honourable and becoming.

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neither has any one any inclinations of that kind. They are sensible that their fortune is most firmly attached to their master's, and that they shall never want any thing while his family prospers. Therefore, in serving him, they take care of their own patrimony, and increase it by making their service agreeable: this, above all things, is their interest. But this word is somewhat misapplied here, for I never knew any system of policy by which self-interest was so skilfully directed, and where at the same time it had less influence, than in this family. They all act from a principle of attachment, and one would think that venal souls were purified as soon as they entered into this dwelling of wisdom and union. One would imagine that part of the master's intelligence, and of the mistress's sensibility, was conveyed to each of their servants; they seem so judicious, benevolent, honest, and so much above their station. Their greatest ambition is to do well, to be valued and esteemed; and they consider an obliging expression from their master or mistress in the light of a present.

These, my lord, are the most material observations I have made on that part of the economy of this family which regards the servants and labourers. As to Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar's manner of living, and the education of their children, each of these articles very well deserves a separate letter. You know with what view I began these

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remarks; but in truth the whole forms such an agreeable representation, that we need only meditate upon it to advance it, and we require no other inducement than the pleasure it affords us.

LETTER CXXX.

TO LORD B——.

NO, my lord; I do not retract what I have said; in this family, the useful and agreeable are united throughout; but occupations of use are not confined to those pursuits which yield profit: they comprehend further every innocent and harmless amusement which may serve to improve a relish for retirement, labour, and temperance; which may contribute to preserve the mind in a vigorous state, and to keep the heart free from the agitation of tumultuous passions. If inactive indolence begets nothing but melancholy and irksomeness, the delights of an agreeable leisure are the fruits of a laborious life. We only work to enjoy ourselves; this alternative of labour and recreation is our natural state. The repose which serves to refresh us after past labours, and encourage us to renew them, is not less necessary for us than labour itself.

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dent Eloisa, in the conduct of her family, I was witness of the good effects of the recreation she uses in a retired place, where she takes her favourite walk, and which she calls her Elysium.

I had often heard them talk of this Elysium, of which they made a mystery before me. Yesterday, however, the excessive heat being almost equally intolerable both within doors and without, M. Wolmar proposed to his wife to make holiday that afternoon, and instead of going into the nursery towards evening, as usual, to come and breathe the fresh air with us in the orchard: she consented, and thither we went.

This place, though just close to the house, is hidden in such a manner by a shady walk, that it is not visible from any point. The thick foliage with which it is environed renders it impervious to the eye, and it is always carefully locked up. I was scarce got within side, but the door, being covered with alder and hazle-trees, I could not find out which way I came in; when I turned back, and seeing no door, it seemed as if I had dropped from the clouds.

On my entrance into this disguised orchard, I was seized with an agreeable sensation; the freshness of the thick foliage, the beautiful and lovely verdure, the flowers scattered on each side, the murmuring of the purling stream, and the warbling of a thousand birds, struck my imagination as powerfully as my senses; but at the same time

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I thought myself in the most wild and solitary place in nature, and I appeared as if I had been the first mortal who had ever penetrated into this desert spot. Being seized with astonishment, and transported at so unexpected a sight, I remained motionless for some time, and cried out, in an involuntary fit of enthusiasm, "O Tinian! O Juan Fernandez*! Eloisa, the world's end is at your threshold!"—"Many people (said she, with a smile) think in the same manner; but twenty paces at most presently brings them back to Clarens; let us see whether the charm will work longer upon you. This is the same orchard where you have walked formerly, and where you have played at romps with my cousin. You may remember that the grass was almost burned up, the trees thinly planted, affording very little shade, and that there was no water. You find that now it is fresh, verdant, cultivated, embellished with flowers, and well watered; what do you imagine it may have cost me to put it into the condition you see? For you must know that I am the superintendant, and that my husband leaves the entire management of it to me."—"In truth (said I), it has cost you nothing but inattention. It is indeed a delightful spot, but wild and rustic; and I can discover no marks of hu-

* Desert islands in the South Sea, celebrated in Lord Anson's voyage.

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man industry. You have concealed the door; the water springs I know not whence; Nature alone has done all the rest, and even you could not have mended her work."—"It is true (said she) that Nature has done every thing, but under my direction, and you see nothing but what has been done under my orders. Guess once more."—"First (I replied) I cannot conceive how labour and expence can be made to supply the effects of time. The trees . . ."—"As to them (said M. Wolmar) you may observe that there are none very large, and they were here before. Besides, Eloisa began this work a long while before her marriage, and presently after her mother's death, when she used to come here with her father in quest of solitude."—"Well (said I) since you will have these large and massy bowers, these sloping tufts, these umbrageous thickets to be the growth of seven or eight years, and to be partly the work of art, I think you have been a good economist, if you have done all within this vast circumference for two thousand crowns."—"You have only guessed two thousand crowns too much (says she), for it cost me nothing."—"How! nothing!"—"No, nothing; unless you place a dozen days work in the year to my gardener's account, as many to two or three of my people, and some to M. Wolmar, who has sometimes condescended to officiate in my service as a gardener." I could not comprehend this riddle;

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but Eloisa, who had hitherto held me, said to me (letting me loose) "Go, and you will understand it. Farewell Tinian! farewell Juan Fernandez! farewell all enchantment! In a few minutes you will find your way back from the end of the world."

I began to wander over the orchard thus metamorphosed with a kind of ecstasy; and if I found no exotic plants, nor any of the products of the Indies, I found all those which were natural to the soil, disposed and blended in such a manner, as to produce the most cheerful and lively effect. The verdant turf, thick, but short and close, was intermixed with wild thyme, balm, sweet marjoram, and other fragrant herbs. You might perceive a thousand wild flowers dazzle your eyes, among which you would be surpris'd to discover some garden-flowers, which seem'd to grow natural with the rest. I now and then met with shady tufts, as impervious to the rays of the sun, as if they had been in a thick forest. These tufts were compos'd of trees of a very flexible nature, the branches of which they bend, till they hang on the ground, and take root, as I have seen some trees naturally do in America. In the more open spots, I saw here and there bushes of roses, raspberries, and gooseberries: little plantations of lilac, hazle-trees, alders, seringa, broom, and trefoil, dispers'd without any order or symmetry, and which embellish'd the ground, at the

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same time that it gave it the appearance of being overgrown with weeds. I followed the track through irregular and serpentine walks, bordered by these flowery thickets, and covered with a thousand garlands composed of vines, hops, rose-weed, snake-weed, and other plants of that kind, with which honey-suckles and jessamine deigned to interwine. These garlands seemed as if they were carelessly scattered from one tree to another, and formed a kind of drapery over our heads, which sheltered us from the sun; while under foot we had smooth, agreeable, and dry walking upon a fine moss, without sand or grass, or any rugged shoots. Then it was I first discovered, not without astonishment, that this verdant and bushy umbrage, which had deceived me so much at a distance, was composed of these luxuriant and creeping plants, which running all along the trees, formed a thick foliage over-head, and afforded shade and freshness under foot. I observed, likewise, that by means of common industry, they had made several of these plants take root in the trunks of the trees, so that they spread more, being nearer the top. You will readily conceive that the fruit is not the better for these additions; but this is the only spot where they have sacrificed the useful to the agreeable, and in the rest of their grounds they have taken such care of the trees, that, without the orchard, the return of fruit is greater than it was formerly.

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If you do but consider how delightful it is to meet with wild fruit in the midst of a wood, and to refresh one's self with it, you will easily conceive what a pleasure it must be to meet with excellent and ripe fruit in this artificial desert, though it grows but here and there, and has not the best appearance : which gives one the pleasure of searching, and selecting the best.

All these little walks were bordered and crossed by a clear and limpid rivulet, which one while winded through the grass and flowers, in streams scarce perceptible ; at another, rushed in more copious floods upon a clear and speckled gravel, which rendered the water more transparent. You might perceive the springs rise and bubble out of the earth, and sometimes you might observe deep canals, in which the calm and gentle fluid served as a mirror to reflect the objects around.

“ Now (said I to Eloisa), I comprehend all the rest ; but these waters which I see on every side.” — “ They come from thence,” she replied, pointing to that side where the terrace lies. “ It is the same stream which, at a vast expence, supplied the fountain in the flower-garden, for which nobody cares. M. Wolmar will not destroy it, out of respect to my father, who had it made ; but with what pleasure we come here every day to see this water run through the orchard, which we never look at in the garden ! — The fountain plays for the entertainment of

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strangers; this little rivulet flows for our amusement. It is true, that I have likewise brought hither the water from the public fountain, which emptied itself into the lake, through the highway, to the detriment of passengers, besides its running to waste, without profit to any one. It formed an elbow at the foot of the orchard, between two rows of willows; I have taken them within my inclosure, and I bring the same water hither through different channels."

I perceived then that all the contrivance consisted in managing these streams, so as to make them flow in meanders, by separating and uniting them at proper places, by making them run as little upon the slope as possible, in order to lengthen their course, and make the most of a few little murmuring cascades. A lay of earth, covered with some gravel from the lake, and strewed over with shells, forms a bed for these waters.— The same streams running at proper distances under some large tiles covered with earth and turf, on a level with the ground, form a kind of artificial springs, where they issue forth. Some small streams spout through pipes on some rugged places, and bubble as they fall. The ground thus refreshed and watered, continually yields fresh flowers, and keeps the grass always verdant and beautiful.

The more I wandered over this delightful asylum, the more I found the agreeable sensation

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improve which I experienced at my first entrance: nevertheless my curiosity kept me in exercise; I was more eager to view the objects around me than to enquire into the cause of the impressions they made on me, and I chose to resign myself to that delightful contemplation, without taking the trouble of reflection; but Mrs. Wolmar drew me out of my reverie, by taking me under the arm. "All that you see (said she) is nothing but vegetable and inanimate nature, which, in spite of us, always leaves behind it a melancholy idea of solitude. Come and view nature animated and more affecting. There you will discover some new charm every minute in the day."—"You anticipate me (said I), I hear a confused chirping noise, and I see but few birds; I suppose you have an aviary."—"True (said she), let us go to it." I durst not as yet declare what I thought of this aviary; but there was something in the idea of it which disgusted me, and did not seem to correspond with the rest.

We went down through a thousand turnings, to the bottom of the orchard, where I found all the water collected in a fine rivulet, flowing gently between two rows of old willows, which had been frequently lopped. Their tops being hollow, and half bare, formed a kind of vessel, from whence, by the contrivance I just now mentioned, grew several tufts of honey-suckles, of which one part intertwined among the branches,

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and the other dropped carelessly along the side of the rivulet. Near the extremity of the enclosure was a little basin bordered with grass, bulrushes, and weeds, which served as a watering-place to the aviary, and was the last use made of this water, so precious and so well husbanded.

Somewhat beyond this basin was a platform, which was terminated, in an angle of the enclosure, by a hillock planted with a number of little trees of all kinds; the smallest stood towards the summit, and their size increased in proportion as the ground grew lower, which made their tops appear to be horizontal, or at least showed that they were one day intended to be so. In the front stood a dozen of trees, which were young as yet, but of a nature to grow very large, such as the beech, the elm, the ash, and the acacia. The groves on this side served as an asylum to that vast number of birds which I had heard chirping at a distance, and it was under the shade of this foliage, as under a large umbrella, that you might see them hop about, run, frisk, provoke each other, and fight, as if they had not perceived us. They were so far from flying at our approach, that, according to the notion with which I was prepossessed, I imagined them to have been enclosed within a wire; but when we came to the border of the basin, I saw several of them alight, and come towards us through a short walk, which parted the platform in two, and made a commu-

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nication between the basin and the aviary. M. Wolmar then going round the basin, scattered two or three handfuls of mixed grain, which he had in his pocket, along the walk, and when he retired, the birds flocked together, and began to feed like so many chickens, with such an air of familiarity, that I plainly perceived they had been trained up to it. "This is charming (said I): your using the word aviary, surpris'd me at first, but I now see what it is; I perceive that you invite them as your guests, instead of confining them as your prisoners."—"What do you mean by our guests? (replied Eloisa) it is we who are theirs. They are masters here, and we pay them for being admitted sometimes."—"Very well (said I), but how did these masters get possession of this spot? How did you collect together so many voluntary inhabitants? I never heard of any attempt of this kind, and I could not have believed that such a design could have succeeded, if I had not evidence of it before my eyes."

"Time and patience, (said M. Wolmar) have worked this miracle. These are expedients which the rich scarce ever think of in their pleasures. Always in haste for enjoyment, force and money are the only instruments they know how to employ; they have birds in cages, and friends at so much a month. If the servants ever came near this place, you would soon see the birds disappear; and if you perceive vast numbers of

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them at present, the reason is, that this spot has always, in some degree, been a refuge for them. There is no bringing them together where there are none to invite them; but where there are some already, it is easy to increase their numbers, by anticipating all their wants, by not frightening them, by suffering them to hatch with security, and by never disturbing the young ones in their nest; for by these means, such as are there abide there, and those which come after them continue. This grove was already in being, though it was divided from the orchard; Eloisa has only enclosed it by a quickset hedge, removed that which parted it, and enlarged and adorned it with new designs. You see to the right and left of the walk which leads to it two spaces filled with a confused mixture of grass, straw, and all sorts of plants. She orders them every year to be sown with corn, millet, turnsol, hemp-seed, vetch, and, in general, all sorts of grain which birds are fond of, and nothing is ever reaped. Besides this, almost every day she or I bring them something to eat, and when we neglect, Fanny supplies our place. They are supplied with water, as you see, very easily. Mrs. Wolmar carries her attention so far as to provide for them, every spring, little heaps of hair, straw, wool, moss, and other materials proper to build their nests. Thus, by their having materials at hand, provisions in abundance, and by the great care we take

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to secure them from their enemies*, the uninterrupted tranquillity they enjoy induces them to lay their eggs in this convenient place, where they want for nothing, and where nobody disturbs them. Thus the habitation of the fathers becomes the abode of the children, and the colony thrives and multiplies."

" Ah! (said Eloisa) do you see nothing more? No one thinks beyond himself; but the affection of a constant pair, the zeal of their domestic concerns, paternal and maternal fondness, all this is lost upon you. Had you been here two months ago, you might have feasted your eyes with the most lovely sight, and have gratified your feelings with the most tender sensations in nature."—

" Madam (said I, somewhat gravely) you are a wife and a mother; these are pleasures of which it becomes you to be susceptible." M. Wolmar then taking me cordially by the hand, said, " You have friends, and those friends have children; how can you be a stranger to paternal affection?" I looked at him, I looked at Eloisa, they looked at each other, and cast such an affecting eye upon me, that embracing them alternately, I said, with tender emotion, " They are as dear to me as to yourself." I do not know by what strange effect a single word can make such an alteration in our minds, but since that moment

* The mice, owls, hawks, and, above all, children.

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M. Wolmar appears to me quite another man, and I consider him less in the light of a husband to her whom I have so long adored, as in that of the father of two children for whom I would lay down my life.

I was going to walk around the basin, in order to draw nearer to this delightful asylum, and its little inhabitants, but Mrs. Wolmar checked me. "Nobody (says she) goes to disturb them in their dwelling, and you are the first of our guests whom I ever brought so far. There are four keys to this orchard, of which my father and me have each of us one: Fanny has the fourth, as superintendant, and to bring the children here now and then; the value of which favour is greatly enhanced by the extreme circumspection which is required of them while they are here. Even Gustin never comes hither without one of the four: when the two spring months are over, in which his labours are useful, he scarce ever comes hither afterwards, and all the rest we do ourselves. "Thus (said I), for fear of making your birds slaves to you, you make yourselves slaves to your birds."—"This (she replied) is exactly the sentiment of a tyrant, who never thinks that he enjoys liberty, but while he is disturbing the freedom of others."

As we were coming back, M. Wolmar threw a handful of barley into the basin, and on looking into it, I perceived some little fish. "Ah, ah

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(said I, immediately) here are some prisoners nevertheless.—“Yes, (said he) they are prisoners of war, who have had their lives spared.”——
 “Without doubt (added his wife). Some time since, Fanny stole two perch out of the kitchen, and brought them hither without my knowledge. I leave them here, for fear of offending her if I sent them to the lake; for it is better to confine the fish in too narrow a compass, than to disoblige a worthy creature.”——“You are in the right (said I), and the fish are not much to be pitied for having escaped from the frying-pan into the water.”

“Well, how does it appear to you? (said she, as we were coming back) are you got to the end of the world yet?”——“No (I replied), I am quite out of the world, and you have in truth transported me into Elysium.”——The pompous name she has given this orchard (said M. Wolmar) very well deserves that raillery. Be modest in your commendation of childish amusements, and be assured that they have never entrenched on the concerns of a mistress of a family.”——“I know it, I am sure of it (I replied); and childish amusements please me more in this way, than the labours of men.”

“Still there is one thing here (I continued) which I cannot conceive, which is, that though a place so different from what it was can never

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have been altered to its present state but by great care and culture, yet I can no where discover the least trace of cultivation. Every thing is verdant, fresh, and vigorous, and the hand of the gardener is no where to be discerned: nothing contradicts the idea of a desert island, which struck me at my first entrance, and I cannot perceive any footsteps of men."—"O (said M. Wolmar), it is because they have taken great pains to efface them. I have been frequently witness to, and sometimes an accomplice in this roguery. They sow all the cultivated spots with grass, which presently hides all appearance of culture. In the winter, they cover all the dry and barren spots with some lays of manure; the manure eats up the moss, revives the grass and the plants; the trees themselves do not fare the worse, and in the summer there is nothing of it to be seen. With regard to the moss which covers some of the walks, Lord B—— sent us the secret of making it grow from England. These two sides (he continued) were enclosed with walls; the walls have been covered, not with hedges, but with thick trees, which make the boundaries of the place appear like the beginning of a wood. The two other sides are secured by strong thickset hedges, well stocked with maple, hawthorne, holy-oak, privet, and other small trees, which destroy the appearance of the hedges, and make them look more like coppice woods. You see nothing here in an exact row, nothing level; the line never entered

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this place ; nature plants nothing by the line ; the affected irregularity of the winding walks is managed with art, in order to prolong the walk, to hide the boundaries of the island, and to enlarge its extent in appearance, without making inconvenient and too frequent turnings*.”

Upon considering the whole, I thought it somewhat extraordinary that they should take so much pains to conceal the labour they had been at ; would it not have been better to have taken no such pains ?” Notwithstanding all we have told you (replied Eloisa), you judge of the labour from its effect, and you deceive yourself. All that you see are wild and vigorous plants, which need only to be put into the earth, and which afterwards spring up of themselves. Besides, nature seems desirous of hiding her real charms from the sight of men, because they are too little sensible of them, and disfigure them when they are within their reach ; she flies from public places ; it is in the tops of mountains, in the midst of forests, in desert islands, that she displays her most affecting charms. They who are in love with her, and cannot go so far in pursuit of her, are forced to do her violence, by obliging her, in some measure, to come and dwell with them, and all this cannot be effected without some degree of illusion.”

* Like those fashionable little woods, so ridiculously twisted, that you are obliged to walk in a zigzag manner, and to make a *pirovette* at every step.

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At these words, I was struck with an idea which made them laugh. "I am supposing to myself (said I) some rich man to be master of this house, and to bring an architect who is paid an extravagant price for spoiling nature. With what disdain would he enter this plain and simple spot! With what contempt would he order these ragged plants to be torn up! What fine lines he would draw.—What fine walks he would cut!—What fine geese-feet, what fine trees in the shape of umbrellas and fans he would make! What fine arbour-work—nicely cut out! What beautiful grass-plats of fine English turf, round, square, sloping, oval! What fine yew-trees cut in the shape of dragons, pagods, marmosets, and all sorts of monsters! With what fine vases of brass, with what fine fruit in stone he would decorate his garden*!"—"When he had done all this (said M. Wolmar), he would have made a very fine place, which would scarce ever be frequented, and from whence one should always go with eagerness to enjoy the country; a dismal place, where nobody would walk, but only use it as a thoroughfare when they were setting out; whereas, in my rural rambles, I often make haste to return, that I may walk here.

* I am persuaded, that some time hence gardens will be furnished with nothing belonging to the country; neither plants nor trees will be suffered to grow in them: we shall see nothing but China flowers, baboons, arbour-work, gravel of all colours, and fine vases with nothing in them.

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“ I see nothing in those extensive grounds so lavishly ornamented, but the vanity of the proprietor and of the artist, who being eager to display, the one his riches and the other his talents, only contribute, at a vast expence, to tire those who would enjoy their works. A false taste of grandeur, which was never designed for man, poisons all his pleasures. An air of greatness has always something melancholy in it; it leads us to consider the wretchedness of those who affect it. In the midst of these grass plats and fine walks, the little individual does not grow greater; a tree twenty feet high will shelter him as well as one of sixty*; he never occupies a space of more than three feet, and in the midst of his immense possessions is lost like a poor worm.

“ There is another taste directly opposite to this, and still more ridiculous, because it does not allow us the pleasure of walking, for which gar-

* He might have enlarged on the bad taste of lopping trees in such a ridiculous manner, to make them shoot into the clouds, by taking off their fine tops, by draining the sap, and preventing their thriving. This method, it is true, supplies the gardeners with wood, but it robs the kingdom of it, which is not overstocked already. One would imagine that nature was different in France from what it is in any other part of the world, they take so much pains to disfigure her. The parks are planted with nothing but long poles; they are like so many forests of masts, and you walk in the midst of woods without finding any shelter.

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dens were intended.”—“ I understand you (said I); you allude to those petty virtuosi, who die away at the sight of a ranuncula, and fall prostrate before a tulip.” Hereupon, my Lord, I gave them an account of what happened to me formerly at London, in the flower-garden into which we were introduced with so much ceremony, and where we saw all the treasures of Holland displayed with so much lustre upon four beds of dung. I did not forget the ceremony of the umbrella and the little rod with which they honoured me, unworthy as I was, as well as the rest of the spectators. I modestly acknowledged how, by endeavouring to appear a virtuoso in my turn, and venturing to fall in ecstasies at the sight of a tulip which seemed to be of a fine shape, and of a lively colour, I was mocked, hooted at, and hissed by all the connoisseurs, and how the florist, who despised the flower, despised its panegyrist likewise to that degree, that he did not even deign to look at me all the time we were together. I added, that I supposed he highly regretted having prostituted his rod and umbrella on one so unworthy.”

“ This taste (said M. Wolmar) when it degenerates into a passion, has something idle and little in it, which renders it puerile, and ridiculously expensive. The other, at least, is noble, grand, and has something real in it. But what is the value of a curious root, which an insect

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gnaws or spoils perhaps as soon as it is purchased, or of a flower which is beautiful at noon-day, and fades before sun-set; what signifies a mere imaginary beauty, which is only obvious to the eyes of virtuosi, and which is a beauty only because they will have it to be so? The time will come when they will require different kinds of beauty in flowers from that which they seek after at present, and with as good reason; then you will be the connoisseur in your turn, and your virtuoso will appear ignorant. All these trifling attentions, which degenerate into a kind of study, are unbecoming a rational being, who would keep his body in moderate exercise, or relieve his mind by amusing himself in a walk with his friends. Flowers were made to delight our eyes as we pass along, and not to be so curiously anatomized*. See the queen of them shine in every part of the orchard. It perfumes the air, it ravishes the eyes, and costs neither care nor culture. It is for this reason that florists despise it; nature has made it so lovely, that they cannot add to it any borrowed beauty, and as they cannot plague themselves with cultivating it, they find

* The sagacious Wolmar had not sufficiently reflected. Was he, who was so skilful in judging of men, so bad a judge of nature? Did he not know that if the Author of Nature displays his greatness in great things, he appears still greater in those which are the least?

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nothing in it which flatters their fancy. The mistake of your pretenders to taste, is that they are desirous of introducing art in every thing, and are never satisfied unless the art appears; whereas true taste consists in concealing it, especially when it concerns any of the works of nature. To what purpose are those straight gravel walks which we meet with continually; and those stars which are so far from making a park appear more extensive to the view, as is commonly supposed, that they only contribute awkwardly to discover its boundaries? Do you ever see fine gravel in woods, or is that kind of gravel softer to the feet than moss or down? Does nature constantly make use of the square or rule? Are they afraid lest she should be visible in some spots, notwithstanding all their care to disfigure her? Upon the whole, it is droll enough to see them affect to walk in a straight line, that they may sooner reach the end, as if they were tired of walking before they have well begun? Would not one imagine, by their taking the shortest cut, that they were going a journey instead of a walk, and that they were in a hurry to get out as soon as they come in?

“How will a man of taste act, who lives to relish life, who knows how to enjoy himself, who pursues real and simple pleasures, and who is inclined to make a walk before his house? He will make it so convenient and agreeable, that he may

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enjoy it every hour of the day, and yet so natural and simple, that it will seem as if he had done nothing. He will introduce water, and will make the walk verdant, cool, and shady; for nature herself unites these properties. He will bestow no attention on symmetry, which is the bane of nature and variety, and the walks of gardens in general are so like each other, that we always fancy ourselves in the same. He will make the ground smooth, in order to walk more conveniently; but the two sides of his walks will not be exactly parallel; their direction will not always be recti-lineal; they will be somewhat irregular, like the steps of an indolent man, who saunters in his walk: he will not be anxious about opening distant perspectives. The taste for perspective and distant views proceeds from the disposition of men in general, who are never satisfied with the place where they are. They are always desirous of what is distant from them, and the artist who cannot make them contented with the objects around them, flies to this resource to amuse them; but such a man as I speak of is under no such inquietudes, and when he is agreeably fixed, he does not desire to be elsewhere. Here, for example, we have no prospect, and we are very well satisfied without any. We are willing to think that all the charms of nature are enclosed here, and I should be very

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much afraid lest a distant view should take off a good deal of the beauty from this walk*. Certainly, he who would not choose to pass his days in this simple and pleasant place is not master of true taste, or of a vigorous mind. I confess that one ought not to make a parade of bringing strangers hither; but then we can enjoy it ourselves, without showing it to any one."

"Sir (said I) those rich people who have such fine gardens have very good reasons for not choosing to walk alone, or to be in company with themselves only; therefore, they are in the right to lay them out for the pleasure of others. Besides, I have seen gardens in China, made after

* I do not know whether there has ever been an attempt to give a slight curve to these long walks, that the eye may not be able to reach the end of the walk, and that the opposite extremity may be hid from the spectator. It is true, the beauty of the prospects in perspective would be lost by these means; but proprietors would reap one advantage which they generally prize at a high rate, which is that of making their grounds more extensive in appearance; and, in the midst of a starry plot thus bounded, one might think himself in a vast park. I am persuaded that the walk would be less tiresome, though more solitary; for, whatever gives play to the imagination, excites ideas, and nourishes the mind: but gardeners are people who have no idea of these things. How often, in a rural spot, would the pencil drop from their hands, as it did from Le Nostre's in St. James's Park, if they knew like him what gave life to nature, and interested the beholder!

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your taste, and laid out with so much art, that the art was not seen; but in such a costly manner, and kept up at such a vast expence, that that single idea destroyed all the pleasure I had in viewing them. There were rocks, grottos, and artificial cascades, in level and sandy places, where there was nothing but spring-water; there were flowers and curious plants of all the climates in China and Tartary, collected and cultivated in the same soil. It is true, there were no fine walks or regular compartments; but you might see curiosities heaped together with profusion, which in nature are only to be found separate and scattered. Nature was there represented under a thousand various forms, and yet the whole taken together was not natural. Here neither earth nor stone are transplanted; you have neither pumps nor reservoirs; you have no occasion for green-houses, or stoves, or bell-glasses, or straw-beds. A plain spot of ground has been improved by a few simple ornaments. A few common herbs and trees, and a few purling streams, which flow without pomp or constraint, have contributed to embellish it. It is an amusement which has cost little trouble, and the simplicity of it is an additional pleasure to the beholder. I can conceive that this place might be made still more agreeable, and yet be infinitely less pleasing to me. Such, for example, is Lord Cobham's celebrated park at Stowe.

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It consists of places extremely beautiful and picturesque, modelled after the fashion of different countries, and in which every thing appears natural except their conjunction, as in the gardens of China, which I just now mentioned. The proprietor who made this stately solitude has even erected ruins, temples, old buildings; and different ages, as well as different places, are collected with more than mortal magnificence. This is the very thing I dislike. I would have the amusements of mankind carry an air of ease with them which does not put one in mind of their weakness, and that while we admire these curiosities, our imagination may not be disturbed by reflecting on the vast sums of money and labour they have cost. Are we not destined to trouble enough, without making our amusements a fatigue?

“ I have but one objection (added I, looking at Eloisa) to make to your Elifium, but which you will probably think of some weight, which is, that it is a superfluous amusement. To what purpose was it to make a new walk, when you have such beautiful groves on the other side of the house, which you neglect?”—“ That is true (said she) somewhat disconcerted, but I like this better.”—“ If you had thoroughly reflected on the propriety of your question before you had made it (said M. Wolmar, interrupting us) it might be imputed to you as more than an indif-

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cretion. My wife has never set her foot in those groves since she has been married. I know the reason, though she has always kept it a secret from me. You, who are no stranger to it, learn to respect the spot where you are; it has been planted by the hands of virtue."

I had scarce received this just reprimand, when the little family, led by Fanny, came in as we were going out. These three lovely children ran and embraced their parents; I likewise shared their little careffes. Eloisa and I returned into Elysium, to take a little turn with them; and afterwards went to join M. Wolmar, who was talking to some workmen. In our way, she told me, that she no sooner became a mother, than an idea struck into her mind, with respect to that walk, which increased her zeal for embellishing it." I had an eye (said she) to the health and amusement of my children as they grew up. It requires more care than labour to keep up this place; it is more essential to give a certain turn to the branches of the plants, than to dig and cultivate the ground: I intend one day to make gardeners of my little ones: they shall have sufficient exercise to strengthen their constitution, and not enough to enfeeble it. Besides, what is too much for their age shall be done by others, and they shall confine themselves to such little works as may amuse them. I cannot describe (says she) what pleasure I enjoy in imagining my infants

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busy in returning those little attentions which I now bestow on them with such satisfaction, and the joy of which their tender hearts will be susceptible, when they see their mother walking with delight under the shades which have been formed by their own hands. In truth, my friend (said she) with an affecting tone, time thus spent is an emblem of the felicity of the next world, and it was not without reason, that, reflecting on these scenes, I christened this placé before-hand by the name of Elyfium." My Lord, this incomparable woman is as amiable in the character of a mother as in that of a wife, a friend, a daughter ; and to the eternal punishment of my soul, she was thus lovely when my mistress.

Transported with this delightful place, I entreated them in the evening to consent that, during my stay, Fanny should entrust me with her key, and consign to me the office of feeding the birds. Eloisa immediately sent a sack of grain to my chamber, and gave me her own key. I cannot tell for what reason, but I accepted it with a kind of concern, and it seemed as if M. Wolmar's would have been more acceptable to me.

In the morning, I rose early, and with all the eagerness of a child, went to lock myself in the desert island. What agreeable ideas did I hope to carry with me into that solitary place, where the mild aspect of nature alone was sufficient to banish from my remembrance all that new coined system

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At her side I beheld the grave Wolmar, that husband so beloved, so happy, and so worthy of felicity. I imagined that I could perceive his judicious and penetrating eye pierce to the very bottom of my soul, and make me blush again; I fancied that I heard him utter reproaches which I too well deserved, and repeat lectures which I had attended in vain. Last in her train I saw Fanny Regnard, a lively instance of the triumph of virtue and humanity over the most ardent passion. Ah! what guilty thought could reach so far as her, through such an impervious guard! With what indignation I suppressed the shameful transports of a criminal, and scarce extinguished passion, and how I should have despised myself had I contaminated such a ravishing scene of honour and innocence with a single sigh. I recalled to mind the reflections she made as we were going out; then my imagination attending her into that futurity on which she delights to contemplate, I saw that affectionate mother wipe the sweat from her children's foreheads, kiss their ruddy cheeks, and devote that heart, which was formed for love, to the most tender sentiments of nature. There was nothing, even to the very name of Elysium, but what contributed to rectify my rambling imagination, and to inspire my soul with a calm far preferable to the agitation of the most seductive passions. The word Elysium seemed

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to me an emblem of the purity of her mind who adopted it; and I concluded that she would never have made choice of that name, had she been tormented with a troubled conscience. "Peace (said I), reigns in the inmost recesses of her soul, as in this asylum which she has named."

I proposed to myself an agreeable reverie, and my reflections there were more agreeable even than I expected. I passed two hours in Elysium, which were not inferior to any time I ever spent. In observing with what rapidity and delight they passed away, I perceived that there was a kind of felicity in meditating on honest reflections, which the wicked never know, and which consists in being pleased with one's self. If we were to reflect on this without prejudice, I do not know any other pleasure can equal it. I perceive, at least, that one who loves solitude, as I do, ought to be extremely cautious not to do any thing which may make it tormenting. Perhaps these principles may lead us to discover the spring of the false judgment of mankind with regard to vice and virtue; for the enjoyment of virtue is all internal, and is only perceived by him who feels it: but all the advantages of vice strike the imagination of other, and only he who has purchased them knows what they cost.

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*Se a ciascun l' interno affanno
 Si legesse in fronte scritto,
 Quanti mai, che invidia fanno
 Ci farebberro pietà * ?*

The aching heart and smiling face
 Thus may our envy move,
 Which, did we know the wretched's case,
 Would our compassion prove.

As it grew late before I perceived it, M. Wolmar came to join me, and acquaint me that Eloisa and the tea waited for me. "It is you yourselves (said I, making an apology) who prevented my coming sooner: I was so delighted with the evening I spent yesterday, that I went thither again to enjoy this morning; luckily there is no harm done, and as you have waited for me, my morning is not lost."—"That is true (said M. Wolmar); it would be better to wait till noon, than lose the pleasure of breakfasting together. Strangers are never admitted into my

* He might have added the conclusion, which is very fine, and as apposite to the subject.

*Si vedria che i lor nemici
 Anno in seno, e si reduce
 Nel parere a noi felici
 Ogni lor felicità.*

So when, reduc'd or bent with years,
 Poor mortals sigh for rest,
 Each, wretched as he yet appears,
 With something still is blest.

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room in the morning, but breakfast in their own. Breakfast is the repast of intimates, servants are excluded, and impertinents never appear at that time; we then declare all we think, we reveal all our secrets, we disguise none of our sentiments; we can then enjoy the delights of intimacy and confidence, without indiscretion. It is almost the only time in which we are allowed to appear what we really are: why cannot it last the day through!"—Ah Eloisa! (I was ready to say) this is an interesting wish! but I was silent. The first thing I learnt to suppress with my love, was flattery. To praise people to their face is but to tax them with vanity. You know, my lord, whether Mrs. Wolmar deserves this reproach. No; I respect her too much, not to respect her silence. Is it not a sufficient commendation of her, to listen to her, and observe her conduct?

LETTER CXXXI.

FROM MRS. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

It is decreed, my dear friend, that you are on all occasions to be my protectress against myself, and that after having delivered me from the snares which my affections laid for me, you are yet to rescue me from those which reason spreads to entrap me. After so many cruel instances, I

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have learned to guard against mistakes, as much as against my passions, which are frequently the cause of them. Why had I not the same precaution always! If in time past I had relied less on the light of my own understanding, I should have had less reason to blush at my sentiments.

Do not be alarmed at this preamble. I should be unworthy your friendship, if I was still under a necessity of consulting you upon dismal subjects. Guilt was always a stranger to my heart, and I dare believe it to be more distant from me now than ever. Therefore, Clara, attend to me patiently, and believe that I shall never need your advice in difficulties which honour alone can resolve.

During these six years which I have lived with M. Wolmar in the most perfect union which can subsist between a married couple, you know that he never talked to me either about his family, or himself, and that having received him from a father as solicitous for his daughter's happiness as jealous of the honour of his family, I never expressed any eagerness to know more of his concerns than he thought proper to communicate. Satisfied with being indebted to him for my honour, my repose, my reason, my children, and all that can render me estimable in my own eyes, besides the life of him who gave me being, I was convinced that the particulars concerning him, to which I was a stranger, would not falsify what

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I knew of him, and there was no occasion for my knowing more, in order to love, esteem, and honour him, as much as possible.

This morning at breakfast he proposed our taking a little walk before the heat of the day came on; then, under a pretence of not going through the country in a morning dishabille, as he said, he led us into the woods, and exactly into that wood where all the misfortunes of my life commenced. As I approached that fatal spot, I felt a violent palpitation of heart, and should have refused to have gone in, if shame had not checked me, and if the recollection of a word which dropped the other day in Elysium had not made me dread the interpretations which might have been passed on such a refusal. I do not know whether the philosopher was more composed; but some time after, having cast my eyes upon him by chance, I found his countenance pale and altered, and I cannot express to you the uneasiness it gave me.

On entering into the wood, I perceived my husband cast a glance towards me, and smile. He sat down between us, and after a moment's pause, taking us both by the hand, "My dear children (said he) I begin to perceive that my schemes will not be fruitless, and that we three may be connected by a lasting attachment, capable of promoting our common good, and procuring me some comfort to alleviate the trou-

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bles of approaching old age : but I am better acquainted with you two than you are with me ; it is but just to make every thing equal among us, and though I have nothing very interesting to impart, yet as you have no secrets hidden from me, I will have none concealed from you."

He then revealed to us the mystery of his birth, which had hitherto been known to no one but my father. When you are acquainted with it, you will imagine what great temper and moderation a man must be master of, who was able to conceal such a secret from his wife during six years ; but it is no pain to him to keep such a secret, and he thinks too slightly of it, to be obliged to exert any vast efforts to conceal it.

"I will not detain you (said he) with relating the occurrences of my life. It is of less importance to you to be acquainted with my adventures than with my character. The former are simple in their nature like the latter ; and when you know what I am, you will easily imagine what I was capable of doing. My mind is naturally calm, and my affections temperate. I am one of those men whom people think they reproach when they call them insensible ; that is, when they upbraid them with having no passion which may impel them to swerve from the true direction of human nature. Being but little susceptible of pleasure or grief, I

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receive but faint impressions from those interesting sentiments of humanity, which make the affections of others our own. If I feel uneasiness when I see the worthy in distress, it is not without reason that my compassion is moved, for when I see the wicked suffer, I have no pity for them. My only active principle is a natural love of order, and the concurrence of the accidents of fortune, with the conduct of mankind well combined together, pleases me exactly like beautiful symmetry in a picture, or like a piece well represented on the stage. If I have any ruling passion, it is that of observation: I love to read the hearts of mankind. As my own seldom misleads me, as I make my observations with a disinterested and dispassionate temper, and as I have acquired some sagacity by long experience, I am seldom deceived in my judgment; this advantage, therefore, is the only recompence which self-love receives from my constant studies: for I am not fond of acting a part, but only of observing others. Society is agreeable to me for the sake of contemplation, and not as a member of it. If I could alter the nature of my being, and become a living eye, I would willingly make the exchange. Therefore, my indifference about mankind does not make me independent of them; without being solicitous to be seen, I want to see them, and though they are not dear to me, they are necessary.

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“The two first characters in society which I had an opportunity of observing, were courtiers and valets; two orders of men who differ more in appearance than fact, but so little worthy of being attended to, and so easily read, that I was tired of them at first sight. By quitting the court, where every thing is presently seen, I secured myself, without knowing it, from the danger which threatened me, and which I should not have escaped. I changed my name, and having a desire to be acquainted with military men, I solicited admission into the service of a foreign prince; it was there that I had the happiness of being useful to your father, who was impelled by despair for having killed his friend, to expose himself rashly and contrary to his duty. The grateful and susceptible heart of a brave officer began then to give me a better opinion of human nature. He attached himself to me with that zealous friendship which it was impossible for me not to return, and from that time we formed connexions which have every day grown stronger. I discovered in this new state of my mind, that interest is not always, as I had supposed, the sole motive which influences human conduct, and that among the crowd of prejudices which are opposite to virtue, there are some likewise which are favourable to it. I found that the general character of mankind was founded on a kind of self-love indifferent in itself, and either good or bad according

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to the accidents which modify it, and which depend on customs, laws, rank, fortune, and every circumstance relative to human policy. I, therefore, indulged my inclination, and despising the vain notions of worldly condition, I successively threw myself into all the different situations in life, which might enable me to compare them together, and know one by the other. I perceived, as you have observed in one of your letters (said he to St. Preux) that we see nothing if we rest satisfied with looking on; that we ought to act ourselves in order to judge of men's actions, and I made myself an actor, to qualify myself for a spectator. We can always lower ourselves with ease; and I stooped to a variety of situations which no man of my station ever condescended to. I even became a peasant, and when Eloisa made me her gardener, she did not find me such a novice in the business as she might have expected.

“ Besides gaining a thorough knowledge of mankind, which indolent philosophy only attains in appearance, I found another advantage, which I never expected. This was the opportunity it afforded me of improving, by an active life, that love of order I derived from nature, and of acquiring a new relish for virtue, by the pleasure of contributing towards it. This sentiment made me less speculative, attached me somewhat more to myself, and from a natural consequence of this

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progress, I perceived that I was alone. Solitude which was always tiresome to me, became hideous and I could not hope to escape it long. Though I did not grow less dispassionate, I found the want of some connexion; the idea of decay, without any one to comfort me, afflicted me by anticipation, and for the first time in my life, I experienced melancholy and uneasiness. I communicated my troubles to the Baron d'Etange. "You must not (said he) grow an old bachelor. I myself, after having lived independent as it were, in a state of matrimony, find that I have a desire of returning to the duties of a husband and a father, and I am going to repose myself in the midst of my family. It depends on yourself to make my family your own, and to supply the place of the son whom I have lost. I have an only daughter to marry; she is not destitute of merit; she has a sensibility of mind, and the love of her duty makes her love every thing relative to it. She is neither a beauty nor a prodigy of understanding; but come and see her, and believe me, that if she does not affect you, no woman will ever make an impression on you." I came, I saw you, Eloisa, and found that your father had reported modestly of you. Your transports, the tears of joy you shed when you embraced him, gave me the first, or rather the only emotion I ever experienced in my life. If the impression was slight, it was the only one I felt, and our sensations are strong only in propor-

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tion to those which oppose them. Three years absence made no change in my inclinations. I was no stranger to the state of yours on my return, and on this occasion I must make you a return for the confession which has cost you so dear." Judge, my dear Clara, with what extraordinary surprise I learnt that all my secrets had been discovered to him before our marriage, and that he had wedded me, knowing me to be the property of another.

"This conduct (continued M. Wolmar) was unpardonable. I offended against delicacy; I sinned against prudence; I exposed your honour and my own; I should have been apprehensive of plunging you and myself into irretrievable calamities; but I loved you, and I loved nothing but you. Every thing else was indifferent to me. How is it possible to restrain a passion, be it ever so weak, when it has no counterpoise? This is the inconvenience of calm and dispassionate tempers. Every thing goes right while their insensibility secures them from temptations; but if one happens to touch them, they are conquered as soon as they are attacked, and reason, which governs while she sways alone, has no power to resist the slightest effort. I was tempted but once, and I gave way to it. If the intoxication of any other passion had rendered me wavering, I should have fallen, every false step I took; none but spi-

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rited souls are able to struggle and conquer. All great efforts, all sublime actions, are their province; cool reason never achieved any thing illustrious, and we can only triumph over our passions by opposing one against another. When virtue gains the ascendancy she reigns alone, and keeps all in due poise; this forms the true philosopher, who is as much exposed to the assaults of passion as another, but who alone is capable of subduing them by their own force, as a pilot steers through adverse winds.

“ You find that I do not attempt to extenuate my fault; had it been one, I should infallibly have committed it; but I knew you, Eloisa, and was guilty of none when I married you. I perceived that all my prospect of happiness depended on you alone, and that if any one was capable of making you happy, it was myself. I knew that peace and innocence were essential to your mind, that the affection with which it was pre-engaged could not afford them, and that nothing could banish love but the horror of guilt. I saw that your soul laboured under an oppression which it could not shake off but by some new struggle, and that to make you sensible how valuable you still were, was the only way to render you truly estimable.

“ Your heart was formed for love; I, therefore, slighted the disproportion of age, which excluded me from a right of pretending to that af-

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fection, which he who was the object of it could not enjoy, and which it was impossible to obtain for any other. On the contrary, finding my life half spent, and that I had been susceptible but of a single impression, I concluded that it would be lasting, and I pleased myself with the thoughts of preserving it the rest of my days. In all my tedious searches, I found nothing so estimable as yourself; I thought that what you could not effect no one in the world could accomplish; I ventured to rely on your virtue, and I married you. The secrecy you observed did not surprise me: I knew the reason, and from your prudent conduct I guessed how long it would last. From a regard to you, I copied your reserve, and I would not deprive you of the honour of one day making me a confession, which I plainly perceived was at your tongue's end every minute. I have not been deceived in any particular; you have fully answered all I expected from you. When I made choice of a wife, I desired to find in her an amiable, discreet, and happy companion. The first two requisites have been obtained. I hope, my dear, that we shall not be disappointed of the third."

At these words, in spite of all my endeavours not to interrupt him by my tears, I could not forbear throwing myself round his neck, and crying out, "O my dear husband! O thou best and

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most amiable of men! tell me what is wanting to complete my happiness, but to promote your felicity, and to be more deserving."—"You are as happy as you can be (said he, interrupting me); you deserve to be so; but it is time to enjoy that felicity in peace, which has hitherto cost you such vast pains. If your fidelity had been all I required, that would have been insured the moment you made me the promise; I wanted, moreover, to make it easy and agreeable to you, and we have both laboured to this end in concert, without communicating our views to each other. Eloisa, we have succeeded better than you imagine, perhaps. The only fault I find in you is, that you do not resume that confidence which you have a right to repose in yourself, and that you undervalue your own worth. Extreme diffidence is as dangerous as excessive confidence. As that rashness which prompts us to attempts beyond our strength renders our power ineffectual, so that timidity which prevents us from relying on ourselves, renders it useless. True prudence consists in being thoroughly acquainted with the measure of our own power, and acting up to it. You have acquired an increase of strength by changing your condition. You are no longer that unfortunate girl who bewailed the weakness she indulged; you are the most virtuous of women; you are bound by no laws but those of honour and duty; and the only fault that can now be im-

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puted to you is, that you retain too lively a sense of your former indiscretions. Instead of taking reproachful precautions against yourself, learn to depend upon yourself, and your confidence will increase your strength. Banish that injurious diffidence, and think yourself happy in having made choice of an honest man, at an age which is liable to imposition, and in having entertained a lover formerly, whom you may now enjoy as a friend, even under your husband's eye. I was no sooner made acquainted with your connexions than I judged of you by each other. I perceived what enthusiastic delusion led you astray; it never operates but on susceptible minds; it sometimes ruins them, but it is by a charm which has power to seduce them alone. I judged that the same turn of mind which formed your attachment would break it as soon as it became criminal, and that vice might find an entrance, but never take root in such hearts as yours.

“ I conceived moreover, that the connexion between you ought not to be broken; that there were so many laudable circumstances attending your mutual attachment, that it ought rather to be rectified than destroyed; and that neither of the two could forget the other, without diminishing their own worth. I knew that great struggles only served to inflame strong passions, and if violent efforts exercise the mind, they oc-

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caſion ſuch torments as by their continuance might ſubdue it. I took advantage of Eloifa's gentleneſs to moderate the ſeverity of her reflections. I nourished her friendſhip for you (ſaid he to St. Preux); I baniſhed all immoderate paſſion, and I believe that I have preſerved you a greater ſhare of her affections than ſhe would have left you had I abandoned her entirely to herſelf.

“ My ſucceſs encouraged me, and I determined to attempt your cure as I had accompliſhed hers; for I had an eſteem for you, and notwithſtanding the prejudices of vice, I have always obſerved that every good end is to be obtained from ſuſceptible minds, by means of confidence and ſincerity. I ſaw you; you did not deceive me; you will not deceive me; and though you are not yet what you ought to be, I find you more improved than you imagine, and I am better ſatisfied with you than you are with yourſelf. I know that my conduct has an extravagant appearance, and is repugnant to the common received principles. But maxims become leſs general, in proportion as we are better acquainted with the human heart; and Eloifa's huſband ought not to act like common men. My dear children (ſaid he, with a tone the more affecting as it came from a diſpaſſionate man), remain what you are, and we ſhall all be happy. Danger conſiſts chiefly in opinion; be not afraid of yourſelves, and you will have nothing to apprehend; only think on the preſent,

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and I will answer for the future. I cannot communicate any thing further to-day, but if my schemes succeed, and my hopes do not betray me, our destiny will be better fulfilled, and you too will be much happier than if you had enjoyed each other."

As we rose, he embraced us, and would have us likewise embrace each other, on that spot—on that very spot where formerly—Clara, O my dear Clara, how dearly have you ever loved me! I made no resistance. Alas! how indiscreet would it have been to have made any! This kiss was nothing like that which rendered the grove terrible to me. I silently congratulated myself, and I found that my heart was more changed than I had hitherto ventured to imagine.

As we were walking towards home, my husband, taking me by the hand, stopped me, and showing me the wood we had just left, he said to me, smiling, "Eloisa, be no longer afraid of this asylum; it has not been lately prophaned." You will not believe me, cousin, but I swear that he has some supernatural gift of reading one's inmost thoughts: may Heaven continue it to him!—Having such reason to despise myself, it is certainly to this art that I am indebted for his indulgence.

You do not see yet any occasion I have for your advice; patience, my angel! I am coming.

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to that point; but the conversation which I have related was necessary to clear up what follows.

On our return, my husband, who has long been expected at Etange, told me that he proposed going thither to-morrow, that he should see you in his way, and that he should stay there five or six days. Without saying all I thought concerning such an ill-timed journey, I told him, that I imagined the necessity was not so indispensable as to oblige M. Wolmar to leave his guest, whom he had himself invited to his house. "Would you have me (he replied), use ceremony with him, to remind him that he is not at home? I am like the Valaisans for hospitality. I hope he will find their sincerity here, and allow us to use their freedom." Perceiving that he would not understand me, I took another method, and endeavoured to persuade our guest to take the journey with him. "You will find a spot (said I) which has its beauties, and such as you are fond of; you will visit my patrimony, and that of my ancestors; the interest you take in every thing which concerns me, will not allow me to suppose that such a sight can be indifferent to you." My mouth was open to add, that the castle was like that of Lord B——,— who . . . but luckily I had time to bite my tongue. He answered me coolly, that I was in the right, and that he would do as I pleased. But M. Wolmar, who seemed determined to drive me to an extremity, replied, that he should

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do what was most agreeable to himself. "Which do you like best, to go or to stay?"—"To stay," (said he, without hesitating). "Well, stay then (rejoined my husband, taking him by the hand): you are a sincere and honest man, and I am well pleased with that declaration." There was no room for much altercation between my husband and me, and in the hearing of this third person. I was silent, but could not conceal my uneasiness so well but my husband perceived it. "What! (said he, with an air of discontent, St. Pruex being at a little distance from us) shall I have pleaded your cause against yourself in vain, and will Mrs. Wolmar remain satisfied with a virtue which depends on opportunity? For my part, I am more nice; I will be indebted for the fidelity of my wife to her affection, not to chance; and it is not enough that she is constant, it wounds my delicacy to think that she should doubt her constancy."

At length he took us into his closet, where I was extremely surprised to see him take from a drawer, along with the copies of some of our friend's correspondences, which I delivered to him, the very original letters which I thought I had seen burned by B—— in my mother's room. "Here (said he to me, showing them to us) are the pledges of my security; if they deceive me, it would be a folly to depend on any thing which

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concerns human nature. I consign my wife and my honour in charge to her, who, when single and seduced, preferred an act of benevolence to a secure and private rendezvous. I trust Eloisa, now that she is a wife and a mother, to him, who, when he had it in his power to gratify his desires, yet knew how to respect Eloisa when single, and a fond girl. If either of you think so meanly of yourselves, as to suppose that I am in the wrong, say so, and I retract this instant." Cousin, do you think that one could easily venture to make answer to such a speech.

I nevertheless sought an opportunity, in the afternoon, of speaking with my husband in private, and without entering into reasons which I was not at liberty to urge, I only entreated him to put off his journey for two days. My request was granted immediately, and I employ the time in sending you this express, and waiting for your answer, to know how I am to act.

I know that I need but desire my husband not to go at all, and he who never denied me any thing will not refuse me so slight a favour. But I perceive, my dear, that he takes a pleasure in the confidence he reposes in me, and I am afraid of forfeiting some share of his esteem, if he should suppose that I have occasion for more reserve than he allows me. I know, likewise, that I need but speak a word to St. Preux, and that he will accompany my husband without hesitation; but

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what will my husband think of the change, and can I take such a step without preserving an air of authority over St. Preux, which might seem to entitle him to some privileges in his turn? Besides, I am afraid, lest he should conclude from this precaution, that I find it absolutely necessary, and this step, which at first sight appears most easy, is the most dangerous perhaps at the bottom. Upon the whole, however, I am not ignorant that no consideration should be put in competition with a real danger; but does this danger exist in fact? This is the very doubt which you must resolve for me.

The more I examine the present state of my mind, the more I find to encourage me. My heart is spotless, my conscience calm; I have no symptoms of fear or uneasiness; and with respect to every thing which passes within me, my sincerity before my husband costs me no trouble. Not but that certain involuntary recollections sometimes occasion tender emotions, from which I had rather be exempt; but these recollections are so far from being produced by the sight of him who was the original cause of them, that they seem to be less frequent since his return; and however agreeable it is to me to see him, yet I know not from what strange humour, it is more agreeable to me to think of him. In a word, I find that I do not even require the aid of virtue, in order to be composed in his presence, and, exclusive of the

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horror of guilt, it would be very difficult to revive those sentiments which virtue has extinguished.

But is it sufficient, my dear, that my heart encourages me, when reason ought to alarm me? I have forfeited the right of depending on my own strength. Who will answer that my confidence, even now, is not an illusion of vice? How shall I rely on those sentiments which have so often deceived me? Does not guilt always spring from that pride which prompts us to despise temptation; and when we defy those dangers which have occasioned our fall, does it not show a disposition to yield again to temptation?

Weigh all these circumstances, my dear Clara, you will find that though they may be trifling in themselves, they are of sufficient importance to merit attention, when you consider the object they concern. Deliver me from the uncertainty into which they have thrown me. Show me how I must behave in this critical conjuncture; for my past errors have affected my judgment, and rendered me diffident in deciding upon any thing. Whatever you may think of yourself, your mind, I am certain, is tranquil and composed; objects present themselves to you such as they are; but in mine, which is agitated like a troubled sea, they are confounded and disfigured. I no longer dare to depend upon any thing I see, or any thing I feel, and, notwithstanding so many years re-

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POOR Eloisa! With so much reason to live at ease, what torments you continually create! All thy misfortunes come from thyself, O Israel! If you adhered to your own maxims; if, in point of sentiment, you only hearkened to the voice within you, and your heart did but silence your reason, you would then, without scruple, trust to that security it inspires, and you would not constrain yourself against the testimony of your own heart, to dread a danger which can arise only from thence.

I understand you, I perfectly understand you, Eloisa; being more secure in yourself than you pretend to be, you have a mind to humble yourself on account of your past failings, under a pretence of preventing new ones; and your scruples are not so much precautions against the future, as a penance you impose upon yourself, to atone for the indiscretion which formerly ruined you. You compare the times! do you consider? Compare situations likewise, and remember that I then re-

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proved you for your confidence, as I now reprove you for your diffidence.

You are mistaken, my dear; but nature does not alter so soon. If we can forget our situation for want of reflection, we see it in its true light when we take pains to consider it, and we can no more conceal from ourselves our virtues than our vices. Your gentleness and devotion have given you a turn for humility. Mistrust that dangerous virtue, which only excites self-love, by making it centre in one point; and be assured, that the noble sincerity of an upright mind is greatly preferable to the pride of humility. If moderation is necessary in wisdom, it is requisite, likewise, in those precautions it suggests, lest a solicitude which is reproachful to virtue should debase the mind, and, by keeping us in constant alarm, render a chimerical danger a real one. Do not you perceive, that after we have had a fall, we should hold ourselves upright, and that by leaning too much towards the side opposite to that on which we fell, we are in danger of falling again? Cousin, you loved like Eloisa. Now, like her, you are an extravagant devotee; I hope you will be more successful in the latter than you were in the former! In truth, if I was less acquainted with your natural timidity, your apprehensions would be sufficient to terrify me in my turn; and if I were so scrupulous, I might, from being alarmed for you, begin to tremble for myself.

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Consider further, my dear friend; you whose system of morality is as easy and natural as it is pure and honest, do not make constructions which are harsh and foreign to your character, with respect to your maxims concerning the separation of the sexes. I agree with you that they ought not to live together, nor after the same manner; but consider whether this important rule does not admit of many distinctions in point of practice; examine whether it ought to be applied indiscriminately, and without exception, to married as well as to single women, to society in general as well as to particular connections, to business as well as to amusements, and whether that honour and decency which inspire these maxims, ought not sometimes to regulate them? In well governed countries, where the natural relations of things are attended to in matrimony, you would admit of assemblies where young persons of both sexes might see, be acquainted, and associate with each other; but you prohibit them with good reason, from holding any private intercourse. But is not the case quite different with regard to married women and the mothers of families, who can have no interest that is justifiable, in exhibiting themselves in public; who are confined within doors by their domestic concerns, and who should not be refused to do any thing at home which is becoming the mistress of a family? I should not like to see you in the cellars, presenting the wine

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for the merchants to taste, nor to see you leave your children to settle accounts with a banker; but if an honest man should come to visit your husband, or to transact some business with him, will you refuse to entertain his guest in his absence, and to do him the honours of the house, for fear of being left alone with him? Trace this principle to its source, and it will explain all your maxims. Why do we suppose that women ought to live retired and apart from the men? Shall we do such injustice to our sex, as to account for it upon principles drawn from our weakness, and that it is only to avoid the danger of temptations? No, my dear, these unworthy apprehensions do not become an honest woman, and the mother of a family, who is continually surrounded with objects which cherish in her the sentiments of honour, and who is devoted to the most respectable duties of human nature. It is nature herself that divides us from the men, by prescribing to us different occupations; it is that amiable and timorous modesty, which, without being immediately attentive to chastity, is nevertheless its surest guardian; it is that cautious and affecting reserve, which at one and the same time cherishing both desire and respect in the hearts of men, serves as a kind of coquetry to virtue. This is the reason why even husbands themselves are not excepted out of this rule. This is the reason why the most discreet women generally maintain the great-

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est ascendancy over their husbands; because, by the help of this prudent and discreet reserve, without showing any caprice or non-compliance, they know, even in the embraces of the most tender union, how to keep them at a distance, and prevent their being cloyed with them. You will agree with me that your maxims are too general not to admit of exceptions, and that not being founded on any rigorous duty, the same principle of decorum which established them may sometimes justify our dispensing with them.

The circumspection which you ground on your past failings is injurious to your present condition; I will never pardon this unnecessary caution which your heart dictates, and I can scarce forgive it in your reason. How! was it possible that the rampart which protects your person could not secure you from such ignominious apprehensions? How could my cousin, my sister, my friend, my Eloisa, confound the indiscretions of a girl of too much sensibility, with the infidelity of a guilty wife? Look around you, you will see nothing but what contributes to raise and support your mind. Your husband, who has such confidence in you, and whose esteem it becomes you to justify; your children, whom you would train to virtue, and who will one day deem it an honour that you was their mother; your venerable father, who is so dear to you, who enjoys your felicity, and who derives more lustre from you

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than from his ancestors; your friend, whose fate depends on your's, and to whom you must be accountable for a reformation to which she has contributed; her daughter, to whom you ought to set an example of those virtues which you would excite in her; your philosopher, who is an hundred times fonder of your virtues than of your person, and who respects you still more than you apprehend; lastly, yourself, who are sensible what painful efforts your discretion has cost you, and who will surely never forfeit the fruit of so much trouble in a single moment; how many motives capable of inspiring you with courage conspire to make you ashamed of having ventured to mistrust yourself! But, in order to answer for my Eloisa, what occasion have I to consider what she is? It is enough that I know what she was, during the indiscretions which she bewails. Ah! if your heart had ever been capable of infidelity, I would allow you to be continually apprehensive: but at the very time when you imagined that you viewed it at a distance, you may conceive the horror its real existence would have occasioned you, by what you felt at that time, when but to imagine it had been to have committed it.

I recollect with what astonishment we learnt that there was a nation where the weakness of a fond maid is considered as an inexpiable crime, though the adultery of a married woman is there softened by the gentle term of gallantry, and

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where married women publickly make themselves amends for the short-lived restraint they undergo when single. I know what maxims, in this respect, prevail in high life, where virtue passes for nothing, where every thing is empty appearance, where crimes are effaced by the difficulty of proving them, or where the proof itself becomes ridiculous against custom. But you, Eloisa, you who glowed with a pure and constant passion, who was guilty only in the eyes of men, and between heaven and earth was open to no reproach! You, who made yourself respected in the midst of your indiscretions; you, who being abandoned to fruitless regret, obliged us even to adore those virtues which you had forfeited; you, who disdained to endure self-contempt, when every thing seemed to plead in your excuse, can you be apprehensive of guilt, after having paid so dearly for your weakness? Will you dare to be afraid that you have less power now than you had in those days which cost you so many tears? No, my dear, so far from being alarmed at your former indiscretions, they ought to inspire you with courage; so severe a repentance does not lead to remorse, and whoever is so susceptible of shame, will never bid defiance to infamy.

If ever a weak mind had supports against its weakness, they are such as uphold you; if ever a vigorous mind was capable of supporting itself, what prop can your's require? Tell me, what

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reasonable grounds there can be for your apprehensions? All your life has been a continual struggle, in which, even after your defeat, honour and duty never ceased opposition, and at length came off victorious. Ah! Eloisa! shall I believe that, after so much pain and torment, after twelve years passed in tears, and six spent gloriously, that you still dread a trial of eight days? In few words, deal sincerely with yourself; if there be really any danger, save your person, and blush at the condition of your heart; if there is no danger, it is an offence to your reason, it is a dishonour to your virtue to be apprehensive of perils, which can never affect it. Do you not know that there are some scandalous temptations which never approach noble minds; that it is even shameful to be under a necessity of subduing them, and that to take precautions against them, is not so much to humble, as to debase ourselves?

I do not presume to give you my arguments as unanswerable, but only to convince you that your's may be controverted, and that is sufficient to warrant my advice. Do not depend on yourself, for you do not know how to do yourself justice; nor on me, who even in your indiscretions never considered any thing but your heart, and always adored you; but refer to your husband, who sees you such as you are, and judges of you exactly according to your real worth. Being, like all people of sensibility, ready to judge ill of those who

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who appear insensible, I mistrusted his power of penetration, into the secrets of susceptible minds ; but since the arrival of our traveller, I find by his letters that he reads your's perfectly well, and that there is not a single emotion which escapes his observation. I find his remarks so just and acute, that I have almost changed my opinion to the other extreme ; and I shall readily believe that your dispassionate people, who consult their eyes more than their hearts, judge better of other men's passions than your impetuous, lively, and vain persons like myself, who always begin by supposing themselves in another's place, and can never see any thing but what they feel. However it be, M. Wolmar is thoroughly acquainted with you, he esteems you, he loves you, and his destiny is blended with your's. What does he require, but that you would leave to him the entire direction of your conduct, with which you are afraid to trust yourself? Perhaps, finding old age coming on, he is desirous, by some trials on which he may depend, to prevent those uneasy jealousies, which an old husband generally feels who is married to a young wife ; perhaps the design he has in view requires that you should live in a state of familiarity with your friend, without alarming either your husband or yourself ; perhaps he only means to give you a testimony of confidence and esteem, worthy of that which he entertains for you. You should never oppose

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such sentiments, as if the weight of them was too much for you to endure; and for my part, I think that you cannot act more agreeably to the dictates of prudence and modesty, than by relying entirely on his tenderness and understanding.

Could you, without offending M. Wolmar, punish yourself for a vanity you never had, and prevent a danger which no longer exists? Remain alone with the philosopher, use all the superfluous precautions against him which would formerly have been of such service to you; maintain the same reserve as if you still mistrusted your own heart and his, as well as your own virtue. Avoid all pathetic conversation, all tender recollection of times past; break off or prevent long private interviews; be constantly surrounded by your children; do not stay long with him in a room, in Elysium, or in the grove, notwithstanding the profanation. Above all things, use these precautions in so natural a manner, that they may seem to be the effect of chance, and that he may never once suspect that you are afraid of him. You love to go upon the water, but you deprive yourself of the pleasure, on account of your husband, who is afraid of that element, and of your children, whom you do not choose to venture there. Take the advantage of this absence, to entertain yourself with this recreation, and leave your children to the care of Fanny. By this means you may securely devote yourself to the

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sweet familiarity of friendship, and quietly enjoy a long *tête-à-tête* under the protection of the waterman, who see without understanding, and from whom we cannot go far without thinking what we are about.

A thought strikes me which many people would laugh at, but which will be agreeable to you, I am sure; that is to keep an exact journal in your husband's absence, to shew him on his return, and to think on this journal, with regard to every circumstance which is to be set down in it. In truth, I do not believe that such an expedient would be of service to many women; but a sincere mind, incapable of deceit, has many resources against vice, which others stand in need of. We ought to despise nothing which tends to preserve a purity of manners, and it is by means of trifling precautions, that great virtues are secured.

Upon the whole, as your husband is to see me in his way, he will tell me, I hope, the true reasons of his journey, and if I do not find them substantial, I will persuade him from proceeding any farther; or, at all events, I will do what he has refused to do: upon this you may depend. In the mean time, I think I have said enough to fortify you against a trial of eight days. Go, Eloisa, I know you too well, not to answer for you as much, nay more than I could for myself. You will always be what you ought to be, and what

you desire to be. If you do but rely on the integrity of your own mind, you will run no risk whatever ; for I have no faith in these unforeseen defects ; it is in vain to disguise voluntary failings by the idle appellation of weaknesses ; no woman was ever yet overcome who had not an inclination to surrender ; and if I thought that such a fate could attend you, believe me, trust to the tenderness of my friendship, rely on all the sentiments which would arise in the heart of your poor Clara, I should be too sensibly interested in your protection, to abandon you entirely to yourself.

As to what M. Wolmar declared to you, concerning the intelligence he received before your marriage, I am not much surpris'd at it ; you know I always suspected it ; and I will tell you, moreover, that my suspicions are not confined to the indiscretions of B——. I could never suppose that a man of truth and integrity like your father, and who had some suspicions at least himself, would resolve to impose upon his son-in-law and his friend. If he engaged you so strictly to secrecy, it was because the mode of discovery would come from him in a very different manner to what it would have proceeded from you ; and because he was willing, no doubt, to give it a turn less likely to disgust M. Wolmar, than that which he very well knew you would not fail to give it yourself. But I must dismiss your mes-

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senger; we will chat about these matters more at our leisure about a month hence.

Farewell, my dearest cousin, I have preached long enough to the preacher; resume your old occupation—I find myself quite uneasy that I cannot be with you yet. I disorder all my affairs, by hurrying to dispatch them, and I scarce know what to do. Ah, Chaillot, Chaillot, . . . If I was less giddy . . . but I always hope that I shall—

P. S.—Apropos; I forgot to make my compliments to your highness. Tell me, I beseech you, is the gentleman your husband Atteman, Knes, or Boyard*? O poor child! You, who have so often lamented being born a gentlewoman, are very fortunate to become the wife of a Prince! Between ourselves, nevertheless, you discover apprehensions which are somewhat vulgar for a woman of such high quality. Do not you know, that little scruples belong to mean people; and that a child of a good family, who should pretend to be his father's son, would be laughed at!

* Mrs. Orbe was ignorant, however, that the first two names are titles of distinction, in Russia; but Boyard is only that of a private gentleman.

LETTER CXXXIII.

M. WOLMAR TO MRS. ORBE.

I AM going to Etange, my sweet cousin, and I proposed to call upon you in my way; but a delay, of which you are the cause, obliges me to make more haste, and I had rather lie at Laufanne as I come back, that I may pass a few hours the more with you. Besides, I want to consult you with regard to many particulars, which it is proper to communicate beforehand, that you may have time to consider them before you give me your opinion.

I would not explain my scheme to you in relation to the young man, till his presence had confirmed the good opinion I had conceived of him. I think I may now depend upon him sufficiently to acquaint you, between ourselves, that my design is to intrust him with the education of my children. I am not ignorant that these important concerns are the principal duty of a parent; but when it will be time to exert them, I shall be too old to discharge them, and being naturally calm and speculative by constitution, I should never have been sufficiently active to govern the spirit of youth. Besides, for a reason you know*,

* The reader is not yet acquainted with this reason; but he is desired not to be impatient.

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Eloisa would be concerned to see me assume an office, in which I should never acquit myself to her liking. I have a thousand reasons besides; your sex is not equal to these duties; their mother shall confine herself to the education of her Harriet; to your share I allot the management of the household upon the plan already established, and of which you approve; and it shall be my business to behold three worthy people concurring to promote the happiness of the family, and to enjoy that repose in my old age, for which I shall be indebted to their labours.

I have always found, that my wife was extremely averse from trusting her children to the care of mercenaries, and I could not discommend her scruples. The respectable capacity of a preceptor requires so many talents which are not to be paid for, so many virtues which have no price set upon them, that it is in vain to think of procuring one by means of money. It is from a man of genius only that we can expect the talents of a preceptor; it is from the heart of an affectionate friend alone that we can hope to meet with the zeal of a parent; and genius is not to be sold any more than attachment.

All the requisite qualities seem to be united in your friend; and if I am well acquainted with his disposition, I do not think he would desire greater happiness, than to make those beloved children

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contribute to their mother's felicity. The only obstacle I can foresee is his affection to Lord B——, which will not allow him to disengage himself from so dear a friend, to whom he has such great obligations, at least if his lordship does not require it himself. We expect to see this extraordinary man very soon: and as you have a great ascendancy over him, if he answers the idea you have given me of him, I may commit the business, so far as it relates to him, to your management.

You have now, my dear cousin, the clue of my whole conduct, which, without this explanation, must have appeared very extraordinary, and which, I hope, will hereafter meet with Eloisa's approbation and your's. The advantage of having such a wife as I have, made me try many expedients which would have been impracticable with another. Though I leave her, in full confidence, with her old lover, under no other guard than her own virtue, it would be madness to establish that lover in my family, before I was certain that he ceased to be such; and how could I be assured of it, if I had a wife on whom I had less dependence?

I have often observed you smile at my remarks on love; but now I think I can mortify you. I have made a discovery which neither you or any other woman, with all the subtlety they attribute to your sex, would ever have made; the proof of

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which you will nevertheless perceive at first sight, and you will allow it to be equal to demonstration, when I explain to you the principles on which I ground it. Was I to tell you that my young couple are more fond than ever, this undoubtedly would not appear wonderful to you. Was I to assure you, on the contrary, that they are perfectly cured; you know the power of reason and virtue, and therefore you would not look upon that neither as a great miracle: but if I tell you, that both these opposites are true at the same time; that they love each other with more ardour than ever, and that nothing subsists between them but a virtuous attachment; that they are always lovers, and yet never more than friends: this, I imagine, is what you would least expect, what you will have more difficulty to conceive, and what nevertheless precisely corresponds with truth.

This is the riddle, which makes those frequent contradictions, which you must have observed in them, both in their conversation and in their letters. What you wrote to Eloisa concerning the picture, has served more than any thing to explain the mystery, and I find that they are always sincere, even in contradicting themselves continually. When I say they, I speak particularly of the young man; for as to your friend, one can only speak of her by conjecture. A veil of wisdom and honour make so many folds about her

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heart, that it is impenetrable to human eyes, even to her own. The only circumstance which leads me to imagine that she has still some distrust to overcome, is, that she is continually considering with herself what she should do if she was perfectly cured; and she examines herself with so much accuracy, that if she was really cured, she would not do it so well.

As to your friend, who, though virtuously inclined, is less apprehensive of his present feelings, I find that he still retains all the affections of his youth; but I perceive them, without having any reason to be offended at them. It is not Eloisa Wolmar he is fond of, but Eloisa Etange; he does not hate me as the possessor of the object I love, but as the ravisher of her whom he doated on. His friend's wife is not his mistress, the mother of two children is not her who was formerly his scholar. It is true, she is very like that person, and often puts him in mind of her. He loves her in the time past. This is the true explanation of the riddle. Deprive him of his memory, and you destroy his love.

This is not an idle subtlety, my pretty cousin, but a solid observation, which, if extended to other affections, may admit of a more general application than one would imagine. I even think that it would not be difficult to explain it by your ideas. At the time you parted the two lovers, their passion was at the highest degree of

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impetuosity. Perhaps, if they had continue d much longer together, they would gradually have grown cool; but their imagination, being strongly affected, constantly presented each to the other in the light in which they appeared at the time of their separation. The young man, not perceiving those alterations which the progress of time made in his mistress, loved her such as he had seen her formerly, not such as she was then*. To complete his happiness, it would not have been enough to have given him possession of her, unless she could have been given to him at the same age, and under the same circumstances she was in, when their loves commenced. The least alteration in these particulars would have lessened so much of the felicity he proposed to himself; she is grown handsomer, but she is al-

* You women are very ridiculous to think of rendering such a frivolous and fluctuating passion as that of love consistent. Every thing in nature is changeable, every thing is continually fluctuating, and yet you would inspire a constant passion! And what right have you to pretend that we must love you for ever, because we loved you yesterday? Then preserve the same face, the same age, the same humour; be always the same, and we will always love you, if we can. But when you alter continually, and require us always to love you, it is, in fact, desiring us every minute not to love you; it is not seeking for constant minds, but looking out for such as are as fickle as your own.

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What deceives him, is, that he confounds the times, and often reproaches himself on account of a passion which he thinks present, and which, in fact, is nothing more than the effect of too tender a recollection; but I do not know, whether it will not be better to accomplish his cure, than to undeceive him. Perhaps, in this respect we may reap more advantage from his mistake, than from his better judgment. To discover to him the true state of his affections, would be to apprise him of the death of the object he loved; this might be affliction dangerous to him, inasmuch as a state of melancholy is always favourable to love.

Freed from the scruples which restrain him, he would probably be more inclined to indulge recollections which he ought to stifle; he would converse with less reserve, and the traces of Eloisa are not so effaced in Mrs. Wolmar, but upon examination he might find them again. I have thought, that, instead of undeceiving him with respect to his opinion of the progress he has made, and which encourages him to pursue it to the end, we should rather endeavour to banish the remembrance of those times which he ought to forget, by skilfully substituting other ideas in the room of those he is so fond of. You, who con-

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tribute to give them birth, may contribute more than any one to efface them. but I shall wait till we are all together, that I may tell you in your ear what you should do for this purpose; a charge, which, if I am not mistaken, will not be very burdensome to me. In the mean time, I endeavour to make the objects of his dread familiar to him, by presenting them to him in such a manner, that he may no longer think them dangerous. He is impetuous, but tractable, and easily managed. I avail myself of this advantage to give a turn to his imagination. In the room of his mistress, I compel him always to look at the wife of his friend, and the mother of my children; I efface one picture by another, and hide the past with the present. We always ride a startlish horse up to the object which frights him, that he may not be frightened at it again. We should act in the same manner with those young people, whose imaginations are on fire even after their affections are grown cold, and whose fancy presents monsters at a distance, which disappear as they draw near.

I think I am well acquainted with the strength of both, and I do not expose them to a trial which they cannot support: for wisdom does not consist in using all kinds of precautions indiscriminately, but in choosing those which are really useful, and, in neglecting such as are superfluous.

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The eight days during which I leave them together will perhaps be sufficient for them to discover the true state of their minds, and to know in what relation they really stand to each other. The oftener they perceive themselves in private with each other, the sooner they will find out their mistake, by comparing their present sensations with those they felt formerly, when they were in the same situation. Besides, it is of importance that they should use themselves to endure, without danger, that state of familiarity in which they must necessarily live together, if my scheme takes place. I find by Eloisa's conduct, that you have given her advice, which she could not refuse taking, without wronging herself. What pleasure I shall take in giving her this proof that I am sensible of her real worth, if she was a woman with whom a husband might make a merit of such confidence! But, if she gains nothing over her affections, her virtue will still be the same! it will cost her dearer, and she will not triumph the less. Whereas, if she is still in danger of feeling any inward uneasiness, it can arise only from some moving conversation, which she must be too sensible before-hand will awaken recollection, and which she will therefore always avoid. Thus, you see, you must not in this instance judge of my conduct by common maxims, but from the motives which actuate me, and from

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the singular disposition of her towards whom I shall regulate my behaviour.

Farewell, my dear cousin, till my return. Though I have not entered into these explanations with Eloisa, I do not desire you to keep them secret from her. It is a maxim with me, never to make secrets among my friends; therefore, I commit these to your discretion; make such use of them as your prudence and friendship will direct. I know you will do nothing but what is best and most proper.

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

TO LORD B——.

M. Wolmar set out yesterday for Etange, and you can scarce conceive in what a melancholy state his departure has left me. I think the absence of his wife would not have affected me so much as his. I find myself under greater restraint than even when he is present; a mournful silence takes possession of my heart; its murmurs are stifled by a secret dread: and, being less tormented with desires than apprehensions, I experience all the horrors of guilt, without being exposed to the temptations of it.

Can you imagine, my lord, where my mind gains confidence, and loses these unworthy dreads? In the presence of Mrs. Wolmar. As

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soon as I approach her, the sight of her pacifies my inquietude; her looks purify my heart. Such is the ascendancy of hers, that it always seems to inspire others with a sense of her innocence, and to confer that composure which is the effect of it. Unluckily for me, her system of life does not allow her to devote the whole day to the society of her friends; and in those moments which I am obliged to pass out of her company, I should suffer less if I was farther distant from her.

What contributes to feed the melancholy which oppresses me, is a reflection which she made yesterday, after her husband's departure. Though till that moment she kept up her spirits tolerably, yet for a long time her eyes followed him with an air of tenderness, which I then imagined was only occasioned by the departure of that happy husband; but I found, by her conversation, that the emotion was to be imputed to another cause, which was a secret to me. "You see (said she) in what manner we live together, and you may judge whether he is dear to me. Do not imagine, however, that the sentiment which attaches me to him, though as tender and as powerful as that of love, is likewise susceptible of its weakness. If an interruption of the agreeable habit of living together is painful to us, we are consoled by the firm hope of resuming the same habit again. A state of such permanence admits few vicissitudes which we have reason to dread;

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and in an absence of a few days, the pain of so short an interval does not affect me so strongly as the pleasure of seeing an end to it. The affliction which you read in my eyes proceeds from a more weighty cause, and though it is relative to M. Wolmar, it is not occasioned by his departure.

“ My dear friend (continued she, with an affecting tone) there is no true happiness on earth. My husband is one of the most worthy and affectionate of men; the duty which incites us is cemented by mutual inclination; he has no desires but mine; I have children which give, and promise pleasure hereafter to their mother; there cannot be a more affectionate, virtuous, and amiable friend than her whom my heart doats on, and with whom I shall pass my days; you yourself contribute to my felicity, by having so well justified my esteem and affection for you; a long and expensive law-suit, which is nearly finished, will soon bring the best of fathers to my arms; every thing prospers with us; peace and order reign throughout the family; our servants are zealous and faithful; our neighbours express every kind of attachment to us; we enjoy the good will of the public. Blest with every thing which Heaven, fortune, and men can bestow, all things conspire to my happiness. A secret uneasiness, one trouble only, poisons all, and I am not happy.” She uttered these last words with

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figh which pierced my soul, and which I had no share in raising. She is not happy, said I, fighting in my turn, and I am no longer an obstacle to her felicity!

That melancholy thought disordered my ideas in a moment, and disturbed the repose which I began to taste. Unable to endure the intolerable state of doubt into which her conversation had thrown me, I importuned her so eagerly to disclose her whole mind to me, that at length she deposited the fatal secret with me, and allows me to communicate it to you. But this is the hour of recreation; Mrs. Wolmar is come out of the nursery, to walk with her children; she has just told me as much. I attend her, my lord—I leave you for the present; and shall resume in my next the subject I am now obliged to quit.

L E T T E R CXXXV.

MRS. WOLMAR TO HER HUSBAND.

I EXPECT you next Tuesday, according to your appointment, and you will find every thing disposed agreeably to your desire. Call on Mrs. Orbe in your way back; she will tell you what has passed during your absence; I had rather you should learn it from her than from me.

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L E T T E R CXXXVI.

TO LORD B——.

I MUST give you an account, my lord, of a danger we have incurred within these few days, and from whence we are happily delivered at the expence of a little terror and fatigue. This relation very well deserves a letter by itself; when you read it, you will perceive the motives which engage me to write.

You know that Mrs. Wolmar's house is not far from the lake, and that she is fond of the water. It is three days since her husband's absence has left us without employment; and the pleasantness of the evening made us form a scheme for one of these parties the next day. Soon as the sun was up we went to the river's side; we took a boat, with nets for fishing, three rowers, and a servant, and we embarked with some provisions for dinner. I took a fowling-piece, to knock down some pefolets*, but was ashamed to kill birds out of wantonness, and only for the pleasure

* A bird of passage on the lake of Geneva, which is not good to eat.

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of doing mischief. I amused myself, therefore, in observing the siflets, the crenets†, and I fired but once at a grebe, at a great distance, which I missed.

We passed an hour or two in fishing within 500 paces of the shore. We had good success, but Eloisa had them all thrown into the water again, except a trout, which had received a blow from the oar. "The animals (said she) are in pain; let us deliver them; let us enjoy the pleasure they will feel on escaping from danger." This operation, however, was performed slowly, and against the grain, not without some representations against it; and I found that our gentry would have had a much better relish for the fish they had caught, than for the moral which saved their lives.

We then launched farther into the lake; soon after, with all the vivacity of a young man, which it is time for me to check, undertaking to manage the master oar, I rowed the boat into the middle of the lake, so that we were soon above a league from the shore. Then I explained to Eloisa every part of that superb horizon which environed us. I showed her at a distance the mouth of the Rhone, whose impetuous current stops on a sudden within a quarter of a league as

† Different sorts of birds on the lake of Geneva, and very good to eat.

if it was afraid to fully the crystal azure of the lake with its muddy waters. I made her observe the redans of the mountains, whose correspondent angles running parallel, formed a bed in the space between, fit to receive the river which occupied it. As we got farther from shore, I had great pleasure in making her take notice of the rich and delightful banks of the *Pays de Vaud*, where the vast number of towns, the prodigious throng of people, with the beautiful and verdant hills all around, formed a most ravishing landscape; where every spot of ground, being cultivated and equally fertile, supplies the husbandman, the shepherd, and the vine dresser, with the certain fruits of their labours, which are not devoured by the greedy publican. Afterwards I pointed out *Chablais*, a country not less favoured by nature, and which, nevertheless, affords nothing but a spectacle of wretchedness; I made her perceive the manifest distinction between the different effects of the two governments, with respect to the riches, number, and happiness of the inhabitants. "It is thus (said I) that the earth expands her fruitful bosom, and lavishes treasures among those happy people who cultivate it for themselves. She seems to smile and be enlivened at the sweet aspect of liberty; she loves to nourish mankind. On the contrary, the mournful ruins, the heath and brambles which cover a half desert country, proclaim from afar that it is under the dominion

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of an absent proprietor, and that it yields with reluctance a scanty produce to slaves who reap no advantage from it.

While we were agreeably amusing ourselves with viewing the neighbouring coasts, a gale arising, which drove us afloat towards the opposite shore, began to blow very high, and when we thought to tack about, the resistance was so strong, that it was impossible for our slight boat to overcome it. The waves soon began to grow dreadful; we endeavoured to make for the coast of Savoy, and tried to land at the village of Meillerie, which was over against us, and the only place almost where the shore affords a convenient landing. But the wind changing, and blowing stronger, rendered all the endeavours of the watermen ineffectual, and discovered to us a range of steep rocks, somewhat lower, where there was no shelter.

We all tugged at our oars, and at that instant I had the mortification to perceive Eloisa grow sick, and see her weak and fainting at the bottom of the boat. Happily she had been used to the water, and her sickness did not last long. In the mean time our efforts increased with our danger; the heat of the sun, the fatigue, and profuse sweating, took away our breaths, and made us excessively faint. Then summoning all her courage, Eloisa revived our spirits by her compassionate kindness; she wiped the sweat from off our faces;

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and mixing some wine and water, for fear of intoxication, she presented it alternately to those who were most exhausted. No, your lovely friend, never appeared with such lustre as at that moment, when the heat and agitation of her spirits gave an additional glow to her complexion; and what greatly improved her charms was, that you might plainly perceive by the tenderness of her behaviour, that her solicitude proceeded less from apprehensions for herself than compassion for us. At one time two planks having started by a shock which dipped us all, she concluded that the boat was split, and in the exclamation of that affectionate mother, I heard these words distinctly: "O my children, must I never see you more!" As for myself, whose imagination always exceeds the danger, though I knew the utmost of our perilous condition, yet I expected every minute to see the boat swallowed up, that delicate beauty struggling in the midst of the waves, and the roses upon her cheeks chilled by the cold hand of death.

At length, by dint of labour, we reached Mellerie, and after having struggled above an hour, within ten paces of the shore, we at last effected a landing. Which done, all our fatigues were forgotten. Eloisa took upon herself to recompence the trouble which every one had taken; and as in the height of danger her concern was for us, she seemed now on shore to imagine that we had saved nobody but her.

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We dined with that appetite which is the gift of hard labour. The trout was served up: Eloisa who was extremely fond of it, eat but little; and I perceived, that to make the watermen amends for the regret which the late sacrifice cost them, she did not choose that I should eat much myself. My lord, you have observed a thousand times that her amiable disposition is to be seen in trifles as well as in matters of consequence.

After dinner, the water being still rough, and the boat wanting to be refitted, I proposed taking a walk. Eloisa objected to the wind and sun, and took notice of my being fatigued. I had my views, and obviated all her objections. "I have been accustomed (said I) to violent exercises from my infancy: far from hurting my health, they strengthen my constitution; and my late voyage has still made me more robust. As to the sun and wind, you have your straw hat, and we will get under the wind, and in the woods; we need only climb among the rocks, and you, who are not fond of a flat, will willingly bear the fatigue." She consented, and we set out while our people were at dinner.

You know, that when I was banished from Valais, I came about ten years ago to Meillerie, to wait for leave to return. It was there I passed those melancholy but pleasing days, solely intent upon her; and it was from thence I wrote her that letter with which she was so greatly affected.

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I always wished to revisit that lovely retreat, which served me as an asylum in the midst of ice, and where my heart loved to converse in idea, with the object of all others most dear to its affections. An opportunity of visiting this beloved spot in a more agreeable season, and in company with her whose image formerly dwelt there with me, was the secret motive of my walk. I took a pleasure in pointing out to her those old memorials of such a constant and unfortunate passion.

We got there after an hour's walk through cool and winding paths, which ascending insensibly between the trees and the rocks, were no otherwise inconvenient than by being tedious. As we drew near, and I recollected former tokens, I found myself a little disordered; but I overcame it; I concealed my uneasiness, and we reached the place. This solitary spot formed a wild and desert nook, but full of those sorts of beauties which are only agreeable to susceptible minds, and appear horrible to others. A torrent, occasioned by the melting of the snow, rolled in a muddy stream within twenty paces of us, and carried dirt, sand, and stones along with it, not without considerable noise. Behind us, a chain of inaccessible rocks divided the place where we stood from that part of the Alps which they call the ice-houses, because from the beginning of the world they have been covered with vast moun-

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tains of ice, which are continually increasing*. Forests of gloomy fir-trees afforded us a melancholy shade on the right. On the left was a large wood of oak, beyond which the torrent issued, and beneath that vast body of water which the lake forms in the bay of the Alps, parted us from the rich coast of the *Pays de Vaud*, crowning the whole landscape with the top of the majestic Jura.

In the midst of those noble and superb objects, the little spot where we were displayed all the charms of an agreeable and rural retreat; small floods of water filtered through the rocks, and flowed along the verdure in crystal streams. Some wild fruit-trees leaned their heads over ours; the cool and moist earth was covered with grass and flowers. Comparing this agreeable retreat with the objects which surrounded us, one would have thought that this desert spot was designed as an asylum for two lovers, who alone had escaped the general wreck of nature.

When we had reached this corner, and I had attentively examined it for some time, "Now (said I to Eloisa, looking at her with eyes swimming in tears) is your heart perfectly still in this place, and do you feel no secret emotion at the

* Those mountains are so high, that half an hour after sun-set its rays still gild the tops of them, and the reflection of red on those white summits forms a beautiful roseate colour, which may be perceived at a great distance.

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sight of a spot which is full of you?" Immediately, without waiting for her answer, I led her towards the rock, and shewed her where her cypher was engraved in a thousand places, with several verses in Petrarch and Tasso, relative to the state I was in when I engraved them. On seeing them again at such a distance of time, I found how powerfully the review of these objects renewed my former violent sensations. I addressed her with some degree of impetuosity: "O Eloisa, the everlasting delight of my soul! this is the spot, where the most constant lover in the world formerly sighed for thee: This is the retreat, where thy beloved image made all the scene of his felicity, and prepared him for that happiness which you yourself afterwards dispensed. No fruit or shade were then to be found here: these compartments were not then furnished with verdure or flowers; the course of these streams did not then make these separations; these birds did not chirp then, the voracious spar-hawk, the dismal crow, and the dreadful eagle alone made these caverns echo with their cries; huge lumps of ice hung from these rocks; festoons of snow were all the ornaments which bedecked these trees: every thing here bore marks of the rigour of winter and hoary frost; the ardour of my affection alone made this place supportable, and I spent whole days here, wrapt in thought of thee. Here is

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the stone where I used to sit, to reflect on your happy abode at a distance; on this I penned that letter which moved your heart; these sharp flints served me as graving tools to cut out your name; here I crossed that frozen torrent to regain one of your letters which the wind had carried off; there I came to review, and give a thousand kisses to the last you ever wrote to me; this is the brink, where, with a gloomy and greedy eye, I measured the depth of this abyss: in short, it was here, that, before my sad departure, I came to bewail you as dead, and swore never to survive you.— Oh! thou lovely fair one, too constantly adored, thou for whom alone I was born! must I revisit this spot with you by my side, and must I regret the time I spent here in bewailing your absence?"

—I was proceeding farther; but Eloisa perceiving me draw near the brink was affrighted, and, seizing my hand, pressed it, without speaking a word, looked tenderly upon me, and could scarce suppress a rising sigh; soon after, turning from me, and taking me by the arm, "Let us be gone, my friend, (said she, with a tone of emotion) the air of this place is not good for me." I went with her sighing, but without making her any answer; and I quitted that melancholy spot for ever, with as much regret as I would have taken leave of Eloisa herself.

We came back gently to the harbour, after some little wandering, and parted. She chose to

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be alone, and I continued walking, without knowing whither I went. At my return, the boat not being yet ready, nor the water smooth, we made a melancholy supper, with downcast eyes, and pensive looks, eating little, and talking still less. After supper, we sat on the strand, waiting an opportunity to go off. The moon shone on a sudden, the water became smoother, and Eloisa proposed our departure. I handed her into the boat, and when I sat down by her, I never thought of quitting her hand. We kept a profound silence. The equal and measured sound of the oars threw me into a reverie. The lively chirping of the snipes*, recalling to my mind the pleasures of a past period, made me dull. By degrees I found the melancholy which oppressed me increase. A serene sky, the mild reflection of the moon, the silver froth of the water which sparkled around us, the concurrence of agreeable sensations, even the presence of the beloved object herself, could not banish bitter reflections from my mind.

I began with recollecting a walk of the same kind which we took together, during the rapture

* The snipe on the lake of Geneva is not the bird called by that name in France. The more lively and animating chirping of the former gives an air of life and freshness to the lake at night, which renders its banks still more delightful.

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of our early loves. All the pleasing sensations which then affected me were present to my mind, to torment me the more; all the adventures of our youth, our studies, our entertainments, our letters, our assignations, our pleasures,

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Our constant vows, memorial sweet!
Which love so often prompted to repeat.

A crowd of objects, which recalled the image of my past happiness, all pressed upon me, and rushed into my memory, to increase my present wretchedness. It is past, said I to myself; those times, those happy times, will be no more; they are gone for ever! Alas! they will never return; and yet we live, and we are together, and our hearts are still united! I seemed as if I could have endured her death or her absence with more patience; and thought that I had suffered less all the time I was parted from her. When I bewailed her at a distance, the hope of seeing her again was comfort to my soul; I flattered myself that the sight of her would banish all my sorrows in an instant, at least, I could conceive it possible to be in a more cruel situation than my own.— But to be by her side, to see her, to touch her, to talk to her, to love her, to adore her, and, whilst I almost enjoyed her again, to find her lost to me

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for ever; this was what threw me into such fits of fury and rage, as by degrees agitated me even to despair. My mind soon began to conceive deadly projects, and in a transport, which I yet tremble to think of, I was violently tempted to throw her, with myself, into the waves, and to end my days and tedious torments in her arms.— This horrid temptation grew so strong at last, that I was obliged suddenly to quit her hand, and walk to the other end of the boat.

There my lively emotions began to take another turn; a more gentle sensation by degrees stole upon my mind, and tenderness overcame despair; I began to shed floods of tears, and that condition, compared to the state I had just been in, was not unattended with pleasure. I wept heartily for a long time, and found myself easier. When I was tolerably composed, I returned to Eloisa, and took her by the hand again. She had her handkerchief in her hand, which I found wet. “ Ah! (said I to her softly) I find that our hearts have not ceased to sympathise!”—“ True (said she, in a broken accent) but may it be the last time they ever correspond in this manner!” We then began to talk about indifferent matters, and, after an hour’s rowing, we arrived without any other accident. When I came in, I perceived that her eyes were red, and much swelled; and she must have discovered that mine were not in

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a better condition. After the fatigue of this day, she stood in great need of rest: she withdrew, and I went to bed.

Such, my friend, is the journal of the day, in which, without exception, I experienced the most lively emotions I ever felt. I hope they will prove a crisis, which will entirely restore me to myself. Moreover, I must tell you that this adventure has convinced me, more than all the power of argument, of the free will of man, and the merit of virtue. How many people yield to weak temptations? As for Eloisa, my eyes beheld, and my heart felt her emotions: she underwent the most violent struggle that day that ever human nature sustained: nevertheless, she conquered. O, my lord, when, seduced by your mistress, you had power at once to triumph over her desires and your own, was you not more than man? But for your example I had perhaps been lost. The recollection of your virtue renewed my own a hundred times in that perilous day.

L E T T E R CXXXV*.

FROM LORD B——.

AWAKE! my friend, and emerge from childhood. Let not your reason slumber to the end of your

* This letter appears to have been written before the receipt of the preceding.

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life. The hours glide imperceptibly away, and it is now high time for you to grow wise. At thirty years of age surely a man should begin to reflect. Reflect, therefore, and be a man at least once before you die.

Your heart, my dear friend, has long imposed on your understanding. You strove to philosophise before you were capable of it, mistaking your feelings for reason, and judging of things by the impressions they made on you, which has always kept you ignorant of their real state. A good heart, I will own, is indispensibly necessary to the knowledge of truth: he who feels nothing can learn nothing; he may float from error to error in a sea of scepticism, but his discoveries will be vain, and his information fruitless, being ignorant of the relation of things to man, on which all true science depends. It were to stop half way, however, in our pursuits after knowledge, not to inquire also into the relation of things to each other, in order to be better able to judge of their connexion with ourselves. To know the nature and operation of our passions is to know little, if we know not, at the same time, how to judge of and estimate their objects. This latter knowledge is to be acquired only in the tranquillity of studious retirement. The youth of the philosopher is the time for experiment, his passions being the instrument of his inquiries; but

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after having applied himself long enough to the perception of external objects, he retires within himself to consider, to compare, to know them. To this task you ought to apply yourself sooner than any other person in the world. All the pleasures and pains of which a susceptible mind is capable, you have felt; all that a man can see, you have seen. In the space of twelve years you have exhausted all those sensations which might have served you during a long life, and have acquired, even in youth, the extensive experience of age. The first observations you were led to make were on simple, unpolished villagers, on persons almost such as they came out of the hand of nature; just as if they had been presented to you for the ground-work of your piece, or as proper objects by which to compare every other. Banished next to the metropolis of one of the most celebrated people in the universe, you leaped, as one may say, from one extremity to the other, your genius supplying all the intermediate degrees. Then visiting the only nation of *men* which remains among the various herds that are scattered over the face of the earth, you had an opportunity of seeing a well-governed society, or at least a society under a good government; you had there an opportunity of observing how far the public voice is the foundation of liberty.— You have travelled through all climates, and have visited all countries beneath the sun. Add

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to this, a sight still more worthy admiration, that which you enjoy in the presence of the sublime and refined soul, triumphant over its passions, and ruling over itself. The first object of your affections is that which is now daily before you, your admiration of which is but the better founded, for your having seen and contemplated so many others. There is now nothing more worth your attention or concern. The only object of your future contemplation should be yourself, that of your future enjoyment the fruits of your knowledge. You have lived enough for this life; think now of living for that which is to come, and which will last for ever.

Your passions, by which you were so long enslaved, did not deprive you of your virtue. This is all your boast, and doubtless you have reason to glory in it; yet, be not too proud. Your very fortitude is the effect of your weakness. Do you know how it came that you grew enamoured of virtue? It was because virtue always appeared to your imagination in the amiable form of that lovely woman, by whom she is so truly represented, and whose image you will always adore. But will you never love her for her own sake? will you never, like Eloisa, court virtue of your own accord? Vain and indolent enthusiast! will you content yourself with barely admiring her virtues, without attempting to imitate

them? You speak in rapture of the manner in which she discharges the important duties of wife and mother; but when will you discharge those of a man and a friend, by her example! Shall a woman be able to triumph over herself, and a philosopher find it difficult to conquer his passions? Will you continue to be always a mere prater, like the rest of them, and be content to write good books, instead of doing good actions*? Take care, my friend; I still perceive

* Not that this philosophical age has not produced one true philosopher. I know one, I must confess, and but one; but the happiest circumstance is, that he resides in my native country. Shall I venture publicly to name him, whose honour it is to have remained unknown? Yes, learned and modest Abdazit, let your sublime simplicity forgive my zeal, which, to say truth, hath not your name for its object. No, it is not you I would make known in an age unworthy to admire you; it is Geneva I would honour, by making it known as the place of your residence. It is my fellow-citizens who are honoured by your presence. Happy the country where the merit that conceals itself is by so much the more esteemed. Happy the people among whom presumptuous and forward youth is ashamed of its dogmatic insolence, and blushes at its vain knowledge before the learned ignorance of age. Venerable and virtuous old man! you have never been praised by babbling wits; no noisy academician has written your eulogium. Instead of depositing all your wisdom in books, you have displayed it in your life, as an example to the country you have deigned to make the object of your esteem. You have lived like Socrates; but he died by the hands of his fellow-citizens, while you are cherished by yours.

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an air of softness and effeminacy in your writing, which displeases me, as I think it rather the effect of an unextinguished passion than peculiar to your character. I hate imbecility in any one, and cannot bear the thoughts of it in my friend. There is no such thing as virtue without fortitude, for pusillanimity is the certain attendant on vice. How dare you rely on your own strength, who have no courage? Believe me, were Eloisa as weak as you, the very first opportunity would debase you into an infamous adulterer. While you remain alone with her, therefore, learn to know her worth, and blush at your own demerit.

I hope soon to be able to see you at Clarens; you know the motives of my desiring to see Italy again. Twelve years of mistakes and troubles have rendered me suspicious of myself; to resist my inclinations, however, my own abilities might suffice; but to give the preference of one to the other, to know which I should indulge, requires the assistance of a friend: nor shall I take less pleasure in being obliged to him on this occasion, than I have done in obliging him on others. Between friends, their obligations, as well as their affections, should be reciprocal. Do not deceive yourself, however; before I put any confidence in you, I shall enquire whether you are worthy of it, and if you deserve to return

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me the services you have formerly received. Your heart I know, and am satisfied with its integrity; but this is not all: it is your judgment I shall have occasion for, to direct me in making a choice which should be governed entirely by reason, and in which mine may be partial. I am not apprehensive of danger from those passions, which, making open war upon us, give us warning to put ourselves upon our defence; and whatever be their effect, leave us still conscious of our errors. We cannot so properly be said to be overcome by these, as to give way to them. I am more fearful of delusion than constraint, and of being involuntarily induced to do what my reason condemns. We have no need of foreign assistance to suppress our inclinations; but the assistance of a friend may be necessary to point out which it is most prudent to indulge: in this case it is that the friendship of a wise man may be useful, by his viewing, in a different light, those objects with which it is our interest to be intimately acquainted. Examine yourself, therefore, and tell me whether, vainly repining at your fate, you will continue for ever useless to yourself and others, or if, resuming the command over yourself, you will at last become capable of advising and assisting your friend.

My affairs will not detain me in London more than a fortnight longer, when I shall set out for our army in Flanders, where I intend to stay

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about the same time: so that you must not expect to see me before the end of next month, or the beginning of October. In the mean time, write no more to me at London, but direct your letters to the army, agreeably to the enclosed address. When you write, proceed also in your descriptions; for, notwithstanding the censure I pass on your letters, they both affect and instruct me, giving me, at the same time, the most flattering ideas of a life of peace and retirement, agreeable to my temper and age. In particular, I charge you to ease my mind of the disquietude you have excited concerning Mrs. Wolmar. If she be dissatisfied, who on earth can hope for happiness? After the relation you have given me, I cannot conceive what can be wanting to complete her felicity.

L E T T E R CXXXVIII.

TO LORD B——.

YES, my lord, I can with transport assure you the affair of Meillerie was the crisis of my folly and misfortunes. My conversation with M. Wolmar made me perfectly acquainted with the true state of my heart. That heart, too weak I confess, is nevertheless cured of its passion as much as it possibly can be; and I prefer my present state of silent regret to that of being perpe-

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tually fearful of falling into guilt. Since the return of this worthy friend, I no longer hesitate to give him that title which you have rendered so valuable. It is the least I can bestow on every one who assists me in returning to the paths of virtue. My heart is now become as peaceful as the mansion I inhabit. I begin to be at ease in my residence; to live as if I was at home; and, if I do not take upon me altogether the tone and authority of master, I feel yet a greater pleasure in supposing myself a brother of the family. There is something so delightful in the simplicity and equality which reign in this retirement, that I cannot help being affected with tenderness and respect. Thus, I spend my days in tranquillity, amidst practical philosophy and susceptible virtue. In company with this happy couple, their situation insensibly affects me, and raises my heart by degrees into unison with theirs.

What a delightful retreat! What a charming habitation! A continuance in this place renders it even yet more delightful; and though it appear not very striking at first sight, it is impossible not to be pleased with it, when it is once known. The pleasure Mrs. Wolmar takes in discharging the noblest duties, in making all who approach her virtuous and happy, communicates itself to all those who are the objects of her care, to her husband, her children, her guests, her domestics. No tumultuous scenes of noisy mirth, no loud

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peals of laughter, are heard in this peaceful mansion; but, in their stead, you always meet with contented hearts and cheerful countenances. If at any time you see a tear, it is the tear of susceptibility and joy. Troubles, cares, and sorrow intrude not here, any more than vice and remorse, of which they are the fruits.

As to Eloisa, it is certain, that, excepting the secret cause of uneasiness with which I acquainted you in my last,* every thing conspires to make her happy. And yet, with so many reasons to be so, a thousand other women would think themselves miserable in the same situation. Her uniform and retired manner of living would be to them insupportable; they would think the noise of children insufferable; they would be fatigued to death with the care of their family; they would not be able to bear the country; the esteem and prudence of a husband, not over tender, would hardly recompense them for his indifference and age; his presence, and even his regard for them, would be burdensome. They would either find means to send him abroad, that they might live more at their liberty; or would leave him to himself; despising the peaceful pleasures of their situation, and seeing more dangerous ones elsewhere, they would never be

* The letter here alluded to is not inserted in this collection. The reason of it will be seen hereafter.

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at ease in their own house, unless when they came as visitors. It requires a sound mind, to be able to enjoy the pleasures of retirement; the virtuous only being capable of amusing themselves with their family concerns, and of voluntarily secluding themselves from the world; if there be on earth any such thing as happiness, they undoubtedly enjoy it in such a state. But the means of happiness are nothing to those who know not how to make use of them; and we never know in what true happiness consists, till we have acquired a taste for its enjoyment.

If I were desired to speak with precision, as to the reason why the inhabitants of this place are happy, I should think I could not answer with greater propriety than to say, it is because *they here know how to live*; not in the sense in which these words would be taken in France, where it would be understood that they had adopted certain customs and manners in vogue: No, but they have adopted such manners as are most agreeable to human life, and the purposes for which man came into the world; to that life you mention, of which you have set me an example, which extends beyond itself, and is not given up for lost even in the hour of death.

Eloisa has a father who is anxious for the honour and interests of his family: she has children for whose subsistence it is necessary to provide. This ought to be the chief care of man in a

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state of society ; and was, therefore, the first in which Eloisa and her husband united. When they began house-keeping, they examined into the state of their fortunes ; not considering so much whether they were proportioned to their rank, as to their wants ; and seeing they were sufficient for the provision of an honourable family, they had not so bad an opinion of their children, as to be fearful lest the patrimony they had to leave, would not content them. They applied themselves, therefore, rather to improve their present, than acquire a larger fortune ; they placed their money rather safely than profitably ; and, instead of purchasing new estates, set about increasing the value of that which they already had ; leaving their own example in this point, as the only treasure by which they would desire to see the inheritance of their offspring increased.

It is true, that an estate which is not augmented, is liable to many accidents, by which it will naturally diminish : but if this were a sufficient motive to begin increasing, when could it cease to be a pretext for a constant augmentation ? Must it be divided among several children ? Be it so. Must they be all idle ? Will not the industry of each be a supplement to his share ? and ought it not to be considered in the partition ? It is thus that insatiable avarice makes its way under the mask of prudence, and

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leads to vice under the cloak of its own security. "It is in vain (says M. Wolmar) to attempt to give to human affairs that stability which is not in their nature. Prudence itself requires that we should leave many things to chance; and if our lives and fortunes depend so much on accident, what a folly is it to make ourselves really unhappy, in order to prevent doubtful evils, or avoid inevitable dangers?"—The only precaution he took was, to live one whole year on his principal, in order to have so much before-hand to receive of the interest, so that he had always the yearly product of his estate at command. He chose rather to diminish his capital, than to be perpetually under the necessity of dunning for his rents; the consequence of which has been in the end advantageous to him, as it prevented him from borrowing, and other ruinous expedients, to which many people are obliged to have recourse on every unforeseen accident. Thus good management supplies the place of parsimony, and he is in fact a gainer by what he has spent.

The master of this house possesses but a moderate fortune, according to the estimation of the world; but in reality I hardly know any body more opulent. There is, indeed, no such thing as absolute wealth: that term signifying only the relation between the wants and possessions of those who are rich. One man is rich, though possessing only an acre of land; another is a beggar in the

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midst of heaps of gold. Luxury and caprice have no bounds, and make more persons poor than their real wants. But the proportion between their wants, and their ability of supplying them, is here established on a sure foundation, namely, the perfect harmony subsisting between husband and wife: the former taking upon him the charge of collecting the rents and profits of his estate, and the latter, that of regulating their expences; and on this harmony depends their wealth.

I was at first struck with a peculiarity in the economy of this house, where there appeared so much ease, freedom, and gaiety, in the midst of order and diligence; the great fault of well-regulated houses being, that they always wear an air of gloominess and restraint. The extreme solicitude also of the heads of the family, looks too much like avarice. Every thing about them seems constrained, and there appears something servile in their punctuality, which renders it intolerable. The domestics do their duty indeed, but then they do it with an air of discontent and mistrust. The guests, it is true, are well received; but they dare not make use of a freedom cautiously bestowed, and are always afraid of doing something that will be reckoned a breach of regularity. Such slavish fathers of families cannot be said to live for themselves, but for their children; without considering that they are not only fathers but men, and that they ought to set

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their children an example how to live prudent and happy. More judicious maxims are adopted here. M. Wolmar thinks one of the principal duties of a father of a family, is to make his house, in the first place, agreeable, that his children may delight in their home, and that, seeing their father happy, they may be tempted to tread in his footsteps. Another of his maxims, and which he often repeats, is, that the gloomy and sordid lives of fathers and mothers are almost always the first cause of the ill-conduct of children.

As to Eloisa, who never had any other guide, and who needed no better, than her own heart, she obeys, without scruple, its dictates; being then certain of doing right. Can a mind so susceptible as her's be insensible to pleasure? On the contrary, she delights in every amusement, nor refuses to join in any diversion that promises to be agreeable; but her pleasures are the pleasures of Eloisa. She neglects neither her own convenience, nor the satisfaction of those who are dear to her. She esteems nothing superfluous that may contribute to the happiness of a sensible mind; but censures every thing as such that serves only to make a figure in the eyes of others; so that you will find in this house all the gratifications which luxury and pleasure can bestow, without refinement or effeminacy. With respect to magnificence and pomp, you will see no more of it than she was obliged to submit to, in order to please

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her father ; her own taste, however, prevails even here, which consists in giving to every thing less brilliancy and show, than grace and elegance. When I talk to her of the methods which are daily invented at Paris and London, to hang the coaches easier, she does not disapprove of that ; but when I tell her of the great expence they are at in the varnishing of them, she can hardly believe or comprehend me : she asks me, if such fine varnish makes the coaches more commodious. Indeed, she scruples not to say that I exaggerate a good deal on the scandalous paintings with which they now adorn their equipages, instead of the coats of arms formerly used ; as if it were more eligible to be known to the world for a man of licentious manners, than as a man of good family. But she was particularly shocked when I told her that the ladies had introduced, and kept up this custom, and that their chariots were distinguishable from those of the gentlemen only by paintings more lascivious and immodest. I was obliged to recount to her an expression of your noble friend's on this subject, which she could hardly digest. I was with him one day to look at a vis-a-vis which happened to be in this taste. But he no sooner cast his eyes on the pannels, than he turned away from it, telling the owner, that he should offer carriages of that kind to wanton women of quality, for that no modest man could make use of them.

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As the first step to virtue is to forbear doing ill, so the first step to happiness is to be free from pain. These two maxims, which, well understood, would render precepts of morality in a great degree useless, are favourite ones with Mrs. Wolmar. She is extremely affected by the misfortunes of others; and it would be as difficult for her to be happy with wretched objects about her, as it would be for an innocent man to preserve his virtue, and live in the midst of vice. She has none of that barbarous pity, which is satisfied with turning away its eye from the miserable objects it might relieve. On the contrary, she makes it her business to seek out such objects: it is the existence, and not the presence of the unhappy, which gives her affliction. It is not sufficient for her to be ignorant that there are any such; it is necessary to her quiet that she should be assured there are none miserable; at least within her sphere of charity: for it would be unreasonable to extend her concern beyond her own neighbourhood, and to make her happiness depend upon the welfare of all mankind. She takes care to inform herself of the necessities of all that live near her, and interests herself in their relief, as if their wants were her own. She knows every one personally, includes them all, as it were, in her family, and spares no pains to banish or alleviate those misfortunes and afflictions to which human life is subject.

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I am desirous, my lord, of profiting by your instructions; but you must forgive me a piece of enthusiasm, of which I am no longer ashamed, and with which you yourself are affected. There will never be another Eloisa in the world. Providence takes a particular interest in every thing that regards her, nor leaves any thing to the consequence of accident. Heaven seems to have sent her upon earth, to serve at once as an example of that excellence of which human nature is capable, and of that happiness it may enjoy in the obscurity of private life, without having recourse either to those public virtues which sometimes raise humanity above itself, or to those honours with which the breath of popular applause rewards them. Her fault, if love be a fault, has served only to display her fortitude and virtue. Her relations, her friends, her servants, all happily situated, were formed to respect her, and be respected by her. Her country is the only one upon earth where she ought to have been born; to be happy herself, it was necessary for her to live among a happy people. If, to her misfortune, she had been born among those unhappy wretches, who groan beneath a load of oppression, and struggle in vain against the iron hand of cruelty, every complaint of the oppressed had poisoned the sweets of her life; the common ruin had been her's, and her benevolent heart had

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Instead of that, every thing here animates and supports the native goodness of her disposition. She has no public calamities to afflict her. She sees not around her the frightful pictures of indigence and despair. The villages, in easy circumstances, have more need of her advice than her bounty.* But, if there be found among them an orphan, too young to earn his subsistence; an obscure widow, who pines in secret indigence; a childless father, whose hands, enfeebled by age, cannot supply him with the means of life; she is not afraid that her bounty will increase the public charge, by encouraging idleness or knavery. The happiness she herself feels multiplies and extends itself to all around her. Every house she enters soon becomes a copy of her own: nor are convenience and order only pursued from her example, but harmony and goodness become equally the objects of domestic management. When she goes abroad, she sees

* There is, near Clarens, a village called Moutru, the right of common to which is sufficient to maintain the inhabitants, though they had not a foot of land of their own. For which reason, the freedom of that village is almost as difficult to be obtained as that of Berne. It is a great pity that some honest magistrate is not appointed to make these burghers a little more sociable, or their burghership less dear.

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none but agreeable objects about her ; and when she returns home, she is saluted by others still more engaging. Her heart is delighted by every prospect that meets her eyes ; and, little susceptible as it is of self-love, it is led to love itself in the effects of its own benevolence. No, my lord, I repeat in again ; nothing that regards Eloisa can be indifferent to the cause of virtue. Her charms, her talents, her taste, her errors, her afflictions, her abode, her friends, her family, her pains, her pleasures, every thing in short that completes her destiny, compose a life without example ; such as few women would choose to imitate, and yet such as all, in spite of themselves, must admire.

What pleases me most, in the solicitude which prevails here regarding the happiness of others, is, that their benevolence is always exerted with prudence, and is never abused. We do not always succeed in our benevolent intentions ; but, on the contrary, some people imagine they are doing great services, who are, in reality, doing great injuries ; and, with a view to a little manifest good, are guilty of much unforeseen evil. Mrs. Wolmar, indeed, possesses, in an eminent degree, a qualification very rare, even among women of the best character ; I mean, an exquisite discernment in the distribution of her favours, and that as well in the choice of means to render them really useful, as of the persons on whom they

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are bestowed. For her conduct in this point, she has laid down certain rules, to which she invariably adheres. She knows how to grant or refuse every thing that is asked of her, without betraying the least weakness in her compliance, or caprice in her denial. Whoever hath committed one infamous or wicked action, hath nothing to hope for from her but justice, and her pardon, if he has offended her; but never that favour and protection which she can bestow on a worthier object. I heard her once refuse a favour, which depended on herself only, to a man of this stamp. "I wish you happy (said she to him coldly) but "I shall not contribute any thing to make you "so, lest I should put it in your power to injure "others. There are too many honest people in "the world who require relief, for me to think of "assisting you." It is true, this piece of just severity cost her dear, and it is but seldom she has occasion to exercise it. Her maxim is, to look upon all those as deserving people, of whose demerits she is not fully convinced; and there are few persons weak and wicked enough not to evade the full proofs of their guilt. She has none of that indolent charity of the wealthy, who give money to the miserable, to be excused from attending to their distresses; and know how to answer their petitions only by giving alms. Her purse is not inexhaustible, and since she is become the mother of a family, she regulates it with more

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economy. Of all the kinds of relief we may afford to the unhappy, the giving alms is certainly that which costs us least trouble; but it is also the most transitory and least serviceable to the object relieved: Eloisa does not seek to get rid of such objects, but to be useful to them.

Neither does she grant her recommendation, or exert her good offices, without first knowing whether the use intended to be made of her interest be just and reasonable. Her protection is never refused to any one who really stands in need of, and deserves to obtain it: but for those who desire to raise themselves through fickleness or ambition only, she can very seldom be prevailed upon to give herself any trouble. The natural business of man is to cultivate the earth, and subsist on its produce. The peaceful inhabitant of the country needs only to know in what happiness consists, to be happy. All the real pleasures of humanity are within his reach; he feels only those pains which are inseparable from it, those pains which, whoever seeks to remove, will only change for others more severe.* His situation is the only necessary, the only useful one, in life. He is never unhappy, but when others tyrannize

* Man, perverted from his first state of simplicity, becomes so stupid, that he even knows not what to desire. His wishes always tend to wealth, and never to happiness.

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over him, or seduce him by their vices. In agriculture and husbandry consist the real prosperity of a country, the greatness and strength which a people derive from themselves, that which depends not on other nations, which is not obliged to attack others for its own preservation, but is productive of the surest means of its own defence. In making an estimate of the strength of a nation, a superficial observer would visit the court, the prince, his posts, his troops, his magazines, and his fortified towns; but the true politician would take a survey of the country, and visit the cottages of the husbandmen. The former would only see what is already executed, but the latter what was capable of being put into execution.

On this principle they proceed here, and yet more so at Etange; they contribute as much as possible to make the peasants happy in their condition, without ever assisting them to change it. The better, as well as the poorer sort of people, are equally desirous of sending their children to the cities; the one that they may study and become gentlemen, the others, that they may find employment, and so ease their parents of the charge of maintaining them. The young people, on their part, have curiosity, and are generally fond of roving: the girls aspire to the dress and finery of the citizens; and the boys, most of them, go into foreign service, thinking it better to return with the haughty and mean air of mercena-

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ries, and a ridiculous contempt of their former condition, than with that love for their country and liberty which honourably distinguished their progenitors. It is the care of this benevolent family to remonstrate against these mistaken prejudices; to represent to the peasants the danger of their children's principles; the ill consequences of sending them from home, and the continual risks they run of losing their life, fortune, and morals, where a thousand are ruined for one who does well. If, after all, they continue obstinate, they are left at their own indiscretion, to run into vice and misery, and the care which was thrown away on them, is turned upon those who have listened to reason. This is exerted in teaching them to honour their native condition, by seeming to honour it ourselves: we do not converse with peasants, indeed, in the style of courts; but we treat them with a grave and distant familiarity, which, without raising any one out of his station, teaches them to respect ours. There is not one honest labourer in the village, who does not rise greatly in his own estimation, when an opportunity offers of our showing the difference of our behaviour to him, and to such petty visitants, who come home to make a figure for a day or two, and to eclipse their relations. M. Wolmar and the Baron, when he is here, seldom fail of being present at the exercises and

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reviews of the militia of the village, and parts adjacent : their presence has a great effect on the youth of the country, who are naturally of a martial and spirited temper, and are extremely delighted to see themselves honoured with the presence of veteran officers. They are still prouder of their own merit, when they see soldiers retired from foreign service, less expert than themselves : yet this they often do ; for, do what you will, five-pence a-day, and the fear of being caned, will never produce that emulation which may be excited in a free man under arms, by the presence of his relations, his neighbours, his friends, his mistress, and the honour of his country.

Mrs. Wolmar's great maxim is, therefore, never to encourage any one to change his condition, but to contribute all in her power to make every one happy in his present station ; being particularly solicitous to prevent the happiest of all situations, that of a peasant in a free state, from being despised, in favour of other employments.

I remember, that I one day made an objection on this subject, founded on the different talents which nature seems to have bestowed on mankind, in order to fit them for different occupations, without any regard to their birth. This she obviated, however, by observing that there were two more material things to be consulted, before talents, these were, virtue and happiness. " Man

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(said she) is too noble a being to be made a mere tool of for the use of others: he ought not to be employed in what he is fit for, without consulting how far such employment is fit for him; for we are not made for our stations, but our stations for us. In the right distribution of things, therefore, we should not adapt men to circumstances, but circumstances to men; we should not seek that employment for which a man is best adapted, but that which is best adapted to make him virtuous and happy. For it can never be right to destroy one human soul for the temporal advantage of others, nor to make any man a villain for the use of honest people. Now, out of a thousand persons who leave their native villages, there are not ten of them but what are spoiled by going to town, and become even more profligate than those who initiate them into vice. Those who succeed, and make their fortunes, frequently compass it by base and dishonest means; while the unsuccessful, instead of returning to their former occupation, rather choose to turn beggars and thieves. But, supposing that one out of the thousand resists the contagion of example, and perseveres in the sentiments of honesty, do you think that, upon the whole, his life is as happy as it might have been in the tranquil obscurity of his first condition?

“It is no easy matter to discover the talents with which nature hath severally endowed us.

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On the contrary, it is very difficult to distinguish those of young persons the best educated and most attentively observed: how then shall a peasant, meanly bred, presume to judge of his own? There is nothing so equivocal as the genius frequently attributed to youth; the spirit of imitation has often a greater share in it than natural ability, and very often it depends more on accident than a determined inclination; nor does even inclination itself always determine the capacity. Real talents, or true genius, are attended with a certain simplicity of disposition, which makes it less restless and enterprising, less ready to thrust itself forward than a superficial and false one; which is nevertheless generally mistaken for the true, and consists only in a vain desire of making a figure without talents to support it. One of these geniuses hears the drum beat, and is immediately in idea a general; another sees a palace building, and directly commences architect. Thus Gustin, my gardener, from seeing some of my works, must needs learn to draw. I sent him to Lausanne, to a master, and he imagines himself already a fine painter. The opportunity, and the desire of preferment, generally determine men's professions. But it is not enough to be sensible of the bent of our genius, unless we are willing to pursue it. Will a prince turn coachman, because he is expert at driving a set of horses? Will a duke turn cook, because he is ingenious at inventing ra-

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gouts? Our talents all tend to preferment; no one pretends to those which would fit him for an inferior station; do you think this is agreeable to the order of nature? Suppose every one sensible of his own talents, and as willing to employ them, how is it possible? How could they surmount so many obstacles? How could they overcome so many unworthy competitors? He who finds in himself the want of abilities, would call in subtlety and intrigue to his aid; and thereby frequently becomes an over-match for others of greater capacity and sincerity. Have you not told me yourself a hundred times that the many establishments in favour of the arts, have only been of prejudice to them? In multiplying indiscreetly the number of professors and academicians, true merit is lost in the crowd; and the honours due to the most ingenious, are always bestowed on the most intriguing. Did there exist, indeed, a society, wherein the rank and employment of its respective members, were exactly calculated to their talents and personal merit, every one might there aspire to the place he should be most fit for; but it is necessary to conduct ourselves by other rules, and give up that of abilities, in societies where the vilest of all talents is the only one that leads to fortune.

“I will add further (continued she) that I cannot be persuaded of the utility of having so many

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different talents displayed. It seems necessary the number of persons so qualified should be exactly proportioned to the wants of society; now, if those only were appointed to cultivate the earth who should have eminent talents for agriculture; or if all those were taken from that employment who might be found more proper for some other; there would not remain a sufficient number of labourers to furnish the common necessaries of life. I am apt to think, therefore, that great talents in men are like great virtues in drugs, which nature has provided to cure our maladies, though its intention certainly was, that we should never stand in need of them. In the vegetable creation there are plants which are poisonous, in the brutal, animals that would tear us to pieces; and among mankind there are those who possess talents no less destructive to their species. Besides, if every thing were to be put to that use for which its qualities seem best adapted, it might be productive of more harm than good in the world. There are thousands of simple honest people, who have no occasion for a diversity of great talents; supporting themselves better by their simplicity than others with all their ingenuity. But, in proportion as their morals are corrupted, their talents are displayed, as if to serve as a supplement to the virtues they have lost, and to oblige the vicious to be useful, in spite of themselves."

Another subject on which we differed was the

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relieving of beggars. As we live near a public road, great numbers are constantly passing by: and it is the custom of the house to give to every one that asks. I represented to her, that this practice was not only throwing that money away, which might be charitably bestowed on persons in real want, but that it tended to multiply beggars and vagabonds, who take pleasure in that idle life, and by rendering themselves a burden to society, deprive it of their labour.

“ I see very well (says she) you have imbibed prejudices, by living in great cities, and some of those maxims, by which your complaisant reasoners love to flatter the hard-heartedness of the wealthy: you make use of their very expressions. Do you think to degrade a poor wretch below a human being, by giving him the contemptuous name of beggar. Compassionate as you really are, how could you prevail on yourself to make use of it? Repeat it no more, my friend; it does not come well from your lips: believe me, it is more dishonourable for the cruel man by whom it is used, than for the unhappy wretch who bears it. I will not pretend to decide whether those who thus inveigh against the giving alms are right or wrong; but this I know, that M. Wolmar, whose good sense is not inferior to that of your philosophers, and who has frequently told me of the arguments they use to suppress their natural com-

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passion and sensibility, has always appeared to despise them, and has never disapproved of my conduct. His own argument is simple. We permit, says he, and even support, at a great expence, a multitude of useless professions; many of which serve only to spoil and corrupt our manners. Now, to look upon the profession of a beggar as a trade, so far are we from having any reason to fear the like corruption of manners from the exercise of it, that, on the contrary, it serves to excite in us those sentiments of humanity which ought to unite all mankind. Again, if we look upon begging as a talent, why should I not reward the eloquence of a beggar, who has art enough to excite my compassion, and induce me to relieve him, as well as I do a comedian, who, on the stage, makes me shed a few fruitless tears? If the one makes me admire the good actions of others, the other induces me to do a good action myself; all that we feel at the representation of a tragedy goes off as soon as we come out of the play house; but the remembrance of the unhappy object we have relieved gives continual pleasure. A great number of beggars may be burdensome to a state: but of how many professions, which are tolerated and encouraged, may we not say the same? It belongs to the legislature and administration to take care there should be no beggars; but, in order to make

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them lay down their trade,* is it necessary to make all other ranks of people inhuman and unnatural? For my part, continuel Eloisa, without knowing what the poor may be to the state, I know they are all my brethren, and that I cannot, without thinking myself inexcuseable, refuse them the small relief they ask of me. The greater part of them, I own, are vagabonds; but I know too much of life to be ignorant how many misfortunes may reduce an honest man to such a situa-

* To give to beggars, say some people, is to raise a nursery of thieves; though it is, on the contrary, to prevent their becoming such. I allow that the poor ought not to be encouraged to turn beggars; but, when they once are so, they ought to be supported, lest they should turn robbers. Nothing induces people to change their profession so much as their not being able to live by it: now, those who have once experienced the lazy life of a beggar, get such an aversion to work, that they had rather go upon the highway, at the hazard of their necks, than betake themselves again to labour. A farthing is soon asked for, and soon refused; but twenty farthings might provide a supper for a poor man, whom twenty refusals might exasperate to despair: and who is there who would ever refuse so slight a gift, if he reflected that he might thereby be the means of saving two men, the one from theft, and perhaps the other from being murdered? I have somewhere read, that beggars are a kind of vermin that hang about the wealthy. It is natural for children to cling about their parents; but the rich, like cruel parents, disown theirs, and leave them to be maintained by each other.

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tion ; and how can I be sure, that an unhappy stranger, who comes in the name of God to implore my assistance, and to beg a morsel of bread, is not such an honest man, ready to perish for want, and whom my refusal may drive to despair ? The alms I distribute at the door are of no great value. A halfpenny and a piece of bread are refused to nobody ; and twice the proportion is always given to such as are maimed, or otherwise evidently incapable of labour. Should they meet with the same relief at every house which can afford it, it would be sufficient to support them on their journey ; and that is all a needy traveller has a right to expect. But supposing this was not enough to yield them any real help, it is at least a proof that we take some part in their distress ; a sort of salutation that softens the rigour of refusing them more. A halfpenny and a morsel of bread costs little more, and are a more civil answer than a mere *God help you* ; which is too often the only thing bestowed, as if the gifts of Providence were not placed in the hands of men, or that Heaven had any other store on earth than what is laid up in the coffers of the rich. In short, whatever we ought to think of such unfortunate wretches, and though nothing should in justice be given to common beggars, we ought at least, out of respect to ourselves, to take some notice of suffering humanity, and not harden our hearts at the sight of the miserable.

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“This is my behaviour to those, who, without any other subterfuge or pretext, come openly a begging. With respect to such as pretend to be workmen, and complain for want of employment, we have here tools of almost every kind for them, and we set them to work. By this means we assist them, and put their industry to the proof; a circumstance which is now so well known, that the lazy cheat never comes again to the gate.”

It is thus, my lord, this angelic creature always deduces something from her own virtues, to combat those vain subtleties, by which people of cruel dispositions palliate their vices. The solicitude and pains she takes to relieve the poor are also ranked among her amusements, and take up great part of the time she can spare from her most important duties. After having performed her duty to others, she then thinks of herself; and the means she takes to render life agreeable, may be reckoned among their virtues: so commendable are her constant motives of action, that moderation and good sense are always mixed with her pleasures! She is ambitious to please her husband, who always delights to see her cheerful and gay: she is desirous of instilling into her children a taste for innocent pleasures, wherein moderation, order, and simplicity, prevail, and secure the heart from the violence of impetuous passions. She amuses herself, therefore, to divert them, as

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Eloisa's mind and body are equally sensible. The same delicacy prevails as well in her senses as her sentiments. She was formed to know and taste every pleasure. Virtue having been long esteemed by her as the most refined of all delights, in the peaceful enjoyment of that supreme pleasure she debars herself of none that are consistent with it; but then her method of enjoyment resembles the austerity of self-denial: not indeed of that afflicting and painful self-denial which is hurtful to nature, and which its author rejects as ridiculous homage; but of that slight and moderate restraint by which the empire of reason is preserved; and which serves as a whet to pleasure, by preventing disgust. She will have it, that every thing which pleases the sense, and is not necessary to life, changes its nature, whenever it becomes habitual; that it ceases to be pleasant in becoming needful; that we thus by habit lay ourselves at once under a needless restraint, and deprive ourselves of a real pleasure; and that the art of satisfying our desires lies not in indulging, but in suppressing them. The method she takes to enhance the pleasures of the least amusement, is to deny herself the use of it twenty times for once that she enjoys it. Thus her mind preserves its first vigour; her taste is not spoiled by use; she has no need to excite it by excess;

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and I have often seen her take exquisite delight in a childest diversion, which would have been insipid to any other person on earth.

A still nobler object, which she proposes to herself from the exercise of this virtue, is that of remaining always mistress of herself, and thereby to accustom her passions to obedience, and to subject her inclinations to rule. This is a new way to be happy; for it is certain that we enjoy nothing with so little disquietude as what we can part from without pain; and if the philosopher be happy, it is because he is the man from whom fortune can take the least.

But what appears to me the most singular in her moderation is, that she pursues it for the very same reasons which hurry the voluptuous into excess. Life is indeed short, says she, which is a reason for enjoying it to the end, and managing its duration in such a manner as to make the most of it. If one day's indulgence and satiety deprives us of a whole year's taste for enjoyment, it is bad philosophy to pursue our desires so far as they may be ready to lead us, without considering whether we may not outlive our faculties, and our hearts be exhausted before our time. I see that our common epicures, in order to let slip no opportunity of enjoyment, lose all: and, perpetually anxious in the midst of pleasures, can find no enjoyment in any. They lavish away the time of which they think they are economists, and ruin themselves,

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like misers, by not knowing how to give any thing away. For my part, I hold the opposite maxim; and should prefer, in this case, rather too much severity than relaxation. It sometimes happens that I break up a party of pleasure, for no other reason than that it is too agreeable; and, by repeating it another time, have the satisfaction of enjoying it twice.

Upon such principles are the sweets of life, and the pleasures of mere amusement regulated here. Amidst her various application to the several branches of her domestic employment, Eloisa takes particular care that the kitchen is not neglected. Her table is spread with abundance; but it is not the destructive abundance of fantastic luxury: all the viands are common, but excellent in their kind; the cookery is simple but exquisite. All that consists in appearance only, whose nicety depends on the fashion, all your delicate and far-fetched dishes, whose scarcity is their only value, are banished from the table of Eloisa. Among the most delicious also of those which are admitted, they daily abstain from some; which they reserve, in order to give an air of festivity to those meals for which they were intended, and which are thereby rendered more agreeable, without being more costly. But of what kind, think you, are these dishes, which are so carefully husbanded? Choice game? Sea-fish? Foreign produce? No. Something better than all that. They are, per-

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haps a particular choice fallad of the country; fine greens of our own gardens; fish of the lake, dressed in a peculiar manner; cheese from the mountains; a German pastry, or game caught by some of the domestics. The table is served in a modest and rural, but agreeable manner, cheerfulness and gratitude crowning the whole. Your gilt covers, round which the guests sit starving with hunger; your pompous glasses, stuck out with flowers for the desert, are never introduced here, to take up the place intended for victuals; we are entirely ignorant of the art of satisfying hunger by the eye. But then, no where do they so well know how to add welcome to good cheer, to eat a good deal without eating too much, to drink cheerfully without intoxication, to sit so long at table without being tired, and to rise from it without disgust. On the first floor there is a little dining-room, different from that in which we usually dine, which is on the ground floor. This room is built in the corner of the house, and has windows in two aspects: those on one side overlook the garden, beyond which we have a prospect of the lake between the trees: on the other side we have a fine view of a spacious vineyard, that begins to display the golden harvest which we shall reap in about two months. The room is small, but ornamented with every thing that can render it pleasant and agreeable. It is here Eloisa gives her little entertainments to

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her father, to her husband, to her cousin, to me, to herself, and sometimes to her children. When she orders the table to be spread there, we know immediately the design; and M. Wolmar has given it the name of the Saloon of Apollo: but this saloon differs no less from that of Lucullus, in the choice of the persons entertained, than in that of the entertainment. Common guests are not admitted into it: we never dine there when there are any strangers: it is the inviolable asylum of mutual confidence, friendship, and liberty. The society of hearts is there joined to the social bond of the table; the entrance into it is a kind of initiation into the mysteries of a cordial intimacy; nor do any persons ever meet there, but such as wish never to be separated.— We wait impatiently for you, my lord, who are to dine the very first day in the Apollo.

For my part, I was not at first admitted to that honour, which was reserved for me till after my return from Mrs. Orbe's. Not that I imagined they could add any thing to the obliging reception I met with on my arrival; but the supper made for me there gave me other ideas. It is impossible to describe the delightful mixture of familiarity, cheerfulness and social ease, which I then experienced, and had never before tasted in my whole life. I found myself more at liberty, without being told to assume it, and we seemed even to understand one another much better than

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before. The absence of the domestics, who were dismissed from their attendance, removed that reserve which I still felt at heart; and it was then that I first, at the instance of Eloisa, resumed the custom I had laid aside for many years, of drinking wine after meals.

I was enraptured at this repast, and wished that all our meals might have been made in the same manner. "I knew nothing of this delightful room (said I to Mrs. Wolmar); why do not you always eat here?"—"See (replied she) how pretty it is! Would it not be a pity to spoil it?" This answer seemed too much out of character for me not to suspect she had some further meaning. "But why (added I) have you not the same conveniences below, that the servants might be sent away, and leave us to talk more at liberty?" "That (replied she) would be too agreeable, and the trouble of being always at ease is the greatest in the world." I immediately comprehended her system by this, and concluded that her art of managing her pleasures consisted in being sparing of them.

I think she dresses herself with more care than formerly; the only piece of vanity I ever reproached her for being that of neglecting her dress. The haughty fair one had her reasons, and left me no pretext to disown her power. But, do all she could, my enchantment was too strong for me to think it natural; I was too obstinate in

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attributing her negligence to art. Not that the power of her charms is diminished; but she now disdains to exert it; and I should be apt to say, she affected a greater neatness in her dress, that she might appear only a pretty woman, had I not discovered the reason for her present solicitude in this point. During the first two or three days I was mistaken; for, not reflecting that she was dressed in the same manner at my arrival, which was unexpected, I thought she had done it out of respect to me. I was undeceived, however, in the absence of M. Wolmar. For the next day she was not attired with that elegance which so eminently distinguished her the preceding evening, nor with that affecting and voluptuous simplicity which formerly enchanted me; but with a certain modesty that speaks through the eyes to the heart, that inspires respect only, and to which beauty itself but gives additional authority. The dignity of wife and mother appeared in all her charms; the timid and affectionate looks she cast on me, were now mixed with an air of gravity and grandeur, which seemed to cast a veil over her features. In the mean time, she betrayed not the least alteration in her behaviour; her equality of temper, her candour knew nothing of affectation. She practised only a talent natural to her sex, to change sometimes her sentiments and ideas of them, by a different dress, by a cap of this form, or a gown of that colour. The day on

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which she expected her husband's return, she again found the art of adorning her natural charms without hiding them ; she came from her toilet, indeed, a dazzling beauty, and I saw she was not less capable to outshine the most splendid dress, than to adorn the most simple. I could not help being vexed, when I reflected on the cause of her preparation.

This taste for ornament extends itself, from the mistress of the house, through all the family. The master, the children, the servants, the equipage, the building, the garden, the furniture, are all set off and kept in such order as shews what they are capable of, though magnificence is despised. I do not mean true magnificence, and which consists less in the expence, than in the good order and noble disposition of things.*

For my own part, I must confess it appears to

* And that it does so appear to me is indisputable. There is true magnificence in the proportion and symmetry of the parts of a great palace ; but there is none in a confused heap of irregular buildings. There is a magnificence in the uniformity of a regiment in battalia ; but none in the crowd of people that stand gazing on them, although perhaps there is not a man among them whose apparel is not of more value than those of any individual soldier. In a word, magnificence is nothing more than a grand scene of regularity, whence it comes to pass, that, of all sights imaginable, the most magnificent are those of nature.

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me a more grand and noble sight, to see a small number of people happy in themselves, and in each other, in a plain modest family, than to see the most splendid palace filled with tumult and discord, and every one of its inhabitants taking advantage of the general disorder, and building up their own fortunes and happiness on the ruin of another. A well governed private family forms a single object, agreeable and delightful to contemplate; whereas, in a riotous palace, we see only a confused assemblage of various objects, whose connexion and dependence are merely apparent. At first sight, indeed, they seem operating to one end; but, on examining them nearer, we are soon undeceived.

To consult only our most natural impressions, it seems that, to despise luxury and parade, we need less of moderation than of taste. Symmetry and regularity are pleasing to every one. The picture of ease and happiness must affect every heart; but a vain pomp, which relates neither to regularity nor happiness, and has only the desire of making a figure in the eyes of others for its object, however favourable an idea it may excite in us of the person who displays it, can give little pleasure to the spectator. But what is taste? Does not a hundred times more taste appear in the order and construction of plain and simple things, than in those which are overloaded with finery? What is convenience? Is any thing in the world

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more inconvenient than pomp and pageantry? *
 What is grandeur? It is precisely the contrary.
 When I see the intention of an architect to build
 a large palace, I immediately ask myself, why is
 it not larger? Why does not the man who keeps
 fifty servants, if he aims at grandeur, keep an
 hundred? That fine silver plate, why is it not
 gold? The man who gilds his chariot, why
 does he not also gild the ceiling of his apartment?
 If his ceilings are gilt, why does he not gild the
 roof too? He who was desirous of building an
 high tower, was right in his intention to raise it

* The noise of people in a house of distinction continu-
 ally disturbs the quiet of the master of it. It is impossible
 for him to conceal any thing from so many Arguses. A
 crowd of creditors make him pay dear for that of his ad-
 mirers. His apartments are generally so large and splen-
 did, that he is obliged to betake himself to a closet, that he
 may sleep at ease, and his monkey is often better lodged
 than himself. If he would dine, it depends on his cook,
 and not on his appetite; if he would go abroad, he lies at
 the mercy of his horses. A thousand embarrassments stop
 him in the streets; he is impatient to be where he is going,
 but knows not the use of his legs. His mistress expects
 him, but the dirty pavement frightens him, and the weight
 of his laced coat oppresses him, so that he cannot walk
 twenty paces. Hence he loses, indeed, the opportunity of
 seeing his mistress: but he is well repaid by the by-stand-
 ers for the disappointment, every one remarking his equi-
 page, admiring it, and saying aloud to the next person
 there goes Mr. Such-a-one!

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up to Heaven ; otherwise it was to no purpose to build, as the point where he might at last stop would only serve to shew, at the greater distance, his want of ability. O man ! vain and feeble creature ! Shew me thy power, and I will shew thee thy misery.

A regularity in the disposal of things, every one of which is of real use, and all confined to the necessaries of life, not only presents an agreeable prospect, but, as it pleases the eye, at the same time gives content to the heart. For a man views them always in a pleasing light, as relating to, and sufficient for, himself. The picture of his own wants or weakness does not appear, nor does the cheerful prospect affect him with sorrowful reflections. I defy any sensible man to contemplate, for an hour, the palace of a prince, and the pomp which reigns there, without falling into melancholy reflections, and bemoaning the lot of humanity. On the contrary, the prospect of this house, with the uniform and simple life of its inhabitants, diffuse over the mind of the spectator a secret pleasure, which is perpetually increasing. A small number of good-natured people, united by their mutual wants and reciprocal benevolence, concur, by their different employments, in promoting the same end ; every one finding in his situation all that is requisite to contentment, and not desiring to change it, applies himself as if he thought to stay here all his life ; the only ambi-

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tion among them being that of properly discharging their respective duties. There is so much moderation in those who command, and so much zeal in those who obey, that equals might agree to distribute the same employments among them, without any one having reason to complain of his lot. No one envies that of another; no one thinks of augmenting his fortune, but by adding to the common good: the master and mistress estimating their own happiness by that of their domestics and the people about them. One finds here nothing to add or diminish, because here is nothing but what is useful, and that indeed is all that is to be found; inasmuch that nothing is wanted which may not be had, and of that there is always a sufficiency. Suppose, now, to all this were added lace, pictures, lustres, gilding; in a moment you would impoverish the scene. In seeing so much abundance in things necessary, and no mark of superfluity, one is now apt to think, that if those things were the objects of choice which are not here, they would be had in the same abundance. In seeing also so plentiful a provision made for the poor, one is led to say, this house cannot contain its wealth. This seems to me true magnificence.

Such marks of opulence, however, surprised me, when I first heard what fortune must support it. "You are ruining yourselves (said I

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to Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar): it is impossible for moderate revenue to employ so much expence." They smiled, and soon convinced me, that, without retrenching any of their family expences, they could, if they pleased, lay up money, and increase their estate, instead of diminishing it. "Our grand secret to grow rich (said they) is to have as little to do with money as possible, and to avoid as much as may be those intermediate exchanges, which are made between the harvest and the consumption. None of those exchanges are made without some loss; and such losses, if multiplied, would reduce a very good estate to little or nothing, as, by means of brokerage, a valuable gold box may fetch in a sale the price only of a trifling toy. The expence of transporting our produce is avoided, by making use of some part on the spot, and that of exchange, by using others in their natural state. And as for the indispensable necessity of converting those in which we abound for such as we want, instead of making pecuniary bargains, we endeavour to make real exchanges, in which the convenience of both parties, supplies the place of profit."

"I conceive (answered I) the advantages of this method; but it does not appear to me without inconvenience. For, besides the trouble to which it must subject you, the profit must be rather apparent than real, and what you lose in the management of your own estate, probably over-

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balances the profits the farmers would make of you. The peasants are better economists, both in the expences of cultivation, and in gathering their produce, than you can be."—"That (replied M. Wolmar) is a mistake; the peasant thinks less of augmenting the produce than of sparing his expences, because the cost is more difficult for him to raise than the profits are useful. The tenant's view is not so much to increase the value of the land, as to lay out but little on it; and if he depends on any certain gain, it is less by improving the soil than exhausting it. The best that can happen, is, that, instead of exhausting he quite neglects it. Thus, for the sake of a little ready money, gathered in with ease, an indolent proprietor prepares for himself, or his children, great losses, much trouble, and sometimes the ruin of his patrimony.

"I do not deny (continued M. Wolmar) that I am at much greater expence in the cultivation of my land than a farmer would be; but then I myself reap the profit of his labour, and the culture being much better than his, my crop is proportionably larger: so that though I am at a greater expence, I am still, upon the whole, a gainer. Besides, this excess of expence is only apparent, and is, in reality, productive of great economy; for, were we to let out our lands for others to cultivate, we should be ourselves idle:

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we must live in town, where the necessaries of life are dear; we must have amusements that would cost us much more than those we take here. The business which you call a trouble, is at once our duty and our delight; and, thanks to the regulation it is under, is never troublesome: on the contrary, it serves to employ us, instead of those destructive schemes of pleasure which people in town run into, and which a country life prevents, whilst that which contributes to our happiness becomes our amusement.

“Look round you (continued he) and you will see nothing but what is useful; yet all these things cost little, and save a world of unnecessary expence. Our table is furnished with nothing but viands of our own growth; our dress and furniture are almost all composed of the manufactures of the country: nothing is despised with us because it is common, nor held in esteem because it is scarce. As every thing that comes from abroad is liable to be disguised and adulterated, we confine ourselves, as well through nicety as moderation, to the choice of the best home commodities, the quality of which is less dubious. Our viands are plain, but choice; and nothing is wanting to make ours a sumptuous table, but the transporting it a hundred leagues off; in which case every thing would be delicate, every thing would be rare, and even our trouts of the lake would be

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thought infinitely better, were they to be eaten at Paris.

“ We observe the same rule in the choice of our apparel, which you see is not neglected, but its elegance is the only thing we study, and not its cost, and much less its fashion. There is a wide difference between the price of opinion and the real value. The latter, however, is all that Eloisa regards; in choosing a gown, she inquires not so much whether the pattern be old or new, as whether the stuff be good and becoming. The novelty of it is even sometimes the cause of her rejecting it; especially when it enhances the price, by giving it an imaginary value.

“ You should further consider, that the effect of every thing here arises less from itself than from its use, and its dependences; insomuch that out of parts worth little, Eloisa has compounded a whole of great value. Taste delights in creating and stamping upon things a value of its own: as the laws of fashion are inconstant and destructive, her's is economical and lasting. What true taste once approves, must be always good, and though it be seldom in the mode, it is, on the other hand, never improper. Thus, in her modest simplicity, she deduces, from the use and fitness of things, such sure and unalterable rules, as will stand their ground when the vanity of fashion is

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no more. The abundance of mere necessities can never degenerate into abuse ; for what is necessary has its natural bounds, and our real wants know no excess. One may lay out the price of twenty suits of clothes in buying one, and eat up at a meal the income of a whole year ; but we cannot wear two suits at one time, nor dine twice the same day. Thus, the caprice of opinion is boundless, whereas nature confines us on all sides ; and he, who, with a moderate fortune, contents himself with living well, will run no risk of ruin.

“ Hence you see (continued the prudent Wolmar) in what manner a little economy and industry may lift us out of the reach of fortune. It depends only on ourselves to increase ours, without changing our manner of living ; for we advance nothing but with a view of profit, and whatever we expend, puts us soon in a condition to expend much more.”

And yet, my lord, nothing of all this appears at first sight : the general air of affluence and profusion hides that order and regularity to which it is owing. One must be here some time to perceive those sumptuary laws, which are productive of so much ease and pleasure ; and it is with difficulty that one at first comprehends how they enjoy what they spare. On reflection, however, one's satisfaction increases, because it is plain that the source is inexhaustible, and that the art of en-

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joying life, serves at the same time to prolong it. How can any one be weary of a state so conformable to that of nature? How can he waste his inheritance, by improving it every day? How ruin his fortune, by spending only his income? When one year provides for the next, what can disturb the peace of the present? The fruits of their past labour support their present abundance, and those of their present labour provide a future plenty: they enjoy at once what is expended and what is received, and both past and future times unite them in the security of the present.

I have looked into all the particulars of domestic management, and find the same spirit extend itself throughout the whole. All their lace and embroidery are worked in the house; all their cloth is spun at home, or by poor women supported by their charity. The wool is sent to the manufactories of the country, from whence they receive cloth in exchange, for clothing the servants. Their wine, oil, and bread, are all made at home; and they have woods, of which they cut down regularly what is necessary for firing. The butcher is paid in cattle, the grocer in corn, for the nourishment of his family; the wages of the workmen and the servants are paid out of the produce of the lands they cultivate; the rent of their houses in town serves to furnish those they inhabit in the country; the interest of their mo-

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ney in the public funds, furnishes a subsistence for the masters, and also the little plate they have occasion for. The sale of the corn and wine which remain, furnishes a fund for extraordinary expences; a fund which Eloisa's prudence will never permit to be exhausted, and which her charity will not suffer to increase. She allows for masters of mere amusements the profits, only, of the labour done in the house, of the grubbing up uncultivated land, of planting trees, &c. Thus the produce and the labour always compensating each other, the balance cannot be disturbed; and it is impossible, from the nature of things, it should be destroyed.

Add to this, that the abstinence which Eloisa imposes on herself, through that voluptuous temperance I have mentioned, is at once productive of new means of pleasure, and new resources of economy. For example, she is very fond of coffee, and when her mother was living, drank it every day. But she has left off that practice, in order to heighten her taste for it, now drinking it only when she has company, or in her favourite dining room, in order to give her entertainment the air of a treat. This is a little indulgence, which is the more agreeable, as it costs her little, and at the same time restrains and regulates her appetite. On the contrary, she studies to discover and gratify the taste of her father and husband with unwearied attention; a charm-

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ing prodigality, which makes them like every thing so much the more, for the pleasure they see she takes in providing it. They both love to sit a little after meals, in the manner of the Swiss; on which occasions, particularly after supper, she seldom fails to treat them with a bottle of wine more old and delicate than common. I was at first deceived by the fine names she gave to her wines, which, in fact, I found to be extremely good; and, drinking them as wines of the growth of the countries whose names they bore, I took Eloisa to task for so manifest a breach of her own maxims; but she laughed at me, and put me in mind of a passage in Plutarch, where Flaminius compares the Asiatic troops of Antiochus, distinguished by a thousand barbarous names, to the several ragouts under which a friend of his had disguised one and the same kind of meat. "It is just so (said she) with these foreign wines. The Lisbon, the Sherry, the Malaga, the Champagne, the Syracuse, which you have drunk here with so much pleasure, are all, in fact, no other than wines of this country, and you see from hence the vineyard that produced them. If they are inferior in quality to the celebrated wines whose names they bear, they are also without their inconveniences; and as one is certain of the materials of which they are composed, they may be drunk with less danger. I have reason to believe (continued she)

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that my father and husband like them as well as more scarce and costly wines."—"Eloisa's wines, indeed (says M. Wolmar) to me, have a taste which pleases us better than any others, and that arises from the pleasures she takes in preparing them."—"Then (returned she) they will be always exquisite."

"You will judge whether, amidst such a variety of business, that indolence and want of employment, which makes company, visitings, and such formal society necessary, can find any place here. We visit our neighbours, indeed, just enough to keep up an agreeable acquaintance, but too little to be slaves to each other's company. Our guests are always welcome, but are never invited or entreated. The rule here is to see just so much company as to prevent the losing a taste for retirement, rural occupation supplying the place of amusements: and to him who finds an agreeable and peaceful society in his own family, all other company is insipid. The manner, however, in which we pass our time, is too simple and uniform to tempt many people; but it is the disposition of those who have adopted it, that makes it delightful. How can persons of a sound mind be wearied with discharging the most endearing and pleasing duties of humanity, and with rendering each other's lives mutually happy? Satisfied every night with the transactions of the day, Eloisa wishes for nothing different on the mor-

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row. Her constant morning prayer is, that the present day may prove like the past. She is engaged perpetually in the same round of business, because no alteration would give her more pleasure. Thus, without doubt, she enjoys all the happiness of which human life is capable: for is not our being pleased with the continuation of our lot, a certain sign that we are happy. One seldom sees in this place those knots of idle people, which are usually called good company; but then one beholds those who interest our affections infinitely more, such as peaceable peasants, without art, and without politeness; but honest, simple, and contented in their station: old officers retired from the service; merchants wearied with application to business, and tired of growing rich; prudent mothers of families, who bring their children to the school of modesty and good manners: such is the company Eloisa assembles about her. To these her husband sometimes adds some of those adventurers, reformed by age and experience, who, having purchased wisdom at their own cost, return, without reluctance, to cultivate their paternal soil, which they wish they had never left. When any one relates at table the occurrences of their lives, they consist not of the marvellous adventures of the wealthy Sinbad, recounting, in the midst of eastern pomp and effeminacy, how he acquired his vast wealth. Their tales are the simple narratives of men of sense,

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who, from the caprice of fortune, and the injustice of mankind, are disgusted with the vain pursuit of imaginary happiness, and have acquired a taste for the objects of true felicity.

Would you believe that even the conversation of peasants hath its charms for these elevated minds, of whom the philosopher himself might be glad to profit in wisdom? The judicious Wolmar discovers in their rural simplicity, more characteristic distinctions, more men that think for themselves, than under the uniform mask worn in great cities, where every one appears what other people are, rather than what he is himself. The affectionate Eloisa finds their hearts susceptible of the smallest offers of kindness, and that they esteem themselves happy in the interest she takes in their happiness. Neither their hearts nor understandings are formed by art; they have not learned to model themselves after the fashion, and are less the creatures of men than those of nature.

M. Wolmar often picks up, in his rounds, some honest old peasant, whose experience and understanding give him great pleasure. He brings him home to Eloisa, by whom he is received in a manner which denotes, not her politeness, or the dignity of her station, but the benevolence and humanity of her character. The good man is kept to dinner; Eloisa placing him next herself, obligingly helping him, and asking kindly at-

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ter his family and affairs. She smiles not at his embarrassment, nor takes notice of the rusticity of his manners ; but, by the ease of her own behaviour, frees him from all restraint, maintaining throughout that tender and affectionate respect which is due to an infirm old age, -honoured by an irreproachable life. The venerable old man is enraptured, and, in the fulness of heart, seems to experience again the vivacity of youth. In drinking healths to a young and beautiful lady, his half-frozen blood grows warm ; and he begins to talk of former times, the days of his youth, his amours, the campaigns he has made, the battles he has been in, of the magnanimity and feats of his fellow-soldiers, of his return to his native country, of his wife, his children, his rural employments, the inconveniences he has remarked, and the remedies he thinks may be applied to remove them : during which long detail he often lets fall some excellent moral, or useful lesson in agriculture, the dictates of age and experience ; but be there even nothing in what he says, so long as he takes a pleasure in saying it, Eloisa would take a pleasure in hearing it.

After dinner, she retires into her own apartment, to fetch some little present for the wife or daughter of the good old man. This is presented to him by the children, who in return receive some trifle of him, with which she had secretly provided him for that purpose. Thus she initi-

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ates them betimes to that intimate and pleasing benevolence, which knits the bond of society between persons of different conditions. The children are accordingly accustomed to respect old age, to esteem simplicity of manners, and to distinguish merit in all ranks of people. The young peasants, on the other hand, seeing their fathers thus entertained at a gentleman's house, and admitted to the master's table, take no offence at being themselves excluded; they think such exclusion not owing to their rank, but their age; they do not say, we are too poor, but we are too young, to be thus treated. Thus the honour done to their aged parents, and their hope of one day enjoying the same distinction, make them amends for being debarred from it at present, and excite them to become worthy of it. At his return home to his cottage, their delighted guest impatiently produces the presents he has brought his wife and children, who are overjoyed at the honour done them; the good old man, at the same time, eagerly relating to them the reception he met with, the dainties he has eaten, the wines he has tasted, the obliging discourse and conversation, the affability of the gentlefolks, and the assiduity of the servants; in the recital of all which he enjoys it a second time, and the whole family partake of the honour done to their head. They join in concert to bless that illustrious house, which affords at once an example to the

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rich, and an asylum for the poor, and whose generous inhabitants disdain not the indigent, but do honour to grey hairs. Such is the incense that is pleasing to benevolent minds; and if there be any prayers to which Heaven lends a gracious ear, they are, certainly, not those which are offered up by meanness and flattery, in the hearing of the person prayed for, but such as the grateful and simple heart dictates in secret, beneath its own roof.

It is thus that agreeable and affectionate sentiments give charms to a life insipid to indifferent minds: it is thus that business, labour, and retirement become amusing by the art of managing them. A sound mind knows how to take delight in vulgar employments, as a healthful body relishes the most simple aliments. All those indolent people who are diverted with so much difficulty, owe their disgust to their vices, and lose their taste for pleasure only with that of their duty. As to Eloisa, it is directly contrary; the employment which a certain languor of mind made her formerly neglect, becomes now interesting from the motive that excites to it. One must be totally insensible, to be always without vivacity. She formerly sought solitude and retirement, in order to indulge her reflections on the object of her passion; at present she has acquired new activity, by having formed new and different connexions. She is not one of those indolent mothers of a fa-

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mily, who are contented to study their duty when they should discharge it, and lose their time in inquiring after the business of others, which they should employ in dispatching their own. — Eloisa practises at present what she learnt long ago. — Her time for reading and study has given place to that of action. As she rises an hour later than her husband, so she goes an hour later to bed. — This hour is the only time she employs in study; for the day is not too long for the various business in which she is engaged.

This, my lord, is what I had to say to you concerning the economy of this house, and of the retired life of those who govern it. Contented in their station, they peaceably enjoy its conveniences; satisfied with their fortune, they seek not to augment it for their children, but to leave them, with an inheritance they themselves received, an estate in good condition, affectionate servants, a taste for employment, order, moderation, and for every thing that can render delightful and agreeable to men of sense the enjoyment of a moderate fortune, as prudently preserved as honestly acquired.

LETTER CXXXIX.

TO LORD B——.

WE have had visitors for some days past. They left us yesterday, and we renewed that agreeable

society subsisting between us three, which is by so much the more delightful, as there is nothing, even in the bottom of our hearts, that we desire to hide from each other. What a pleasure do I take in resuming a new being which renders me worthy of your confidence! At every mark of esteem which I receive from Eloisa and her husband, I say to myself with an air of self-sufficiency, At length I may venture to appear before Lord B—. It is with your assistance, it is under your eyes, that I hope to do honour to my present situation by my past follies. If an extinguished passion casts the mind into a state of dejection, a passion subdued adds to the consciousness of victory a new elevation of sentiment, a more lively attachment to all that is sublime and beautiful. Shall I lose the fruit of a sacrifice which hath cost me so dear? No, my lord; I feel that, animated by your example, my heart is going to profit by all those arduous sentiments it has conquered. I feel that it was necessary for me to be what I was, in order for me to become what I am.

After having thrown away six days in frivolous conversation with persons indifferent to us, we passed yesterday morning, after the manner of the English, in company and silence; tasting at once the pleasure of being together and the sweetness of self-recollection. How small a part of mankind know any thing of the pleasures of this situation! I never saw a person in France who had the least idea of it.

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The conversation of friends, say they, can never be exhausted. It is true, the tongue may easily find words for common attachments: but friendship, my lord, friendship! thou animating celestial sentiment! what language is worthy of thee? What tongue presumes to be thy interpreter? Can any thing spoken to a friend equal what is felt in his company? Good God! how many things are conveyed by a squeeze of the hand, by an animating look, by an eager embrace, by a sigh that rises from the bottom of the heart? And how cold in comparison is the first word which is spoken after that! I shall never forget the evenings I passed at Besançon; those delightful moments sacred to silence and friendship.— Never, O B——! thou noblest of men! sublimest of friends! No, never have I undervalued what you then did for me; never have my lips presumed to mention it. It is certain that this state of contemplation affords the greatest delight to susceptible minds. But I have always observed that impertinent visitors prevent one from enjoying it, and that friends ought to be by themselves, to be at liberty to say nothing. At such a time one should be, if one may use the expression, collected in each other: the least avocation is destructive, the least constraint is insupportable. It is then so sweet to pronounce the dictates of the heart without restraint. It seems as if one dared to think freely only of what one can as

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freely speak; it seems as if the presence of a stranger restrained the sentiment, and compressed those hearts which could so fully dictate themselves alone.

Two hours passed away in this silent ecstasy, more delightful a thousand times than the frigid repose of the deities of Epicurus. After breakfast, the children came, as usual, into the apartment of Eloisa, who, instead of retiring, and shutting herself up with them in the work-room, according to custom, kept them with her, as if to make them some amends for the time they had lost without seeing us; and we none of us parted till dinner. Harriet, who begins to know how to handle her needle, sat at work before Fanny, who was weaving lace, and rested her cushion on the back of her little chair. The two boys were busy at a table, turning over the leaves of a book of prints, the subject of which the eldest explained to the younger, Harriet, who knew the whole by heart, being attentive to and correcting him when wrong: and sometimes pretending to be ignorant what figures they were at, she made it a pretence to rise, and go backwards and forwards from the chair to the table. During these little lessons, which were given and taken with little pains and less restraint, the younger boy was playing with some counters which he had secreted under the book. Mrs. Wolmar was at work on some embroidery near the window, op-

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posite the children, and her husband and I were still sitting at the tea-table, reading the Gazette, to which she gave but little attention. But when we came to the article which mentions the illness of the king of France, and the singular attachment of his people, unequalled by any thing but that of the Romans for Germanicus, she made some reflexions on the disposition of that affectionate and benevolent nation, whom all the world hate, whilst they have no hatred to any one; adding, that she envied only a sovereign the power of making himself beloved. To this her husband replied, "You have no need to envy a sovereign, who have so long had us all for your subjects." On which she turned her head, and cast a look on him so affecting and tender, that it struck me prodigiously. She said nothing indeed; for what could she say equal to such a look? Our eyes met: and I could perceive, by the manner in which her husband pressed my hand, that the same emotion had effected us all three, and that the delightful influence of her expansive heart diffused itself around, and triumphed over insensibility itself.

We were thus disposed when that silent scene began, of which I just now spoke: you may judge that it was not the consequence of coldness or chagrin. It was first interrupted by the little management of the children; who, nevertheless, as soon as we left off speaking, moderated

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their prattle, as if afraid of disturbing the general silence. The little teacher was the first that lowered her voice, made signs to the other, and ran about on tip-toe, while their play became the more diverting by this light constraint. This scene, which seemed to present itself in order to prolong our tenderness, produced its natural effect.

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Our hearts conversing while our tongues were mute.

How many things may be said without opening one's lips! How warm the sentiments that may be communicated, without the cold interposition of speech! Eloisa insensibly permitted her attention to be engaged by the same object. Her eyes were fixed on the three children; and her heart, ravished with the most enchanting ecstasy, animated her charming features with all the affecting sweetness of maternal tenderness.

Thus given up to this double contemplation, Wolmar and I were indulging our reveries, when the children put an end to them. The eldest, who was diverting himself with the prints, seeing the counters prevented his brother from being attentive, took an opportunity, when he had piled them up, to give them a knock, and throw them down on the floor. Marcellin fell a crying; and Eloisa, without troubling herself to quiet him, bid Fanny pick up the counters. The child

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was immediately hushed; the counters were nevertheless not brought him, nor did he begin to cry again, as I expected. This circumstance, which, however, was nothing in itself, recalled to my mind a great many others, to which I had given no attention; and when I think of them, I do not remember ever to have seen children, with so little speaking to, give so little trouble. They hardly ever are out of the mother's sight, and yet one can hardly perceive they are in company. They are lively and playful, as children of their age should be, but never clamorous or teasing; they are already discreet before they know what discretion is. But what surprises me most is, that all this appears to be brought about of itself; and that with such an affectionate tenderness for her children, Eloisa seems to give herself so little concern about them. In fact, one never sees her very earnest to make them speak or hold their tongues, to make them do things or let them alone. She never disputes with them; she never contradicts them in their amusements: so that one would be apt to think she contented herself with seeing and loving them; and that when they have passed the day with her, she had discharged the whole duty of a mother towards them.

But, though this peaceable tranquillity appears more agreeable in contemplation than the restless solicitude of other mothers, yet I was not

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a little surpris'd at an apparent indolence, so little agreeable to her character. I would have had her even a little discontented amidst so many reasons to the contrary; so well doth a superfluous activity become maternal affection! I would willingly have attributed the goodness of the children to the care of the mother; and should have been glad to have observed more faults in them, that I might have seen her more solicitous to correct them.

Having busied myself with these reflections a long time in silence, I at last determin'd to communicate them to her. "I see (said I, one day) that Heaven rewards virtuous mothers in the good disposition of their children; but the best disposition must be cultivated. Their education ought to begin from the time of their birth. Can there be a time more proper to form their minds, than when they have received no impression that need to be effaced? If you give them up to themselves in their infancy, at what age do you expect them to be docile? While you have nothing else to teach them, you ought to teach them obedience."—"Why, (returned she) do my children disobey me?"—"That were difficult (said I) as you lay no commands upon them." On this she looked at her husband, and smiled; then taking me by the hand, she led me into the

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Here, explaining her maxims at leisure, she discovered to me, under that air of negligence, the most vigilant attention of maternal tenderness. "I was a long time (said she) of your opinion with regard to the premature instruction of children; and while I expected my first child, was anxious concerning the obligations I should soon have to discharge. I used often to speak to M. Wolmar on that subject. What better guide could I take than so sensible an observer, in whom the interest of a father was united to the indifference of a philosopher? He fulfilled, and indeed surpassed my expectations. He soon made me sensible, that the first and most important part of education, precisely that which all the world neglects*, is that of preparing a child to receive instruction.

"The common error of parents, who pique themselves on their own knowledge, is to suppose their children capable of reasoning as soon as they are born, as to talk to them as if they were grown persons before they can speak. Reason is the instrument they use, whereas every other means ought first to be used, in order to

* Locke himself, the sagacious Locke, has forgot it, instructing us rather in the things we ought to require of our children, than in the means of obtaining them.

form their reason; for it is certain, that of all the knowledge which men acquire, or are capable of acquiring, the art of reasoning is the last and most difficult to learn. By talking to them at so early an age, in a language they do not understand, they learn to be satisfied with mere words; to talk to others in the same manner; to contradict every thing that is said to them; to think themselves as wise as their teachers: and all that one thinks to obtain by reasonable motives is, in fact, acquired only by those of fear or vanity.

“The most consummate patience would be wearied out, by endeavouring to educate a child in this manner; and thus it is, that fatigued and disgusted with the perpetual importunity of children, their parents, unable to support the noise and disorder they themselves have given rise to, are obliged to part with them, and to deliver them over to the care of a master; as if one could expect in a preceptor more patience and good nature than in a father.

“Nature (continued Eloisa) would have children be children before they are men. If we attempt to pervert that order, we produce only forward fruit, which has neither maturity nor flavour, and will soon decay; we raise young professors and old children. Infancy has a manner of perceiving, thinking, and feeling peculiar

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“The understanding does not begin to form itself till after some years, and when the corporeal organs have acquired a certain consistence. The design of nature is, therefore, evidently to strengthen the body before the mind is exercised. Children are always in motion; rest and reflection is inconsistent with their age; a studious and sedentary life would prevent their growth, and injure their health; neither their body nor mind can support restraint. Shut up perpetually in a room with their books, they lose their vigour, become delicate, feeble, sickly, rather stupid than reasonable; and their minds suffer during their whole lives, from the weakness of their bodies.

“But, supposing such premature instruction were as profitable as it is really hurtful to their understandings, a very great inconvenience would attend the application of it to all indiscriminately, without regard to the particular genius of each. For, besides the constitution common to its species, every child at his birth possesses a peculiar temperament, which determines its genius and character; and which it is improper either to pervert or restrain; the business of education being only to model and bring it to perfection. All these characters are, according to M. Wol-

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mar, good in themselves : for Nature, says he, makes no mistakes*. All the vices imputed to malignity of disposition are only the effect of the bad form it had received. According to him, there is not a villain upon earth, whose natural propensity, well directed, might not have been productive of great virtues ; nor is there a wrong head in being, that might not have been of use to himself and society, had his natural talents taken a certain bias ; just as deformed and monstrous images are rendered beautiful and proportionable, by placing them in a proper point of view. Every thing (says he) tends to the common good in the universal system of nature. Every man has his place assigned in the best order and arrangement of things ; the business is to find out that place, and not to disturb such order. What must be the consequence then of an education begun in a cradle, and carried on always in the same manner, without regard to the vast diversity of temperaments and genius in mankind ? Useless or hurtful instructions would be given to the greater part, while at the same time they are deprived of such as would be most useful and convenient ; nature would be confined on every side, and the greatest qualities of the mind de-

* This doctrine, so true in itself, surprises me, as adopted by M. Wolmar ; the reason of it will be seen presently.

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faced, in order to substitute in their place mean and little ones, of no utility. By using indiscriminately the same means with different talents, the one serves to deface the other, and all are confounded together. Thus, after a great deal of pains thrown away in spoiling the natural endowments of children, we presently see those transitory and frivolous ones of education decay and vanish, while those of nature, being totally obscured, appear no more; and thus we lose at once, both what we have pulled down, and what we have raised up. In a word, in return for so much pains indiscreetly taken, all these little prodigies become wits without sense, and men without merit, remarkable only for their weakness and insignificance."

"I understand your maxims (said I to Eloisa), but I know not how to reconcile them with your own opinion on the little advantage arising from the display of the genius and natural talents of individuals, either respecting their own happiness or the real interest of society. Would it not be infinitely better to form a perfect model, by animating one, restraining another, by regulating its passions, improving its understanding, and thus correcting nature!"—"Correcting nature! (says M. Wolmar, interrupting me) that is a very fine expression; but, before you make use of it, pray reply to what Eloisa has already advanced."

The most significant reply, as I thought, was

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to deny the principle on which her arguments were founded; which I accordingly did. "You suppose (said I) that the diversity of temperament and genius which distinguish individuals is the immediate work of nature; whereas nothing is less evident. For, if our minds are naturally different, they must be unequal; and if nature has made them unequal, it must be by enduing some, in preference to others, with a more refined perception, a greater memory, or a greater capacity of attention. Now, as to perception and memory, it is proved by experience that their different degrees of extent or perfection, are not the standard of genius and abilities; and as to a capacity of attention, it depends solely on the force of the passions by which we are animated; and it is also proved that all mankind are by nature susceptible of passions strong enough to excite in them that degree of attention necessary to a superiority of genius.

"If a diversity of genius, therefore, instead of being derived from nature, be the effect of education; that is to say, of the different ideas and sentiments which objects excite in us during our infancy, of the various circumstances in which we are engaged, and of all the impressions we receive; so far should we be from waiting to know the character of a child before we give it education, that we should, on the contrary, be in

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To this he replied, that it was not his way to deny the existence of any thing, because he could not explain it. "Look (says he) upon those two dogs in the court-yard. They are of the same litter; they have been fed and trained together; have never been parted; and yet one of them is a brisk, lively, good-natured, docible cur; while the other is lumpish, heavy, cross-grained, and incapable of learning any thing. Now, their difference of temperament, only, can have produced in them that of character, as the difference of our interior organization produces in us that of our minds: in every other circumstance they have been alike."—"Alike! (interrupted I); what a vast difference may there not have been, though unobserved by you? How many minute objects may have acted on the one, and not on the other! How many little circumstances may not have differently affected them, which you have not perceived!"—"Very pretty, indeed (says he); so, I find you reason like the astrologers; who, when two men are mentioned of different fortune, yet born under the same aspect, deny the identity of circumstances. On the contrary, they maintain, that, on account of the rapidity of the heavenly motions, there must have been an immense distance between the themes, in the horoscope, of

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the one and the other ; and that, if the precise moment of their births had been carefully noted, the objection had been converted into a proof.

“ But, pray, let us leave these subtleties, and confine ourselves to observation. This may teach us, indeed, that there are characters which are known almost at the birth, and children that may be studied at the breast of their nurse ; but these are of a particular class, and receive their education in beginning to live. As for others, who are later known, to attempt to form their genius before their characters are distinguished, is to run a risk of spoiling what is good in their natural dispositions, and substituting what is worse in its place. Did not your master Plato maintain, that all the art of man, that all philosophy could not extract from the human mind what nature had not implanted there ; as all the operations in chemistry are incapable of extracting from any mixture more gold than is already contained in it ? This is not true of our sentiments or our ideas ; but it is true of our disposition, or capacity of acquiring them. To change the genius, one must be able to change the interior organization of the body ; to change a character, one must be capable of changing the temperament on which it depends. Have you ever heard of a passionate man’s becoming patient and temperate, or of a frigid methodical genius having acquired a spi-

rited imagination? For my own part, I think it would be just as easy to make a fair man brown, or a blockhead a man of sense. It is in vain then to attempt to model different minds by one common standard. One may restrain, but we can never change them: one may hinder men from appearing what they are, but can never make them really otherwise; and, though they disguise their sentiments in the ordinary commerce of life, you will see them re-assume their real characters on every important occasion. Besides, our business is not to change the character and alter the natural disposition of the mind; but, on the contrary, to improve and prevent its degenerating; for by these means it is that a man becomes what he is capable of being, and that the work of nature is completed by education. Now, before any character can be cultivated, it is necessary that it should be studied; and that we should patiently wait its opening; that we should furnish occasions for it to display itself; and that we should forbear doing any thing, rather than do wrong. To one genius it is necessary to give wings, and to another shackles; one should be spurred forward, another reigned in; one should be encouraged, another intimidated; sometimes both should be checked, and at others assisted. One man is formed to extend human knowledge to the highest degree to another it is even dangerous

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to learn to read. Let us wait for the opening of reason; it is that which displays the character, and gives it its true form: it is by that also it is cultivated, and there is no so such thing as education before the understanding is ripe for instruction.

“As to the maxims of Eloisa, which you think opposite to this doctrine, I see nothing in them contradictory to it: on the contrary, I find them, for my own part, perfectly compatible. Every man at his birth brings into the world with him a genius, talents, and character peculiar to himself. Those who are destined to live a life of simplicity in the country, have no need to display their talents in order to be happy: their unexerted faculties are like the gold mines of the Valais, which the public good will not permit to be opened. But in a more polished society, where the head is of more use than the hands, it is necessary that all the talents nature hath bestowed on men should be exerted; that they should be directed to that quarter in which they can proceed the farthest: and above all, that their natural propensity should be encouraged by every thing which can make it useful. In the first case, the good of the species only is consulted; every one acts in the same manner; example is their only rule of action; habit their only talent; and no one exerts any other genius than that

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which is common to all : whereas, in the second case, we consult the interest and capacity of individuals ; if one man possess any talent superior to another, it is cultivated and pursued as far as it will reach ; and if a man be possessed of adequate abilities, he may become the greatest of his species. These maxims are so little contradictory, that they have been put in practice in all ages. Instruct not, therefore, the children of the peasant, nor the citizen, for you know not as yet what instruction is proper for them. In every case, let the body be formed, till the judgment begins to appear : then is the time for cultivation."

" All this would seem very well (said I) if I did not see one inconvenience, very prejudicial to the advantages you promise yourself from this method; and this is, that children thus left to themselves will get many bad habits, which can be prevented only by teaching them good ones. You may see such children readily contract all the bad practices they perceive in others, because such examples are easily followed, and never imitate the good ones, which would cost them more trouble. Accustomed to have every thing, and to do as they please on every occasion, they become mutinous, obstinate, and untractable."—
 " But (interrupted M. Wolmar) it appears to me that you have remarked the contrary in our's, and that this remark has given rise to this conversation."—" I must confess (answered I) this

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is the very thing which surprifes me. What can Eloifa have done to make them fo tractable? What method hath ſhe taken to bring it about? What has ſhe ſubſtituted inſtead of the yoke of diſcipline?”—“A yoke much more inflexible (returned he immediately) that of neceſſity; but, in giving you an account of her conduct, you will be better able to comprehend her views.” He then engaged Eloifa to explain her method of education; which, after a ſhort pauſe, ſhe did, in the following manner:

“Happy, my dear friend, are thoſe who are well-born! I lay not ſo great a ſtreſs as M. Wolmar does on my own endeavours. I doubt much, notwithstanding his maxims, that a good man can ever be made out of a child of a bad diſpoſition and character. Convinced, nevertheless, of the excellence of his method, I endeavoured to regulate my conduct, in the government of my family, in every reſpect agreeable to him. My firſt hope is, that I ſhall never have a child of a vicious diſpoſition; my ſecond, that I ſhall be able to educate thoſe which God has given me, under the direction of their father, in ſuch a manner, that they may one day have the happineſs of poſſeſſing his virtues. To this end I have endeavoured to adopt his rules, by giving them a principle leſs philoſophical, and more agreeable to maternal affection; namely, to make my children happy. This was the firſt prayer of my heart

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after I was a mother, and all the business of my life is to effect it. From the first time I held my eldest son in my arms, I have reflected that the state of infancy is almost a fourth part of the longest life; that men seldom pass through the other three fourths; and that it is a piece of cruel prudence to make that first part uneasy, in order to secure the happiness of the rest, which may never come. I reflected, that during the weakness of infancy, nature had oppressed children in so many different ways, that it would be barbarous to add to that oppression the empire of our caprices, by depriving them of a liberty so very much confined, and which they were so little capable of abusing. I resolved, therefore, to lay mine under as little constraint as possible; to leave them to the free exertion of all their little powers; and to suppress in them none of the emotions of nature. By these means I have already gained two great advantages; the one, that of preventing their opening minds from knowing any thing of falsehood, vanity, anger, envy, and, in a word, of all those vices which are the consequences of subjection, and which one is obliged to have recourse to, when we would have children do what nature does not teach: the other is, that they are more at liberty to grow and gather strength, by the continual exercise which instinct directs them to. Accustomed, like the children of peasants, to expose

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themselves to the heat and cold, they grow as hardy; are equally capable of bearing the inclemencies of the weather; and become more robust, as living more at their ease. This is the way to provide against the age of maturity, and the accidents of humanity. I have already told you, that I dislike that destructive pusillanimity, which, by dint of solicitude and care, enervates a child, torments it by constant restraint, confines it by a thousand vain precautions, and, in short, exposes it during its whole life to those inevitable dangers it is thus protected from but for a moment; and thus, in order to avoid catching a few colds while children, men lay up for themselves consumptions, pleurifies, and a world of other diseases.

“What makes children, left thus to themselves, acquire the ill habits you speak of, is, that not contented with their own liberty, they endeavour to command others, which is owing to the absurd indulgence of too many fond mothers, who are to be pleased only by indulging all the fantastical desires of their children. I flatter myself, my friend, that you have seen in mine nothing like the desire of command and authority even over the lowest domestic; and that you have seen me countenance as little the false complaisance and ceremony used to them. It is in this point that I think I have taken a new and more certain method to make my children at

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once free, easy, obliging, and tractable; and that on a principle the most simple in the world, which is, by convincing them they are but children.

“ To consider the state of infancy in itself, is there a being in the universe more helpless or miserable; that lies more at the mercy of every thing about it; that has more need of pity and protection, than an infant? Does it not seem that, on this account, the first noise which nature directs it to make is that of crying and complaint? Does it not seem, that nature gives it an affecting and tender appearance, in order to engage every one who approaches it to assist its weakness, and relieve its wants? What, therefore, can be more offensive, or contrary to order, than to see a child pert and imperious, commanding every one about him, and assuming impudently the tone of a master over those who, should they abandon him, would leave him to perish? Or can any thing be more absurd than to see parents approve such behaviour, and encourage their children to tyrannize over their nurses, till they are big enough to tyrannize over the parents themselves?

“ As to my part, I have spared no pains to prevent my son's acquiring the dangerous idea of command and servitude, and have never given him room to think himself attended more out of duty than pity. This point is, perhaps, the most dif-

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ficult and important in education ; nor can I well explain it, without entering into all those precautions which I have been obliged to take, to suppress in him that instinctive knowledge, which is so ready to distinguish the mercenary service of domestics from the tenderness of maternal solicitude.

“ One of my principal methods has been, as I have just observed, to convince him of the impossibility of his subsisting, at his age, without our assistance. After which I had no great difficulty to show him, that, in receiving assistance from others, we lay ourselves under obligations to them, and are in a state of dependence ; and that the servants have a real superiority over him, because he cannot do without them, while he, on the contrary, can do them no service : so that, instead of being vain of their attendance, he looks upon it with a sort of humiliation, as a mark of his weakness, and ardently wishes for the time when he shall be big and strong enough to have the honour of serving himself.”

“ These notions (I said) would be difficult to establish in families, where the father and mother themselves are waited on like children ; but in this, where every person has some employment allotted him, even from the master and mistress to the lowest domestic ; where the intercourse between them apparently consists only of reciprocal services, I do not think it impossible : but I

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am at a loss to conceive how children, accustomed to have their real wants so readily satisfied, can be prevented from expecting the same gratification of their imaginary wants or humours; or how it is that they do not sometimes suffer from the humour of a servant, who may treat their real wants as imaginary ones."

"Oh! my friend (replied Mrs. Wolmar) an ignorant woman may frighten herself at any thing or nothing. But the real wants of children, as well as grown persons, are very few; we ought rather to regard the duration of our ease than the gratifications of a single moment. Do you think, that a child who lies under no restraint can suffer so much from the humour of a governess, under the eye of its mother, as to hurt it? You imagine inconveniencies which arise from vices already contracted, without reflecting that my care has been to prevent such vices from being contracted at all. Women naturally love children; and no misunderstanding would arise between them, except from the desire of one to subject the other to their caprices. Now that cannot happen here, neither on the part of the child, of whom nothing is required, nor on that of the governess, whom the child has no notion of commanding. I have in this acted directly contrary to other mothers, who in appearance would have their children obey the domestics, and in reality require the servants to obey the chil-

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dren: here neither of them command nor obey: but the child never meets with more complaisance from any person than he shows for them. Hence, perceiving that he has no authority over the people about him, he becomes tractable and obliging; in seeking to gain the esteem of others, he contracts an affection for them in turn: this is the infallible effect of self-love; and from this reciprocal affection, arising from the notion of equality, naturally result those virtues, which are constantly preached to children, without any effect.

“ I have thought, that the most essential part in the education of children, and which is seldom regarded in the best families, is to make them sensible of their inability, weakness, and dependence, and, as my husband called it, the heavy yoke of that necessity which nature has imposed on our species; and that, not only in order to show them how much is done to alleviate the burden of that yoke, but especially to instruct them betimes in what rank Providence has placed them, that they may not presume too far above themselves, or be ignorant of the reciprocal duties of humanity.

“ Young people, who from their cradle have been brought up in ease and effeminacy, who have been caressed by every one, indulged in all their caprices, and have been used to obtain easily every thing they desired, enter upon the world

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with many impertinent prejudices; of which they are generally cured by frequent mortifications, affronts, and chagrin. Now, I would willingly spare my children this second kind of education, by giving them, at first, a just notion of things. I had indeed once resolved to indulge my eldest son in every thing he wanted, from a persuasion that the first impulses of nature must be good and salutary; but I was not long in discovering, that children, conceiving from such treatment that they have a right to be obeyed, depart from a state of nature almost as soon as born; contracting our vices from our example, and theirs by our indiscretion. I saw that if I indulged him in all his humours, they would only increase by such indulgence; that it was necessary to stop at some point, and that contradiction would be the more mortifying, as he should be less accustomed to it: but that it might be less painful to him, I began to use him to it by degrees; and in order to prevent his tears and lamentations, I made every denial irrevocable. It is true, I contradict him as little as possible, and never without due consideration. Whatever is given or permitted him is done unconditionally, and at the first instance; and in this we are indulgent enough: but he never gets any thing by importunity, neither his tears nor entreaties being of any effect. Of this he is now so well convinced, that he makes no use of them; he goes his

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way on the first word, and frets himself no more at seeing a box of sweetmeats taken away from him, than at seeing a bird fly away, which he would be glad to catch; there appearing to him the same impossibility of having the one as the other; and so far from beating the chairs and tables, that he dares not lift his hand against those who oppose him. In every thing that displeases him, he feels the weight of necessity, the effect of his own weakness, but never—excuse me a moment (says she) seeing I was going to reply; I foresaw your objection, and am coming to it immediately.

“ The great cause of the ill-humour of children, is the care which is taken either to quiet or to aggravate them. They will sometimes cry for an hour, for no other reason in the world than because they perceive we would not have them. So long as we take notice of their crying, so long have they a reason for continuing to cry; but they will soon give over of themselves, when they see no notice is taken of them: for, old or young, nobody loves to throw away his trouble. This is exactly the case with my eldest boy, who was once the most peevish little bawler, stunning the whole house with his cries: whereas, now you can hardly hear there is a child in the house. He cries, indeed, when he is in pain; but then it is the voice of nature, which should never be restrained; and he is hushed again as soon as

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ever the pain is over. For this reason I pay great attention to his tears, as I am certain he never sheds them for nothing: and hence I have gained the advantages of being certain when he is in pain and when not; when he is well and when sick; an advantage which is lost with those who cry out of mere humour, and only in order to be appeased. I must confess, however, that this management is not to be expected from nurses and governesses: for, as nothing is more tiresome than to hear a child cry, and as these good women think of nothing but the time present, they do not foresee, that by quieting it to-day it will cry the more to-morrow. But what is still worse, this indulgence produces an obstinacy, which is of more consequence as the child grows up. The very cause that makes it a squaller at three years of age, will make it stubborn and refractory at twelve, quarrelsome at twenty, imperious and insolent at thirty, and insupportable all its life.

“I come now to your objection (added she, smiling). In every indulgence granted to children, they can easily see our desire to please them, and therefore they should be taught to suppose we have reason for refusing or complying with their requests. This is another advantage gained by making use of authority, rather than persuasion, on every necessary occasion. For, as it is impossible they can always be blind to our motives, it

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is natural for them to imagine that we have some reason for contradicting them, of which they are ignorant. On the contrary, when we have once submitted to their judgment, they will pretend to judge of every thing; and thus become cunning, deceitful, fruitful in shifts and chicanery, endeavouring to silence those who are weak enough to argue with them: for, when one is obliged to give them an account of things above their comprehension, they attribute the most prudent conduct to caprice, because they are incapable of understanding it. In a word, the only way to render children docile, and capable of reasoning, is not to reason with them at all; but to convince them, that it is above their childish capacities; for they will always suppose the argument in their favour, unless you can give them good cause to think otherwise. They know very well that we are unwilling to displease them, when they are certain of our affection; and children are seldom mistaken in this particular: therefore, if I deny any thing to my children, I never reason with them; I never tell them why I do so or so; but I endeavour, as much as possible, that they should find it out; and that even after the affair is over. By these means they are accustomed to think that I never deny them any thing without a sufficient reason, though they cannot always see it.

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“ On the same principle it is, that I never suffer my children to join in the conversation of grown persons, or foolishly imagine themselves upon an equality with them, because they are permitted to prattle. I would have them give a short and modest answer, when they are spoke to, but never to speak of their own head, or ask impertinent questions of persons so much older than themselves, to whom they ought to show more respect.”

“ These (interrupted I) are very rigid rules, for so indulgent a mother as Eloisa. Pythagoras himself was not more severe with his disciples. You are not only afraid to treat them like men, but seem to be fearful lest they should too soon cease to be children. By what means can they acquire knowledge more certain and agreeably, than by asking questions of those who know better than themselves? What would the Parisian ladies think of your maxims, whose children are never thought to prattle too much or too long: they judge of their future understanding, by the nonsense and impertinence they utter when young? That may not be amiss, M. Wolmar will tell me, in a country where the merit of the people lies in chattering, and a man has no business to think, if he can but talk. But I cannot understand how Eloisa, who is so desirous of making the lives of her children happy, can reconcile that happiness with so much restraint;

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"What (says she, with impatience) do we restrain their liberty, by preventing them from trespassing on ours? And cannot they be happy, truly, without a whole company sitting silent to admire their puerilities? To prevent the growth of their vanity is a surer means to effect their happiness: for the vanity of mankind is the source of their greatest misfortunes, and there is no person so great or so admired, whose vanity has not given him much more pain than pleasure*.

"What can a child think of himself, when he sees a circle of sensible people listening to, admiring, and waiting impatiently for his wit, and breaking out in raptures at every impertinent expression? Such false applause is enough to turn the head of a grown person; judge then what effect it must have upon that of a child. It is with the prattle of children as with the predictions in the Almanack. It would be strange, if, amidst such a number of idle words, chance did not now and then jumble some of them into sense. Imagine the effect which such flattering exclamations must

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have on a simple mother, already too much flattered by her own heart. Think not, however, that I am proof against this error, because I expose it. No; I see the fault, and yet am guilty of it. But, if I sometimes admire the repartees of my son, I do it at least in secret. He will not learn to become a vain prater, by hearing me applaud him; nor will flatterers have the pleasure, in making me repeat them, of laughing at my weakness.

“ I remember one day, having company, I went out to give some necessary orders, and on my return found four or five great blockheads busy at play with my boy; they came immediately to tell me, with great rapture, the many pretty things he had been saying to them, and with which they seemed quite charmed. ‘Gentlemen (said I, coldly,) I doubt not but you know how to make puppets say very fine things; but I hope my children will one day be men, when they will be able to act and talk of themselves; I shall then be always glad to hear what they have said and done well.’ Seeing this manner of paying their court did not take, they since play with my children, but not as with Punchinello; and, to say the truth, they are evidently better since they have been less admired.

“ As to their asking questions, I do not prohibit it indiscriminately. I am the first to tell them to ask, softly, of their father or me, what they

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desire to know. But I do not permit them to break in upon a serious conversation, to trouble every body with the first piece of impertinence that comes into their heads. The art of asking questions is not quite so easy as may be imagined. It is rather that of a master than of a scholar.— The wise know and enquire, says the Indian proverb, but the ignorant know not even what to inquire after. For want of such previous instruction, children, when at liberty to ask questions as they please, never ask any but such as are frivolous, and answer no purpose, or such difficult ones whose solution is beyond their comprehension. Thus, generally speaking, they learn more by the questions which are asked of them, than from those which they ask of others.

“ But, were this method of permitting them to ask questions as useful as it is pretended to be, is not the first and most important science to them, that of being modest and discreet? And is there any other that should be preferred to this? Of what use then is an unlimited freedom of speech to children, before the age at which it is proper for them to speak? Or the right of impertinently obliging persons to answer their childish questions? These little chattering querists ask questions, not so much for the sake of instruction, as to engage one’s notice. This indulgence, therefore, is not so much the way to instruct

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them, as to render them conceited and vain; an inconvenience much greater, in my opinion, than the advantage they gain by it; for ignorance will by degrees diminish, but vanity will always increase.

“The worst that can happen from too long a reserve will be, that my son, when he comes to years of discretion, will be less fluent in speech, and may want that volubility of tongue, and multiplicity of words, which he might otherwise have acquired; but when we consider how much the custom of passing away life in idle prattle impoverishes the understanding, this happy sterility of words appears rather an advantage than otherwise. Shall the organ of truth, the most worthy organ of man, the only one whose use distinguishes him from the brutes, shall this be prostituted to no better purposes than those which are answered as well by the inarticulate sounds of other animals? He degrades himself even below them when he speaks and says nothing; a man should preserve his dignity, as such, even in his lightest amusements. If it be thought polite to stun the company with idle prate, I think it a much greater instance of true politeness to let others speak before us; to pay a greater deference to what is said, than to what we say ourselves; and to let them see we respect them too much to think they can be entertained by our

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nonsense. The good opinion of the world, that which makes us courted and caressed by others, is not obtained so much by displaying our own talents, as by giving others an opportunity of displaying theirs, and by placing our own modesty as a foil to their vanity. You need not be afraid that a man of sense, who is silent only from reserve and discretion, should ever be taken for a fool. It is impossible in any country whatever that a man should be characterised by what he has not said, or that he should be despised for being silent.

“On the contrary, it may be generally observed that people of few words impose silence on others, who pay an extraordinary attention to what they say, which gives them every advantage of conversation. It is so difficult for the most sensible man to retain his presence of mind, during the hurry of a long discourse; so seldom that something does not escape him, which he afterwards repents of, that it is no wonder if he sometimes chooses to suppress what is pertinent, to avoid the risk of talking nonsense.

“But there is a great difference between six years of age and twenty; my son will not be always a child, and, in proportion as his understanding ripens, his father designs it shall be exercised. As to my part, my task does not extend so far. I may nurse children, but I have

not the presumption to think of making them men. I hope, (says she, looking at her husband) this will be the employment of more able heads. I am a woman and a mother, and know my place and my duty; hence, I say again, it is not my duty to educate my sons, but to prepare them for being educated.

“ Nor do I any thing more in this than pursue the system of M. Wolmar, in every particular; which, the farther I proceed, the more reason I find to pronounce excellent and just. Observe my children, particularly the eldest; have you ever seen children more happy, more cheerful, or less troublesome. You see them jump and laugh, and run about all day, without incommoding any one. What pleasure, what independence, is their age capable of which they do not enjoy, or which they abuse? They are under as little restraint in my presence as when I am absent. On the contrary, they seem always at more liberty under the eye of their mother than elsewhere; and though I am the author of all the severity they undergo, they find me always more indulgent than any body else: for I cannot support the thought of their not loving me better than any other person in the world. The only rules imposed on them in our company are those of liberty itself, viz. they must lay the company under no greater restraint than they themselves are under; they must not cry

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louder than we talk ; and as they are not obliged to concern themselves with us, they are not to expect our notice. “ Now if ever they trespass against such equitable rules as these, all their punishment is, to be immediately sent away ; and I make this a punishment, by contriving to render every other place disagreeable to them. Setting this restriction aside, they are, in a manner, quite unrestrained ; we never oblige them to learn any thing ; never tire them with fruitless corrections ; never reprimand them for trifles ; the only lessons which are given them being those of practice. Every person in the house having my directions, is so discreet and careful in this business, that they leave me nothing to wish for ; and, if any defect should arise, my own assiduity would easily repair it.

“ Yesterday, for example, the eldest boy having taken a drum from his brother, set him a crying. Fanny said nothing to him at the time ; but, about an hour after, when she saw him in the height of his amusement, she in her turn took it from him, which set him a crying also. “ What (said she) do you cry for ? You took it just now by force from your brother, and now I take it from you ; what have you to complain of ? Am not I stronger than you ? ” She then began to beat the drum, as if she took pleasure in it. So far all went well till some time after she was

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going to give the drum to the younger, but I prevented her, as this was not acting naturally, and might create envy between the brothers. In losing the drum, the youngest submitted to the hard law of necessity; the elder, in having it taken from him, was sensible of injustice: both knew their own weakness, and were in a moment reconciled."

A plan so new, and so contrary to received opinions, at first surprised me. By dint of explanation, however, they at length represented it in so admirable a light, that I was made sensible the path of nature is the best. The only inconvenience which I find in this method, and which appeared to me very great, was to neglect the only faculty which children possess in perfection, and which is only debilitated by their growing into years. Methinks, according to their own system of education, that the weaker the understanding, the more one ought to exercise and strengthen the memory, which is then so proper to be exercised. "It is that (said I) which ought to supply the place of reason. The mind becomes heavy and dull by inaction. The seed takes no root in a soil badly prepared, and it is a strange manner of preparing children to become reasonable, by beginning to make them stupid."—"How! stupid! (cried Mrs. Wolmar immediately.) Do you confound two qualities so different, and at-

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most contrary, as memory and judgment*? As if an ill digested and unconnected lumber of things, in a weak head, did not do more harm than good to the understanding. I confess, that of all the faculties of the human mind, the memory is the first which opens itself, and is the most convenient to be cultivated in children: but which, in your opinion should be preferred, that which is most easy for them to learn, or that which is most important for them to know? Consider the use which is generally made to this aptitude, the eternal constraint to which they are subject, in order to display their memory, and then compare its utility to what they are made to suffer. Why should a child be compelled to study languages he will never talk, and that even before he has learnt his own tongue? Why should he be forced incessantly to make and repeat verses he does not understand, and whose harmony all lies at the end of his fingers; or be perplexed to death with circles and triangles, of which he has no idea; or why burdened with an infinity of names of towns and rivers, which he constantly mistakes, and learns anew every day? Is this to cultivate the memory to the improvement of the understanding, or is all such frivolous acquisition

* Here appears to be some little mistake. Nothing is so useful to the judgment as memory: it is true, however, that it is not the remembrance of words.

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“ If nature has given to the brain of children that softness of texture, which renders it proper to receive every impression, it is not proper for us to imprint the names of sovereigns, dates, terms of art, and other insignificant words of no meaning to them while young, nor of any use to them as they grow old; but it is our duty to trace out betimes all those ideas which are relative to the state and condition of humanity, those which relate to their duty and happiness, that they may serve to conduct them through life in a manner agreeable to their being and faculties. The memory of a child may be exercised without poring over books. Every thing he sees, every thing he hears, catches his attention, and is stored up in his memory: he keeps a journal of the actions and conversation of men, and from every scene that presents itself deduces something to enrich his memory. It is in the choice of objects, in the

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care to show him such only as he ought to know, and to hide from him those of which he ought to be ignorant, that the true art of cultivating the memory consists.

“ You must not think, however (continued Eloisa) that we entirely neglect that care on which you think so much depends. A mother, if she is the least vigilant, holds in her hands the reins over the passions of her children. There are ways and means to excite in them a desire of instruction; and so far as they are compatible with the freedom of the child, and tend not to sow in them the seeds of vice, I readily employ them, without being chagrined if they are not attended with success: for there is always time enough for knowledge, but not a moment should be lost in forming the disposition. Mr. Wolmar lays, indeed, so great a stress on the first dawnings of reason, that he maintains, though his son should be totally ignorant at twelve years old, he might know not a whit the less at fifteen; without considering that nothing is less necessary than for a man to be a scholar, and nothing more so than for him to be just and prudent. You know that our eldest reads already tolerably well. I will tell you how he became fond of it: I had formed a design to repeat to him, from time to time, some fable out of La Fontaine, and had already begun, when he asked me one day, seriously, if ravens could talk. I saw immediately the difficulty of

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making him sensible of the difference between fable and falsehood : and laying aside La Fontaine, got off as well as I could, being from that moment convinced that fables were only proper for grown persons, and that simple truth only should be repeated to children. In the room of La Fontaine, therefore, I substituted a collection of little interesting and instructive histories, taken mostly from the Bible ; and, finding he grew attentive to these tales, I composed others as entertaining as possible, and applicable to present circumstances. These I wrote out fair, in a fine book ornamented with prints, which I kept locked up, except at the times of reading. I read also but seldom, and never long at a time, repeating often the same story, and commenting a little before I passed on to another. When I observed him particularly intent, I pretended to recollect some orders necessary to be given, and left the story unfinished, just in the most interesting part, laying the book down negligently, and leaving it behind me. I was no sooner gone than he would take it up, and go to his Fanny, or somebody else, begging them to read the remainder of the tale ; but as nobody was at his command, and every one had his instructions, he was frequently refused. One would give him a flat denial, another had something else to do, a third muttered it out very low and badly, and a fourth would leave it in the middle, just as I had done before. When we saw him

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heartily wearied out with so much dependence, somebody intimated to him to learn to read himself, and then he need not ask any body, but might turn it over at pleasure. He was greatly delighted with the scheme, but where should he find any one obliging enough to instruct him? This was a new difficulty, which we took care, however, not to make too great. In spite of this precaution he was tired out three or four times; but of this I took no other notice, than to endeavour to make my little histories the more amusing, which brought him again to the charge with so much ardour that though it is not six months since he began to learn, he will be very soon able to read the whole collection, without any assistance.

“It is in this manner I endeavour to excite his zeal and inclination to attain such knowledge as requires application and patience; but though he learns to read, he gets no such knowledge from books, for there is no such in the books he reads, nor is the application to it proper for children. I am desirous also of furnishing their heads with ideas, and not with words; for which reason I never set them to get any thing by heart.”—

“Never, (said I, interrupting her!) that is saying a great deal. Surely you have taught him his prayers and his catechism!”—“There you are mistaken (replied she.) As to the article of

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prayers, I say mine every morning and evening aloud in the nursery, which is sufficient to teach them, without obliging them to learn. As to their catechism, they know not what it is."—"What, Eloisa! your children never learn their catechism!"—"No, my friend, my children do not learn their catechism."—"Indeed! (said I, quite surprised) so pious a mother!—I really do not comprehend you. Pray what is the reason they do not learn it."—"The reason is (said she) that I would have them some time or other believe it: I would have them be Christians."—"I understand you (said I); you would not have their faith consist in mere words; you would have them believe, as well as know, the articles of their religion; and you judge very prudently, that it is impossible for a man to believe what he does not understand."—"You are very difficult (said M. Wolmar, smiling); pray, were you a Christian by chance?"—"I endeavour to be one (answered I, resolutely). I believe all that I understand of the Christian religion, and respect the rest, without rejecting it." Eloisa made me a sign of approbation, and we resumed the former subject of conversation; when, after explaining herself on several other subjects, and convincing me of her active and indefatigable maternal zeal, she concluded by observing that her method exactly answered the two objects she proposed, namely, the permitting the natural disposition

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and character of her children to discover themselves, and empowering herself to study and examine it.

“ My children (continued she) lie under no manner of restraint, and yet cannot abuse their liberty. Their disposition can neither be depraved nor perverted; their bodies are left to grow, and their judgments to ripen at ease and leisure: subjection debases not their minds, nor does flattery excite their self-love; they think themselves neither powerful men nor enslaved animals, but children, happy and free. To guard them from vices not in their nature, they have, in my opinion, a better preservative than lectures, which they would not understand, or of which they would soon be tired. This consists in the good behaviour of those about them; in the good conversation they hear, which is so natural to them all that they stand in no need of instruction; it consists in the peace and unity of which they are witnesses; in the harmony which is constantly observed, and in the conduct and conversation of every one around them. Nursed hitherto in natural simplicity, whence should they derive those vices, of which they have never seen the example? Whence those passions they have no opportunity to feel, those prejudices which nothing they observe can impress? You see they betray no bad inclination; they have adopted no erroneous notions. Their ignorance is not opi-

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nionated; their desires are not obstinate; their propensity to evil is prevented, nature is justified, and every thing serves to convince me, that the faults we accuse her of are not those of nature, but our own.

“ It is thus, that, giving up to the indulgence of their own inclinations, without disguise or alteration, our children do not take an external and artificial form, but preserve exactly that of their original character. It is thus that their character daily unfolds itself to observation, and gives us an opportunity to study the workings of nature, even to her most secret principles. Sure of never being reprimanded or punished, they are ignorant of lying or concealing any thing from us: and in whatever they say, whether before us or among themselves, they discover, without restraint, whatever lies at the bottom of their hearts. Being left at full liberty to prattle all day long to each other, they are under no restraint before me. I never check them, enjoin them to silence, or indeed pretend to take notice of what they say, while they talk sometimes very blameably: though I seem to know nothing of the matter. At the same time, however, I listen to them with attention, and keep an exact account of all they say or do: but these are the natural productions of the soil which we are to cultivate. A naughty word in their mouths is a plant or seed foreign to the soil, sown by the vagrant wind: should I cut it

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off by a reprimand, it would not fail ere long to shoot forth again. Instead of that, therefore, I look carefully to find its root, and pluck it up. I am only (said she, smiling) the servant of the gardener; I only weed the garden by taking away the vicious plants: it is for him to cultivate the good ones. It must be confessed also, that with all the pains I may take, I ought to be well seconded to succeed, and that such success depends on a concurrence of circumstances, which is perhaps to be met with no where but here. The knowledge and discretion of a sensible father are required to distinguish and point out, in the midst of established prejudices, the true art of governing children from the time of their birth; his patience is required to carry it into execution, without ever contradicting his precepts by his practice; it is necessary that one's children should be happy in their birth, and that nature should have made them amiable; it is necessary to have none but sensible and well-disposed servants about one, who will not fail to enter into the design of their master. One brutal or servile domestic would be enough to spoil all. In short, when one thinks how many adventitious circumstances may injure the best designs, and spoil the best concerted projects, one ought to be thankful to Providence for every thing that succeeds, and to confess that wisdom depends greatly on good fortune."—"Say, rather (replied

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I), that good fortune depends on prudence. Do not you see that the concurrence of circumstances, on which you felicitate yourself, is your own doing, and that every one who approaches you is, in a manner, compelled to resemble you? O ye mothers of families! when you complain that your views, your endeavours, are not seconded, how little do you know your own power! Be but what you ought, and you will surmount all obstacles; you will oblige every one about you to discharge their duty, if you but discharge yours. Are not your rights those of nature? In spite of the maxims or practice of vice, these will be always respected by the human heart. Do you but aspire to be women and mothers, and the most gentle empire on earth will be also the most respectable.

In the close of our conversation, Eloisa remarked that her task was become much easier since the arrival of Harriet. "It is certain (said she) I should have had less trouble if I would have excited a spirit of emulation between the brothers. But this step appeared to me too dangerous; I chose, therefore, rather to take more pains, and to run less risk. Harriet has made up for this; for, being of a different sex, their elder, fondly beloved by both, and very sensible for her age, I make a kind of governess of her, and with the more success, as her lessons are less suspected to be such.

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“As to herself, her education falls under my care; but the principles on which I proceed are so different, as to deserve a particular explanation. Thus much at least I can say of her already, that it will be difficult to improve on the talents nature has given her, and that her merit is equal to her mother's, if her mother could possibly have an equal.”

We now, my lord, expect you every day here, so that this should be my last letter. But I understand the reason of your stay with the army, and tremble for the consequence. Eloisa is not less uneasy, and desires you will oftener let her hear from you; conjuring you, at the same time, to think how much you endanger the peace of your friends, by exposing your person. For my part, I have nothing to say to you on this subject. Discharge your duty; the advice of pusillanimity is as foreign from my heart as from yours. I know too well, my dear B——, the only catastrophe worthy of you, is, to lose your life in the service and for the honour of your country; but ought you not to give some account of your days to him who has preserved his only for your sake?

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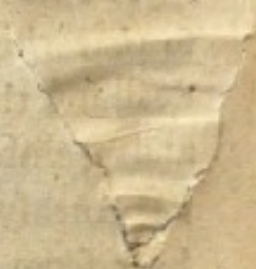
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