

The New Clarissa:
A True History

Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont

London, 1768

-Volume I-

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El objetivo de esta publicación de *La Nouvelle Clarice* (Tome I) es, ante todo, el acceso al texto de Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont (1711-1776) en francés, inglés y español para garantizar su mejor legibilidad por parte de los lectores; pero también para ofrecer a investigadores y profesores una base para posibles trabajos.

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Ofrecemos el texto limpio de los errores más flagrantes (como cabeceras insertas en el texto o saltos de línea) y con la ortografía regularizada, pero con la puntuación original. Así proponemos una transcripción semi-diplomática, normalizada y modernizada. Somos conscientes de que ello conlleva la pérdida de ciertos rasgos idiosincrásicos e históricos, pero también nos permite trabajar con técnicas basadas en corpus y con herramientas digitales, esto es, con medios automáticos o semi-automáticos. El investigador siempre podrá volver a la imagen de partida para comprobar la transcripción.

Esta se ha realizado por el equipo investigador entre los meses de marzo y mayo de 2023 y se ha basado para la regularización en el [Diccionario de Español de la Real Academia Española](#), en el [Trésor de la Langue Française Informatisé](#) y en el [Oxford English Dictionary](#). La regularización de nombres propios sigue los criterios de [Wikidata](#) de [CERL](#) y de [Getty TGN](#) para los nombres de lugar.

En aras de una ciencia abierta, ofrecemos, pues, los textos que sirven de base para nuestra investigación y la publicación de sus resultados. Así, podrán servir para posteriores aplicaciones didácticas y desarrollos científicos.

Volume I

LETTER I. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

To lose at the same time an aunt, whom I always regarded as the best of mothers, and a friend who might have assuaged my afflictions, by a tender sympathy with them, is more than your Clarissa is able to support; and I am oppressed to a degree that might be taken for insensibility. I passed the two days which followed my dear aunt's death in a stupid silence. Staring wildly without seeing, listening without hearing and in a perfect indifference about what was going to become of me.

You know my parents were strangers to me: I never was with them from three years old; and my father's hatred for his respectable sister, did not suffer him to keep up the smallest correspondence with her. My aunt often told me that I had a mother worthy of my utmost tenderness, and of a happier lot than she experienced; she even assured me that her sister in law had subsisted purely by her bounty; and not only so, but, that she was obliged to assist her in secret; that is to say, under a false name. These discourses often inspired me with a strong desire to be acquainted with my mother, and an apprehension yet more lively of falling into the power of a father who was painted to me in such terrible colours. You have more than once been witness to my sentiments with respect to these two points, and it was natural that they should be felt with most force in the moment when my desires and fears were going to be realized. Grief, however, was able to absorb them.

Seated in silence near the precious relicks of my beloved aunt, the confusion which reigned in her house was not sufficient to rouse me from my lethargy. Officers of justice, friends, distant relations, were about me in crowds. The first, sealing up everything, took the keys, and gave the necessary orders to hasten the arrival of my father, and the dean of Colborne, to whom my aunt had intrusted her will; the second did their utmost to recall my spirits, and served me in some measure as a guard against the malice of the last, who evidently looked upon me with fury, in the fear that my aunt might have considered my advantage at their expence; for they could not persuade themselves but she must have excluded my father from the number of her heirs.

Lady Horton, who has always honoured me with so much friendship, made many useless efforts to draw me from a spectacle which nourished my despair. I shrieked as often as they attempted to take me away; but the third day, my exhausted spirits had left me in a state of such weakness, that they had little difficulty to make use of the opportunity to transport me to the house of that generous lady, who soon succeeded in rendering my grief more tranquil, without diminishing its force.

As my father is in Ireland, it must necessarily be a considerable time before he can arrive; and in the interval, I receive great comfort from the visits of the dean of Colborne, who has made me ashamed of the excess of my sorrow, in showing me that I dishonoured the triumph

of a person who had been so dear to me, and who, from the height of heaven, where her eminent virtues no doubt have now placed her, might reproach me with the little profit I had drawn from her wise lessons, upon the manner in which mortals ought to receive the strokes that come from God.

As soon as he perceived me in a state to listen to what he had orders to tell me, he spoke as follows: “That which I owe,” said he, “to the memory of your deceased aunt, obliges me to justify to you her last dispositions. If hate had caused the distance in which she lived, with regard to your father, and she died in sentiments so little Christian, we should have nothing more to do than to mourn for her eternal loss: but how far was she from such a malignant spirit! —To make you sensible of this, and to engage you to conduct yourself according to the views of her who was every thing to you, I find myself obliged to set before you some things which preceded your birth: things which, indeed, I would willingly bury in oblivion, was it in my power; and I could do it without hurt or detriment to you.”

I flattered myself, my dear Harriet, that should have sufficient strength to finish a recital, which will make you weep over the fate of your poor Clarissa; but it has made an impression upon me, which has froze my heart and my senses: I am obliged, therefore, to defer the dreadful tale for the subject of another letter.

LETTER II. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

I take up my pen in continuation, and am now going to tell you what I learned from the mouth of our good dean; and as I have not had an opportunity to dispatch my former letter, I will send this under the same cover. The dean speaks.

“Mr. Darby, your father, is born of an opulent family, which for a long time was apprehensive of the extinction of a very ancient name. Your late aunt was born the fifth year of your grand-father’s marriage; and the displeasure of having a daughter, was balanced only by the hope that a second birth would bless him with a son; but eight years rolling away without that blessing arriving, your grandfather conceived a vexation upon it, of which your aunt became the victim: he had an aversion for her, the more shocking, as, in her then state of infancy, she promised all she afterwards fulfilled in figure, understanding and goodness of heart. It is true, that her mother recompensed her, as far as she could, for the strange hatred of her father; she loved her with tenderness, and gave her all the marks of it in her power; but, poor infant, the birth of your father, deprived her even of that comfort, and ravished from her the affections of all the family. Your aunt, born with extreme sensibility, felt the alteration of behaviour towards her, and was so afflicted by it, that the goodness of her constitution could not support her: she fell dangerously ill, and they did not fail to attribute it to envy and jealousy. Indeed, they would have been so glad of an opportunity to leave all the wealth of

the family to the new-born son, that they abandoned his sister wholly to the care of nature; and it was probably the excellence of her temperament that saved her life. To the great regret of her parents, the marriage contract had settled twenty thousand pounds sterling upon younger children; and your grandmother giving little hopes of future issue, it was with pain they saw the inheritance of their adored son likely to be diminished by the payment of so considerable a portion. In order therefore, if possible, to prevent what they considered as a misfortune, they sent your aunt into France, where they put her in a convent hoping, that, in time, she would have an inclination to take the veil. Your aunt has herself often told me, that a religious life was the dearest object of her desires, and the end of all her prayers: but they were put up in vain; for as she was in a society of truly pious nuns, the hopes of the great sum which her parents offered with her, could not engage them to deceive their young pensioner: on the contrary, they encouraged her to withstand all the threats and arguments which her friends used, to make her forsake the world; she remained among them till she was seventeen, and her parents informed her that she must expect to stay there till her brother was settled. As she was happy, it was an exile which she had little reluctance to submit to, but it was not of so long a duration as they had endeavoured to make her fear it would. Her father and mother died in a short space, one after the other; and, in the mean time, the brother of the prioress, who had brought her up, arrived from the Indies; he was a man fifty-five years old, who came into his own

county to enjoy an immense fortune, the fruits of his industry abroad: the guardians of your aunt called her into England, and Mr. Harvey was intrusted with the care of transporting her thither: it was in this short space that he conceived the design of making her his wife; and as she found in him all the qualities which constitute the honest man and the good christian, the disproportion of ages had nothing to frighten her youthful mind, who, was apprehensive that her guardians, some of whom were not Roman catholics, would force her to marry a man of another religion than that which her ancestors professed, and she herself had been educated in. Her relations made great difficulties about the conditions; and, under pretence that the affairs of the family were in disorder, demanded a certain time for the payment of the portion. Harvey was too much in love to suffer that obstacle to delay his happiness: in short, he married your aunt, and agreed to wait for her fortune till his wife should be of age. The young man now began to show a character from which every thing was to be apprehended. I speak of your father, my dear Clarissa; and my respect for your just delicacy, will make me suppress whatever is not absolutely necessary for you to be acquainted with: let it suffice to tell you that he went abroad; and that, to a nature not well disposed, he added the additional misfortune of falling into the hands of a governor who had no principles of religion, and during their tour associated only with men of his own cast: his manners corresponded with his faith; and at two and twenty years old he returned your father into England, after having dissipated at least one half of his paternal

fortune. This last circumstance, however, not being generally known, Mr. Darby passed for a considerable match; and Lord Asaph, who was but ill in his affairs, endeavoured at a marriage between him and his daughter. Ah! My dear Clarissa, how worthy was she of a better choice! In spite of the brilliant figure of her intended husband, she felt a disgust for him, which she combated in vain: and she would have preferred death to his hand, if the election had been left to herself: too timid, however, to refill the despotic orders of a father, whom she had always seen terrible to his children, she overcome her repugnance. You were born the first year of her nuptials, and her tenderness for you was her only comfort. In the mean time, your aunt was become a widow. Mr. Harvey having left her considerable possessions, she signified to your father that she would give him longer time for the payment of what he owed her; but this condescension did in no sort diminish the hate which he had for his sister, and he gave her proofs of it, as often as it was in his power. He had dragged after him into England an Irish girl, whom he had run away with from one of his friends, whose mistress she was. As he was fearful such a connection might be prejudicial to his establishment, he kept it concealed till after his marriage; but scarce was that concluded, when he proposed this woman to his lady as a person proper to have the care of her house, of which she soon became the scandal. Your mother saw herself reduced to receive from the hands of this wretch the smallest necessaries; and when she presumed to remonstrate with her husband, and show him the evil light which such

a conduct must put him in with all good people, he treated her with a cruelty that sometimes put her life in danger. All her resource was in the friendship of her sister in law. But her barbarous husband suffered her not long to enjoy that: as great part of his estate was in Ireland, he informed her that she must prepare to go with him there. You were, then three years old, and your virtuous mother had the mortification to see you confounded with two other children, which your father had by the creature he kept in his house. She shuddered lest your morals should be corrupted by ill example; and this fear being forcible enough to engage her to deprive herself of the pleasure of bringing you up, she determined that your aunt should perform that office in her stead. Nothing more was necessary to make your father refuse his consent: his wife and sister desired it. Your worthy aunt, therefore, as I may say, bought you of him; she gave him an acquittance for the twenty thousand pounds he owed her, in consequence of his ceding you to her for ever, without his having any future right to exert the authority of a parent, in order to take you out of her hands. On this condition the affair was concluded: for fourteen years past Mrs. Harvey omitted nothing which might make your father alter his conduct, but in vain; twice she paid considerable sums to extricate him out of difficulties into which his extravagance had plunged him. New extravagance was the only consequence: and she was obliged to assist the indigence of your unfortunate mother, in secret, if we can call that woman unfortunate, who was able to draw from the adversities of life the inestimable treasure of all the virtues.”

Here, my dear, is the horrible recital I have had from our good dean, which has thrown me into inexpressible perplexities. The chief is, the necessity under which I at first thought myself to hide from you the melancholy circumstances to which your friend is reduced. Nothing should have prevailed on me to merit the curse of Ham for exposing a father; and, I believe, this delicacy would have restrained my pen, if the dean had not assured me that you were already acquainted with the misfortunes of my mother, whom Mr. Balfour, your husband, had known in Ireland. Indeed I recollected that, immediately before your departure, the fear you had of my falling into the hands of my father, was one of the motives for your prayers to Heaven for the prolongation of my aunt's life. As your discourse was mysterious, and I little capable of reflection, at a time when grief for losing you chiefly occupied my thoughts, what you said made but a slight and short impression upon me: but, alas! The traces are renewed by the shocking lights which the doctor has been forced to throw upon them; and I now perceive, that it was out of tenderness for me you explained yourself by halves. But I take up too much of your time in talking of myself; and I ought to ask of you, with your advice, a circumstantial account of your new situation; if you are as happy as you ought to be, my misfortunes can never be complete; your felicity will be some compensation for my own sufferings. I do not know why my heart should indulge such melancholy presages: would to Heaven I had nothing to apprehend but that poverty which I must necessarily be reduced to, if my aunt has not taken some care for my

preservation. Thank God I can make use of my needle, and I shall never consider myself unfortunate, while I can live by my labour: the evils I have to fear are of a blacker dye. I will not examine them too attentively; no, I will give you an example of that reliance on Providence, which I have so often recommended to your practice: it is the virtue proper to our sex; brought up in the bosom of a family where we are generally cherished, we are forced to tear ourselves from it, to pass under a strange yoke, without being able to foresee our fate. Men are not ashamed to descend even to artifice, to deceive a poor victim, who sacrifices to them all she has dear; and they make her pay, during her whole life, for the restraint in which they are kept for a few months. I am persuaded, that even the most reasonable men have momentary humours from which women suffer much pain: and I assure you, like my dear aunt, I would choose a life of religious celibacy if God had left it to my choice. I have somewhere read, that if a noviciate was permitted in matrimony, few would become professors: it is, notwithstanding, the state that God has allotted for the greatest number, and we ought, in the first step towards it, to take every justifiable method to render our burden as light as possible. It is to this I exhort my dear Harriet: her excessive vivacity has need of an exordium a little serious. Your husband passes for one of the best men in the world; but they say that he is of his country, and by no means belies the proverb, "fierce as a Scotsman." I own to you, of all faults, it is that I would support most willingly in a husband; because a wife may avail herself of it on numberless occasions; and there is

nothing more easy than to avoid its ill consequences; we need only respect him who is subject to it. I know this word respect has always shocked you. “Love one’s husband —agreed”— you have often said. “But by what right would those imperious creatures reduce us to a humiliating subjection?” No, my dear friend, submission to a husband derogates not from the glory of the first woman in the world. In this case, respect, submission, are of divine institution; and we may be assured that the more faithful we are in fulfilling our duty, the more we shall be respected in our turn; if I remember right, you were a little deaf to this lesson the day we parted. It was in the time of your triumph, the mighty words were not yet pronounced; in a word, Mr. Balfour was but a lover. After the solemn Yes, the face of things changed. Have you ever made a remark which has not escaped me? I have seen few marriages, where the bridegroom, led by custom, has not given the right hand to the bride in conducting her to the altar. That mark of respect is no longer in season, the priest puts things in their proper order, and lets the wife know the nature of the compact into which she is going to enter, by making her change situation, and stand at the left hand of her husband. Stay there, my dear, if you are willing to enjoy the privileges of a beloved companion; women never strive to usurp the right with impunity; and, was I married, I should despise my husband, if he was weak enough to cede it.

Do not forget in your answer to let me know in what useful and agreeable manner you pass your time in the family, of which you now

make apart, among a nation which has adopted you for its own. Fear not to be too particular, less you should be tiresome. All things that interest you (in themselves however trifling) must be of consequence to me, and I cannot hear too much of them. As I am ignorant how long I shall stay here, please to address your answer to the dean, who will send it to me wherever I am.

LETTER III. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

Weep, my dear Clarissa; your tears are just, and I will most cordially mingle mine with them. If you have lost an aunt who loved you with the tenderness of a mother, I have lost a friend, a protectress, to whom I owe the little I am. Let us honour her memory by following her counsels: I consent; but do not go to push your heroism so far as to be willing to suffer from your family, what she had the patience to bear from hers. I am persuaded that my dear Mrs. Harvey would shortly have taken measures which you will be instructed in upon the opening of her will; and suffer not a filial piety, ill understood, to make you disobey her. I would not write to you in this file, had she not said to me several times, that she hoped God would let her live long enough to see you well married; and that, for all the world, she would not have you in the power of your father. A sudden death, which she had no reason to apprehend, has deprived her of the pleasure she wished for; and, without doubt, prevented her telling yourself what were her views. I wait with impatience for the opening of her will, which will fix the fate of my dear friend. I am not surprised at the gloomy presages that rise in your mind; the sorrowful spectacle you have lately seen, the multitude of tears you have shed, has dejected your spirits, and thrown you into a situation, where every thing appears clouded. I find that your disposition has been contagious: for four and twenty hours, after the receipt of your letter I was lost in the blackest melancholy. “What’s the matter with you, my dear?” said Mr.

Balfour, when he came in to supper. "I left you at six o'clock in good health, and, at ten, you have the countenance of one who has been sick a fortnight." I have received a letter, Sir. "My God, you make me tremble! May I beg of you, without indiscretion, to communicate it?" No, Sir, I am not fool enough to provide you with arms against myself. Clarissa makes a prodigious parade with her advice, but we must pardon every thing in her woeful situation. She has lost her aunt. Those who read this little monologue, will accuse me of having a bad heart, and small feeling of our common loss: they will deceive themselves; I am, without doing you injustice, as much touched as you can be; but it is not in my nature to afflict myself in a serious manner; my heart does not govern my tongue, you have often told me so: it is moved by the slightest of all imaginations, without, if I may so express myself, my soul in the least interfering; while that giddy tongue prattles without common sense, considering the circumstances I am in, my heart goes its train; and any one who could confront my discourse with my sentiments, would be astonished at the contrast. This remark is yours, my dear; so you cannot fail of finding it just: not because you made it; but because you never make any but such as are well founded: it is a rule which one may regard as certain. However, as there are few rules without exceptions, I will tell you, by one means or other, to put you in the rank of ordinary beings, that you are absolutely unreasonable, when you speak upon the duties of women. My good husband! I am no longer unwilling to show you miss Clarissa's letter, if you will be content to read what I am going

to write myself, which is a counterpoison. Indeed I am but a simpleton, my lord and master will make a jest of my exception, and take your sermon for good and valid. Well, so much the worse for him, he had reason to expect my impertinencies, I apprized him of them, and if he thinks me capable of changing my skin, he will be mistaken.

You have done very well, to get the better of the scruple, which would have occasioned you to use reserve with me about your father; I know him, as one may say, since.

He was in the upper classes, when my husband first went to school, and he well remembers that Darby's morning answered directly to what his day afterwards turned out. Indeed, his evil courses are so notorious, that there is no person within twenty miles of his estate who does not regard your respectable mother as a martyr. Come now, my dear, cry up gentleness in a wife: I doubt much, if your father had met one of my character, whether he would have pushed his excesses to such extremities. I would have sent his doxy packing with well boxed ears, and thrown his bastards out of the window at the risque of whatever might have happened. If Heaven had sent me into the world by means of such parents, or given you a head and heart like mine, I would cry out to you to succour your persecuted mother: but I know her humour too well; her lessons would be pernicious to you. Your soul, already humble and pliable, is but too willing to lay itself under the feet of oppression; especially, when the persecutors are

persons whom duty has made it a law to respect. I admire you; but take care less you make me admire you too much. Let us speak seriously, my dear; If you could reasonably expect to be able to comfort the sorrows of your mother, I would tell you that it is your first and most sacred devoir; but you have no right to flatter yourself with such hopes; you would only aggravate her miseries, by adding yours to them; spare her, then, that new species of torment, which might possibly be more insupportable than any she has yet experienced.

You desire I would give you some description of the country where I am settled. You are not in it, and that makes it terribly faulty in my eyes: they say, however, that Edinburgh contains a number of agreeable people; and such an assertion is pardonable from those who have not seen you; but when they have lived as I have, with the master-piece of the creation, they will do very well to follow the example of some devout Mahometans, who, on turning their backs to Mecca, tear out their eyes, because the world affords nothing besides worthy to be looked at. Stay, I have a charming thought come into my head; if the women here take airs upon themselves, and join presumption to middling qualities, if they dare to criticise my sincerity, my petulance, I have sure means to rid myself of three parts in four of them. I will make Mr. Balfour go post, and bring you down by the same carriage; and then, slap, plant you in the middle of one of their most brilliant assemblies. What poor figures will our

goddesses make! I cannot help laughing at them: this is the dagger which I keep in reserve, to revenge myself if they have the misfortune to displease me; you shall know it in my next letter; for tomorrow I make my entry into the capital of Scotland: the preparations for that ceremony force me to abridge; and perhaps it would not have been amiss, had I thought on them before, to spare you the pain of so silly a letter: but to finish, like my uncle the baronet, “the fox must die in his skin.” I am incapable of change, especially in that perfect friendship which I vow to you.

LETTER IV. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

You are in the right, to put me in mind, that your discourse is not the expression of your heart; without which, I should really have been shocked at the levity of your letter: in short, one must resolve to love you such as you are; and, to say the truth, the talk is nothing hard for those who know you as well as I. A grand scene of new events has opened upon me since my last letter; and, though you should scold me, I cannot help telling you that I foresee some happy conclusions; this father so terrible, is, to me the most tender in the world; and, my mother regards as a miracle of paternal affection the prodigious change that is wrought in him: but you are not satisfied with a general idea of things; you must have particulars: you shall.

It was the third day after my last letter, that I had the inestimable happiness of finding myself in the arms of my parents. Scarcely had I began to enjoy the pleasure of their embraces, when the dean called us into the great parlour, where all the family was assembled: shall I tell you? I could not help trembling when he broke the seals of the will. I had received with transport the caresses of my father; had I not reason to fear that the tenderness he showed me would suffer alteration, if my aunt should have considered me with too much generosity to his prejudice? In that instant, I wished from the bottom of my heart to depend always upon him, to whom I owed my life; and if I had been mistress of the fatal testament, I believe, I should have thrown it into the fire without reading it. I desired a copy from the

dean, and I send one to you; that is to say, of those articles which regard me.

“I appoint for my universal heir, Clarissa Darby, my niece; and I will, that, on the day of my death, he shall be put in possession of all my effects, jewels, ready money; and, in a word, of all my personal estate. In respect to my estates in houses, lands, etc. I nominate the dean of Colborne for her guardian, to regulate and take care of the same; the entire disposition of which shall be given up to my niece, the day he attains the age of one and twenty, compleat, unless she shall before that age marry a man who is, like herself, a Roman catholic; at which time, her guardian shall put her in possession of all my titles to dispose of as her prudence shall think fit; excepting only, that she shall reserve to herself one sum of twenty-four thousand pounds sterling, which she shall not dispose of during her life, and which shall devolve to her children after her death. In case she should die without issue, the said sum shall be veiled in the hands of six persons whom she shall nominate, to be employed in the foundation of working-schools for poor Roman catholics. I permit her to charge my other estates with an annuity of five hundred pounds sterling for her father, and the same sum in favour of her mother; which annuity shall be revocable at her pleasure. I desire that the said Clarissa, my niece, may pass her time, till her marriage, under the eyes of her virtuous mother; but, for essential reasons, I charge, and command, that she shall on no account put her foot into her father’s house while he stays in Ireland:

if he will come and live at the seat where I shall finish my life, I allow him the use of it for the term of his, on condition that he shall never bring any person into it of the female sex, born in Ireland; revoking the present donation to my niece, if she stays four and twenty hours under the roof with a woman of that nation, or in any other dwelling her father shall choose to inhabit; and in case of disobedience on her part to this express condition, I give all I die possessed of to the poor.”

LETTER VI. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

God bless our good dean, and give him the courage he has need of, in order to moderate the virtues of my dear Clarissa. It is not the work about which directors are generally employed. Faults are what they have to destroy; you have none, and are only to be cautioned against the extremity of your virtue. To judge of you by your letter, you would be taken for one of those soft souls, who do good through weakness; and, to deal plainly with you, that is the idea Mr. Balfour had of you: nay, before I could bring him to alter his opinion, I was obliged to cite twenty facts to prove, that the real temper of your mind was courage and resolution; and, after all, I can scarce flatter myself with having succeeded in his conviction for these men think they degrade themselves in confessing, in the presence of their meaner moieties, that they have turned to the left in their judgments. I ought, however, to do justice to my best beloved: either he is less tainted than others, with the pride natural to his sex, or better knows how to disguise it; he hears reason, and has not the ridiculous madness to believe, that it cannot come out of a woman's mouth. Do you know that I find myself a little disappointed with him? They would force me to submit to a yoke, in spite of my desire of independance; and not being permitted the pleasure of freedom, I promised myself some little recompence in putting my husband out of temper, if I did not find him a complaisant observer of all my capricious humours. I have not been able yet to have this satisfaction: indeed, my dear, I believe I love

the man, and that love blinds me to all his faults; for, after all, he ought to have some tincture of his sex, and I have not yet been able to discover in his character any colour of it. I will say more: I absolutely find myself in danger of being overcome by the foible into which I have unwillingly been seduced, ever since I perceived with what vivacity my husband interests himself in your welfare. It is a treason against my majesty which I had not foreseen; and if he continues it, my gratitude will become love. You will perceive that he has rendered himself worthy of these sentiments, when you have read his letter, which you are also to suppose subscribed by me, for I actually believe the creature has a secret to read my heart, that he may precisely tell you what I think and what I feel. When you hear his decision, then you also hear mine; for which reason I here stop short, to give you the details of my adventures, as you desire.

I have been walked about, dragged, presented, examined, and, perhaps, criticized by every body, that is not nobody, in Edinburgh; first in the Grose, at the assembly which I told you of, and since in every private house. I persuaded myself that they would have some pity for me at my first visits, and that a card left at every door would do the business: but by no means; I must climb two hundred steps, make a thousand curtsies, and alike number of those compliments that signify nothing. Oh! It kills me; and what's still more singular than all this, it is on account of conscience that they make me undergo those trials; that is to say, they swallow a camel, for fear a rat should

imperceptibly flick upon it. What good Christians would deny themselves when they are at home! Would it not be a lie? It is impossible to persuade them that a lie implies deceit, and that there is no deception in refusing to receive a visit of ceremony. When it is agreed to say, my lady is not at home, it is to say, in other words, my lady is too polite to give you the trouble of coming up stairs. I am sure you will take the part of those rigorous formalists; however, I have this to comfort me, by the time I receive your reasons, my poor limbs may be pretty well recovered from the horrible fatigue, which, at present, will not suffer me to hear any thing in justification of such false females. I say false, and will not eat my words; for the wretches told above an hundred lies, during the half quarter of an hour I passed with every one of them for what but lies were those overstrained compliments with which they loaded me? How could they have the face to say that they esteemed me? Some of them even did not blush to go as far as the word friendship; did they know me, to love me, to esteem me! Here then are my scrupulous ladies convicted of having swallowed the camel, of having told lies. I am curious to see in what manner you will undertake their defence. I would believe you scarcely dare do it, if I did not know by experience how much you excel in the talent of excusing your neighbour. Do not ask me how I like the women of this country, you know I was in a bad humour, and when I am so, I never see clearly. There is one, however, whom I have distinguished; but what is ridiculous enough, I cannot tell who she is. I had not sufficient retention to remember the name of every face,

and it would take me a year complete to assort them properly together; expect to have them described by the brown, the fair, the tall, the short. You know I have a quick eye at finding out absurdities, something of that kind will make a sign-board for every person, and your delicacy will not be wounded, as no name will be written under it. Hold, however, there are two ladies I must bring you acquainted with; fear not, child; I have nothing to say but in their praise. One is the dutchess of Roxborough: I had often heard of her grace, and, if I may credit the public voice, she would be just to your taste: she is more than the mother of her children, she is their governante, and, when occasion serves, their nurse, which is as often as they have the slightest indisposition. Since the death of my lord duke she is become her son's steward; and I found her at a bureau, where she had twenty letters to read and answer. She told me she had that amusement twice a week; and it is assured that, by her prudent management, she has doubled the young duke's fortune. She presented me to her family, which consists of two sons and two daughters: I was in rapture: the two young lords are at school, yet take off their hats, and salute with a good grace: they never put in their words impertinently, always answer with propriety, and, in a word, have the air of children of quality. The two daughters are extremely pretty; the elder asked me very seriously if I did not think her sister was prettier than she. You are both extremely handsome, said, but why do you ask the question? Because, answered she, I would know whether you are of the same opinion I am; every body tells me I am handsomer than my sister, and

yet I like her face better than my own. Look at her eyes, madam; are they not very fine? And you very modest, my dear, said I, embracing her. If this girl does not alter as she grows up, I will set her down as one of the few rare things I have seen. The second person that pleases me here, is lady —O Lord I forget her name— but I know she is the younger sister of lord Brooke, or Warwick; she is called Charlotte. I can say no more of her: this young lady is extremely timid, but she has something in her manners amazingly charming.

Confess, my dear Clarissa, that this is one of the most singular letters that ever came from my pen: a general criticism, long panegyrics: Oh, be assured of it, I make prodigious strides towards reformation: we shall see how so good a beginning will prosper. Let us return to our affairs: I am charmed with the ray of happiness which breaks upon you; Heaven continue it: but do you enjoy the pleasure without troubling yourself about its duration? It will be permanent, if you follow the counsels of those who love you: place me at their head; you run no risque of being unjust.

LETTER VII. MR. BALFOUR TO CLARISSA.

I am much indebted to the dean of Colborne, for the good opinion he has of my probity; but I owe him yet more for the honour of a correspondence, which he has procured me, with a lady of your merit. I could express myself in warmer terms, but my dear Harriet stops me with a decisive air. No panegyrics, Mr. Balfour; Clarissa is not fond of that stile. Your way of thinking, madam, I will venture to say, is that of all who deserve a panegyric. I will endeavour, therefore, to accomodate myself to it, in order not to displease you; but you ought to be obliged to me for the violence I do myself, when I am brief on an article, where there is so happy an occasion to be copious. But enough; in obedience to your commands, I will give my sentiments upon your situation.

I know it will be necessary, on this occasion, to manage your delicacy; but my zeal for your interest will not permit me to be so reserved as you could wish: I am not, madam, one of those, who think the time of miracles passed; the arm of God is not shortened, he can multiply them at his pleasure; and the perfect esteem, the lively interest, which I take in all that concerns you, makes me wish that he may deign to work one in your favour: it will be useless for me to enter into details, which might prove the necessity of a miracle, to render a person, to whom you are strongly attached, such as he ought to be to make you happy. Permit me only to say, that an apparition from the dead would less surprize me. I cannot, therefore, but greatly applaud the wife

precautions, which the dean advises you to take; and, if mine could add any weight to the counsels of so prudent a man, I beseech you, madam, let what will arrive, take care how you deprive yourself of the means of independance. It is not upon a general acquaintance with the character of a certain person, that I ground the admonition I take the liberty to give you: it is founded on certitude which can admit of no doubt.

Your charming friend makes me a rival here of every man that sees her. I am not sure whether my quality of husband will excuse what I am going to say, but I know you love her as well as I do, and will be glad to hear that every day adds new beauties, to those she already possesses. How great would be my happiness, if I could hope to join to the gift so rare of a wife, just such as I could wish her; that of a friend, so worthy of the sentiments with which you inspired me, the very first moment I had the honour of being acquainted with you.

Lady Harriet in continuation.

You hear him, my dear Clarissa; I am the extraordinary woman, the excellent wife; but do not you go to make yourself any indirect compliments now, in consequence of those praises, by persuading yourself that my exacitude in practising your grave lessons, has given me a right to them. No, my dearest, I am more petulant, more testy, more giddy, more capricious, more whatever you please, than ever; and, in spite of all those accomplishments, which you dare to call faults, Mr. Balfour, who passes for a man of admirable discernment,

Mr. Balfour, my master, my governor, my judge, finds me perfect. I defy you to object any thing to this. Are you confounded? Well, I will take you out of your confusion. Upon my honour, my husband is but a mere hypocrite; he is, at this moment, more a man than all mankind put together. It is a mere piece of art, to pique my honour, and engage me to realize what he has the goodness to imagine. I ought to say malice: but, after all, the turn is not *mal adroit*, and I pardon him in favour of the invention.

In short, I must speak sincerely, and tell you; that I am convinced I have not the least likeness to the flattering picture, which a too indulgent husband has given you of his too imperfect wife: but I am content that his love for me should have imposed upon him; that he should be willing to engage me to become, what he has supposed I am. Most certainly I ought to applaud his motives, and I assure you my heart was out of his debt, the instant he conferred the obligation: I will even confess to you, that this kind of sentimental payment I think of little value, and that I am determined to omit nothing till I can pay him. For what, pray? For praises given apropos. Heavens! how culpable are men, to endeavour to rule with a rod of iron creatures so easily governed. I married without love, because my uncle desired me; because, he being forced to go to the Indies, I had no inclination to follow him, and, in his absence, I had need of a protector. This good uncle swore to me, that Mr. Balfour was one of the honestest men in the world, that he had known him for a long time.

For my part, I neither liked nor disliked him; and, if the same testimony had been rendered in favour of six different men, I would have left the choice to my uncle. Whoever had asked me, the day of our marriage, Do you love him? I could have answered with confidence, No, I shall esteem him. They told me it was necessary to respect, to obey him. These two duties appeared to me incompatible with love, which is always wounded by an appearance of inequality. I do not know if the sagacity of Mr. Balfour was sufficient to give him a pre-knowledge of my disposition; but of this I am sure, he has conducted himself, as if he was from the first acquainted with it. He has been able to hide from me the master, the chief: I have seen nothing in him but the lover: and that submission which I should have disputed, if he had exacted it, has no difficulty attending it; because it is voluntary. It seems to me a present which I make him; and, what flatters more than a power to give? it is the noblest part we can act, which brings with it a satisfaction, and which can receive no augmentation, but from the pleasure the gift causes in those who receive.

Mercy on us, where have I been rambling this half hour? It is her husband's writing, my Clarissa will cry out, on reading this page; at least, it is a theme she has copied; her head could never give birth to such a rational discourse. You may think what you please, miss; but most certainly the words are my own: however, as one ought to be candid with one's friends, I will confess that my wit has had no part

in this letter: it has been indited solely by my heart, and that heart is capable enough of feeling properly, especially when Clarissa is to be loved and admired.

LETTER VIII. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

My situation, my dear Harriet, is such, that I cannot reasonably rely upon its duration. Felicity, without a cloud, can never be long the portion of poor mortals; and mine would be perfect, if this reflection did not abate the inclination I have to think it permanent. I put in the rank with those blessings, which I have been for some time in possession of, the change in the humour of my inestimable friend; not that it has surprised me so much as she may imagine; I know her heart, and I know that will succeed in subduing her spirit: but, to tell the truth, I did not believe her conversion so near: next to God, you owe the happy turn to your husband; it is a benefit to merit ten hearts, if you had them, your's is not made to be ungrateful; mine cannot suffice for all my sentiments of gratitude towards the author of my felicity. I believed myself completely happy till the day when I lost my respectable aunt: under the shadow of her wings, the blasts of adversity could not reach me. When I examine my past situation with my present, I find in it a tiresome insipidity; something was wanting to me, and it was adversity; a certain piquant; it is, me-thinks, the seasoning of happiness; and those who have never suffered, cannot, in my opinion, boast of having enjoyed. You may, perhaps, find this manner of thinking strange; I experience the truth of it, however; and, if I was not afraid of your being angry with me, I would tell you that I hope you will one day do the same. But why philosophize, you will say, upon such a subject? One ought to have a vast deal of waste time,

to employ it in a manner so useless. I do not know whether your criticism would be just: we hear all the world complain of the miseries with which the life of man is, as it were, sown; but they never reflect that those accidental pains are the salt to their pleasures. You and I have always enjoyed perfect health: we scarce are sensible of that advantage; while poor James, our gardener, is in transports of joy, approaching to madness, every time he makes use of his limbs, which he was in danger of losing; he walks with a sort of ravishment, merely to convince himself that he can walk; he pays a visit to his crutches ten times a day, and stops every body he meets, to show that he can walk without them, and to tell them, what little hopes he once had of ever being able to do so. Count, if you can, the pleasures which this poor man is possessed of; they are all born of his sufferings and his fears. Let us then no more insolently accuse the Divine Wisdom, who is able to draw good from evil; but abandon ourselves entirely to his mercy. I resemble James: that which constitutes the exquisite in the happiness I at present prove, are the little hopes there were of my ever arriving at it. Mr. Balfour tells me, it must be brought about by a miracle. Well, God has wrought it, and my dearest mother sheds tears of joy, in acknowledgment, every instant. It is not the tenderness of a daughter that puts a fillet over my eyes; I plainly perceive how far my father has erred; he wanted morals, and nothing could compensate for that fault; with regard to every thing else, no more can be desired in man: on the side of wit and figure —In fine, my dear girl, you will love him, I am sure; and judge the degree of my

affetion for him, at a time when he makes his whole study the happiness of his wife and me.

Of my mother we may say, without exaggeration, she is the phoenix of her sex. You have sometimes thought proper to praise the disposition of my features; be assured, that, in spite of the advantages of youth, they will not bear any comparison with those of my mother. As for her mind, I am reduced to admire it; all that I could say to you about it, would disfigure, without painting it. What virtue must her's have been, to support, for twenty years, the contempt of my father? And to whom did he sacrifice her! I am told that Mrs. Cosby has small pretensions to beauty, and that her understanding is more contemptible than her figure; and this gives me an idea sufficiently distinct of the vice. Good God! How malignant must its poison be, when it can conduct a reasonable creature to such depravity.

The dean has triumphed through Mr. Balfour's letter: it would have been unjust, if my little judgment had carried it from two persons so much my superior in every thing. However, I have obtained two thousand pounds, which I define to pay my father's debts contracted in Ireland. This is mere justice, my dear; what right should I have to assist the widow and the orphan, at the expence of a number of merchants and mechanics, who would suffer in the very instant, perhaps, because they were not paid for their goods, and the prices of their labour?

My father's children are arrived, and seem extremely grateful for my kindness in putting them out; for my father has declared to them, the design and expence are entirely my own. I keep the girl near me, till an opportunity offers to send her into France; some years in a convent are necessary for her instruction, and to correct some faults which she has contracted through a bad education. I at first thought of desiring my mother to take charge of her, but a little reflection made me alter that design; her father has always spoiled her, and might, perhaps, grow impatient to see her contradicted under his eye. The boy goes this day to London: he has a propensity to trade, and I put him with a merchant, who joins to a great knowledge in that way, a solid piety: indeed my poor brother has much need of instructions relative to his religious duties; neither he nor his sister know so much as their catechism.

We live here, pretty nearly, as we did in my aunt's life time; the same society: I suspected, it would be too grave for my father. He tells me often that we shall be better at my house at Old Windsor, which is but two and twenty miles from London. Do you know what has determined my mother to insinuate to me, that I should please him much by submitting to him in this matter? It is in the neighbourhood of my lady Roxborough, and another lady of her friends, who lives at her seat with her. Perhaps, when we are so near London, we shall be obliged to spend a month or two there every year. My mother will decide in this matter; with such a guide I am in no danger of going

astray; and I should be unworthy of the favours which Heaven showers upon me in such abundance, if I aspired to live in the independance which my aunt would never have designed for me, but that she could not foresee all those happy events.

I beg you will join to my letter to Mr. Balfour a thousand acknowledgments for the goodness he has had in writing to me.

LETTER IX. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

God bless philosophy and philosophers, and keep me from having any thing to do with either. The pretty imagination! to regard broken limbs as a piece of good fortune, because that one will afterwards taste the pleasure of walking with greater satisfaction! Take care, my good young lady, never to wish me any such happiness; its full enough not to drown oneself when one passes the water: let us enjoy peaceably the pleasures which we possess, without impertinently enquiring into the causes of them. I am not in the least apprehensive of that insipidity which you would make me apprehend from an uninterrupted course of happiness. Thanks to those grains of folly which I have in my composition, new desires succeed so quickly with me, that I have scarcely time for satiety. We are all possessed with a travelling devil, Mr. Balfour excepted, who determines to go to Paris, only because he has important affairs to transact there. However, as he continues the politest of husbands, he has assured me, that if he had suspected my inclination was so strongly for that voyage, he would have preferred France to Scotland; and he now terminates an affair in eight days, which he would not have finished in six months, but to oblige his Harriet. O! this husband, child, is not made like others; and if to love one's husband is a soible, in truth, mine will be pardonable. I do not know why I put it off so long, it is not fit that bashfulness should engage me to deceive my Clarissa, it's all over, and love is come in spite of me. I swear it is a most amusing thing to love

one's husband; I could not have suspected: it is a certain preventative against drowsiness. Mr. Balfour is forced to dine in town: Harriet, who had a very good appetite, is no longer impatient for dinner. Is she at table? Heaven help the cooks and the footmen; this thing is too sweet, another too salt, the meat is hard, the sallad too old, the desert ill chosen; and she calls two or three times for drink. Is there a thundering knock at the door, such as announces a person of consequence? my lady throws away the napkin, overturns every thing in her passage, and makes but three strides across the diningroom, to see by the window if it is not her dear, who has found a pretext to quit a place a few minutes sooner, where he had good company; but company that tired him, because the objet of his affections were not among them. Is it he? the countenance is chearful, the appetite returns, and not a dish goes away untasted. Is it a false alarm? I return sadly to my place, call to take away, and my face is as long as my knife; vapours succeed, and I am determined to scold Mr. Balfour: the resolution holds two minutes, and then his pretence makes me forget all. I should never finish, if I was to describe to you the variety which a little love throws into life. Perhaps it is the novelty of these emotions that amuse me, and a little habitude will blunt the pleasure. In this cafe, a woman of spirit, as I am, will not want resources. I will beg of Mr. Balfour to make me jealous, and if he has not complacence enough to comply with my request, I will take care to make him so. You can easily conceive what a fund of variety that will supply us with.

O! depend upon it, my dear, I will never go to sleep, for want of something to keep me waking.

As it will be impossible for me to receive your answer here, I beg the favour of you to address it to where we shall embark. In a word, in spite of my folly, I am capable of tasting what is good and estimable; I therefore applaud the act of justice you have done, in paying your father's debts. It is on those occasions, my dear, that one feels the pleasure of being rich.

LETTER IX. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

It is from London I write to you, my dear: we arrived here two days ago; my house at Windsor wanted some repairs, and my father chose that time for a little journey to the capital; I consented to it more willingly, as, at present, there is scarcely any one in town; so that I shall neither be obliged to pay, or receive, visits. I profit of this occasion to satisfy a wish I long have had. I have been in pain for the poor figure my father and mother make; mourning has hitherto been an excuse for it, but that is almost at an end, and I take a true pleasure in making them taste the sweets of that affluence to which they were born, though for a longtime they have not enjoyed it. My mother wants every thing, and I do not think less than five hundred pounds will make a proper provision for cloaths and linen. I have need of your advice upon this occasion, for I do not pique myself much upon being a connoisseur in dress; but happily my woman has taste, and understands economy; it is to her care I leave this commission.

I am called to read a letter, which an express has just brought me. O great and merciful God! My dear Harriet, it informs me of the death of our excellent dean; and what death! and in what circumstances! But my agitation will not permit me to finish this letter. I am obliged to lay down my pen.

I have been in such trouble for these two days past, that I have not had courage to inform you of the new misfortunes that threaten me, of which the death of my dear friend and protector is a woeful

presage. At present I find that a terror which has no fixed object, is a thousand times more painful than a certain misfortune. You may judge of the state I am in, by the letter I received from farmer Ryding, him whom my aunt associated with the dean in the care of my estate.

LETTER X. MR. RYDING TO MISS CLARISSA.

Your attachment to the dean of Colborne, will make you but too sensible of his misfortune: he has been found in his closet in an apoplexy; and, notwithstanding the speediest succours were procured and administered, he died in a few hours, without recovering the use of speech, after having testified by signs his resignation to the will of the Lord. He appeared to me to be taken up with something which greatly disquieted him, as he incessantly pointed to the bureau, at which he had been writing when his fit surprised him. I went and searched it with the clergyman, who was, at that time, praying by him; and I found there a letter begun, but not finished; which he made signs to me to put in my pocket. I mentioned a number of my acquaintances, to know for whom the imperfect scroll was designed; and when I pronounced your name, he, by a lively motion, gave me to understand it was for you: I send it to you without looking at the contents. My dear miss, be not under the least uneasiness about your affairs; the first care of the dean, after having quit you, was to put them in order. I have at present, in my hands, four thousand pounds, being your half year's rent, and I wait for your orders how to dispose of it.

The dean's servants attribute his accident to the visit of a stranger, with whom he had a long conference the evening before. It appeared to trouble him extremely, and he neither supped that night, nor breakfasted the next morning. You are too good a christian, madam,

not to accept this cross from the hand of God: no doubt our loss in such a friend is great; but our Heavenly Father knows what is good for us, better than we do ourselves; and I hope that he will afford you better comfort, than such a poor ignorant as I am can be supposed capable of.

The letter begun by the Dean of Colborne, to Miss Clarissa.

What pain does it cost me, my dear child, to trouble, with just fears, the sweet peace of which you believe yourself in lasting possession. But, my God, how my head swims! The journey to London hides designs! —I am not able to hold my pen— Let your mother watch the actions of—

The rest of this letter, my dear Harriet, is written without any connection, and in characters almost illegible. Alas, I doubt it not, his friendship for me occasioned his death; but what could he learn capable of causing such a revolution? The conduct of my father, with regard to my mother, is unexceptionable: his friendship for me increases every day. No matter, I will hurry the workmen, that my house may be in a condition to receive us; it is upon the journey to London, that the fears of our worthy friend seem founded, and I will leave it as soon as possible.

I am not so occupied with the fear of what may happen to me, but that I have a lively sense of the loss of him, who has guided my steps from my earliest infancy; and whose sage advice has given my soul a love for virtue. But why weep for him? Ought I to be more

interested in my own worldly affairs, than in his eternal happiness? His days are full, and God has spared him the miseries which he might have tasted, if—but in vain I endeavour to fix upon an object where my apprehensions may fall. My mother is under the same incertitude, she endeavours indeed to encourage and inspire me with a tranquility, which, it is visible, she does not enjoy herself.

The circumstances attending the death of our dear dean, has just been repeated to us by the servant who attended him the last time he was at my house. If we may believe this lad, the letter which has disturbed us so much, is nothing but the production of our worthy friend's disorder: his senses had began to fail the evening before his death, and his servant then advised him to send for a physician. He says, that the man taken for a stranger, was a poor Roman catholic, who used to come every year to confess to the dean; but, as he already felt his indisposition upon him, he was not then able to hear him, but put him off till the next day. He had been troubled with violent vapours since his last return home; his mind was on the rack, less my father should not persevere in the road of reformation. It is not then astonishing, that those ideas should have affected him yet stronger, when his reason began to give way. My father appears extremely shocked at the death of our friend, and has prevented my intentions, in begging me to take his servant, who is now our butler. Commonly good masters make good servants; and this, having lived four years

with the dean, appears to me to be a man in whom one may confide without any risque.

LETTER XI. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

Would you believe it, my dear Clarissa, for ten days past Mr. Balfour has endeavoured to persuade me, that my incomparable friend is not all perfection! and that one may venture to accuse her of a little negligence? However, he does not think this, I am sure, but he has believed it prudent to put such a fancy into my head, in the place of those inquietudes, which your silence has caused. I was in my post-chaise when I cried to our landlady, are you sure no letter has been brought for Lady Harriet Balfour? We have had no letter for any one indeed, madam, said the good woman. Send quickly to the post then, cried I; and waiting for the return of a footman, and Mr. Balfour's valet de chambre, who ran with all their speed, I sat at the door of our lodging, beating the bottom of the chaise with my feet, and saying every minute, "but sure this post-house is a prodigious way off, or those fellows creep like tortoises." At last they came back, but no letter; and on the instant my brain set to work, to imagine an accident which might retard your answer.

You may believe, my dear, that nothing, possible to have happened, escaped me. She is dead, sick, her father, perhaps her coach has been overturned in the journey she was to make. Those things engaged me so deeply, that Mr. Balfour was an hour in the chaise with me, before he could obtain a moment's audience. In the end, however, he contrived to bring to my remembrance, that you had told me, you were going to change your place of residence; and that very probably

you had been so taken up in preparatives for it, you deferred writing to me one day, and missing a single day, was sufficient to hinder your letter from coming in time. He carried his complaisance so far, as to show me, upon the book of posts, the route of the courier; and I really see that you had but a few hours to read my letter, and answer it. However pressing our affairs might be, my husband offered to stay at Edinburgh another post. Indeed this man is adorable, but I would not abuse his goodness; and I part, my head in a sack, without seeing where you are, and without being able to give the reins to my imagination, as I was accustomed to do, on what might happen to you, from one letter to another. If I was great lady enough to keep expresses always ready in my service, there should not pass a day, a single day, which should not bring me news from my Clarissa, and from me to her; if I knew where you are this moment, I would send off this unfinished scroll; but I must wait with patience for your letter. I hope to receive it at Calais, and then I will put an end to this. But Mr. Balfour would insinuate to me, that the post-boy, charged with your desired letter, will not probably have wings; that consequently he must wait the return of the packet-boat, in which we shall go over, and so it cannot come to my hands before we get to Paris. Indeed, my dear husband, I cannot wait so long; I must — O how negligent is my Clarissa! — This is my eternal burden.

Sure one must have a prodigious inclination to converse with one's friend, when I write to you in my present condition. Do but listen to

our tragicomic entry into Calais. To tell you that in coming into the vessel, the smell of the pitch made me sick at heart; that, in a moment after, my head began to turn round with the motion of the sea, and that I suffered for five hours, all that one suffers from the most violent emetick; would only be to give you the history of all who for the first time go to sea, who rarely fail to pay it that tribute. It is only with misfortunes particular to myself, that I would willingly entertain you. We embarked in the finest weather imaginable: to speak poetically, Eolus, who kept the winds shut up, had let out a few zephyrs, who, with their breaths, just curled the surface of the sea. But all of a sudden they withdrew, and a dead calm left us immoveable in the middle of our passage. Any one less impatient than your friend, would have staid with tranquility with the rest of the passengers. Wait but an hour, the wind would rise with the tide, and we should enter the port. I suffered horribly; that hour appeared to me an age; and I very willingly lent an ear to an invitation from the people of a boat, which came by the side of our vessel. Mr. Balfour not having courage to contradict me, consented to go in with me; and our example, drew after it some others. We were three leagues from France, but we had four stout oars, and they promised to land us in day light; for one of my reasons for quitting the ship, was the fear of passing the night in it, or arriving at Calais after the gates were shut: in which case, they frightened me with the necessity I should be under, of lying in a suburb hovel, falsely called an inn, the only resource on such occasions. We had scarcely made half a league, when a terrible black

cloud threatened us with a shower of rain, which quickly began to pour in such abundance, that in an instant we were wet to the skin. However, as the rain had abated the wind, which might have put us in danger, I consoled myself for being wet. But this calm was not long, and the pilot of our skiff foretold a hurricane which would scarce give time to put us a-shore. He hoisted all his sails, and, I believe, if he had delayed a quarter of an hour, we should not have escaped being wrecked, so violent was the tempest. You know how I am frightened with thunder; imagine, my dear, that one clap scarce waited for another; and what thunder! I never in my life heard any thing so terrible. After all, we had at last a league to walk over the sands. I would not stir during the storm; besides, the sand was so soft, that I sunk at every step: if I had been as nimble, and as light as my Clarissa, our boatmen could have carried me alternately; they offered it, but considering my size, it was impossible to attempt it. I was obstinate then to stay on the shore, till a carriage came up; but they made me take notice, that the tide, which began to rise, brought the sea under our feet, and that I must advance, or be drowned. You may imagine which I chose. I advanced, sometimes on foot, sometimes carried, sometimes dragged. While I amused myself with scolding, Mr. Balfour took the wisest method, which was, to send one of the rowers to bring me the first method of conveyance he could lay hold of, chaise, horse, ass, wheelbarrow, barrow, cart — nothing was excepted. One of our servants went with this man, and it was lucky he did so, as you will see by and by. Though they went as if they had wings to

their heels, I had time to walk at least half a league, and to arrive at a sort of bridge, where the tide could no longer incommode us. Here I was resolved to fix, till some sort of carriage was procured. When, lo! it appeared, I saw a kind of sedan chair, and, with transports, went to sling myself into it, one of our servants whispered something to Mr. Balfour, who begged I would not be so precipitate, but that I would, let them get me a barrow. I do not know, my dear, if you have any idea of the vehicles in which they carry dung; they are laths, joined by four pieces of wood, in the form of a frame; and two sticks, something like those in our sedan chairs, but much shorter, serve to bear them. It was upon this noble carriage that I went the rest of the road. Mr. Balfour walked before with my two maids, and those unfortunate passengers whom I had, by my impatience, engaged in this disagreeable undertaking. Our servants brought up the rear. But what do you think your silly friend was doing the rest of the way? laughing ready to kill herself: and I doubt whether your grave ladyship would not have done the same, had you seen our comical equipage. Imagine to yourself the women dragged up to the waist, dripping water from all sides, Mr. Balfour's hair as strait as wax candles, all the perriwigs in the same condition, and, myself especially, wet to the skin, and shook as no unfortunate being ever was. Happily it was night when we arrived, or we should certainly have raised a mob. They had the complaisance to keep the gates open, so we slept in town, where they warmed for me a very bad bed; but it was impossible to make me stay in it a quarter of an hour; I found myself quite refreshed

and hearty, and would get up to supper. Here is my lamentable history; and, what makes it still more lamentable, the packet boat arrived in the port as soon as we; so that, if we had laid in it, we might have avoided all our pains and fatigues. But you must know, I was excessively inquisitive why my husband made choice of such a carriage for me. He told me the reason; the chair they had brought, was that in which they carried the sick to the hospital; and it had served the very same day, for a woman in a malignant fever.

Now, do you not think, my dear, that Mr. Balfour had a fine occasion to regale me with a good sermon; for it was against his will that I drew him into this ill encountered boat? I expected it, and really should have submitted to the humiliation in silence, so much was I down in the mouth. However, he has been gracious, and I have acknowledged the obligation; nay, I have made a vow implicitly to obey him (during the whole voyage); I have not yet had power to extend it farther: however, the man will certainly succeed in rendering me reasonable, however slight the appearance of such a miracle may be at present. But, after all, what would he have gained by reproaching me with my imprudence? I felt it as well as him; all his lamentations would not have dried a single drop of the water that had almost drowned us; and would have infallibly put me into a fury; for it is insupportable to hear oneself found fault with, when one is in the wrong: for my part, I think it is more easy to have patience under an unjust accusation; for then one is conscious of having the best in the dispute.

Mr. Balfour resolved to stay a day at Calais, to let our people rest; it is an act of consideration that pleases me, and we slept till eleven o'clock in the morning, without losing mass: we went to that, for the officers of the garrison and your friend shed tears of joy there; each part of the sacrifice was announced by beat of drum; at the elevation, the soldiers presented their arms, and there was a general sound of all the music. In short, I think with queen Elizabeth: they say the loved ceremonies; certainly they are useful to beings composed of bodies and souls; they elevate the soul to God, and shut the door against distractions, by filling it with an idea of his majesty; yet I confess I was distracted: but how? regretting the misfortune of my poor countrymen, and burning with desire to see them united with us in the same faith. But, alas! it is with this inestimable gift as with health. I remember you tell me in one of your letters, that a person who always enjoys it, does not feel its value: in like manner, the French, who owe their faith to the happiness of their birth, are ignorant of its worth. For myself, I find this moment so great a pleasure in being a catholic, that I firmly resolve no day of my life shall pass, without thanks being returned to God for so great a blessing.

We set off to-morrow post, and, I hope, that the day we have passed here, will occasion your letter to meet me in Paris.

LETTER XII. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

My melancholy bodings are then verified, they foretold me the death of our worthy friend, and the vexatious consequences of it to my dear Clarissa. I would willingly believe what the dean's servant tells you about his master's indisposition; but Mr. Balfour will not give me leave; either he has a wonderful knowledge of your father, or he is furiously prejudiced against him: he suspects every thing he does, and is greatly concerned that you took that fellow into your service. When I asked him, why? he answered me simply, because Mr. Darby recommended it; and he begs of me to insist upon your taking the first opportunity to part with him; or, at least, that you will be strictly on your guard while he is in your house. He approves much of your retiring to your countryseat, and then there are moments when he believes you would be safer in London. In fine, his last resolution is, to dispatch his affairs as soon as possible, return to England, and take up his residence somewhere near you. I cannot tell you how much I am obliged to him, for these instances of regard for you; but you know my heart, and I leave you to guess it. He intreats you to let us know exactly every thing that passes in your family, and he will conduct himself according to your letters. As these precautions seem to threaten you with some approaching danger, he has made me easy upon that head. You want three years of one and twenty, and, if you die before that age, your father will lose all; so that, for that time at least, his own interest will make him careful of you. However, my

dear, be punctual in letting us hear from you: you may imagine what my terrors will be, should one post pass without bringing me a letter. If you have time for no more, write only on a scrap of paper, *there is nothing new.*

LETTER XIII. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

Alas, my dear friend, what fatigues and difficulties have you gone through; I should not know what to say to you on the subject, if you had not artfully thrown in an eulogy on the discretion of Mr. Balfour, without doubt, to engage me to imitate it. Not a word then of your past sufferings; I will content myself, with exhorting you, never to violate the vow of obedience which you have made to your husband. I hope your deference for his advice, will extend farther than your travels: I am sure his conduct will deserve, that it should be extended to every thing, even though it was not your duty. But I will not dwell, upon this article; my Harriet hates to be preached to by any thing but her own heart; and it seems to me to acquit itself so well, that she may venture to rely upon it.

We are fixed at Old Windsor, but your dutchess is yet in Scotland; truly she stays too long there for my impatience; I ought to say, our impatience, for my mother burns with a desire to be acquainted with her. We are at more than a mile's distance from any neighbourhood, yet that does not prevent us from frequent company: the proximity of the town, and Windsor castle, brings us sufficient to save us from absolute solitude. My father continues to behave in such a manner, as entirely destroys Mr, Balfour's suspicions. I scarcely conceive, how a man, accustomed to a life of dissipation, can be reduced to the uniformity in which we pass our time; it is varied only by hunting parties, which happen but seldom, and little tours to Windsor, where

he never stays above four and twenty hours. He has told us, however, that, was his fortune less circumscribed, he should like, now and then, a short visit to London. Put yourself in my place, my dear Harriet, I have eight thousand pounds a year, could I hear such an expression drop from the mouth of a father, without immediately telling him, that it was doing me injustice, if he did not believe, every thing I possessed was at his disposal? He answered me only, by clasping me in his arms, and I felt my face wet with his tears. In what abundance did mine flow! I never in my life experienced such heart-felt pleasure. I should consider myself as a monster, if, listening to injurious suspicions, I did not do my utmost to re-establish the author of my birth in the opinion of the man I most esteem. I know, and value Mr. Balfour's motives when he endeavours to inspire me with a dissidence of my father. A dissolute youth has but given too good grounds for it; but riper age, great misfortunes, and, above all, grace, which, indeed, I ought to have named first; may not all those things create a change in the heart? How can we tell but the prayers of my pious aunt, those of my respectable mother, for I count not much upon my own; how can we tell, I say, but such prayers may have had efficacy sufficient to touch the Father of mercies, in favour of my misguided parent? One may counterfeit for some days, some weeks; but I have lived in the house with my father six months, and it is not probable that he should be so perfect a master of deceit for so long a time to escape my observation. My mother begins to have some hopes; and if she blamed the offer which I made my father, it is only, as she tells

me, because she is afraid, less ill company should overturn the good resolution he has set up. He allows himself, that he has spent his younger days in a most deplorable manner; 'he repents it, and even confesses, that he has had some difficulty to conquer bad habits; which confession is, methinks, a proof of his sincerity. I took the liberty of doing a thing, which I did not think myself capable of; but it has succeeded to my wish. After spending an hour in imploring the divine assistance, I followed my father into the garden (this was the evening of the day in which I offered him the disposal of my estate): he turned into a shady walk, where he sat down, seemingly sunk in profound thought, so that I was kneeling at his feet before he perceived me; I embraced his knees with tenderness; my tears flowed so fast that they took away my power of speaking. O father, my dear father, cried I, forgive your audacious daughter the liberty she is going to take; permit her to open her heart to you; it is charged with a burden that oppresses, and will kill her, torn by the opposition of contrary duties, equally dear and sacred. My father took me in his arms, and forced me to rise. No, said I, my polture must accord with my sentiments of profound respect, in some sort, to expiate the boldness of my tongue. Will my father permit me? All is permitted, dear daughter of my heart, cried he, whom I regard less as a child, than as a tender friend; doomed to make the happiness of my latter days; and in whose faithful breast I may repose the secrets of my heart with confidence: fear not to open yours then; for, be assured, your happiness is the first object of my wishes. Encouraged by this mark

of bounty, I dared to tell him, that my respect for the memory of my aunt, forced me, in spite of myself, to a reserve which was become my torment. Ah! cried I, in a transport, which I believe truly painted to him the sentiments of my soul, if the fortune I enjoy was the fruit of my labour and industry, with what pleasure would I come to lay it at your feet; and receive from you, as a favour, whatever might be necessary for me: dependance on you would make my happiness; and I cannot, without confusion, recall the idea, that, at my age, I am drawn out of the common order, by the will of an aunt, whom I ought to obey, because you transmitted to her the authority you had over me. My aunt was virtuous; why has she deprived me of the felicity and merit of obedience, of which she herself well knew the value? Permit me to make an end, added I, seeing my father ready to interrupt me, in reflecting upon what has passed during these six months, that I have had the happiness to live under your eye; I believe, I have found an explication of her conduct. Without doubt, my dear father, she knew your heart; she knew that it was capable of the greatest virtues, and that your errors, pardon me for naming them, were rather the vices of those, with whom certain circumstances had fatally connected you; she knew how difficult it was to renounce such attachments; that long habitude even rendered them necessary; and it was to lay you under the happy necessity, of doing yourself that violence, she put your interest into my hands; it is a deposit of which I ought to render a just account, and this is what causes my misery. If I follow the motions of my affection, which carry me to deliver into

your hands, both my person and fortune, I no longer accomodate myself to the intentions of my benefactress, and, by that means, forfeit my right to her favours; they belong to me no more; it is a robbery, because I enjoy them but upon certain conditions, which I violate; and what misfortunes might be the cause of my infidelity? How could I answer it to my conscience, if an ill judging tenderness should again precipitate my father? —I have not courage to go on, but you understand me, I am sure; spare your daughter, and put her in a way of accomplishing her duty.

I did myself so great a violence by this free explanation, that I had like to faint away; my father raised me with great concern and tenderness, took out my smelling bottle, and refused to answer me, till he saw me entirely recovered; and still demanding his pardon for my boldness. You have not offended me, cried, he, my dear daughter; would to Heaven, that I had always been treated with such gentleness and good sense; I should not now blush before you; nor would you have just reason to fear following the motions of your tenderness in my behalf. People have not known my real characer, they believed it might be curbed by outrageous severity: accustomed to excess of indulgence, from the only relations to whom I owed respect, I considered the authority which my sister would usurp over me, as an ad of tyranny; her good intentions, (which I knew) were not sufficient to justify the tone in which she made her remonstrances. I had determined to quit my mistress, the virtue of your mother had engaged me to make that

sacrifice; but the haughtiness with which your aunt exacted it, bound yet stronger those ties, which I was going to break: I thought it would be shameful to give way to her menaces. Here then was the unhappy source of all my indiscretions: my mistress loved expence, she engaged me in it; I first was obliged to mortgage my estate, and afterwards fell it. The cruelty of my sister, which left me to suffer extremities, such as I cannot recall the memory of without horror; her cruelty, I say, at length, threw me into despair: she was very exact in fulfilling those duties, which religion prescribes; from whence I concluded, that religion was only proper to harden the heart; and this idea confirmed me in a disregard for religion, which, in my youth, I had too fatally been estranged from. My wife became the object of my aversion, because I attributed to her complaints, the haughtiness and cruelty of my sister. This was the disposition of my mind, till the moment I saw you; nay, I was even determined to confound you with the objects of my hate, but my heart refused to submit to the odious design. I thought I discovered in you, sentiments very different from those; which had produced my dislike to persons, who ought to have been dear to me. The good grace with which you left me master of all, which had been given you to my prejudice, effaced the impressions of dislike, which one naturally has for those who ravish from us our fortune. I thought I should always be master, while things were left at the disposal of such a daughter. Your conduct has not contradicted the judgment I then made, of your duty and affection for me. You have paid my debts, provided against my necessities, with

a generosity which I should not have done myself. But, my dear child, it is hard, at my age, to live in dependance: 'tis true, mine is supportable, while it is only upon you; your respect, your tenderness, softens and endears it. Yet I cannot be easy. You are at an age when one thinks of settling, and I cannot support the idea of a son in-law; who knows but your generosity to me, might be disagreeable to a husband, who should think less nobly than yourself: who knows but you might be forced to abandon the interests of a father, or alienate the heart of a husband? and, in either case, should I not regard myself as the most unfortunate of men? I know that, with the annuity which your aunt has permitted you to give is, we could live in a sort of ease; but I will speak with confidence to my friend; there is a superfluity, which custom has changed into necessity, and I feel that I have not courage to renounce it without pain. I hate the country, and shall be soon eaten up with melancholy, if I find myself obliged to continue there always. Some months passed at London would make a diversion which may prolong my life: it is in you, my dear child, to fix its duration, by taking measures to put me in a state more agreeable, than that with which I am at present threatened. You shall decide yourself, said I, on what is necessary to your happiness, respectfully kissing his hand, which he had given me: at present I have no inclination for marriage; and, if we can answer for our own resolutions, I dare promise you, that I shall bound my happiness, to live with you, and my dear mother, at least for five or six years. However, as nothing is more uncertain than the human will, I am ready to enter into any bond

you please, to double your annuity of a thousand a year before I make any engagement; does that sum appear sufficient?

Yes, my dear daughter, cried my father, embracing me, and more so, as you have already had the generosity to establish my two children, who are 'tis true your nearest relations, notwithstanding the misfortune of their birth. But I doubt whether you can execute what your good heart projects; you cannot dispose of your estates, which are settled upon your children, or the poor. I do not believe your aunt left much ready money, and you have drained yourself to pay my debts; so that I should be in a woeful plight indeed was I so unfortunate as to lose you. Be easy on that head, said I, I can every year put a considerable sum apart; and, suppose I die before I have been able to save any thing, my jewels will more than answer any duties that lie upon me, independant of those imposed by nature. The thousand pounds a year, which you at present enjoy, is an allowance I make to the author of my being; that which I shall hereafter give you; is a present I make to my friend; for you have honoured me with the name of friend; and I hope you will permit me to fulfil those obligations, which friendship lays me under. But, dear sir, said I, smiling, (for my father's manner of treating me, had opened my heart, and taken away all dissidence) will you sometimes allow me the privilege of a friend.? I understand you, said my father, pressing me in his arms: you reserve to yourself the right of preaching to me now and then: observe me, I am an old sinner, and may often give occasion

for a sermon; I will not promise you always to profit by it, but I will promise you never to be angry.

We continued thus chatting together till it was quite dark; and, in returning to the house, I begged my father's leave to rejoice my mother with the recital of our conversation: he paused for a moment, and then said, it will be better to say nothing to her of it; your mother is suspicious, and seeks for a double meaning in a conduct the most simple: however, I will not prevent any thing that can give you pleasure, and therefore; leave you to at in this mattter as you please.

I have been thus circumstantial, my dear friend, to justify what I have done; I am sure your conduct would have been the same, in my situation. As a christian, I have no right to judge any man; how then shall I dare to suspect my father? Let us suppose, (which, however, I have no reason to think) but let us suppose, I say, that my father would take the advantage of my credulity, to draw from me an allowance, which he does not want, but to abuse; I shall at least have the comfort to think, that I have been deceived by appearances extremely plausible. I am well convinced, that my aunt was gentleness itself; and that my father must be mistaken, when he says, he was shocked with the haughtiness with which she treated him. But weigh all the circumstances well; my father had been brought up in absolute dominion; his will was a law; his very caprices were sacred; and applause followed whatever he said: nay, perhaps, the first word of disaprobation he met with, came from his sister; and, supposing it

was softened ever so much, must have appeared dissonant to the ears of a man, who never used to be contradicted. What must have been the effect of that reprehension then, supposing that zeal for his safety, or indignation at his conduct, might have thrown into it ever so little vivacity! In fine, here is my conclusion: many attempts have been hitherto made, to bring my father back to virtue, by contempt, threats, and hard treatment: friendship, gentleness, and prosperity, are now to be tried, to see whether they will not better answer the end proposed. Granting him to be the worst of men, I repeat it, I am not authorized the more from that, to despair of his conversion, or to spare any pains to bring it about. Can I regret any sums of money employed for such a purpose? I, who would gladly give the last drop of my blood, to procure him that, which I consider as the only good; and, in comparison of which, crowns are less than atoms?

Yet it appears as if my mother's hopes were not equally, strong with mine, though she endeavours to dissemble her doubts: however, she approves my conduct in the affair, and I hope Mr. Balfour will follow her example: at least, if he should find any thing imprudent in it, I entreat the favour of him to keep it to himself, as to find fault will be useless, when the error cannot be retraced; and I am at present in a situation perfectly peaceful. I have a prodigious curiosity to know something of the manners of those people, among whom you are going to pass some time: you know I always loved the French; let me know if there is not some exaggeration in the faults attributed to

them; and what virtues counterbalance those faults, if they exist. Do not be afraid of prolixity, your memoirs will be the thing most likely to entertain us in our country solitude. As for James, the dean's late servant, be assured, if he stays in my service, he must have a conduct that will bear a strict watch; and I will, in this affair at least, submit myself entirely to the determination of Mr. Balfour.

LETTER XIV. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA

May Heaven assist a conduct justified, or, at least, excused by motives so noble, and so christian; it is the only answer I shall make to your last letter; and Mr. Balfour hopes, that his silence upon the subject, will encourage you to continue those informations about yourself, which we so sincerely wish to be obliged with. This is all he desires of you; and, as your granting his request is essential to my tranquility I hope you will be exact and sincere with us.

To tell you that the French ladies wear mask, or, in other words, that rouge disfigures the most beautiful faces; to tell you, that the men resemble butterflies, and that they are more frivolous than our coquettes in England; would only be to set down what thousands have wrote beforeme. To add, that among those frivolous men and daubed women, one finds knowledge and good sense, which would do honour to our philosophers, would be to add something to the picture, which is frequently done. To conclude with assuring you, that wisdom and virtue mingle with those contrarities, that there are a number of people here, who, through principle, subject themselves to the most impertinent ceremonies; would be to tell you, what you will certainly have some difficulty to believe: but I will go further, and say, that among those butterflies are found persons of the first merit; provided you search for them at certain hours. This has need of explanation.

There are in Paris different Societies; in one house they play, in another they show their wit; where also they criticize the wit of others, without being ashamed, when their judgments, which is commonly the case, are reversed by the public; here they talk of religion, and charitably condemn all those, who are not of the same opinion with themselves; there they talk less of piety, and practice it more. In a word, all the world associate, and generally expose themselves. However, the truly wise avoid all this affectation, are chiefly mixed with societies like themselves, for whom they live three quarters of the day, and abandon the remainder to others, whose extravagancies they support with a patience, which they regard as a duty. These are the philosophers without cloak, staff, or beard. Believe me, my dear, I have found out some of them by instinct: you have familiarized me with that wisdom, soft and complaisant, which yields to folly, and rejects nothing but malignity and vice. I would willingly enjoy that sort of spontaneous philosophy; it warms societies the most sterile, and sometimes produces a flame so bright, that it enlightens those who surround it, and brings them to reason. These are all the remarks I am capable of making at present. I have not been in any public place, and, except a few friends, made in our voyage, have seen nobody. An indisposition, which they attribute to the state of woman, confines me at present to my chamber: they endeavour to amuse me by procuring me pamphlets and songs; but I have not patience sufficient to read the first, and my morals are too good to suffer me to learn the second.

But let us quit the tone of modesty, and speak naturally: do you know, my dear, that there are authors here, who seem to have undertaken to find out to what length the public folly will go? Fairy tales, which have no merit but their obscenity; scandalous anecdotes? These are what fill all the books of the day. Indeed I regard it as a sort of miracle, if a handsome French woman can keep herself prudent. To receive such books from the hand of an agreeable man, who will know you have read them, when you return them to him; is it not to confess to him, that your heart is corrupted? that you dip with pleasure into dirt and filthiness? and willingly listen to those libertine discourses, with which such writings familiarize you? I know, by hearsay, that such kind of books find readers among our country women in England; but those who have a taste so depraved, blush at and endeavour to conceal it in privacy. You know, that, with us, a woman who should take the liberty of using double entendres in discourse would be regarded as a lost creature; and that a girl, who should be licentious enough to sing a loose song, would find it a difficult matter to get a husband. I said this, the other day, to one of those uncloaked philosophers, who had heard talk of some English girls, who, notwithstanding public faults, had afterwards been well married; he found this indulgence very contradictory to that contempt, which we have for women of a free life. But, I hope, I was able to prove to him, that this difference of conduct was by no means incompatible.

A first, and only, error in a young person, is not always a proof of a vicious heart; very often it is the consequence of a heart too confiding, because she finds herself incapable to deceive: it often proceeds from imprudence, in throwing herself in the way of dangerous opportunities; and it is not rare to see a poor victim of her own credulity, return for ever into the road of Virtue, which she confesses, with sorrow, she had formerly made one step from: but a licence in double entendres and loose songs, marks a depraved mind: they are pronounced in cold blood; and it is not possible that a female, who has contracted such a habit, can have preserved even the shadow of modesty. Alas! what is a woman without modesty? and where is the man sufficiently hardy, that dares hope to make her recover a quality, which is the greatest ornament to her sex? I have heard say, that the most extravagant rakes, love a show of modesty, in women that have no virtue. How then can men dispense with it in those, who are destined to be the mothers of their children?

Confess, my dear, that I have made you read a very foolish letter here, with my trite and general remarks. Cannot you guess the reason of it? do not you see that you have put me into setters? Write me this, do not write me that. Till you set me at liberty, you must expect nothing from me, but letters as cold as ice. I leave you the liberty to do what you please, provided you do not take from me the liberty of finding something in it to talk upon. This last paragraph is one too much, I took the advantage of Mr. Balfour's absence to write it.

LETTER XV. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

You are a strange creature, my dear Harriet; and where have you found, I beseech you, that I take from you the liberty of speaking freely? I begged quarter from Mr. Balfour, in a tingle article, because nothing he could have said to me, would have been able to mend it. In every thing else, I have followed his counsels; or, rather, I am determined to follow them. Pray do not restrain yourself, let your pen run when you write to me. All that comes to me from you, will it not be on the principle of friendship? and when you think proper to scold, me, shall I not pardon it from so beautiful a cause? You confess to me yourself, that Mr. Balfour may have conceived some prejudices against my father; was it not my duty to endeavour to disabuse him? and would you exact of me, after prevention, cruel and barbarous behaviour towards the author of my being?

We have been in an error with regard to my landed estates being entailed; the person whom I set to copy the article out of the will I sent you, no doubt made a mistake, and the notary, as gross a one in reading it: they omitted both in one and the other some essential words, unless she shall otherways dispose of them; so that I am mistress to dispose of my estates. I sent the other day for a copy of my aunt's will; and this liberty which is left me, has prevented my selling, or pawning my jewels, to make my father the income I promised him. I must do him the justice to say, he opposed my

sending to London; probably he thought me more attached to those baubles, than, thank Heaven, I am.

Our solitude will soon be enlivened by the arrival of a young Italian nobleman, at whose birth my father, in some sort, assisted, and whose godfather he is: the marquis of Montalvo has writ to recommend to him his only son, whose governor is dead in Slanders; and he charges my father to find him such a one as he has lost, who, it seems, was the phoenix of his kind.

The arrival of our stranger, forces me to interrupt my letter; and the orders necessary for lodging his retinue have so taken me up, that I have been obliged to put it by till this morning. Certainly this Italian must have a prodigious fortune, to draw after him six persons; for he has three footmen, a valet de chambre and an almoner, who replaces the governor. My house, which we call, very mal apropos, the castle, is exceeding small, and I have found great difficulty to provide for the entertainment of so many people. The young marquis is about three and twenty years old; though a certain air of gravity, common to the Italians, gives him the appearance of thirty: his features are regular, his figure charming; in a word, he is the handsomest man I ever saw in my life. But draw no sinister consequences from these general remarks. A handsome man, a handsome statue, have equal right to please my eyes; and, till this day, they have made an equal impression upon my heart; however, I will not answer that it shall be always thus; the day may arrive for touching

my heart; and, to spare you the pain of rash judgments and useless researches, I give you my word, to let you into the secret, as soon as my heart shall be sensible of the slightest scratch. After this preamble, which I thought necessary, I will go on with my remarks on the young marquis. He is awkward, and wears his cloaths with an ill grace; he wears a perriwig at his age, though, I have heard, the young people of his country generally preserve their hair; perhaps some disorder, has obliged him to cut it off, for I observe he endeavours to impose upon the eye by a toupee, which his valet de chambre vainly endeavours to mix with the borrowed hairs; this obstinate toupee, in spite of the pomatum with which it is charged, falls continually on his forehead. And how long, will you say, when you shall read this, how long has my Clarissa accustomed herself to pay such attention to a gentleman's figure without paying any regard to his wit? I have had an excellent reason for it, my dear; for, to tell you the truth, this beautiful idol never speaks, but for compliment; there, indeed, he is prodigal! and puts six words where one would suffice. They say it is timidity, and that he has a great deal of wit. One must have a strong faith to believe it; men at his years are not generally so fearful; yet it is true, that his eyes are extremely lively.

Since my last letter, my father has made a little tour to London, where he stayed four days: he is come back more gay, more complaisant, more amiable than ever. During his absence our days passed like moments. My mother has a fine understanding, cultivated with the

greatest care; add to this, an infinite sweetness of temper and solid piety! Heavens! how blind must a man be, to prefer to her a mistress Cosby: that woman, my dear, is in the rank of the most indifferent. It is from my father's mouth I write what I now set down, and you may judge that I listen to him with pleasure: he added, that his children formed the sole bond that attached him to her, and really they are amiable, and behave extremely well in the houses I have placed them. I have often endeavoured to engage my mother in a recital of her sufferings from this creature, but her scrupulous charity has not permitted her to satisfy me: she prays for her every day, and says she is obliged to it, because she owes to the misfortunes Mrs. Cosby brought upon her, her attachment and love to virtue. On this theme she would talk for ever.

I lived, said she, in a great insensibility for God, and a monstrous indifference for my salvation; my manners were indeed pure, I was an honest pagan, and I aspired to be no more; they married me young, my heart was void, your father amiable; and it seemed natural, that he should please a young person, whose fortune he assured, for I had but a small portion. Notwithstanding I conceived an antipathy against him, which I could not conquer, I was dragged to the altar like a victim, while my only hope, was a sudden death, which I thought inevitable from the violence offered me. The goodness of God, which permitted that I should be unfortunate in this world, only to assure my felicity in the next, made use of my sister in-law to open my eyes;

she showed me that religion alone could soften my afflictions, and lighten the yoke which I imagined insupportable. Grace, while it assisted me to begin, blessed my efforts; and I can assure you, that, for twenty years I have suffered, but never been unhappy: I have been content with my fate, because God allotted it for me. Nay, if your father could realize your hopes and my desires, I am almost sure that the mercy of God would find out some other means to afflict me; and, without daring, to put up such a prayer, I wish it from my soul. The cross is the life of a christian, or rather the love of the cross; for an acquiescence to bear that which God sends us, in softening its rigour, makes it disappear.

Here, said I to my mother, is what I do not comprehend: I know that a christian may be resigned under affliction; but I have no idea how one can find happiness in it. It is because your faith is imperfect, my dear Clarissa; happiness is in God alone, the cross approaches us to him, and he never gives it to be borne, but through an overflow of his mercy. You will be convinced of this, my dear, added she, tapping me on the shoulder; only wait his good time, he will know where to find my Clarissa, to make her partake the bread of the righteous. We are never nearer pain, than at the moment when our felicity seems at the highest, and it is a mercy. Rest satisfied with this momentary happiness, and our desires after happiness eternal, that only happiness deserving the name, will soon become cold and languishing.

On reflecting upon this prediction of my mother, I examined carefully all the avenues to my soul, to find by what road affliction could reach me; and I find myself inaccessible, except by the route of my heart: firm as a rock every where else, the wall on that side is a mere cobweb; that is to say, my dear, I am able to count the occasions of misfortune, by the number of objects which at present constitute my felicity. My Harriet then makes a great ingredient in the physic, which God prepares for me. But what is it I have to fear? Is it sickness, misfortune, or death? No, surely, that would afflict me, as my mother says, without rendering me unhappy. This is an ill finishing of my letter; but suspend your judgment, I conjure you. The post, which is just going out, does not permit me to enter into the justification of opinions, which appear hard, but are not so, since they are compatible with this truth, that nothing in the world, without exception, is more dear or more tenderly beloved, than my dear Harriet by her Clarissa.

LETTER XVI. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA

I have much to do with your explications, after the fine compliment with which you finish your letter. O what folly to attach ones self to a philosopher! These sort of people would persuade one, that fire does not burn: in short, philosophy will do what you will. But I am much less anxious to examine the reason, why fire penetrates me to the bone, as I may say; than to get out the redness and swelling which it leaves upon my skin. I have a great deal of respect for your mother's virtue, without ever hoping to arrive at it; if Heaven sends me crosses, I will endeavour to be resigned, and comfort myself in the hope to see a calm succeed the storm: but to have joy in them, to desire afflictions, is only for the saints; and I am too sensible of my own imperfections to aspire to that title. Attempt not, out of friendship, to pray for afflictions for your poor Harriet; at present I suffer only a little uneasiness, which keeps me to my couch, and my span of patience is almost at an end. At last it is found out that I am breeding, and, in truth, it is no very amusing thing. I do not know whether I would not rather suffer a fever of fifteen days, than this lameness, which never is over. Aye, but the fever will not finish in bringing me a son, and, perhaps, in six months, I shall have the satisfaction of holding one in my arms. Let us keep the big belly then, and let the fever alone. For the rest, though I say a son instead of a daughter, it is not that I would prefer one to the other, but merely in condescension to Mr. Balfour. Your friend is become extremely

complaisant, and her husband has yet something of the man in him. These animals think that nature makes a mistake, when she produces any species but theirs. What vanity! Does not my Clarissa do more honour to her family, than half a dozen boys? I allow it, says Mr. Balfour, who reads this over my shoulder; but all women are not Clarissas and Harriets. You are too gallant, sir; do not confound these two names, if you please: your wife is modest, and has not the pride to want to be compared with the masterpiece of womankind; that may be said your of daughter, if I bring you one; for I will make her a present to my friend, who will communicate to her all her perfections; on condition, however, that she will let her believe that fire burns, water wets, and grief renders miserable.

You may, perhaps, believe, my dear, that your curious friend is ready to hang herself, on account of the impossibility in which she finds herself, to gallop all over Paris. There is not a word of truth in this imagination. Most women with child are eat up with the vapours. In England, I am sure, they must be black; the subtlety of the air one breathes there suffers them not to take that colour. I am only lazy. But what vexes me most, my person is become such an important concern among them, that they will not risque it in a journey. I represented to them, in vain, those peasants, who discontinue not their most laborious work, though they are with child. Those soldiers wives, who, if I may use the expression, are brought to bed in the middle of the road, wrap their infants in their apron, and run to

overtake the waggon. They answer me, that, from a habitude of living hard, they are put into a state to support those fatigues. Marry hang those then who brought me up with so much delicacy and gave me a body of glass. Remember, Clarissa, you are to give my daughter a body of iron: I will not expose her to stay nine months in Paris, while she has a friend in England, who, I am sure, will burn with desire to see, to embrace, to watch, to lead, to quarrel with her even, if she should give herself the airs not to obey her.

Mr. Balfour is acquainted with your marquis, and desires me to assure you, that he is not so foolish as his air speaks him, unless he is prodigiously changed within eight years. When my husband went last to Italy, Mr. Darby charged him with a commission from the father of this young lord; he was enchanted with the whole family, and cannot help wishing, that you may enter into one which resembles it. Montalvo is rich, his figure amiable. Mr. Balfour knows nothing of his timidity, he had not that fault at fifteen years old: and do you know the conclusion he draws from it, my dear? that your first glance discouraged him, that he is in love; and nothing gives so awkward an air to a man, who loves for the first time. This is Mr. Balfour's first conclusion. His second, that you will love him. My dear, his figure pleased you, but his understanding was suspected; now he is sure that he has an excellent one, therefore.

His third conclusion, which will please you as well as the other two, is, that if Mr. Darby encourages this young lord to address you, my

husband abjures all the suspicions which he had conceived, forgets all his reasons to continue them; and firmly believes in the reality of your father's conversion. This match, my dear Clarissa, is suitable to you in every respect: haggle not then, but marry, if it be only to tranquilize your friends; and put in the first article of your contract, after the titles of your husband, the said lord also contents, promises, and engagss to fulfil the oath which he has taken by the beautiful eyes of his wife, to conduct her to Paris, immediately after the celebration of their nuptials; there to register the wry faces of the right honourable and impatient lady Harriet, when she must deliver up her present deposit; and afterwards breath upon the new born, as did the fairies of old; wishing that it may hold from her mother, nothing but her friendship for Clarissa, who wishes to be her godmother, and promises to endow her with all her qualities, virtuous perfections, etc. etc. etc.

Sincerity, if you please; it is a debt which you have indiscretely enough engaged yourself to pay. You have no experience in this respect, and you do not know how much it costs, to say, for the first time, those big words I love. Open as you are, if the marquis pleases you, you will tell it to him as frankly as you would to me, or any other female companion. In this respect you would never have the wit to coquette, to hide your face with a fan; in a word, to play all those monkey tricks in which the honour of a girl is supposed to consist; though nobody is made the dupe of it. One would or one would not marry a man; if one would not, it is easy to tell him so at first, without amusing him;

if one would, he ought not to be left in suspense to let him think there is something to sacrifice to him, some inclination to be rooted out. Mr. Balfour insists that I should tell you the fine answer I made him, when he was presented to me as a man, who aspired to the happiness, or ill luck, of being my husband: for, indeed, marriage is a lottery, in which there are a great many more blanks than prizes: he pretends, that I answered him, Sir, I have not the honour to know you, therefore I should tell a falshood, was I to say, that I would have for you the esteem, respect and love, which a good wife owes a husband; however, I will not endeavour to prevent them, if they are willing to come; it is your part to take pains to possess me with them; and to examine yourself well, in order to know, whether you have in you what is able to produce them. I will esteem you, if you are estimable; I will respect you, if you are more virtuous than myself; I will love you, if you have not more faults than your physiognomy announces. The examination I would have you make, with regard to your disposition, is essential for me, as well as for you. If my friends have deceived me in your charater, you will make me miserable. We shall both play the same game, I am insupportable to all those I do not love; I tell you so before hand, therefore take care of it.

I am obliged to depend upon my dearest, for the truth of this harangue, which I had totally forgot; but I have some reason to believe it real, because I perfectly remember I had in my head a song to the same tune. I desire you will let me know immediately, what you

would have said in a like case. I conclude, from my forgetfulness, that I was less myself, in that moment, than I believed; but you know I trouble myself less than a certain person, because I do not reflect so much; she would then be more trouble than I, upon such an occasion, and I should be sorry to lose her harangue.

LETTER XVII. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

If your uncle was to read your letters, he would have a very good opportunity to employ his old adage, *The fox must die in his skin*. Do not take this for a reproach, my dear; change as much as you will, upon certain articles, but preserve still your heart, and your amiable gaiety. This then is your tone, when you are sick, and have the vapours; your peevishness resembles the joy of others, like two drops of water. I must tell you, however, that I do not like your indolence; it is a state against nature; shake yourself, if the physicians will give you leave; but at present you are under their rod, and they ought to make you do penance for your heresies against physic. I should be very sorry that you were to have a daughter, inheriting nothing of her mother, but her friendship for me; she might love me, but I should hardly love her: I must have a copy, absolutely like the original; in which case, there would be no occasion for fairies; I very well perceive, that I am not one, especially when I write to you; for, was I in possession of a magic wand, stead of a pen, you should have a visit, instead of a letter.

Why do you speak of registering grimaces? you mistake the word, you should say jests; for I am sure you would draw strokes of pleasantry from your pains, as well as from every thing else. It is because marriage is a lottery, where there are but few prizes, that I am resolved, to think, at least, four times before I take a ticket: I do not love games of chance; but rather those, where caution and good play

may assist fortune. This is nearly the answer I made, about two days ago, to my father, who solicited me in favour of his godson: it is to tell you, in other words, Mr. Balfour had nearly guessed right: I say nearly, for the romance is not perfect; since, in those sort of works, love is almost always a surprise. Now, the marquis came here, expressly to be in love; his father charged him not to fail, and I was the governor which he desired my father to procure for him.

But a truce to raillery, I promised you to be sincere, and I will keep my word. The embarrassment which the marquis seemed at first under, has been, for some time, worn off; and I am as well content with his understanding, as his person: but this is not the essential point; his heart must accord with the rest, and it is easy to mask it: I require more, religion; a piety, solid, and not superstitious: qualities very rare in an Italian. If, after a strict examination, I can reasonably presume, that he unites these qualities, I will marry him, in preference to any other man. I do not consider exterior and brilliant qualities as absolutely necessary to the happiness of a wife; but when they are found united with the more solid ones, it is a superfluity that hurts nothing. That is not my question, cries Harriet, with vivacity; one single word, and that will be decisive. Do you love him? To answer you, I must have more experience than I possess; but I will describe my situation, and beg of you to decide yourself. I see the marquis with pleasure, quit him without pain; I am never tired of his company, but I never find myself uneasy when he is absent; I sleep my seven hours,

without interruption, and he never mixes himself with my dreams; he causes no distraction in my prayers, nor even in my studies; I should be truly sorry if any unlucky accident was to befall him; I could see him pay his addresses to another, without inquietude. I will obey my parents, without repugnance, if they order me to marry him; I will obey them without vexation, if they forbid me ever to think of him. Is this love, Harriet? No, answers she, spitefully; but you deceive us, or you deceive yourself. Myself I may; but, most assuredly, I do not deceive you: the end will justify me, if my protestations are not sufficient. My father will needs show London to our guest; it is a very unfavourable season, no- body being in town: however, he goes to see the public edifices; for which, two or three days will be sufficient; and my father was obliged to promise the marquis, he should not be longer. They made me some proposals to go with them, but I would not listen. Is this love? I go to profit of the solitude, which their departure affords me, to demand of God the grace to conduct me in this affair, in such a manner, as will be most conducive to his glory, and my salvation. Methinks, I have only these two motives; and I assure you that I shall pray for the conclusion, or rupture of the affair, with such indifference, that its breaking off will not cost me a sigh. Montalvo, notwithstanding, is not indifferent to me; I feel something for him which I cannot explain: I wish him happiness, I think he deserves it; but I could, without repugnance, see him happy with another. These are my last words; and I repeat it again, I do not deceive you.

LETTER XVIII. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

Be not frightened at the sight of this packet, my dear Clarissa. Will you have the courage to read this letter, or rather this volume? I accuse myself of indiscretion for sending it to you, and yet I will put it in the post. It is my way, you know, to be sensible of the follies I am going to commit, and go through with them? What hopes can I have that you will read my epistle, when, perhaps, you are busy in discussing a point, the most serious of your life? No matter; what is written, is written; and, what's worse, shall go. What I have to say, is too singular to be kept in silence. You remember, my dear, without doubt, that I had a taste for romance, which you took a good deal of pains to triumph over. I have broken the promise I made you, never to read any more; and it is your own fault; you recommended me to submit to the rod of the physicians; and the reading of those trifles, has been recommended to me by the sons of Hypocrates: add to their authority, that of my language master, who assures me, there is no better way to perfect myself in French; and you will find me sufficiently justified in my breach of faith. I had sense enough to trust Mr. Balfour to choose me a novel, for I had not been able to read ten pages of the licentious pamphlets, which had been so much praised to me. He came back, three days ago, with five volumes, which he put upon my table; and, at the same time, he fixed his eyes upon me smiling. I thought the smile was occasioned by the work which he offered me. I opened a volume; but judge of my surprise when I read

the title, *Letters from Clarissa*. If there had not been five volumes, I should have imagined they had taken the pains to print your letters, but you have not yet fulfilled such a laborious task. I ran over! I devoured! My astonishment grew at every line! A Clarissa, whom, at first, you resembled feature for feature: I say at first, for the resemblance is not supported; and she commits follies of which you are incapable: a miss How, as giddy as your Harriet, and almost as much attached to her Clarissa, as I am to mine. All of a sudden I am taken with a fancy, to make an extract of these books for you, which, most assuredly, you would not have patience to read. It is, however, shown with admirable maxims. The author is English, a man of worth, and loves virtue; but he is prolix to a dreadful degree; and this fault is your aversion. To have a fancy, and satisfy it, you know, are two things, which follow immediately; and it is to this bad habit, which, I confess to you, as though you were ignorant of it, that you owe the drudgery I at present impose upon you. I must also have your opinion of my criticism upon the work. Clarissa, all beautiful, and all perfect, is younger sister to a brother and sister, who resemble her in nothing. Roughness, impertinence, obstinacy, is the character of the brother: folly, jealousy, a desire to revenge herself on her sister who eclipses her, is the character of the sister. Mr. Harlowe, the father, is described as an honest man, cruel towards his wife, who is laid to be perfect; despotic over his family, and, notwithstanding, governed by his son. Two uncles, who have the character of the father; an aunt, who resembles the mother, whose sister she is; Lovelace, who

addresses the eldest of the miss Harlowe's by mistake; but, having found his error, makes her refuse him, and demands Clarissa, the younger, with whom he is in love. This Lovelace is one of those characters, which cannot be defined; in the first volumes, through the most frightful libertinism, one discovers some rays of goodness, which cannot accord with what passes at the end of the work. The elder brother engages the father in an aversion he had conceived against Lovelace, since they were at the university; and the family decide, to get rid of him, by treating him with rudeness. He submits to it, however, in consideration of Clarissa. But, at length, they push things to extremity: Harlowe, the son, forces him to fight; is vanquished, receives his life from the conqueror, and only becomes more enraged against him. Clarissa informs miss Howe of all these accidents. This original, of which I am, in some sort, the copy, would make Clarissa confess, that she loves Lovelace. Clarissa answers her, pretty nearly, as you have done me. Observe, Clarissa's grandfather had left her a considerable estate, where she might live independant; she gives it up, to be disposed of by her father, and her friends quarrel with her for doing so. I would do as much; but here is what I would not do. During the greatest embarrassments of her friend, miss Howe fills her letters with ill-placed jests, at the expence of her mother, and one Hincksman, her lover: she falls again upon the Harlowes, whom she turns into ridicule (with all my heart) and finishes by a picture of poor Hincksman, whom she is resolved to burlesque at any rate.

The younger Harlowe proposes one *Somes* for a husband for his sister *Clarissa*; he is extremely rich, nephew of an uncle, who got wealth by base means; and would have been the most avaricious of all men, if his nephew had not been more so. *Somes* is a soul of dirt, who consents to buy *Clarissa*: all the family, even her mother, enter into the conspiracy. It is true, she does it against her will; she sacrifices every thing to a love of peace, which she cannot obtain: from whence, *miss Howe* concludes, that a wife, who is too submissive to an unreasonable husband, aggravates his faults, and puts it in his power to abuse her good nature. This remark is sufficiently to my taste, but I doubt whether it is to your's: what say you?

Before the entire rupture with *Lovelace*, they had ordered *Clarissa* to write to him; I do not know why: however, she continues the correspondence, in order to prevent her furious lover from taking vengeance on her family. *Lovelace*, piqued at their ill behaviour, undertakes to make himself master of *Clarissa* in spite of them; for which purpose, he excites them to drive the girl to extremities, and even to use violence, in order to force her to marry the monster, to whom they would sacrifice her. The *Harlowes* fall into the snare; *Clarissa* engages never to marry, if they will, neither *Lovelace*, nor any other person; to give up an estate; to depend upon the liberality of a father: but all is refused, rejected, and her mother has the barbarity to press her to marry *Somes*, though, at the same time, *Clarissa* tells her, that both her present and eternal, happiness, depend upon her refusal.

Where now, I beseech you, are the praises which were bestowed upon this virtuous lady? was she to be criminal, in order to please her husband? and is it not a crime to use violence to a daughter, who made proposals so reasonable? Has the author a mind to show us the danger of an excessive soft and submissive temper? I believe he might spare himself the trouble; these are not commonly the faults of women, and if there are, here and there, some to be found subject to them, I apprehend it is an imperfection which will not spread very far. Lovelace's promise to Clarissa, that he will not exterminate all her relations, draws a promise from her, to continue unmarried, if she cannot marry him. Afterwards he advises her, to throw herself into the hands of lady Lawrence, his aunt: she contents; changes her mind, and gives her word again, in the fear that they should take the advantage of a fit to marry her; for she knows that they have brought a minister into the house, little enough scrupulous to assist in such an action. However, she contradicts herself again; and writes to Mr. Lovelace, that she has changed her mind. As he doubts it, he leaves the letter in the place, where they were usually deposited; which forces Clarissa to come to a *rendezvous* she had given him, in order to tell him positively that she could not quit her father's house. While she is talking with him, she hears a cry, and clashing of swords; believes that her relations are come to surprise her; fears they will cut one another's throats before her eyes, and suffers herself to be dragged by Lovelace to a coach, which waits for her. She is conducted to a farm-house; and Lovelace, whose first design was, at least, to prove her virtue,

forgets his perverse resolutions, on seeing her, and offers to marry her directly. She rejects this proposal with disdain; declares that she will, if possible, be reconciled to her family, and continue unmarried if that depends upon her. It is in consequence of these resolutions, that she refuses to go to Lovelace's relations; desires that he will conduct her to London, and leave her in a house which he shall not approach. Here miss Howe seems to act the part of a person of sense, and writes to her friend, that she has no choice left, but to marry Lovelace; that she will be unfortunate indeed, if she is not able to reform his manners; but that she has put herself under the necessity of becoming so, because it is better to be unfortunate than dishonoured.

Here is the great fault of this romance; it is certain that a girl, who has been forced to quit the house of her father, ought to go off with a husband only; we are accountable to God for our virtue, and to men for our reputation: the more the manners of Lovelace are known to be depraved, the less reason she had to hope, that the world would imagine, he had respected a girl, whom he loved, and had in his power; the hope to reconcile herself to her parents was ridiculous, they could no longer regard her, but as a daughter, whose honour was lost. For me, was I in the case, to run away with a footman, I would rather be accused of meanness in marrying, than of vice in staying with him; and if he could not immediately place me among people of honour, who might answer for my conduct, he should be my husband

in four and twenty hours. I find nothing which is not preferable to the loss of reputation, except the crime that may occasion it. Now there is no crime in a base alliance, and still lets in such a one as Clarissa might have made. Her friend repeats it to her in every letter; she allows that her friend is in the right; Lovelace offers his hand twenty times; but, because he is not pressing enough, she repulses him, and, through want of complaisance, throws him back into his natural state of perverseness.

He conducts her to London, to a bad house, the mistress of which pretends to be a woman of fashion; and, to make a long story short, he makes use of a potion, which deprives Clarissa of her senses. After this, she gets away from him, and constantly refuses the hand of Lovelace, though she is supplicated to accept it by all the family of that monster; and, at length, she dies, after receiving several affronts, which are but episodes to the subject. Why, since they make use of the name of a girl, so perfect as my Clarissa, do they not also give her a conduct as perfect? What need had she of Lovelace to save her? Either she could have obeyed her parents, or her conscience opposed. In the second place, she should have sworn the peace against her persecutors; protested before a magistrate that she would not marry Somes; that all marriages made otherwise than in the church, and publicly, would be forced on her side; make the magistrate the deposit of the promise to continue a maiden; and thus sheltered from the violence she feared, returned to her father's house, and submitted to

persecution with a good grace. It is true, that Lovelace had surrounded her with spies, and that she might have fallen into his hands; but then she would have been in the case of a girl run away with, who, after that, has no party to take but marrying her ravisher.

Here are my reflections, my dear; and, I flatter myself, they will be yours; if so, have the goodness to confirm it to me. I know myself, all the good I have in me comes from you; and I am dissident of opinions which appear most just to me, till you have put your seal upon them. However, let me tell you, that Mr. Balfiour is of my side of the question, and cites an episode of a celebrated author, who thought the same way. Count Roger was on the eve of espousing a lady he loved, and who loved him; she was named Alice. The father of Alice dies, and makes his daughter promise to conclude her marriage; but her mother opposed it, because she loved Roger; and, to assure him to herself, she makes the count de Martin carry off her daughter. Alice, in spite of her love for Roger, marries the ravisher, and believes that honour requires she should do so; while the despairing and afflicted Roger approves the conduct by which he loses her.

And we also approve of your conduct, with regard to the marquis de Montalvo; we passionately desire, however, to see you married, without being able to tell you half the reasons we have to wish it. Consult God, nothing is more just; but resign yourself to the commands he shall manifest, by a hidden providence, under the appearance of events seemingly fortuitous; he could not send you an

angel from Heaven, to declare his will to you in a manner more immediate.

LETTER XIX. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

You will never imagine, my dear, that your friend has fallen under a temptation to read the romance you mention, and in eight volumes; for the English author has been abridged by his translator into French, whom you have still found too long. I believe, the intention of the author, which is extremely good, has escaped you. It is as much as to say, even a girl as virtuous and perfect as my Harriet, has lost, through disobedience to her parents, her happiness, her reputation, and her honour. Learn, young women, by her example, that the first fault against the submission which you owe your parents, may conduct you from precipice to precipice; that there are proceedings which leave nothing but a choice between two misfortunes; to be in league with an immoral man, is, no doubt, a great one; but it is not without resource; there is a hope to reform, or by patience to sanctify ones self; but reputation once lost, is never to be regained. You say, that if you found yourself under the necessity to fly with a footman, you would marry him directly. The case is very delicate; one must suppose an absolute impossibility to find protection, or resource. One must, O, one must not expose ones self to the necessity; and I shall always have a bad opinion of a girl, who quits the house of her father, unless she does it to avoid the commission of a crime; and how can she find herself in that circumstance? I think a poor girl much to be pitied in a parallel case, if it be possible: there are few fathers who would seek the ruin of their children. I conceive, however, but away

with those ideas, we shall never have need of them; and they are things which leave traces in the imagination, that produce nothing either good or useful.

After having reflected upon the match proposed to me, I found no objection, sufficiently valid, against it; I gave my consent with a good grace, to prevent the marquis from suspecting, that I did myself any violence, as you say in one of your letters. I ratified it again with greater joy, when they were going to prepare the articles: the marquis de Montalvo, an only son, could well dispense with a fortune with a wife: his father, of whom I have conceived the highest idea, orders him, in a letter which accompanies his consent, to content himself with a quarter of my fortune, and give up the rest to my parents: they will have no child but you, said he, and it is not just that they should have but a bare subsistence, while you enjoy abundance. The joy with which the marquis subscribed to this article, transported me to such a degree, that I could very willingly have embraced him; and, at least, I gave him the liberty to read in my eyes how much my friendship for him was increased. I say my friendship, Harriet; for assuredly I have no more: the more I examine myself, the more I am persuaded of it; and I have not concealed it from the marquis: he would have something of a warmer kind, but it is not in my power to give it. Perhaps I am not of a constitution for any thing but friendship. Here are the articles which we have agreed upon, and we are to sign the day after my marriage; for by marrying only I acquire a right to dispose of

my estate. My portion will amount to fifty thousand pounds sterling; part in the bank of Genoa; the rest, in India bonds, the funds and the bank, shall be disposed of, in paying the legacies my aunt left behind her; that is to say, those which consist in life annuities, and part to purchase an estate, which shall descend to my heirs; but my father and mother shall enjoy it for their lives. As my mother's inclinations agree entirely with mine, we will engage my father to buy this estate in Italy, that we may have the pleasure of seeing one another: but, notwithstanding, every two years, we are to pass some months in England, to pay a visit to my Harriet, and her husband, on condition that they will, in their turns, pay us a visit in Italy. There will not be time to have your answer to this, before the celebration of my marriage; but there will be time enough for you to receive this, and pray for me. I am sensible how many virtues are necessary to enable a woman to fulfil the duties of a wife; and this frightens me. You see, Harriet, that your incense has not intoxicated me. I have said nothing to you hitherto of the excessive flattery with which you fill your letters: I know you too well, to hope to make you change your tone; but these praises will be no longer in season. If my husband insists upon my showing him the letters I write and receive, which would be nothing extraordinary from an Italian; if, I say, he will see your letters, he may suspect me for taking pleasure in a language which resembles adulation, but is, in fact, nothing but the effect of the friendship, a little blind, that you have for me. This may diminish the esteem with

which I would wish to inspire him, and would flatter me more than those tender sentiments, which generally disappear after marriage.

LETTER XX. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

With what a horrid tale am I going to wound your heart, my dear and tender friend! How will Mr. Balfour be shocked, who yet appears to have foreseen it? Ought I not to reproach myself for my obstinacy, in persisting in that fatal confidence which has undone me, when such a man as he, had pointed out the precipice to which it conducted me. Yet was it not shocking also to suspect a father of such villainy? Ah, dear Harriet, when I write to you in such security, that I should never be in the situation imagined, by the author of the romance of *Clarissa*; how far was I from thinking, that I was arrived at the moment, when I must experience misfortunes a thousand times more terrible; at the moment, when I should be obliged to quit my house, like a fugitive, to seek near you an asylum against the person who ought to be my protector? But, alas! even that resource is ravished from me; and your poor *Clarissa*, but what shall I say, it is from the obscure chamber of a person unknown, to whose probity she is obliged to abandon herself; that she implores the pity of you and Mr. Balfour. But I keep you too long in suspense; let me take up the thread of my unfortunate story, from the conclusion of my last letter.

The sword hung over me by a thread, and I was at ease; I waited, without the least inquietude, in regard to my fate, for the moment which was to unite me for ever, to a man, whom I thought worthy of all my esteem. Who would not have been deceived? The monster affected virtue, religion, with an hypocrisy, to impose even upon a

person, whom long experience might have rendered more suspicious; and then the testimony which Mr. Balfour gave in favour of the Montalvo; was it not sufficient to prevent any doubt from arising in my mind? You know, that since the act of parliament, nobody is permitted to marry without a licence, nor any where but in their proper parish, which is an extreme inconvenience to Roman catholics: some, after having been married by a priest, have gone through the protestant ceremony: others have gone into France, or other catholic countries, to be married, and avoided, by that means, an appearance before the minister. They insinuated, that this ceremony was not necessary with regard to me, as I was going to quit the kingdom; and that it was sufficient, if I was married by the chaplain of an ambassador, or enjoy of some Italian prince. Montalvo knew the chaplain of the grand duke of Tuscany; he undertook to write to him, and he came on the day appointed. At first he made a good deal of difficulty to marry us; he exposed himself to be transported for fourteen years, and it was natural that he should take every precaution to avoid such a misfortune. My father, however, eased his scruples, by discovering to him a circumstance, which I forgot to tell you before. The treaty between the young marquis and me, was unknown to any body out of our house; the domestics even were ignorant that the celebration of our nuptials was so nigh, and it was an easy matter to send them out of the way. In consequence of this, two were sent to London, and two to Windsor, under a pretence of carrying letters of consequence, and buying provisions. My women

went to bed be-times, as, you may remember, I never had the cruelty to make them wait for me, when I stayed up beyond a reasonable hour; rather choosing to undress myself. We would only have kept up the house chaplain, and Montalvo's, who, with my father and mother, made four witnesses; but one of these failed us: my chaplain was taken ill after dinner, and forced to go to bed; but he assured me, that the three remaining witnesses were sufficient. My mother thought herself at the happiest period of her life; she dressed me with her own hands, and, in spite of my little regard for magnificence, I was obliged to obey. A description of my dress is necessary, because it produced an incident which saved me, as you will presently hear. I had a robe, with a rough ground of silver, wrought in polished silver, powdered with tufts of roses, very elegant: my black hair was braided with pearl, you know my aunt had a great many of the most beautiful; as my diamonds were not set, I wore a collar and earrings of amethysts; and my dear mother made a sprig of the largest diamonds, to place at one side of my head; so that my jewels alone were worth at least seven thousand pounds sterling. Poor victim! How did Montalvo devour with his eyes those riches, which he thought himself already in possession of. You know, my dear, that I was always much attached to Fanny, my waiting-maid, and her attachment to me merits that I should; I could not make a secret to her of my marriage, and I risked nothing by discovering it, as she was to go with me into Italy. The poor girl told me, that she should not be easy, unless she had the pleasure of seeing me in my wedding cloaths, and I promised to slip

into her chamber, a moment before we sat down to table. They waited for supper till all the servants of the house were retired: you know there were but few remaining: those of the marquis prepared our supper in the village, and it was served at eleven o'clock at night. While they were occupied in settling every thing, I pretended to have forgot something in my chamber, and ran up, in order to keep my word with Fanny. I was surprised to find her out of bed, seemingly in great consternation. An unknown person, said she, has given me a letter, and he said, that it was of great importance to you to read it before you was married. I was surprised, that a stranger should be so well acquainted with a thing, that was a mystery to us all; and would feign have questioned him a little; but he would not stay; only recommended secrecy to me, and dispatch in delivering it to you. I have had it in my pocket these three hours, not knowing how to get at you; but if you had not come up now, I was going to raise a cry, under pretence of a fit of the cholic. I took the letter, trembling; and not being willing, contain what it would, that they should suspect the girl had given it to me, I went down into the study; but judge what I became, as soon as I read the original of the copy which I here send you.

Mrs. Cosby to Miss Clarissa.

Madam,

It is upon my knees I write to you the horrible confession of my crimes. Grant, Heaven, that the first good action of my life, in

discovering to you the unnatural treason, of which you are going to be made the victim; grant, Heaven, I say, that this good action may be followed by a sincere repentance. Yesterday evening, on your account, I, for the first time in my life, felt remorse: till that moment, madam, I swallowed iniquity like water, and I gloried in a project, which must have rendered you miserable; when, of a sudden, it came into my mind, what injury has the innocent Clarissa done you? Was it not, on the contrary, she who could not resolve to let you live in that state of necessity, to which you were born; who, out of her own immediate bounty, added a hundred pounds sterling to that pension that was desired for you, and who has made herself the mother of your children? I hardened not my heart against this just motion, but, fearing that the malignity of my nature might overcome the mercy of God, I immediately called for succour against myself. I am born a catholic, though since the fourteenth year of my age I have totally neglected my religion. I knew there was a zealous ecclesiastic, who lived near me: I sent to him to come to me, and I discovered to him the diabolical snare which was laid to destroy you: he charged me to write you an account of it, and he will trust no one but himself, to deliver it to the girl whom you honour with your friendship, and whose name I have told him.

You are upon the point of marrying my son, and perhaps your own brother: this wretched fruit of my crimes was taken from me by the marquis of Montalvo, who disputed with your father the right of

paternity. Piously educated under the care of the marquis, who, since his marriage, has renounced the errors of his youth, my unfortunate child seemed by his virtues to repair the crime of his birth; he entered into a religious order, very austere, and for several years seemed content with his situation; but I perceive, beyond a doubt, that he is the son of Mr. Darby: the perverseness of his character discovers the source of his blood: he, by degrees, grew cold in the duties of his profession, which at length he abandoned, and, escaping from his monastery, came to me in London, where your father has secretly brought me. He hoped to engage you to live some time there: your repugnance for this town increased the hatred he bears you, for he cannot think, without horror, that you are in possession of a fortune, which he considers as his own right, and which he designed for our children. He thought my son sufficiently depraved to enter into his designs of vengeance; he knew, that the marquis of Montalvo, with whom he has been at variance for these two years, had sent his son into England for six months, in order to learn the language. He found the circumstance favourable: the sums of money you have so generously given him, have served to assist his cheat; and, in order to procure a protection, both he and my wretched son have abjured the Roman catholic religion, before the bishop of London, who, imagining them sincere, has conceived a great regard for them; Mr. Darby has also promised to bring his wife and daughter into the pale of the church of England: he flatters not himself, however, with hopes of success; and here follows the rest of his frightful project. A

considerable sum of money gained over the attorney employed to take a copy of your aunt's will. Had the poor dean of Colburn been suffered to live, he would have confounded all those machinations; but the monster, whom you have received into your house, his former servant, found means to put him out of the way. Your father, in order to turn these crimes to account, found himself under a necessity of committing new ones. You must be surprised into a marriage with some wretch, who, content with a small part of your portion, would give the rest up to him. The false will, gives you a right to dispose of your fortune when you marry; and, as your good heart was well known, it was not doubted but you would, with pleasure, come into any measures, to insure the happiness of your family. My son is afterwards to take you into Germany, and endeavour, by love and assiduity, to make you forget the deceit put upon you; but you are never to know his double apostacy. The person to marry you, is an apostate monk, my son's companion; for they would have your marriage as good as possible, in regard to law, in order to secure the validity of the following deed. There is nothing more remains for me, madam, but to beg a thousand pardons for the hand I have had in this black conspiracy: it is easy for you to punish me, by revealing the secret of my intelligence. Your father will regard an additional crime as a trifle, and my death will, in some sort, seem a recompence for the failure of his project: but, the truth is, you will gain nothing by showing my letter; the worthy clergyman, who bears it, will copy it in his own hand, so that I may deny it for mine: add, that, was the affair

brought to a legal proof, it would conduct your father to the gallows; he merits to lose his life, but it is not for his daughter to take it. After having read these horrors, you will not, I apprehend, find it difficult to feign a sudden indisposition; gain a day, take the advantage of it, and put yourself into a place of security; it is the only advice that can be given you by the criminal, but penitent,

MRS. COSBY

Clarissa in continuation.

Was not the reading of this fatal letter enough to kill me? The desire of escaping from the danger, alone sustained my spirits, and I resolved to follow the counsel of this woman, whom the mercy of God made the instrument of my preservation. Heavens! upon the point of being united for ever to a sacrilegious monster! My blood froze in my veins at the thought of it; and when I returned into the parlour, my mother screamed, on seeing me totter as I walked, and my face covered with the shades of death: she ran to me, and took me in her arms; at the moment my force failed me; however, I did not swoon away, and that was my misfortune. Montalvo approached to support me: but I cried out, Retire, monster, whom hell has vomitted for my ruin. It is to this imprudence that I must attribute all the miseries I have since suffered. A little dissimulation would have given me time to consult my mother and my... O! I have no courage to pronounce that name, which had such charms for me. Mr. Darby, I say, would have attributed my situation to a physical cause; and, having no reason to suspect my

knowledge of his wicked conspiracy, would have consented to a delay, which he would not have thought dangerous; but my horror for Montalvo let him see at once I was instructed in all; and, despairing to deceive, he determined to force me. I am betrayed, cried he, in a transport; but I will not descend to the unnecessary meanness of a feint, to dispose of a creature, whose artifices have robbed me of my right. Approach, said he to the clergyman, and instantly marry these two persons: and you, said he to me, with a look wherein was painted the blackest fury, make haste to seize the only means, to give you back a father. I will forget all, if you will immediately become the wife of Montalvo.

This terrible discourse, which one would have thought enough to destroy me, on the contrary, gave me new strength. Hope not, answered I, with vivacity, to force from me a consent which outrages nature: take all I possess, I consent; but to avoid a death the most cruel, I will not be obliged to commit the crime you have proposed to me: and you, said I to the priest, who advanced towards me, remember that there is an avenging God, and fear, lest his thunder should reduce you instantly to powder, if you dare undertake to tie those criminal bonds, which I refuse to receive. At these words, my furious father threw himself upon me; and, without doubt, would have taken away my life, if my poor mother had not exposed her's, to save it. I little felt the strokes he had given me; but, O Heavens! how those he struck my mother, tore my bleeding heart! I threw myself at

his feet, begging with cries, that he would take his proper victim, and spare his wife, who was not guilty of my rebellion to his will. Montalvo, spite of his wickedness, was touched at the danger in which he saw me, and forced me out of his hands. It was a long time before my father would listen to any one; at length, however, getting him to the other side of the room, Montalvo spoke to him, for some time, with great seeming animation. During this interval, I threw myself at my mother's feet, which I bathed with my tears, without being able to utter a syllable; the astonished priest standing without motion, till Montalvo called him; probably to fortify the advice he had given my father, to avoid a discovery to the world of what might ruin him; and endeavour to reduce me by gentler methods. Return thanks to love, said Mr. Darby: I give you four and twenty hours to do, with a good grace, that which I require of you; but hope not for a longer delay; you shall be the wife of Montalvo, either willingly, or by force. Follow me both of you. With these words, he accompanied me and my mother into an obscure closet, at the extremity of the house, which had but one window, or, rather, hole, near the top, which, even in the day time, scarce admitted light. I made no resistance; the comfortable thought of being alone with my mother, and at liberty to bewail myself, entirely took me up: but in what a condition was I, when I knew the intention of my persecutors. They gagged my mother, to stifle her cries, and tore her from my dungeon; while hands, which I scarce respected, in the situation to which I was reduced, held me immovable to my place. My cries, which, in the parlour, might have

alarmed the servants, were useless in a place where they were stifled. I screamed, however; I called Heaven to help me, and protect my mother; I endeavoured to disengage myself, to fly to her assistance. Vain efforts! they dragged me away; and Mr. Darby, letting me go, dashed me with such violence to the floor, that I was terribly bruised: he then went out, and shut the door after him. My first attention was to fasten it within side, with two bolts, placed there for that purpose, and I resolved to die with hunger rather than open it. This, in some measure, tranquilized me; and I knelt down to implore the assistance of God, with an ardour which surely reached Heaven, since it gave me a desire and means to break my chains. I had every thing to fear for my mother's life: Mr. Darby, in his rage, had let escape the horrible design to make her life depend upon my marriage. Ah! if my own alone had been in danger, I could have braved death and torments but an interest more dear laid hold of my heart. While I was yet praying, I heard a key put in the door: as it turned round without effect, and they perceived the obstacle that kept the door from opening; the odious Montalvo raised his voice, and conjured me, out of regard to my own safety, to condescend to honour him with a quarter of an hour's conversation. Had I listened only to my indignation, I should have answered him with the just reproaches his crimes deserved; but I had conceived some hopes of escaping, and that restrained me. I have four and twenty hours to fix my last resolution, said I to him; hope not to see me before that time, and remember that my determination depends on the treatment my

mother meets. Ah, charming Clarissa, replied the monster, would you could read my heart however filled it; nay be with love for you, you would find more remorse there than tenderness. A criminal like me dares not call Heaven to witness his oaths: I content, however, this moment, to receive the punishment it owes my crimes, if I am not sincere in my repentance; if I have not made a vow to repair the injuries I have done you. For your own sake, feign to content to your father's designs, you shall not be less mistress of your fate; with my own life I will answer for that of your respectable mother. We shall see tomorrow, said I, how far your repentance may be depended on; and, till that time, I only desire you to let me be quiet.

How easy it is to impose upon an innocent heart! I thought I could perceive the tone of truth in the promises of Montalvo. Is there a man rash enough to invoke the vengeance of Heaven, at the time he provokes it by his treasons? If the promises of that wretch were sincere, but has he respect those he made to God, when he engaged himself in the service of the altar? Can his penitence subsist with the criminal passion, with which he confesses yet to burn? Heavens I should render myself an accomplice of his crime, was I to confide in his oaths. Let me fly then, though at the risque of my life: God, who only punishes the will, knows that I abridge not my days by choice.

There was, in the place where I was shut up, a very narrow chimney; I did not despair, however, of being able to squeeze up it, and arrive at the top of the house. If you ask me what I designed to do when I

got there, I cannot tell; if it was to go off, I had not considered whether the height would not be an obstacle to my enterprize; I recommended myself to God, before I attempted to mount this narrow passage, and more than once I was afraid I should stick by the way: at length, however, with the assistance of my hands and feet I gained the top, where I was obliged to stay, for some moments, to take my breath; afterwards, by the pale light of the stars, I cast my eyes on all sides, to see if I could not discover a place where the descent was easy: I knew there was a little building at the end of my house, much lower than it; and, if I could be happy enough to come at it, I might slide, without danger, from one roof to another, and arrive below; I thought it would be easy to come to the ground on the side of the garden, where it was not above fifteen feet high; but I had a long way to scramble, and how should I avoid falling? However, I had no choice, and resolved to hazard all, for all. On horseback then, as I may say, upon the ridge of the roof, one leg on one side, and one on the other, I, with great awkwardness, pain and danger, sometimes on my stomach, sometimes by the help of my hands, at length reached the end. That moment, I heard Windsor clock strike twelve, and it was well I had got to my journey's end; the sky began to grow darker, the stars disappeared, every thing foretold a storm, and I had scarce gained the garden, when the little light, I till then had, entirely failed: there was yet a wall to get over, not so high as the buildings I had already dropped from, yet I found greater difficulties; I attempted to mount, but fell; my foot got under me in such a manner, that, with

the pain, I was above an hour before I could stir from the place; however, my fall being on the outside of the garden, I was, in some sort, happy; my fears of falling again into the hands of my persecutors, gave me new strength; and, as well as I was able to judge, I set out towards Windsor: and, though a dreadful rain pierced me to the skin, I advanced courageously towards the place, where I hoped to find an asylum: I knew there were in the castle some ladies of rank, and I resolved to throw myself at the feet of the first to whom Providence should bring me, intreating her to hide me for a few days, till I should learn some news of my mother, determining to let them believe what they would of my condition, rather than accuse him, notwithstanding his cruelty to me, whom it was my duty to respect. But Heaven disposed things in a different manner. I had not walked above a quarter of an hour, when the anguish of my foot began to relent. I made my advantage of it, and doubled my pace, so that in three hours I had not gone less than seven miles across the fields: I perceived that I had missed my way, but it was in vain to think of regaining it, and I only thought of getting farther from Old Windsor; so that, by break of day, I might arrive at some place, where a carriage might be taken for London. My foot began again to grow uneasy; when I heard the clock strike four, and, casting my eyes toward the place from whence the sound came, I saw that I was between two villages, to the nearest of which, I began to make all possible haste, when I perceived, at a distance, something coming towards me. I soon discovered that it was a woman, carrying a basket. A few moments before, I would gladly

have asked her assistance; but the sound of the clock and the view of the steeple, denoted a considerable town, where I hoped to find some good inn; I had money enough in my pocket to procure a short reception there, and a carriage, which was all I wanted. While I made these reflections, the woman approached, and lifting up her hands and eyes in admiration: And from what pretty place did you come, my fine lady? said she brutishly: I warrant you have ran away from some good house, where the bullies would have drubbed you. She advanced to have a nearer view of me, but I crossed the road; and, as soon as I had lost sight of her, fear, left curiosity should make her turn back to insult me, made me leap a ditch, and scramble over a hedge, which separated a field of corn from the high road. I crossed it, and saw, with pleasure, that it conducted to a double hedge, in the middle of which there was a lane, which seemed to lead to the place where I wanted to be. The woman's discourse occasioned me to reflect upon the disorder of my dress, which before I had not thought of; and judging that it would be imprudent to appear so adorned, I sat down under a little tree to take off my diamonds and pearls. My design was to tuck my robe into a white petticoat, which I wore under it, and to wrap myself up in a capuchin, which I had accidentally put in my pocket on coming from a walk in the garden the evening before. I thought myself, in the solitary place I then was, sufficiently sheltered from curious eyes; but what was my astonishment, to see, about twenty paces from me, a man, with a naked sword under his arm. At that instant, every thing I had to fear the most terrible, offered itself

to my imagination, already troubled and distracted; and seeing that there was no hopes of escape, I arose upon my knees, throwing my purse at a little distance from me: Have pity, said I, upon an unhappy young woman, and take not advantage of the misfortunes, which put her into your power: there is my purse, you have it with all my heart; take also these diamonds; I only beg, in return, that you will leave me at liberty to go where I please, and to tell me whether I may hope to find a carriage in the village which is before us. The man stopped on hearing my voice, and considering me from head to foot, seemed at a loss to imagine, by what accident a girl like me, could come into such a place, in a dress so unsuitable to my seeming circumstances. After a short silence, he said to me, in broken English, take back your money and your diamonds, and tell me, if I can do you any service? If you think you ought not to accept my offer, say but the word, and I will go away. I confess, however, I shall do it with regret; you may fall into bad hands; I fancy you are not of a rank to beg a shelter in a common inn; and, for a carriage, I assure you, you will not find one in all the village.

The countenance of this man was so beautiful, the sound of his voice so moving, his air so respectful, that, in an instant, my fears deserted me. You are not English, sir, said I to him. No, madam, answered he, I am French; and all the men of that nation, regard it as a duty incumbent on them, to devote themselves to the assistance of the fair sex, when they are unfortunate. It was in French he made me this

reply, as I spoke to him in that language. May I ask you, said I, of what religion you are? Are you a French refugee? I do not know with what design you ask the question, answered he, but though it may possibly diminish that confidence which you seem willing to repose in me, I will make no scruple to confess, that I have the honour and happiness of being a Roman catholic. Great God, cried I, raising my eyes to Heaven, have you sent me a protector? After this short exclamation, I said to the young man, the ingenuity with which you have declared your faith, without knowing mine, engages me to trust you. Could you procure me a safe harbour for some hours, furnish me with proper cloaths, and get me a carriage? Nothing more easy, says he, if you will accept of my poor lodging: I live with a master, a very honest man, and am the only servant in his house; you may shut yourself up in my chamber till the evening, by which time, I will procure you a safe conveyance to London, or where else you please. I had not yet taken notice of the dress of him who spoke to me; it disagreed with his figure; and the powder, with which his coat was filled, informed me that I spoke to a perriwig-maker. What must the politeness of a French gentleman be, when I find so much in a man of this class? You will not oblige one ungrateful, replied I, rising: it is in my power to make your fortune, and I promise I will do it: indeed you seem to be born above your present station. At these words, the young man blushed exceedingly. I should be greatly concerned, said he, to find myself suspected of any base and interested views, in the little service I am willing to do you. I am poor, 'tis true; but my poverty does not

make me unhappy, though I have reason to blush for the cause. With regard to my profession, I confess it is new to me; but it, in some measure, re-establishes me in my own esteem, as a desire to fulfil my duty holds me to it. My astonishment augmented at every word he spoke; his respectful and genteel carriage surprised me still more. My foot, which was extremely swelled, began to give me more pain as it grew cold. The stranger perceived that I could scarce walk; but, instead of offering me his arm, he plucked a stake from the hedge to serve me for a staff: his respectful modesty, on this occasion, strengthened my good opinion of him so far, that I thought I ran no risque in desiring leave to lean upon him. We spoke little during the rest of the way, which lay still between the hedges, till we came to the end of a wall with two or three doors; my conductor opened one, and brought me into a little chamber, after having first crossed a garden, belonging to a small house, where it was the first floor. This looks to the street, says he; and if you have any suspicions of me, you may make yourself easy in the thought, that you have nothing to do but call out. Saying these words, he showed me the street, which was broad, and the houses tolerably handsome. You are here, said he, in security; here is the key of my room, which I will enter no more, without your leave. Only permit me to knock now and then, to see if you want any thing; and if you think you owe me any acknowledgment, condescend to give me a proof of it, by accepting a dish of chocolate, which I am now going to bring you. Sir, said I, I entertain not the least doubt of you, and willingly accept the

refreshment you offer, which, indeed, I have great need of, being almost overcome; and, when your business will permit, I can do nothing better than consult with you upon the steps necessary for me to take. Perhaps, my dear Harriet, you may think me too confiding; but there are figures to whom we can refuse nothing; and till this moment that I write to you, I have no reason to think I have trusted too far. My guide came back, with some biscuits and a dish of chocolate, and told me, he was then obliged to quit me, to open his shop. As the chamber was but low, and nothing but a simple floor of planks, without plaistering, divided from the shop, I could easily hear every word that was spoke there; and for that reason I sat down in a corner, not daring to stir, for fear of discovering myself. Presently I heard a person talking, who was, without doubt, the master of the shop: he said to his man; You are come very early, my poor chevalier, I will lay my life you have not eat a bit since yesterday evening, for you would rather come fasting, than eat or drink with my lord's servants; poverty and pride go ill together, my friend, and you ought to change your manners; I, who am your mailer, eat with those people, and what right have you to despise them? I do not despise them, replied my guide, but I was afraid you would want me; besides, I was more sleepy than hungry. Ay, ay, said the master, I know you; however, you may have occasion for some hours rest; so go up, and throw yourself upon your bed, we shall have nothing to do all day. As the master finished these words, I heard several horses in a hard gallop, some of which stopped before the shop. I do not know why,

I was seized with an involuntary horror; but how were my fears augmented, when I heard the voice of Mr. Derby, who asked, if they had not seen a young woman, dressed in such a manner, describing directly my cloaths; there is a hundred guineas, said he, for those who will bring her back to her parents. A stroke of thunder would not more have shocked me. What a temptation for a young man! He had told me he was poor; will he scruple to gain such a sum of money with so much ease? But I immediately reproached myself for the thought, as an act of ingratitude. The master replied, that he had but that moment opened his shop, and that such a person might have passed a hundred times without his seeing her. I had better luck, replied a woman, who was sweeping the next door; I met her, just at day-break, about three quarters of a mile from the town; she crossed the fields, and made as fast as she could towards London: if I had known what was to be got by it, I should have made her stacken her pace. Judge of my fright, my dear: I, literally speaking, dared not breathe, lest even my very breath should be heard. But happily the horsemen no sooner understood that I was gone for London, than they took that route at a full stretch. O Providence! cried I to myself, what would have become of me, had not the meeting of that woman obliged me to quit the high-road? But by what enchantment could they so soon discover my flight, and follow at my heels, and put themselves exactly in my tract? The arrival of my benefactor interrupted my reflections. On entering the chamber, he put his finger upon his mouth, as much as to say silence; and pointing to a door

which opened into another room, he made signs for me to go into it. We should be over-heard there, said he, setting me a chair. Ah, madam, how was I frightened for you just now; but, perhaps, you already know the subject of my terrors; you must certainly have heard. Alas I heard all, said I; what obligations have I not to you, and what acknowledgments! Talk not to me of acknowledgments, answered he, interrupting me, only let me know what is farther to be done, to save you from the dangers which threaten you: who are your persecutors? Could you not apply to justice against them? There is a magistrate in the town, a very honest gentleman; shall I demand of him an asylum for you, more proper than what I can offer?

I melted into tears, and was a good while before I could answer him; at length, I conquered myself so far, as to tell my protector, the excels of my misfortune was such, that I could not hate my most cruel enemy: it is my father, said I; and I would die an hundred times, rather than do him an injury: I fly to avoid an odious marriage: a mother, whom I love more than myself, is in danger of becoming the victim of my refusal; my first, my only desire, is to be reunited to her. How many horsemen were after me? Five, answered the young man. We had no more in the house, replied I. Ah, sir, how should I bless your goodness, if you had the courage to go to Old Windsor, to enquire for the house of miss Derby, and in that house for her chambermaid Fanny. If you could, by her means, draw my mother from the danger to which she is exposed, and bring her to a place, where I may this

night go to her, my life would scarcely suffice to acquit the obligation. There are certain actions, said the young man, which carry their recompence along with them, in the eyes of an honest man: but we lose time in talking; Old Windsor is but four miles from hence; I fly. But, madam, this is the moment of my life, in which my poverty is most vexatious to me; some accident might happen to render money necessary. I understand you, said I, presenting my purse. Five guineas will be enough, said he: rest quiet here, no one has a key to my chamber but myself; and you will know, by my cracking the whip, when you shall come to the door of the other room, in order to let me in. He did not wait for my answer, but saluted me with a grace, somewhat uncommon in a man of his rank. He went down, and said in the shop, loud enough for me to hear him, I find my drowsiness is gone off; and, since you have no occasion for me, I will try to refresh myself, by taking the air a little on horseback.

Clarissa in continuation.

Who would believe, that, in the midst of inquietude and perturbation, this should for a moment be able to suspend my sense of affliction? What do I say? Alas, it seems to have fallen upon me only to augment my power of feeling, by re-establishing my worn-out faculties. What frightful images have affailed my soul, during my slumber! I thought I saw my preserver become that of my mother; he was bringing her to me, when he met her cruel husband; the valiant young man endeavoured to defend her from five others, who would have

ravished her from him; I saw him fall, covered with wounds. My mother, who strove to save his life at the expence of her own, fell by his side. Their blood ran from them in a mingled stream, and my protector cried, I am rejoiced to shed it for Clarissa. On a sudden, the earth opened, and swallowed my unfortunate father. Montalvo fell at my feet, and joining my hand with that of the expiring youth, I repair, said he, the injuries I have done you. The whole disappeared, and I saw you at my side; but with so cold and distant an air, that I dare not express the pleasure I felt at the sight of you: Mr. Balfour took you suddenly by the arm, and cried, let us fly, let us fly. I ran after, and endeavoured to hold you; and the anxiety I was in, awakened me in a cold sweat, and I was ready to faint. How weak is your poor friend! In vain do I say to myself, this dream is nothing, but the effects of the dangers I have gone through, during the last twenty-four hours, and those which I yet fear. It leaves an impression of terror that I am not able to dissipate. What! will not Heaven grant to my ardent prayers, the conversion of my wretched father? Must he be an eternal vicim of the just anger of an avenging God? Ah! let him take my life; in satisfaction for his crimes, or let me suffer all the punishments due to them here, so that he may be saved hereafter. Terrible as the image of my dying mother and friend appear, I should have nothing to fear, methinks, for their future welfare. My mother had filled the measure of her virtues, and the generous youth thinks too nobly for vice ever to pervert him.

Innocence, candour and gentleness, seem printed on his face. May Heaven deign to be his recompence, and put it into my power not to die ungrateful. O, could he but unite me to my tender mother! Why will the author of my days dishonour his rank, while a man, born, no doubt, in the obscurest class, shows sentiments worthy of a prince ?

A curiosity, which I in vain reproach myself with, obliges me to interrupt my letter. Paper, scattered upon a table, may give me some lights, as to the character of him, into whose power I am obliged to put myself. Heavens! if his beautiful outside should hide a heart wicked and corrupt! Had not Montalvo, like him, a seducing form? Who knows if this curiosity, which I combat and condemn, be not an inspiration from Heaven, to warn me to fly a danger, equal to that from whence I have escaped? I give way to the temptation; my intention, in some measure, justifies an action, which, at any other time, and in any other circumstances I should account criminal.

If I was to conceal what my curiosity has discovered, you might imagine it disadvantageous to my protector. In the first place then he is called Chevalier: that name is upon the address of the letter, which can be for none but him, for his profession is set down : I was not a little surprised at the seal which was upon the cover, being the arms of nobility; the hand a woman's. I looked at the letter. A perruig-maker, thought I, has not usually such correspondents. I found nothing, and I am not sorry for it. I have nothing to fear from a mean man, the meanness of his birth will prevent his lifting his eyes to me,

and make me better able to defend myself against a merit, which, unallayed by that circumstance, would make too strong impressions upon me. What have I said, my dear Harriet? Give me time to examine my heart.

Thank Heaven, I find myself incapable of forgetting the blood from whence I have sprung. My sentiments of gratitude were so strong, that I began to be afraid. Ought they to be otherwise? No, I would tear my heart, if it was less sensible. To what dangers may this poor young man be how exposed for my sake, if the frightful dream should become reality? Let me turn from the dreadful thought, I cannot support it.

There are a great many verses among these papers, and they are by no means to be ranked among the indifferent: If he is not a poet, he loves poetry. A taste singular enough, for a man like him. His choice of some pieces he has copied out, show his discernment. O Heavens! I hear the signal which he gave me! What, returned already! I have hardly strength enough to go and open the door.

What things have I to tell you my dear! I am lost in confusion! O fatal voyage! It was Heaven, which, in its anger against me, laid you under a necessity of leaving England. Yet will I not murmur. O my God, am I not your creature; in duty bound to submit to your decrees, however rigorous they may seem? have you not showed yourself my protector, in savouring my escape from the worst of evils? You will finish your work, you will cover with your wings the most virtuous of women;

you will restore me to her arms, and those of my tender friend; or, if you refute me these blessings, of which I am not worthy, you will give me strength to support the affliction. Here follows the melancholy account brought by Chevalier.

“Being arrived at an inn in Old Windsor, he was a long time before he was able to attract the attention of the landlord, whom he asked for something to eat; and of the servant, whom he desired to put his horse in the stable: every thing seemed there in disorder and confusion. At last the landlady came in, crying out, No, they shall never persuade me, I will never believe that madam Darby, or her daughter, have acted in the least contrary to their duty; poor Fanny says so; and the brute of a butler threatens her, as if it was a crime in the eyes of his master, to assert that he has the best wife, and most virtuous daughter in the world. Why did you not send for the poor girl here, replies the landlord? I have always had a bad opinion of this James, I do not think her over safe with him. Run, call her, says he to the maid, desire her to drink a dish of tea with us, the poor girl, I am certain, has not been able to breakfast. Then, perceiving Chevalier, who yet held the bridle of his horse, I beg pardon, sir, for having made you wait; you see us entirely in disorder, will you please to breakfast with us? With all my heart, replies Chevalier, I will willingly drink tea with you, provided you give me something more substantial: give me, if you please, a little meat, for I will not stop any more between this

and London. But may I take the liberty of enquiring what has happened new in this quarter?"

Truly, says the landlady, we know nothing more at present, than a flying report: but see, Mrs. Fanny, the chambermaid of an excellent young lady that has been carried off; she will tell us every thing that happened.

Fanny's eyes were extremely red, and it was easily seen she had wept much. She showed a great deal of prudence in every thing she said. Her young mistress escaped in the night; the tract of her footsteps in the garden lead to the wall; and the same marks, on the other side, showed the road she had taken. Mr. Darby, Montalvo, and three servants, pursued her some hours after. Montalvo and James returned to the house; the first went to a private chamber, where Mrs. Darby was, and having forced the lock, James, who would have opposed his entrance, was very much beat. After half an hour's conversation, his mistress was forced into a post-chaise, which Montalvo escorted on horseback. The cries of James had alarmed the whole village; he cried out, that his master was betrayed; that, after having stole his daughter, they forcibly carried off his wife. But Mrs. Darby having said something or other, every thing was quieted. She added, that the infamous James, threatened to put her in the hands of justice as a thief, because she had assisted her young mistress in breaking open the drawers, to take out her diamonds. All the people of the house and the neighbours, exclaimed greatly against this baseness, and

advised Fanny to go to Windsor, and swear the peace against this servant, and offered their service to conduct her there. No, says Fanny, I will embarrass no one in my affairs; provided a horse can be found me, I shall go very well alone to make my deposition. Chevalier then took up the conversation. I have some business at Windsor, said he to her, and I can dine there as well as here; I offer you to ride behind me; and, as I have the honour of being known to a neighbouring magistrate, I have no doubt but he will do your young lady all imaginable justice: I ask but one recompence for my services; inform me to-morrow of the sequel of this affair. I interest myself in this lady's fortune, and, if I was not obliged to be this day in London, on very urgent business, I would put off my journey.

Fanny blessed a thousand times, the gentleman who was so kind and good-natured; and, before she quitted the house, emptied her pockets and shook her petticoats, after having had them examined by several women, to show that she carried nothing away. The landlord was generous enough to insist upon Chevalier's accepting of his breakfast, but he would pay his reckoning, and throw a guinea upon the table, leaving five shillings for his breakfast and the dinner he had ordered; which raised him greatly in the people's opinion, who took him for a man of consequence, for he had borrowed a great-coat in the village: which concealed his dress.

Chevalier had not got above half a mile from the village, when he discovered himself to my maid. The poor girl almost fainted with joy,

on hearing him mention my name; she would feign have been carried to me directly; but the chevalier convinced her, that she might be more useful to me at Old Windsor, from whence she could give us daily notice of the measures that were concerting, in order to discover me. They agreed that the steps she had hitherto taken, were absolutely necessary for her own security. But as she was afraid, lest I should be uneasy at Chevalier's stay, she begged he would make all the haste to me he could, and she returned herself on foot. If the desire of information concerning my abandoned house and family did not detain me where I at present am, I have another strong reason for not stirring. James said, that I should be in my father's power in four and twenty hours, for that I had been described at all the turnpikes, and proper authority left to seize me wherever I came. To what extremity am I forced, in spite of decorum, to pass the night with an unknown man. In this, I am more to be pitied than the Clarissa of Mr. Richardson, who was never left destitute of female companions. Yet, on comparing our adventures, I find mine the more supportable, if I could but be easy about the fate of my dear mother. I cannot reproach myself with being the cause of my own misfortunes, inevitable necessity justifies my flight, I did not voluntarily put myself under the protection of a man. This man is not, nor ever can be my lover; and if I had been to choose among all the human race, Mr. Balfour excepted, I do not believe I could have found a person, with whom I might remain in greater security. The letter which you will receive from me by next post, will show you that I speak this on good

foundation; and my present situation, excuses the indiscreet favour I am going to beg of you. I am as safe at this place, as I can be any where else; and as Fanny is to come and stay with me, as soon as she ceases to be useful to us at Old Windsor, I am determined to keep here, till I see the end of my misfortunes, which I shall think entirely past, the moment I have it in my power to throw myself into Mr. Balfour's protection, and go with him into France. I know that, at my age, a daughter is still in the power of her father; mine may claim me, though I know, at the same time, the abjuration of his right, formally made to my aunt, will, in some measure, weaken that claim, and mitigate the power he received from nature; but I will expose myself to every thing, rather than stigmatize the author of my being. He may forget that I am his daughter, but I will never forget that he is my father; and, with the assistance of Heaven, I will always act according to my duty in that quality. The best method then is, to fly my country, and abandon my possessions: my fortune is what he wishes for; let him have it, and restore me his affections; and I hope Mr. Balfour, as soon as he sees this letter, will have the goodness to set out. It is with infinite pain I propose such a parting in your present situation; but it is the only thing which can justify my flight in the eyes of the public, as I cannot, nor will disclose the true reasons of it. His espousing my interest, will be sufficient to convince the world, I have done nothing wrong. It is prudence alone that makes me wait here till Mr. Balfour arrives, for Chevalier offers to conduct me securely into France, and I should have no scruples to venture with him, if all the world knew

him as well as I fancy I do; but Mr. Darby might, perhaps, take such an occasion to villify me; and, if one ought to suffer with patience the loss of reputation when God orders it, I regard a just care for its preservation, among the most sacred duties; and I have always these words in my ear, *Cursed be those who are the cause offcandal, etc.* Alas, I am fallen into that misfortune; in my opinion, the greatest of all; my only consolation is, the resolution I have taken not to aggravate it. The post obliges me to finish. You shall hear from me again speedily.

LETTER XXI. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

As I foresee, my dear Harriet, that I shall have a great many things to say to you, I begin this letter a day before it can depart; and I take up the thread of my melancholy adventure at the place where the post forced me to break it off.

Chevalier's business obliged him to quit me, as soon as he had given an account of what he had heard and seen: he had that attention for me, that he brought a cold fowl in his pocket, with every thing necessary to support a life, which, though threatened with misfortunes, God commands me to preserve. I raised myself then, and, in spite of my desponding condition, took some nourishment; which, I think, has given vigour to my fainting spirits. But two things above the rest cause me mortal inquietude; particularly my fears for my dear and worthy mother: yet I could not help recollecting the promises Montalvo had made me a little before my flight; and, perhaps, the first effect of his repentance, said I to myself, will be his care to preserve the best of women, from the fury of a cruel husband: she followed him willingly, and, to engage her to do so, he must have discovered to her all the machinations against us. Montalvo probably could conduct her only to his mother. The conversion of that poor woman was not equivocal; she run a great risk in writing the letter, which tended to my preservation: such beginnings carry one a great way, and I consider her as a sinner, whom God has chosen for an example of his mercy: and, even supposing her son's intentions

against my mother were bad, when he bore her off, he might still take her to his mother; not being instructed in the change God had wrought in her. How did I regret, at that moment, my not having waited for the effect of his promises: perhaps, said I to myself, had I done that, I should now be in the arms of my dear mother; but I soon considered again, that, in acting as I did, I had followed the rules of prudence; that is the guide which God gives us for our actions, and we are not responsible for their success: yet perhaps I have confided too much in mine, and God takes pleasure in rendering it abortive, to learn me henceforward to rely on his assistance.

I have quitted my pen a few moments, to run over in my mind this last reflection: in effect, I have reckoned too much upon happiness; I imagined, what I promised myself was my own work; and I left, without perceiving it, that dependance upon God, which, for many years, I have been trained in dreadful consequences of prosperity. I perceived, that for some months past, I was grown cooler in religious matters. This strange disgrace is, without doubt, a method used by the Father of mercies, to rouse me from the lethargy, into which I had fallen unawares: if he is pleased again to restore me, may he never suffer me to relax into the same error. I have been, for an hour past, meditating upon a project, which may possibly put an end to my afflictions; and the inclination I have to see my mother at quiet, inspires me with it. What is it that opposes the sentiments of nature, in the heart of Mr. Darby? Is it not the rancour he has conceived, on

account of my aunt's partiality in my favour? Can I esteem a fortune, which causes me such a loss? No, better give it up to him. Indigence is but an imaginary evil; let him give me my mother, and take my wealth. Have we not a thousand times agreed, that happiness and riches can hardly dwell together? But there's a tap at my door; I fly to open it.

Sleep flies from my eyes, my dear Harriet. The strange project I was about to explain to you, when interrupted, presents itself to my imagination in the most seducing forms; yet I have not courage, at present, to let you into it; perhaps I may conquer that bashfulness before I finish my letter; in the mean while, I must tell you what has passed from the time my protetor left me, to this, when I am again alone. One of my inquietudes was the uneasiness I had at passing the night so near a strange man: however great the esteem with which his conduct has inspired me, I know, that dissidence is the guardian of virtue: he did not put me to the pain of explaining what I felt upon this occasion; but told me, on entering, that he had been taking the necessary measures to leave the chamber to myself that night, and that he had prevailed upon a friend to give him share of his bed; but, says he, I constantly retire to my own room every evening, while my master passes two or three hours at a public house, and I take care to attend him with a light when he comes in. If I was to fail in this, he would be displeased, and perhaps might think me out of order: and in the last case, his regard for me is such, that I am sure he would not

go to bed till he had looked after me, to see if I wanted any thing; by which means our secret might be discovered. I am then obliged, madam, to ask your permission to wait in the adjoining chamber till my master goes out; and till he comes back again I will sit in the shop, leaving you free from any disturbance. At present, I thought it was better to be troublesome to you, than give him any cause of suspicion; I am come also to receive your commands. If you are forced, by some unforeseen accident, to quit this asylum, you will have occasion for cloaths plainer than those you at present wear: you will want linen, and a thousand other necessaries. If your woman is not here to provide them for you, would it not be better to make a provision in time?

I praised the care and attention of my guardian; and, as I had a great inclination to be better acquainted with him, I took that opportunity to satisfy myself. I perceive, said I, that you are fond of solitude: it is very laudable in so young a man, for you don't appear to be more than twenty: may I ask how you employ yourself every evening? I love reading, answered Chevalier, but the want of good authors has been very irksome to me, for near a twelve-month, that I have been in England; but for a little time past, my profession has procured me admittance into several good houses, where I have procured English books. I begin to understand them, and greatly regret that I have not had occasion or opportunity to read them: there are such a number of good works in your language, that it is every man's duty to be

acquainted with them. Excuse, madam, my neglect, I should have offered you my little library; it had made your time, perhaps, seem shorter. I never read romances, said I. Have you any books of another kind? There are romances, said he, that may be read with pleasure; however, I confess, few English authors have excelled in that way. I prefer books which treat of morals and science; and, it must be confessed, that here we find an abundant source of riches, for those who are more curious of instruction than entertainment. At present, I read the great Newton; and the hours I pass with that author, glide away unperceived. I must repeat to you, said I, what I once said to you already, you are not made for the station you are in: such sentiments and education transpire every moment, as speak a man not born in meanness and obscurity. I am young, replied Chevalier, yet more than half my life has been passed in a mediocrity, not far distant from indigence. I have lived by the works of my hands, like our first parents; and, the happiness of relieving the wants of one, who ought to be dear to me, kept me from feeling any thing in my situation capable of giving me pain. Happy day! cried he, raising to Heaven his eyes, swimming with tears, some drops of which fell down his cheeks, I have lost you without hopes of return, and the rest of my deplorable life will be but a series of unremitting despair. Pardon me, madam, said he, I ought to repress these transports; and if I had nothing to complain of but misfortunes, methinks I should disdain to afflict myself; but I weep for faults, not misfortunes and faults accompanied with remorse, are evils, against which courage is unable to oppose

itself. There are few faults, said I, which a lively penitence cannot obliterate. If you have abandoned a wife or a mother, is this evil irreparable? I apprehend, by the proofs which you have given me of your disinterestedness, that your tears have a nobler cause, than the poverty to which you are reduced; and would to Heaven, that you had no other misfortunes to weep for, with what pleasure would I repair fortune's injustice to you: you should make me sensible of the pleasure of abundance.

Chevalier answered my professions by a profound inclination; for I had forced him to fit down: after which, he said, I have not hitherto engaged myself in indissoluble bands: it is not the duties of marriage I have betrayed, but those of nature: I have wrung the heart of the most respectable of mothers: the generosity with which she has pardoned my ingratitude, makes me feel, with double weight, the horror of my guilt. I hope one day to see myself at her feet; but the return of tenderness, which made her a month ago the sole object of my desires, does not prevent me, to the last day of my life, from being the most unfortunate of men. In a word, madam, my misfortunes are of that nature, as to be finished only with my life; nay, I desire not to outlive them: but, once again, pardon me, madam, 'tis troubling you too much, about a wretched man, who at present looks for no happiness, but to see your vexations at an end, and whose future pains will be softened, so far as he shall be conscious of having been of service to the master-piece of the creation.

Nothing could be more cautious than Chevalier's discourse; but his eyes were less upon their guard, and some looks escaped them, which the unworthy Montalvo first taught me to observe. I do not know whether he was sensible of them himself, but I imagined so, from his correcting them from time to time, and from the promptitude with which he changed our discourse. We talked of French authors, I found that he had read all the good ones. At last we heard the master go out of the shop, shutting the door after him, and then Chevalier would get me some tea; after which, he asked me, what were my resolutions for the day following? I have occasion for rest to-night, said I, in order to consult with myself. You must not appear at Old Windsor to-morrow before ten o'clock, as you are supposed to have been to London on business; and before that, I hope to have made some determination able to restore my quiet. At these words I arose, and went towards a little cupboard, where he told me he had his books: I saw, with pleasure, among them, many books of devotion, which gave me an opportunity of founding him upon the subject of religion, in which I found him superiorly instructed. I wished him joy. Ah, madam, replied he, with a sigh, how weak is the support of understanding against the inclinations of the heart! The little sense I have, only serves to aggravate my faults, and the deplorable forgetfulness of my principles, during an entire year. Horrid days! that I would efface the remembrance of, at the expence of my last drop of blood. I dare promise you forgiveness, on the part of God, said I to him, if to the sorrows they cause you, you have joined the succours

which religion offers you in a like case: you will find at London ecclesiasticks of great piety; you are, no doubt, already acquainted with some. Yes, madam, replied he, God has not so far chastised me in his anger: the misfortunes consequent to my fault, are become the remedy; and I found an angel, whose charitable hand, has troubled the pool in my favour. This worthy man lives in a neighbouring village, and near him my miseries never fail to find new consolation. I have already had it once or twice in my head, to propose to you an interview with him. My mailer sometimes sees him here, and though he is not ignorant of his profession, sees him with pleasure. How great was my satisfaction, to find that I could meet with an ecclesiastick, in whom I might confide, and from whose holy assistance I might procure comfort. I begged Chevalier to procure me a visit from him, for I was impatient to be blessed with such a companion. The young man quitted me, as soon as his master returned, and I would not delay giving you an account of our interesting conversation, which, for a short time, suspended my sense of pain. I dare not ask his story. He seemed to me afraid to tell it me, by twice eluding my curiosity: whatever may be the faults with which he reproaches himself, I believe it is rather the effect of error than vice his heart is made for virtue.

Continuation and conclusion of Clarissa's letter to Lady Harriet.

Chevalier is returned from Windsor, and what dreadful news has he brought me! God give me strength to support the misfortunes I am

yet to suffer. It is from the land-lady of the inn he had the following account. The moment she saw him, she cried out, Alas, my dear sir, if you had arrived a few hours sooner, you would have been witness to a scene, which would have melted your heart. The poor girl, whom you saw here yesterday, has been taken up as an accomplice with her mistress. Two wretches have sworn, that madam Darby, and her daughter, would have prevailed upon them to poison Mr. Darby, because he opposed her marriage with the Italian, who passed for a marquis, though he was but a vagabond. The servants (as they say) received the poison, left it should be offerd to others less scrupulous, and put it yesterday evening into the hands of Mr. Darby, who, unwilling that such a thing should take wind, contented himself with shutting up his wife and daughter, in different places. His daughter escaped in the night; and Montalvo, taking advantage of the father's absence, took off the mother yesterday morning. What confirms this evidence is that madam Darby seems to have gone off with the Italian very willingly. For my part, added the woman, I do not know what to say; I could have sworn that the mother and daughter were saints; it is true, they are papishes, and it is some months since the father quitted that religion; perhaps they might have done this out of vengeance, and they say those papishes are capable of any thing. I am sure I never saw any ill by the poor gentlewomen in my life; and I wish, from the bottom of my heart, they may get clear. To be certain, they were the best neighbours in the world, and the kindest to us; when they met me, it was, How do you do dame? how are the

children? and such like. And do you believe, said Chevalier, that the maid is guilty? Ever since I knew her, said the hostess, she has appeared a very good girl, and I believe she is only suspected; but it is a cruel thing to be in prison, sir; it is but a little while since they took her away, and she seemed to go with great resolution.

But I beg pardon for not asking you in before; won't you please to take something? No, said Chevalier, I have a great way to go to-day; but tell me, does Mr. Larby intend to arrest his wife and daughter? He has got warrants against them, said she; but, to tell you the truth, I believe, only with a design to frighten them, and make them fly. The daughter is as rich as a Jew, and perhaps the father has a mind for her wealth: but, after all, God is to judge them, and not I. Chevalier had no occasion to hear more, he returned hither as fast as his horse could go; and after having given me this melancholy information, set out for a neighbouring village, to bring the priest of whom he spoke to me yesterday.

Was there ever such a situation as mine? I have no choice between an infamous death for myself, and my honoured mother; or to be the means of bringing to the gallows, him to whom I owe my life. O Heavens! Mr. Balfour can, from this moment, afford me but one sort of assistance, which I must never think of but with horror. Could he grant a protection to a creature, under the most infamous accusation, without justifying her to the world? and at what price must that justification be purchased! I must yield with a good grace to the fate

that pursues me. My resolution is taken; you shall know what it is, after I have communicated it to the guide I now wait for, whose council I will follow, as coming immediately from Heaven.

The fate of your friend is fixed, my dear Harriet, for ever; and if I could hope again to be united to my dear mother, I confess, without blushing, I should think myself well recompenced for what I lose, by what I gain; if he, who generously helped me, was born the last of men, and I destined to a throne, my heart would have chosen, in the moment my reason rejected him. I endeavoured to hide from myself the impression he has made upon me, which I was going to confess to you at the beginning of this letter. To repair that short want of confidence, I will own to you, I loved him from the moment I saw him: nor can Heaven be offended at a passion, which has suspended the effects of the most cruel misfortunes, under which I must otherwise have perished.

But why name passion, a sentiment so immediately supported by esteem and gratitude! Can I otherwise repay a protector so generous? I might attribute my marriage to the necessity I am in, to disarm my father. I might justify it by the discoveries I have made since I resolved upon it. But I consider such disguises as unworthy of me, and offensive to a friend like you. I go then to give you a recital of events, in the order they happened; you may find me culpable, but suspend your judgment.

I mentioned to you, in the beginning of this letter, the distaste I had conceived against the fortune which had brought upon me such unhappiness. When I am reduced to sell the diamonds which I have in my possession, said I, shall I not draw from thence a fund sufficient to pass in case the rest of my life? It is true, I deprive myself of the hope of entering into an illustrious family; but what is there in title or wealth? Do they merit that we should expose ourselves to those evils, which the greater part of marriages made upon such terms, are cursed with? A great fortune is often a misfortune; the love of the inheritance, rather than the possessor, may engage a dishonest man to feign an affection which he has not, in order to get into his net, the prey he wants to devour. At present, as I am poor, and no longer worth deceiving, I may, without fear of wounding decorums, which ought always to be respected, marry a man in a middling class, where one generally finds people of better morals, than among those in more exalted stations.

These considerations succeeded the following reflections. There is an order established by Providence, which we are not permitted to depart from. A girl of my age, cannot, with decency, choose a husband for herself. A woman of illustrious birth cannot mis-ally herself without shocking modes and customs, which having nothing in them contrary to the law of God, ought to be respected in marriage. I not only give myself a husband, but a father to a family, which has a right to expect from me one equal to myself. My reason was but

second, in declaring in favour of my protector; my eyes directed their choice, and I have good reason to believe, that they have not deluded me, in the favourable opinion they have given me of him. It is reputation that I am most anxious about, and I shall lose it by a match so little suitable. My father gives out, that a desire to marry, had wrought upon me to attempt his life; a marriage so contrary to prudence, will give weight to that accusation: but I shall be justified sooner or later. God has an eye on the wicked; and if I am forbid to wish the chastisement of my father, I am permitted to hope that his accomplices may be punished, who will then acquit me for the irregularity I now commit. I despise the judgment of a blind crowd; but what shall give me courage to support the contempt of my dear Harriet, and her worthy husband? Shall I be able to survive it? Nay, does not prudence direct me to wait the arrival of Mr. Balfour? He will fly to my assistance on the receipt of my first letter. Will he not have reason to accuse me of precipitation, seemingly occasioned by a passion, the irregular motions of which I had not power to suppress? If I am under a necessity of taking a husband, would it not be better to receive one from the hands of my friend? My father consenting to give me up the money I have in the bank of Genoa it will be sufficient to procure me a match, that my friends and family will have no occasion to blush at. May I not acquire a right to dispose of my fortune, by entering a convent: perhaps becoming a nun, will suffice to disarm my father; at least I should determine on nothing till he has rejected that offer.

On reading the objections which I made to myself against my marriage, my dear Harriet, may, perhaps, condemn me for acting contrary to them; but these objections were not unanswerable; and here are those which my reason suggests; or, perhaps, my love. I am not of an age to dispose of my hand, without my father's consent; but, alas, what hopes have I to obtain it! has he not sold, many years since, the right nature gave him over me? If that right be, as I am convinced it is, unalienable, does not the unworthy use for which he reclaims it, for ever bar him from it? Those who spring from illustrious blood, ought not meanly to ally themselves: it is a prejudice to which we are bound, and how has that prejudice become sacred? because we suppose that high birth transmits, as an inheritance, the noble and virtuous sentiments which first produced it; because we have reason to hope that a man, who is spurred by the great actions of his forefathers, and the good example of his immediate parents, will blush to deviate from them. In fine, it is because we suppose a good education inseparable from high descent. Nobility then has no real merit, but what it derives from a greater capability of virtue. He then that is virtuous, is the true nobleman. With the wife, in giving a virtuous ally to my family, I save it from the danger of being dishonoured by the son of a peer. If Heaven had prolonged the life of lord Asaph, would not he have grieved, in spite of his severity, for the misfortunes in which he has plunged my incomparable mother? The shameful poverty to which vice has brought his son-in-law, would be a sufficient punishment for his avarice and ambition. I loved him,

whom I am going to make master of my fate, before I esteemed. Is then his gracious figure a crime for which he ought to be punished? His air, the regularity of his features, make a smaller part of his beauty, than the gentleness, tenderness, and evenness of his mind; it is that mind which embellishes his face. Can you think your Clarissa so weak, that she would not soon have been able to recover from a surprise of the senses, if the least baseness had disparaged the object of her attraction? I knew him but little, you will say; but circumstances, critical like mine, for there two days past, unfold a character at a stroke. It is no longer a hundred pounds that my father offers to the person who shall discover me; his desire to destroy me is such, that he goes as far as a thousand. Can Chevalier expect an equal recompence on my part? This is no piece of artifice to enhance his disinterestedness; I myself read the advertisement in the public papers, signed with my father's name; I am described as a parricide, who, by her artifices, had cheated her father, and to that crime would yet add more enormous ones, through fear, left the last will of a deceived aunt should be set aside. Chevalier then seizing me, a creature proscribed, and perhaps culpable, who would blame him for delivering up a criminal? and might he not easily have covered a desire to make his fortune, with an apparent zeal for justice? He offered to conduct me into France; and that offer alone, is a certain sign that he had no particular hope, nor can I suppose he had. Twice interrogated upon his birth, he eluded my questions; from whence I ought to conclude that it was base. People suppose they have a right to dignify their

poverty by titles, when they have any pretensions to them; he set up for none, therefore he had none; he gave himself out for a mean workman; a person of that condition, could have no pretensions to one of mine. He then had no hope of recompence in *lieu* of those, which he might have secured to himself by betraying me; and he imposed upon me a law to repair the wrong which his probity had done him.

O Heavens! new misfortunes are ready to fall upon the miserable Clarissa: in the middle of the night she is obliged to fly on foot, to avoid the worst of fates. Great God! what will become of me?

LETTER XXI. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

You must have received a letter from me, which makes me tremble when I think of it; but I had not time to inform you of the indispensable necessity I was under, to conclude it. Alas, without doubt, I have lost your esteem and friendship; the one cannot survive the other. If my conjectures are well founded, you will not deign to cast your eyes on the letter of an unfortunate creature, whom you blush to have loved. For God's sake, dear Harriet, condemn me not before you hear me. You have hitherto regarded me with eyes, which your partiality rendered bad judges. You have esteemed me too much: fall not, I conjure you, into the other extremity, and despise: no, my heart reproaches me with nothing which should occasion such a change.

I hasten to give you a recital of my misfortunes; my justification goes hand in hand with such fatal circumstances as I could neither foresee nor avoid, I am conscious but of one fault; that fault has had its principle in virtue, and how can I repent of it?

In my last, I gave you the reasons which determined me, in spite of prejudice, to marry my protector; I despaired not to make Mr. Balfour see the reasonableness of the action, and had resolved to remain where I was, till he should arrive, supposing it could not be long till I had the pleasure of seeing him. Could I foresee that I should have but a few hours to remain in my asylum? The priest I expected. And who is that but Mr. Baker, to whom I confided your last letter for the post.

This ecclesiastic, I say, being come, went up, as he was accustomed to do, into the apartment of Chevalier, who, to leave me at liberty to entertain him, staid in the first chamber. I made no scruple to trust him with my afflictions and designs; I conjured him not to refute me his assistanze, my greatest inquietude was about my mother. I then put into Mir. Baker's hand a letter, which I wrote to my father, and desired to know whether he would advise me to send it. Here follows a copy.

Clarissa to Mr. Darby.

Oh! Sir, shut not your ears against the voice of Nature, who cannot fail to call on you, in favour of an unfortunate daughter, unconscious of a single thought that ought to offend you. Why make her fortune a crime? A fortune she never desired, nor valued, but as she might share it with you, which she gave up to you with pleasure, and which she is still willing you should possess. I know it may seem insolent in me to dictate conditions to him, whom nature has ordered I should be obedient to. But I know of no law at present, but love for my mother. The greatest of misfortunes has hindered her from partaking your tenderness. I call Heaven to witness, that it is not from her complaints I draw this knowledge, her respect for you would never suffer her to murmur. Give me that worthy mother, and receive, in exchange, all I possess. Marriage alone can give me a right to dispose of my inheritance: I am determin'd to acquire that right by espousing an obscure man, with whom I will go into a strange country, and live

there, if necessary, by the labour of my hands. I ask only a few days to fulfil my promises. They shall be put in execution, as soon as you give your consent. I will deposit the instrument of my marriage and deed of gift, sealed up carefully, in the hands of the French ambassor, who will deliver them to whoever you shall appoint to conduct my mother to his house. May Heaven vouchsafe to pour down its blessings on you, in proportion to those I beg for myself. May Heaven hear the prayers I daily offer to restore me the heart of a father, who shall ever find from me all the obedience and respect, which he has a right to expect from the most beautiful of children, provided this obedience can be compatible with that she owes her God.

The unfortunate Clarissa Darby.

Mr. Baker approved of my letter, but smiled at the passage, where I mentioned to my father, that I was determined to marry an obscure man. I asked him what this emotion meant, which had not escaped my notice. If you mean, replied he, by an obscure man, one who is destitute of the gifts of fortune, your expression is just; but if you intended this expression to signify a man of mean extraction, it is improper. He who has had the happiness of being the instrument of God, to save you, is descended from a very antient family; his barony might have erected into a marquissate, under the last reign; and had it not been for the moderation and probity of his father, he would have been a rich lord. If he has not declared his birth to you, it is owing to the confusion of your situation, and to a motive more flattering to

you. You would have had nothing to fear from the pretensions of Chevalier, perhaps you would have found yourself in more danger from the baron de Lastic.

You are sensible, my dear Harriet, that such a discovery was not likely to lessen the good opinion I entertained of this amiable young man. Mr. Baker undertook the trouble of acquainting him with it, when it should be proper; and he judged it proper to call him to assist us with his advice, with respect to what we ought to do about my mother and Fanny.

I was entirely ignorant of Mrs. Cofby's address, but had hopes of finding it out, by means of a Roman catholic clergyman. Through her we could trace her son, and know what was become of my mother. With respect to Fanny, there was no doubt of consoling her, and forcing her to accept a sum of money: I had fifty guineas in my purse; I gave them to Mr. Baker, to defray the necessary expences of my mother's journey. I proposed to pledge one of my diamonds; but my advisers remarked, that I ought not to think of it, since it was very likely, that my father had distributed hand-bills to stop them, if offered to sale. I remained, therefore, with no more than five guineas. Chevalier, whom I ought no more to call so but by his name; the baron, I say, having made use of the rest, to provide me a very plain dress. Mr. Baker promised me to set out at day-break, and exhorted me to expect success from his researches.

It was tea-time, the baron went out to procure some trifles he wanted, and was so long absent, that his stay began to give us uneasiness. He seemed much disturbed, when he returned; and behold the cause of his inquietude.

Being of a benevolent disposition, Mr. de Lastic once had an opportunity of doing a piece of service to the daughter of a custom-house officer, who was married in this village. This young woman, willing to show her gratitude, had come to give him some intelligence of consequence. Her father, with two of his companions, were just coming, advice having been given to the custom-house officers, that a great contraband trade was carried on in the villages adjacent to Windsor. They had received an order to make a strict search in all houses which were not inhabited by persons of fashion, and proposed to search his mailer's house first; for you know, my dear, all the French hair-dressers furnish the ladies they dress, with lace and other French goods. She offered de Lastic to take his goods, if he had any, home with her, and promised him they should remain there in safety till the search was over. De Lastic, after returning her thanks, and assuring her he had nothing to fear, made the utmost haste to acquaint us with this overwhelming news, which expedited all my resolutions.

I must resolve to quit my asylum, and make my escape in the middle of the night, under the protection of the baron. Had not my Harriet told me that the only step a girl ought to take, on such an occasion, was to make her escape with a husband? But was I sure, that a man

of quality would consent to ally himself with an accused girl, who could not give him certain proofs of her innocence? This reflection stopped me some moments. Forced to offer my hand, should I have the courage to support a refusal, without dying? Nevertheless, we must determine upon something, the house might be invested this moment, and what would the world think to find a girl concealed in a man's chamber? Besides, this notice might be an artifice of my father, who, certain I had not entered London, suspected I was somewhere in the environs. The fear of falling into his hands, overweighed every other consideration. Sir, says I to the baron, if I had less opinion of your virtue, I should not hesitate a moment about the steps I should take: my misfortune is such, that I cannot justify myself but at the expence of a person's honour, whom I ought, and whom I shall, ever respect; nothing remains, therefore, but to deliver myself up into his hands, and give him an opportunity to extinguish by my blood, the hatred I have had the misfortune to inspire him with. The most cruel torments should never force from me the confession of a crime, the thought of which alone strikes me with horror; but I can keep silent; my judges will doubtless say it is a tacit acknowledgment of the crime of which I am accused, I shall die ignominious: if I draw not my respectable mother into my misfortune, I shall bless my fate; and what will the opinion the world entertains of my memory signify, if the just judge, who examines all our actions, declares me innocent? There is but one method to escape; I may fly, but cannot do it without an husband. Consider, if the sad condition I am reduced to will permit

you to accept this offer, which possibly, in other circumstances, might have been accompanied with some advantages which are at present wanting, since...

I was not permitted to say more, de Lastic was at my feet; and, with a disorder more eloquent than the most studied language, acquainted me, with what rapture he received an offer, which he should have made himself a thousand times if he had dared. Mr. Baker interrupted us. It would, perhaps, says he to me, be dangerous to stay much longer: leave me only here to speak to the matter, and expeditiously set out for my house; I will meet you there presently to complete your union, and procure you immediately a more safe retreat.

Happily, I was already dressed in the plain cloaths which had been brought me, and had made my sack into a parcel, which the baron took charge of. The night began to grow dark, we escaped through the garden, and took the rout by which I came to this house, where I expected to see your husband. What words could express the situation of my mind on so critical an occasion! Was this the lot to which I was defined! Under what unhappy auspices was this union formed, which must finish with my life only! Ah, my dear aunt, exclaimed I, from the happy abodes where your virtues have doubtless placed you, look down on your unfortunate Clarissa, and obtain for her from God succour and protection, equal to the danger to which she is exposed. Pardon me, my generous protector, I added, I cannot think without horror, that I shall soon have only the fatal

power of making you a partner in my misfortunes and poverty; for, in short, sir, I have no other means to save my mother, than by giving to her husband the fortune which has drawn on me his hatred; too happy, if, at the price of this sacrifice, I could regain his heart. How little do you know mine, adorable Clarissa, replied de Lastic, if you think the idea of your fortune can cause a moment's uneasiness, to a man whom you snatch from the most fatal destiny. The first moment I saw you, I adored you. I dare appeal to yourself with regard to the profound respect, which forced me to conceal these sentiments in the bottom of my heart, if the business had only been to offer to your eyes a train of illustrious ancestors, I might have conceived some hopes; but, miserable sport of the dishonesty of mankind, there remains nothing of all my fortune, but a field cultivated by my labour, and bedewed by the sweat of my brow. How could I have the temerity, in this situation, to lift up my eyes towards the divine Clarissa? How could I presume to offer her my humble cottage, who would adorn the palace of a king? It is true, my humble roof is inhabited by virtue; a mother, worthy of a better son, practices therein, every day, new virtues. What present more precious can I make her, than such a daughter as you? I am going to make her amends with usury, for the torments with which I have rent her heart! You do not know, madam, how guilty he is whom you deign to accept, and how little he deserves such an happiness? Though I am almost afraid, that the confession of my ill conduct, will lessen me in your good opinion, yet I cannot find in my heart to dissemble my

faults. Then I will hear nothing, replied I, interrupting him; I have already told you, that there can hardly be any crime which such a repentance would not efface. Suffer me to abandon myself to the transporting thought, of seeing our respectable mothers forget in our arms, both our faults and the rigours of fortune. A first motion makes me regret a fortune which I would have offered you; a second consoles me for its loss, because it teaches me to bless the misfortunes, which give me an opportunity of being acquainted with the nobleness of your mind. We shall live in the mediocrity which nourishes virtue, preserves it, and produces happiness. I shall perpetually remember the circumstances in which you have accepted my hand; and you will be able to say to yourself, it is not to these circumstances that I owe Clarissa. Decency, in another situation, would have obliged her to wait the consent of those on whom she depended, before she declared her sentiments; but they were such, that if she could not have obtained their consent in my favour, she would never have married any other person. De Lastic was not able to moderate his joy, on hearing so frank an avowal of the sentiments he had inspired me with; he threw himself at my feet, without considering how improper the place was for such transports; and, if I had not reminded him that we could not gain an asylum too soon, he would absolutely have forgot the danger we were in by delaying our escape. Mr. Baker had given us the key of a small house where he lived alone, and recommended us to wait there for him, without any light; where he very soon came to us, though loaded with the baron's

goods. My future husband had acquainted me, in the interim, that he did not know how he could settle with his master, to whom he owed fifteen guineas. His generous friend gave his note for that sum; and, as the departure of his servant might embarrass him, he gave him fifteen guineas more of my money, which I approved of. He told us afterwards with what pretence he had disguised the baron's flight. He had there two valuable pieces of goods, which had been entrusted to his care, to be sold, and he had just learned that a search was immediately going to be made in your house. You need not be in the least uneasy, he has left nothing that can bring you into trouble, and, in a few days you will hear of him, as soon as he has secured his trust in a place of safety.

You may imagine with what pleasure we received the happy turn he had given this affair. He interrupted our thanks, to make a short discourse on the sacrament he was about to administer to us. I know your dispositions, says he, in finishing; you are worthy of each other, and I hope I shall never have blessed a union more agreeable to the Lord: in a time of greater tranquility, I should have required more precautions. You know I run a great risque in marrying you, and that you would ruin me, if you made use of the certificate I shall give you. It is only for madam, your mother, says he to the baron, when you get to her, and you cannot dispense with adding some ceremonies to your marriage, to render it conformable to the custom of the country in which you are going to live; I shall take care to write to your

archbishop, by means of the apostolic vicar, who will certify my being a priest, and you will then follow the orders of your prelate.

Mr. Baker went out a moment, to call in two catholics on whom he could depend; and, in their presence, united me to the most worthy and best beloved of husbands. The ceremony was hardly over, before he says to us, I do not think you are safe here; who knows but this village may be one of those that are to be searched? you must, therefore, resolve to depart directly. My mother lives about nine miles hence, in a village far from the main road. I will write a line to her, to desire her to secure you an asylum, in which I may acquaint you with the turn your affairs take: one of your witnesses will be your guide. I would, added he, procure you horses, but I think it will be safer for you to go on foot; though it is not likely that Mr. Darby has given a description of you, to the turnpikes on the north road, where you are going; yet the public papers have, no doubt, said enough of your flight to excite curiosity; foot passengers escape notice more easily than persons on horseback; besides, they can travel, without being obliged to go through the turnpikes.

How happy am I, my dear! Our generous friend, Mr. Baker, sends me a letter, which was given him by the peruke-maker! I remember the hand of my dear Harriet; I kiss it a thousand times, and leave every thing to read it.

LETTER XXII. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

To what trials does God put my patience, dear and unfortunate friend! How has your Harriet restrained herself from setting out directly, on receipt of your letter, to rescue you from your cruel persecutor! Is this the only token I can give you of that lively sense, with which you have a right to expect that I should feel all your afflictions! If, instead of myself, you only see a letter from me, attribute it to the fear I am under of committing a crime. The recital of your misfortunes has made such an impression upon me, that I feel very ill effects from it: however, the physicians are of opinion that the hurt I have received is not incurable, if I consent to remain eight or ten days in bed; and during that interval, my unfortunate friend... O Heavens! I cannot support the dreadful apprehensions that cloud my mind; and if I was not sure that Mr. Balfour would, on the first intelligence, set out to give you that assistance which you stand in need of, I doubt whether my feeble virtue would be strong enough to keep me here.

By the greatest misfortune in the world, Mr. Balfour was at Compeigne when I received the dreadful news of your situation; but an express was immediately sent off. I expect my husband every moment, and you may be assured that he will stay at Paris no longer than is necessary to read your letter. The post-chaise is ready, and perhaps you may see him before you hear of his departure. Poor Clarissa, to what extremities have you been reduced! May God shower down his blessings on that honest man who is become your protector:

if I was a queen, he should soon be a prince: praise him, love him, as much as you please, you cannot love him more than I. My fortune, from this moment, is his: I will not say, to diminish my sense of gratitude, that he must have been a barbarian to have acted by you in any other manner than he has done; yet, how few men, in his circumstances, would have refused such a sum, in exchange for their probity! But his delicate attention to you, shows a soul of the noblest mould. No, my Clarissa, that man is not what he appears to be; he confessed that he was poor, but has answered nothing on the article of his birth; and, be assured, it is not obscure. But, supposing that my conjectures are wrong in this particular, and he springs from an ignoble stock, he has ennobled his race, and has a right to respect from all honest people. Add not to your misfortunes, my dear, that of tormenting yourself, on account of the sentiments with which he has inspired you; your extreme delicacy renders you timid; and I know, by that warm interest which I take in his affairs, what the most grateful of hearts must feel for him. I have always had a horror for mean alliances; you know it; but if on any account I could excuse one, surely your present situation would justify it to me. Do not believe that I would encourage that good disposition which you ought to have towards him; all the virtues have their excess, which becomes vice. I would only defend you against yourself; it would be excusable to be tempted in such a case, and I should regard a victory, in that temptation, as an heroic act, of which, perhaps, there is no person, but my Clarissa, capable: but if my suppositions, with regard to this

young man, are well grounded; if he is only indigent; if, as he has told you, he remains in his present low profession but to fulfil a duty; if, in short, one could be assured, that his birth is equal to yours, I say to you sincerely, my dear friend, do not come alone, bring me your protector, we will verify his nobility, and accomplish that part of your dream, in joining your hands, without that monster Montalvo's meddling. I hear my husband.

He departs, my dear Clarissa; he departs with this letter: I put it, however, in the post; the post, perhaps, will make more diligence than he; if he arrives first, well and good; if this expression of my friendship arrives only an hour before him, my dear friend's tranquility will be an hour in advance.

LETTER XXIII. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

My misfortune is contagious, and caught by those who are most dear to me Heaven grant that the effects may be less dreadful than I have reason to fear. Mr. Balfour's departure assures me, that he thought you out of danger. The warmth of your friendship does not surprise me, any more than the address with which you give me advice, that I am no longer in a state to follow. We are now weighing anchor; the moment I arrive in France you shall hear from me. But why do I not leave the ship, and return from whence I came, on being apprized of Mr. Balfour's kindness for me? I beg us you to suspend your judgment: I have only time to seal my letter. If you condescend to answer me at Bourdeaux, to be left at the post-house, I shall receive one of the greatest pleasure which I am vet capable of enjoying.

LETTER XIV. MRS. DARBY TO MISS CLARISSA.

Dear, amiable and virtuous daughter, you would have found me on your landing, instead of this letter, was I not yet in the beginning of an illness, which might be of the most fatal consequence, was I not to nurse it. The ardent desire I have to see myself again in your arms, engages me to take care of a life which belongs to you, and every moment of which I would employ, to testify my gratitude for the sacrifices you have made me.

Lady Harriet in Continuation.

The physicians have permitted your mother to write the few lines above, in order to satisfy her dear daughter. She is snatched from the jaws of death: but rest assured that the danger is over. We have an account of your marriage; we approved it, before we received the letter, in which you conveyed us that agreeable news; and we admire the goodness of Providence which has conducted you to happiness by ways so extraordinary. I will not scold you till by and by, for your ill conceived fears of our disapprobation of your conduct. I will not amuse you with my babbling, till you know by what happiness we are in possession of your other half; of a woman, to say all in a word, worthy of being the mother of Clarissa.

I told you in what manner I sent my husband to your assistance. In fifteen hours Mr. Balfour was at Calais, and arrived before the post the only servant he had with him run to the port, with orders to make a bargain with a captain to sail the next tide; he was obliged to wait at

Calais two hours; and though he had scarcely taken any nourishment on the road, he was angry at the delay, however necessary for himself, and his servant as much fatigued. The man was but just gone off, when his impatience persuaded him that he lost a precious time, hoping, by means of an extraordinary recompence, to engage some captain to put to sea half an hour sooner. He left his chamber to follow his servant. Judge of his surprise at the sight of Mrs. Cofby, who, at that moment, entered the inn. What she had done for you, the light she could give with regard to you, and your mother, made him salute her by her name. The woman, who had heard from your mother, that you corresponded with us, gave a loud cry as soon as he spoke and she knew him; and, without making any answer, run to the door of a room, which opening, she cried, Mrs. Darby, here is Mr. Balfour. You may easily imagine, that my husband was in the room before your mother could come out of it. His first words were, Is miss Clarissa with you? Your poor mother burst into tears, and, falling upon her knees before Mr. Balfour could prevent her, Ah, fir, said she, I am going to Paris, to demand your protection for my unfortunate daughter; I know not what will become of her, only that the search her father makes after her, assures me, that she is not fallen into his hands. Recover yourself, madam, said Mr. Balfour, raising her up; your charming daughter is in safety, and I fly to restore her to your arms; I would say, to revenge her of her persecutor, did I not know that her scrupulous virtue, content with the first service, would not permit the second. But read yourself the cruel extremities to

which she has been reduced, and her sentiments with regard to you, and a man, whom I cannot call as he deserves.

Eager as your mother was to read what might inform her of your situation, her tears and sighs often obliged her to lay down the letters. I will not repeat to you her expressions of grief and tenderness; you know her heart is attached to you, and that knowledge will easily convince you of her feelings upon this occasion: those are things which description always enfeebles, because they are beyond expression. She would have informed Mr. Balfour, by what means she escaped; but considering that every instant employed in that narration, would be so much time lost for your deliverance, she contented herself with telling him, that she owed her's to the sincere repentance of Mrs. Cosby and Montalvo. Mr. Balfour, wholly occupied by your mother, had not taken notice of that young man, who, with an air of great humility, stood at some distance in a corner of the room. My husband reached him his hand, saying, It is for man to err, but he must be a great man, sir, who repairs his faults as you have done yours. Any other time I would partake with you the happiness of conducting Mrs. Darby to my house but miss Clarissa's interest forces me at present to leave it entirely to you; yet pardon me one reflection, are you in surety in France? The motives which bring me hither, replied Montalvo, makes me hope to find favour from my superiors; but, if I presume too far, I will willingly submit to whatever chastisement they think proper to inflict, to punish my apostacy.

These are worthy sentiments, replied Mr. Balfour; however, let me intreat you to suspend their effects; if Heaven favours my passage, I hope to be in thirty hours at . . . , it will scarce take more time to repass the Channel. This little interval will not be unnecessary to rest these ladies. I beg of you then to wait for me here; we will take the road for Paris all together, and you shall stay at my house till you have made conditions with your superiors. Mrs. Cosby conjured your mother to grant this favour to her son, and she consented with more willingness, as, by that means, she hoped to see you a day or two sooner. Mr. Balfour being told, that the vessel which the servant had hired, was then in the port, waiting for the tide, the wind being brisk and fair, he went to it immediately: but his return was not so speedy as he hoped. Here is what happened to him.

He never left the post-chaise which he got into at Dover, till he arrived at . . . ; and having enquired for the house of the perriwig-maker, he got out at a little distance from the shop, where he enquired for a young man, that worked there, named Chevalier. He has left this house some days, replied the man; and the fifteen guineas he has sent me, by no means comforts me for his loss; no, never shall I meet such a brave lad again: so sober, so disinterested! O he was a treasure. Whatever pleasure my husband took in hearing thus confirmed the praise you bestowed upon your guide, an interest more pressing obliged him to interrupt it. And why is this excellent young man gone from your house? said he. It is a mystery, replied the perriwig-maker,

and I cannot tell you: but you, sir, appear to be a man of distinction; pardon my curiosity, if you are a custom-house officer, I can assure you that I never knew my young man deal in smuggled goods; he had enemies, without doubt, but he never I am sure deserved them: indeed he was loved by every body hereabouts, and even those above him, notwithstanding he was known to be a papist. By his mysterious manner, my husband thought him in the secret. I am no revenue officer, said he, but a friend of the person who lived with you: he was a man of quality, and I come to tell him, that his affairs in France are entirely settled, and he may return there when he will. My name is Balfour, and you may depend on the truth of what I say. Very likely, sir, replied the other, but as I do not know you, you will excuse my not saying more, especially as I tell you all I know. The young man lived with me, I have nothing but good to say of him: if he was a person of quality, his air spoke as much: farther, I can answer for his not owing a penny in the village; he went away, because the roads are free; I did not ask him where he was going, because I never meddle with other people's affairs. Thus it is impossible for me to say where he is, though a member of parliament should ask me, or the king himself, because it is impossible to tell what one does not know.

At any other time Mr. Balfour would have admired this man's fidelity, but now he could have wished him less discreet. You drive me to despair, said he to the perriwig-maker I tell you I am just arrived from France, the post-chaise boy will tell you, ask him. At that instant a

young woman, in a genteel riding habit, on horseback, flopped before the shop, and asked if it was not there Mr. Chevalier lived? Why, are you all mad? replied the perriwig-maker: he was here, and he is here no longer; I know nothing of him, go about your business. You are very rude, said the girl; about a fortnight ago I saw him at Old Windsor; he rode, and took me up behind him, his horse was... Is your name Fanny? said my husband. Yes, sir, replied she, but to whom have I the honour to speak? My name is Balfour. The girl instantly exclaimed, Ah, sir, what good fortune brings you here? you certainly have heard of my poor mistress, and what has happened; I thought to find her here, that Mr. Chevalier gave me his direction, and this is the place: so saying, she drew out of her pocket a small paper, folded up, which she gave to the perriwig-maker. He drew out his spectacles, wiped them, fixed them up on his nose, shook his head several times, to try if they were fast, because his nose is like Mr. Lefby's, which has so often made us laugh. Mr. Balfour confessed to me, that he had more than once an inclination to beat him, but that was not the way to unchain his tongue; they were obliged to work fair and softly, and be angry with patience. The good man turned the note, and returned it three or four times: he then said to himself, here is a mystery which I cannot comprehend; here is one who asks for a young man that lives here no longer, and another that enquires for her mistress who never was here at all; but, notwithstanding, here is the writing of poor Chevalier. Then, raising his voice, Sir, and young gentlewoman, said he, will you be pleased to walk into my shop, and be so good as to

wait here an instant: if miss will be pleased to lend me her horse I shall return quicker. It was the only way that was to be taken, and Mr. Balfour made no doubt that he was going with intelligence to the young man, whom, he imagined, had retired to some distant village. During his absence, Fanny informed my husband, that she had found securities, and that the first use she made of her liberty, was to come and look for her mistress; she informed him also that it was James, and one of the servants of Montalvo, who had deposed against Mrs. and Miss Darby, and who had even put into the hands of a justice of peace, the poison which was to be the means of their perdition. With regard to Mr. Darby, he did not return to the house for eight days, and was much surprised to find Old Riding, your guardian, who had sealed up all your effects, and refused him admittance. Fanny had wrote to that honest farmer, who lost not a moment in flying to your assistance, and found her bail. He was flopped at an inn, at the entry of the village, and waited, with impatience, till she had obtained permission for him to salute you, and receive your orders. His design was to conduct you to London, there to put you under the guardianship of my lord chancellor, and indite the two perjured villains who accused you and your mother. Have you, added Fanny, heard nothing of my lady's mother? do you believe she is with my mistress? Mr. Balfour then told the poor girl, that Mrs. Darby was in safety at Calais, and desired that she would immediately go to the inn, and bid Old Riding come to him. That worthy creature was extremely comforted by the sight of my husband, and promised himself, from

the assistance of his protection, to have the pleasure of soon seeing the two perjurers with their necks in the pillory. But Mr. Balfour much surprised him, when he informed him, that you were determined to commit your justification to Providence, and that you would rather be condemned as culpable, than permit an attack upon the life of your father. Excellent young lady, excellent young lady, repeated twice the good man; may God bless her. I stop here, my dear; I make as much haste to write this letter, as if I was not well assured it would be a long time before it could come to your hands; but I would rather it should stay at the post-houfe, than you wait for it; and when my fingers are a little rested, I will take up my pen again, and send it off the first opportunity.

And now, my dear, I begin my narration, where I left off. The perriwigmaker at length arrived, and brought with him a very well looking man, who desired Mr. Balfour to go up with him into the chamber, which was over the parlour. As we had not received your second letter, the name of Baker excited no extraordinary emotion in my husband; but when he learned from that worthy creature the obligations you had to him, he embraced him with an ardour, sufficient to convince him of his attachment to you: he was now informed of your second flight with the Baron de Lastic, become your husband. I addressed them to my mother, who lives in a village in the next county, said the good priest; but God, whose designs accord not always with ours, had permitted that she should depart from thence

some hours before their arrival, to visit, at sixty miles distance, one of my sisters, who was sick; and, as their letters pressed her to set out on the moment, if she wished to see her alive, what with her hurry and her trouble, she was not able to give me previous notice. The baron did not mention this to me in his letter, I heard it from my mother in the first I received from her; but she told me, his wife was determined to go , to..., where she would find, in the house of a gentleman farmer, her guardian, all the protection she could desire: he told me, that they would not depart till the next day, because that madam de Lastic was extremely fatigued; but he promised to write to me in a post or two. I have heard nothing from them since, and having myself writ to the farmer to make inquiries, no answer is come from him; however, I am more happy with regard to Mrs. Darby, who, I know for a certainty, to have embarked for France, where she must, ere this, be safely arrived. My husband confirmed this circumstance to him, and Mr. Baker, desiring to know what measures he would take with Mr. Darby, my husband told him, that, was he mailer of the affair, he would undoubtedly prosecute him with the utmost rigours but that you had resolved against any step that would in ought be prejudicial or uneasy to your father. Let her enjoy the glory of resignation to the will of Heaven: her resolution to abandon all to her father, appears to me heroic, and I should think I opposed the decrees of God, if I endeavoured to dissuade her from it. Let us leave her to cultivate in obscurity and retreat, virtues, which, perhaps, might be lost in a more brilliant situation. Mr. Darby is old; he cannot dispose of the main

fund, which must, one day, return to Clarissa and her children: let him then enjoy the revenues for his life. Madam de Lastic will be better able to sanctify the use of them, when she shall have been, by a near view, how precious riches may become to those who know how to employ them to the purposes which Providence had, when he made them rich.

I only give you an extract of Mr. Baker's long discourse, which might be called a sermon; and also a panegyric, where your praises and your husband's were not forgotten, but I have the discretion to pass them over in silence. My Clarissa loves not incense; though her head is too strong to be affected by it. Mr. Riding was called, and it was agreed, that my husband should see Mr. Darby, and confirm all your promises to him, on condition that he would cease all pursuit, and that he would put into the hands of a justice of peace a certificate, in which he should declare his conviction of the innocence of his wife and daughter. This certificate, which should be sealed in his pretence, and not opened till after his death, should not be delivered but in exchange for a due and proper assignment of your fortune to him, for the term of his natural life.

It does not become me to criticise the decision of such wife people, yet it appears to me a little hard, that the richer heiress in England should be reduced to narrow circumstances, while her immense fortune is possessed by a... Hold your tongue, Harriet, you will be scolded. My Clarissa will perish to kiss the hand that persecutes her:

this, however, comforts me, by the sale of your diamonds, you may raise a sum, which, in France, will be a considerable fortune; for to tell you that our fortune, such as it is, is yours, would be another thing for which I should be infallibly scolded. My husband was ignorant that Mr. Baker was engaged for fifteen guineas to the honest perriwigmaker, but thinking that some acknowledgment was due to him, he begged of that worthy clergyman to give him the remainder of the sum, which you had left in his hands, which was an infinite satisfaction to the poor man, without consoling him for the loss of his servant, whom he declared he would make his heir. They did not think it necessary to trust him with more than he already knew, which was only that Chevalier was a great nobleman; and as they did not tell it to him as a secret, he had been every where to tell this good news to all the people in the village, who heartily rejoiced at it. He ordered a very good dinner from the inn, and my husband, Mr. Baker, the good Riding, and Fanny, dined at his house, and obliged him to sit at table with them.

Immediately after dinner, my husband went to Old Windsor, to speak to Mr. Darby, who at first seemed discouraged at this visit, which he received at the inn: afterwards, assuming his usual audacity, he endeavoured to persuade my husband, that he could ruin you beyond resource. My husband did not suffer him to finish, but, assuming a haughtier tone, Thank, says he to him, the commands of your excellent daughter, otherwise I would have sacrificed my fortune and

life to have done her justice, with respect to the horrible attempt which has been made against her. Your James is not a novice in guilt; he must not think that I am ignorant of the share he had in the sudden death of the dean of Colburn; and if he does not seek safety by a speedy flight, I will have him put into a place, where he shall discover more mysteries. This menace rendered your father more tractable; he showed my husband the letter you had wrote to him, and asked if you were determined to abide by what you promised: he added, with an oath, that he desired nothing more than to restore you your mother; but that he would be buried alive, if he knew where the villain Montalvo had concealed her. His jade of a mother had disappeared with him, and he wished to God that the devil had taken all three. Only mind, the harm I would do my daughter, said he, by making her marry a handsome young fellow, whom she loved, I am certain of it. Since the flight of this wretch Cosby, I have hardly any doubt, but it was her who caused all this confusion: it is the bigotry of my daughter, which throws us into this dilemma. Why not be of the religion of her country? If she had been a Protestant, she would have regarded the vows of this youth as null. I loved her, I would settle her... Do you not blush to avow it? said my husband, interrupting him: ought not the uncertainty of his birth to have made you fear incest? None but Cosby could have told this circumstance, said Mr. Darby. I am almost certain, that this lad is the son of Montalvo, and the treachery he has been guilty of, is a proof of it; but, even if he was my son, people like us, sir, are not swayed by scruples, which affect common people.

Where should we have been, if Adam and Eve had paid a regard to them? Did not they marry their sons and daughters?

My husband omitted nothing, to make Mr. Darby ashamed of the impious sentiments that seemed to take pleasure in displaying: but it was in vain, he turned into ridicule every thing that was said; and my husband, considering that such a conversion was a miracle out of the power of man to effect, he left him to the mercy of the Lord, and insisted only on his dropping his prosecution against Fanny. He discharged the bail readily enough; and my husband was not deceived in thinking, I should see with pleasure, a girl, who had shown such an attachment to you. To this proof of his goodness he joined another, which hastened my recovery; that was, to acquaint me, by a line, that he had reaped all the advantage he expected from his voyage. I did not, at that time, doubt but I should see the day that would restore my Clarissa to my arms; and I waited for it with an impatience equal to my tenderness for her. He arrived in five days afterwards, having left the ladies in an apartment near mine. I cried out, as soon as I saw him, Where is Clarissa? With the baron de Lastic, her husband, replied he, her marriage, and departure, preceded, for some days, my arrival in England: for want of her, I bring you another lady; Mrs. Darby desires permission to show you her gratitude, for the friendship of which you have given such great proofs to her dear Clarissa. But my dear, permit me also to beg a favour of you: moderate your transports,

you know not how far extraordinary emotions may hurt you at present.

Yes, my dear, I will be moderate. Betty, quick, my robe; run, fly, Mr. Balfour, desire her to come in, or I will go myself: in fact, if she had not appeared, I believe, I should have forgot that the robe I called for was not put on, and that she would have found me naked on the stairs. I stretched out my arms to her; she clasped me in her's; and, be it said, without displeasing you, I know not whether I should have received yourself more tenderly than her. After a number of unconnected sentences, I was obliged to be a little quiet, in order to learn what I burnt to know, and I did not give her time to tell me. Would you believe that, never comprehending that the baron de Lastic and poor Chevalier had any thing in common together, I interrupted Mr. Balfour, to scold him, that he did not bring him with him; yet I had some suspicion of his birth, and it is here I ought to make you my confession.

Used to understand you by half a word, I doubted not, on reading your first letter, that the invincible Clarissa had met her vanquisher: less a philosopher than my friend, I own, I feared, the excess of her gratitude: had you given up three parts of your wealth to your protestor, I should not have murmured: of all the gifts you could bestow him, there was but that of your hand, which appeared to me excessive. I then recalled to mind the expression I had made use of, in blaming Clarissa: if a young woman is unfortunate enough to quit

her father's house, she ought to fly with no one but her husband. At that time, I had in my head, the case of Clarissa only; little divining, that, in a few days, your situation would be like hers. I had no care to make the exceptions, which I should otherwise have set against that general rule. Was it not natural to fear, that you might dwell too much, according to the letter, on that, which I had written with too little reflection; and think it not an insufferable vanity in me, to believe, that a judgment like your's, could be biassed by suggestions like mine. The worst of councils appear good, when they happen to chime with our secret inclinations. But what a multitude of useless words, half a page! employed to tell you, I saw you loved Chevalier; and I feared you would claim a right to marry him, from the impertinent sentence I had unwittingly given in your favour. In fine, I would fain have engaged you, at least, to suspend that resolution till the arrival of my husband, supposing that some accident might have retarded his voyage. But think not I disapprove of what you have done. Circumstances were become such, after your first letter, that it was impossible for you not to endeavour to extricate yourself at any hazard. I admire the ingenuity with which you confess, that your determination in this respect, preceded your knowledge of his real condition. But even there your humility deludes you. How should sentiments and education, such as had your guide, meet in a man sprung from nothing? It was impossible to be mistaken, it spoke the gentleman at once; but I must finish a narration interrupted *mal a propos*.

We had scarce enjoyed the possession of your mother, than we were in the most cruel concern for fear of losing her; a malignant fever appeared with symptoms so terrible, that the physicians at first despaired of her recovery. They urged my condition, to prevent my entering her chamber; but I protested in so positive a manner, that the inquietude would make me miscarry, that they left me to do as I would. You will scarcely imagine who, next to myself, was the most assiduous of your mother's nurses; it was poor Mrs. Cosby. She confessed before she went into her chamber, and prepared for her hit hour. In effect, she caught your mother's disorder; the seventh day took to her bed, and four days after was carried off. 'Tis dreadful to have lived like that woman, yet I desire no other grace of God, than to die like her. It was impossible to hear her talk of her past irregularities, the favours she had received from her Creator, and the confidence she had in his mercy, without being touched. Heaven has paid your debt, my dear Clarissa: her holy and composed dissolution, was a recompence for the service she had done you. Montalvo was so touched by her last advice to him, that, instead of returning into his antient order, he has retired among the Chartreux, and is now actually commencing noviciate. Your mother is at present ignorant of Mrs. Cosby's death, believing her to be in the country. For myself, I advance in a happy pregnancy, without so much as a head-ach. I am to inform you of the motives which engaged Montalvo to save your mother; but that, with the history of their flight, I will remit to another letter, this already making a volume. I find, by your last, that you have

had new difficulties to surmount in your flight. I depend on you for an account of them the first opportunity: let us know particularly in what part your husband's estate lies, and if he cannot obtain permission from his mother to pay us a visit at Paris during my lying-in: you may believe, that if I was in any other situation, I should not attend your coming, but lay hold of the happy occasion to conduct your mother to your house; but, what with Mr. Balfour's law-suit, and my disorder, I shall not be able to quit this town for six or seven months, which will appear to me so many ages. Mrs. Darby and my husband charged me to embrace Monsieur le Baron for them, and I do it without scruple; I could do it no better if he was here, for me to render them that service, otherwise than in idea; for, upon my honour, I regard him passionately; and, notwithstanding my high idea of my Clarissa, I firmly believe him worthy of her.

P. S. Attempt not, we conjure you, an excess of generosity for Mr. Darby. He has consented to yield your money in the bank of Genoa: why will you give it him?

LETTER XXV. CLARISSA TO LADY HARRIET.

How much am I indebted to you, my dear friend; and how ought I to acknowledge the goodness of Providence during the rest of my life, in guarding you from those dangers which you run in attending her! And you, Mr. Balfour, my generous protector, how shall I acknowledge, how shall I requite, the consideration you have had for me! To quit a beloved wife in such circumstances, and then, to permit her to expose herself as she has done: it is too much, the multitude of your favours make me ungrateful. With the most lively sentiments of acknowledgment, I find my sense of my obligations infinitely below their value. May God be your recompenser: it is what I ask of him, upon my knees, every day I live. I also hope that he will repay poor Mrs. Cosby; she entered late to work in the vineyard of the Lord; but that good master will pay those, who have begun at the sixth hour, as much as those who went through the fatigue of the day, provided they have worked with a good will. I will for ever return God thanks for his grace to that poor penitent, who drew me from the precipice where I was ready to fall. She will obtain for her son the grace of perseverance; and if my feeble prayers can have any efficacy, he will wipe out the stains of his youth by a sincere repentance. That unfortunate young man had naturally good principles; and there was room to hope, that those virtuous feeds, which had been choaked up, as it were, by the tares of passion, would, in the end, produce good fruit. Would to Heaven that I could purchase, at the expence of my

life, a like grace for my unfortunate father! Cursed, cursed be they who corrupted his youth, and spread in his soul the poison of irreligion, the source of all his faults. But, alas! as Mr. Balfour once observed, there needs a miracle in order to obtain it. I would willingly devote myself to the most extreme poverty: judge with what pleasure then I would sacrifice the superfluous. I am determined not to claim any part of my fortune; I would prove to my father the excellence of that religion which he despises, more by my example than my words. I ask nothing in return for all I sacrifice, but his affection, and permission, from time to time, to give him proofs of mine. My husband approves of my determination: his disinterestedness is without example; and I may safely say, that this is not the only virtue, in which he surpasses other men; every day, every hour, I discover new perfections in him. With such a partner what can I wish for; what can I regret?

As I have been extremely fatigued by the sea, I am obliged to remain some days at Bourdeaux, and I lay hold of this opportunity to finish my adventures.

Mr. Baker has already informed you of the accident which prevented our obtaining the asylum which he offered us at his mother's. We arrived at the village where she lives about five o'clock in the morning, and I was so fatigued, that I was obliged to repose some hours at a bad inn; the good woman, to whom we were addressed, being so poor, that she had no servant; and, by consequence, had carried with

her the key of her little lodging. After having slept a short time, it was necessary to deliberate on the measures proper to be taken: you know I had but little money, and I found myself but ill able to go far on foot. My first design was to get to farmer Riding's, but he lived sixty miles from the place we then were at; and after having paid our guide, we should not have money enough to hire horses. The honest man who accompanied us, seemed sensible of our embarrassment, and we thought we might venture to open ourselves to him. I have some effects, said my husband, of considerable value, but there are strong reasons that prevent my selling them: are you not acquainted with some Jew in the neighbourhood hereabouts, who would advance money on some rich toys I have, because I should be unwilling to put them into the hands of a goldsmith? Our guide, after a short consideration, said, I am sure Mr. Baker would not own you for his friends, if you were not good people; I will therefore venture to assist you. There is, about twelve miles from hence, a Jew whom I know: I once lived with him, he is extremely rich, and knows that I would not offer any thing ill come by: give me what you would willingly leave in pledge; I will carry it to him, if you choose to trust me, and you may wait for me here till I come back; but, in my opinion, you had better come there yourselves; it will not take you much out of the way, and you will see how far it is prudent to take what he offers. As the town was not upon the great road, and it advanced us nine miles in that we wished to take, we followed the man's advice. We hired horses, and set out the next day. I had a necklace of pearl, which was valued at

fourteen hundred pounds, which we put into the hands of our guide, and he took it to his Jew. He said that some people, who were to spend the summer in the village next to his, finding themselves in want of money, had trusted him with some effects, and desired five hundred pounds on them for six months. The Jew made no difficulty to lend that sum upon what was worth twice as much; and our guide returned with four hundred pounds in bank bills, and the rest in gold. My husband delivered them to me, and I immediately gave five guineas to the honest countryman, who paid it me back with a thousand blessings: afterwards we hid our bank bills in the plaits of my robe, where we showed them up; and my husband took the same precaution with our money, which he showed in different parts of his cloaths; because, being obliged to take a cross route, it was necessary to guard against ill accidents. The rest of my diamonds were put in the corner of a chaise which we hired, and we made one half of our journey, without any accident. Arrived at Stafford, we began to respire; a day sufficed to conduct us to Mr. Riding's, and we thought ourselves almost at the end of our troubles; but I could almost say the vexations were yet to be endured.

It was on a Saturday, in the evening, that we arrived at Stafford, and I had a great desire to hear mass before I set out the next day. The hostess was very obliging: coming up to my chamber, to offer her services, I invited her to drink a dish of tea with me; and as she seemed sensible of my politeness, I ventured to ask her if there were many

catholics about that place? Probably, madam, said she, you are one: and, to-morrow being Sunday, engages you to ask that question. I told her she guessed right, and she embraced me tenderly; then told me there was at Stafford, a certain number of Roman catholics, who entertained a priest and as they were quiet, harmless people, and in the late rebellion had shown much fidelity to the government, they left them the free exercise of their religion. She was called into the kitchen; and having wished me a good evening, she left me. It was nine o'clock: they gave us a morsel in our chamber, and I hastened supper, in order to have sufficient time to justify myself to you before I went to bed; when the woman returned, with all the marks of terror imprinted on her countenance. My dear lady, said she, the moment I saw you, I had a secret inclination, which made me wish you well; and nothing would shock me more, than your encountering any misfortune in my house: but deal sincerely with me; is there any bad affair? Had I had an inclination to deny it, the sudden paleness that overspread my countenance, would have made me declare the truth. Listen to me, said she, I only desire to be of service to you, and by no means believe you capable of the crime laid to your charge. When you came out of your carriage, there was a man at the door, who had just arrived on horseback, who examined you with much curiosity. When your coachman came into the kitchen to supper, the man was there, and asked him, if you were not come from the London side? Why that question? said the coachman. Because, answered the other, I am very much mistaken, if she is not the young woman who has been

advertised in the papers so lately; she is worth stopping, said he; he is accused of a design to poison her father. What's that to me, said the coachman? She pays me well; and all those that pay me well, I take for honest people. I am not so credulous, replied the other, but we will see farther. Now, my dear lady, added the woman, consider whether you have any thing to fear, and reckon upon my discretion. The Baron then took the word. I will not hide from you, said he to the woman, that a love-match has embroiled my wife with a powerful family; but you have judged like a virtuous and honest person, that she is incapable of the crime with which that wretch dares accuse her; I will confess, however, that the falling into the hands of her parents, before she was reconciled to them, would throw me into the deepest despair. Thus, madam, you will acquire an eternal right to our acknowledgments, if you will assist us in escaping from those, who would possibly do us a mischief. Nay, said the woman, I must tell you all the fellow said to my husband, when he had got a cup in his head: there was a thousand pounds for him who should stop you, and he swore he would not lose the reward, but he would examine you a little closer in the morning, and then send for a couple of constables, who should take you up. 'Tis my advice then that you take advantage of the night, to make your escape; and, as my lady is a remarkable figure, I think, it would be better if she disguised her sex: I have a son about her size and height, I will provide her with a suit of his cloaths, and his great coat; quit the high road, the moon is up, and you may cross the fields: in keeping always to your left, the way is extremely

unfrequented, and there is no danger of their seeking you here. During all this conversation, your poor friend did nothing but shed tears, which made those of our charitable hostess run down her cheeks plentifully. My husband embraced me, conjuring me to take courage. Providence, said he, declares for us, in inspiring this good woman with the generous design to assist us; and so saying, he drew from his finger a pretty ring, which I had given him, of about ten guineas value, which he begged of her to accept, as a slight mark of our gratitude. At first she made some difficulty; I perceived, however, that this little present gave her zeal new ardour; she ran for her son's cloaths, and dressed me in them herself. The Baron would have given any thing in the world for a horse, but it would have exposed us to more easy pursuit. We thanked a thousand times our kind hostess, who conducted us herself out of a back door, and even led us a quarter of a mile over a field; after which she showed us, in the best manner she could, paths which would bring us near Flint, in the principality of Wales. The first night only, said she, will be painful to you; for, once distant from this route about a dozen or fourteen miles, you will, without either danger or difficulty, find a horse. When the woman left us, a thousand mortifying ideas crowded upon me: Is it then, said I, the grand-daughter of lord Asaph, the great heiress, that finds herself, in the midst of the night, exposed to such adventures! If these sort of thoughts were discouraging, those that followed were equally comforting. What gracious protection has Providence afforded me under my misfortunes! What would have become of me,

had I fallen into the hands of a dishonest man! He would have been already discouraged by the dangers he had run, in endeavouring to save me; and, perhaps, the best I had to hope from him, would be desertion in this lonely place, which, possibly, his ill conduct might make me consider as a blessing. The baron, my tender husband, left me not long a prey to those devouring imaginations. How do I suffer, my dear Clarissa, said he, to see you reduced to such an extremity! Under misfortunes, attended with circumstances so mortifying, will you have sufficient strength to support yourself under the fatigue you are going to encounter? If you will permit me to ease you from time to time, I shall feel less concern. I am in full strength, you are delicately and lightly made: I can spare you a part of the fatigue, by carrying you: a burthen so precious, will sweeten to me the length of the way. This excess of tenderness seemed to inspire me with new vigour. What do you propose to me, my dear, said I. Do you think my sufferings can be determined by an increase of yours? No, if Heaven has decreed that I should perish, I would rather die of fatigue, than of grief to see you sink under that which I had caused. But why presume so ill of my courage or my strength? In more happy times, I should have considered the way, which I am now obliged to make on foot, as a walk; I confess that my misfortunes have, in some sort, enfeebled me, but the happy consequences of my misfortunes have given me vigour; my present pains have produced all the happiness of my life, and could I buy it too dearly? The baron, not considering where we were, caught me in his arms; when we heard a sudden

noise, within a little way of us, which made him put himself upon his defence; for I should have told you, that he was provided with a pair of pistols. The moon so gave little light, that we heard the noise some minutes, before we could perceive by what it was caused; so that we found ourselves close upon three men, of a sufficient bad appearance, before we were aware of it, and who appeared to conceive no better opinion of us. We all remained immovable, looking at one another from head to foot; when one of the men said, in French, to his companions, What have we to fear? they are but two, we shall be the strongest party. Have you never seen a scene in Moliere, where two poltroons meet in the night, who affect the courage to frighten one another, while the sound of their voices betray their mutual cowardice? We, at this time, made an excellent representation of that scene; though I ought in justice to say, that among the actors there was no poltroon but myself. Indeed my hair stood an end with horror. I at present make myself merry with an adventure which had like to kill me, after the manner of those old sailors, who, in their chimney corner, divert their families with the recital of a shipwreck from whence they escaped, and interest in proportion to the danger they had run. The baron, at first, doubted the truth of this rencounter. The unhappy, whose misfortunes are alike, ought not to be alarmed at each other. You are French prisoners, gentlemen, and seek, like us, to recover your lost liberty. You guess right, said one of the three men, who had a voice so terrible, that it made me tremble; let us sit down, and try if we cannot help one another in our design. As I had walked

for some hours, and began to be tired, I accepted the proposition. The men informed us directly who they were: one was the captain of a vessel, the other a lieutenant, and the other a surgeon. I was comforted at this, thinking that some education might be expected from people of their rank. The captain told us, that they had come from the castle of...; that they had already travelled four and twenty miles with a guide, who had left them at the beginning of the night, because their money had failed: that their first design was to go to Bristol, where the surgeon had a friend that promised to favour his escape; that the want of money reduced them to despair, with the loss of their guide; as for nourishment, added he, the fields are full of turnips and other roots, which would prevent our dying of hunger; a very happy circumstance, as we speak the language ill, so that we dare not ask any person the way: there is also half a guinea promised for every French prisoner, who is apprehended making his escape; and the hopes of such a recompence would make us meet as many enemies as we met country fellows. I have a remedy for these inconveniencies, replied the baron; and my little companion, having learned English when he was very young, speaks it as perfectly as if he was born in this country: but he is of a delicate complexion, so that I despair of seeing him come to the end of our journey, otherwise, we should be happy in your company, and glad to assist you with any thing in our power. If that is all that embarrasses you, replied the captain, make yourself easy: we are four; a few branches of trees will soon make us a machine, and when he can walk no further, we will

carry the boy upon it; for that matter, I could carry him myself on my shoulders, like a lamb: I only desire for a recompence, that he will use his tongue now and then to ask the road. If they do not deceive us, three nights will bring us to Bristol. During the day time, we will hide ourselves in the woods, or under the hedge, as we have hitherto done. Our young master here shall go into Bristol alone, and you may be assured, that the next day we shall have a ship, ready to carry us where we desire. The offer of money you make us, my dear countryman, I accept, while we are on our way; but it shall only be a loan; for, thank Heaven, we are not quite without means: and, as soon as it is day, I will show you a letter of credit upon the Bristol merchant whom I have mentioned to you. Let us walk on till then, the stars will be our guides. In drawing towards the south east, we advance towards the sea, which is the term of our course. What do you think of it? my dear, said the baron to me. Does this plan appear to you reasonable? In truth, I did not know what to answer. The surgeon observing me hesitate, said very politely, if the gentleman finds any difficulty, he is free to continue his journey alone. We do not pretend to incommode him; we only desire to borrow a couple of guineas, for which we will give you an order to be paid in France; and these I do not ask, gentlemen, but because you were generous enough to offer it; and should you have changed your mind, and now refuse to lend it us, we shall quit you, without taking the least offence. Sir, said I, you greatly mistake me. Then, turning towards my husband, I desired him to follow the gentlemen; they appear to me honest people, let us trust

ourselves with them, under the conduct of Providence. Saying these words, I rose; and the captain and lieutenant, willing to show me that they were inclined to keep their words, crossing their hands, and grappling together, made me sit down upon them; in which manner they carried me above a mile, without appearing the least fatigued. This greatly refreshed me, and, as if I had acquired new force from the courage of my companions, I walked briskly till day-break, which discovered to us a village upon our right. They proposed that I should go there to ask the road, and my husband would follow me. In this case, I easily comprehended, that he would not be left the master. Fugitives are always dissident, they would have a hostage for my return. I was obliged then to have resolution to attempt the adventure alone; and the persuasion I was in, that I should risque nothing from discovery, in a place so distant, and under such a disguise, animated my courage, and I laughed at those fears which I had felt till that moment. My cloaths were tolerably decent, and they might take me for a boy of the better sort, who had run away from his friends. This was the worst they could think of me. My companions hid themselves in a field of furze, and in order to make themselves easily found by me again, they set up, near their hiding-place, a long stick, which had served one of them for a cane. It being harvest time, almost all the inhabitants had left the village. I went into a well-looking farm-house, where an old man sat before the kitchen door, in order to receive the first rays of the sun: a girl was employed, at some distance from him, in feeding the poultry. God bless you father, said I: God bless you,

daughter, replied the old man. At these words, which made me tremble, the servant-wench burst into a loud fit of laughter. You are very knowing, cried she to the old man, if all the girls resemble this youth, there would be a crowd of them indeed. Youth or maid, said the old man, my blessing is not lost, I am sure it was the voice of a girl: is there any thing for your service, my child ? My design is for Bristol, replied I ; but I lost my way, and have walked all night; could you not give me, on paying for it, a morsel to eat? Yes, said the old man, and a sup to drink too. If you are able to pay for it, so much the better; if you cannot, God will pay for you. He will not fail to pay you, said I, though you take my money; I have more than is necessary for my journey, and your good will, which he knows, will not go without a recompence. Heaven bless thee, my child, said the old man; Molly, give him a cup of ale: I never touch strong liquor, said I; but I will willingly take a couple of eggs, and a little milk. I love eggs exceedingly; and if this girl will boil me a dozen hard, I will very willingly charge myself with them. Molly made haste to do what I desired her; and during that time, the old man spoke to me as follows: You have undertaken a long journey, my child; do you know that it is one hundred and forty miles to Bristol? Can you go such a long way on foot? If I find a horse to buy, which is not too dear, I will purchase it, I could sell it again when I got to Bristol, for I only go there, in order to embark for Holland. Why, said the old man, if you would accommodate yourself with a bad horse, which we will sell you very cheap; I say it is bad, because it is blind, but otherwise it goes firm,

and will not tire its rider. As I appeared willing to make the bargain, they immediately brought the horse, which indeed had but an indifferent appearance. They asked three guineas, and I gave it, in order to give a colour of truth to my appearance; and they threw into the bargain, a pair of horsemen's bags, with two loaves of bread, a dozen of hard eggs, a piece of salt beef and some cheese: I could have wished for some beer, but I had said that I never drank any, and happily I was enabled to make a provision of it, before I left the village.

Thus my first trial was happy; it encouraged me, and I rejoined my companions, who began to be uneasy at my stay. For my husband, he was more dead than alive, and reproached himself for having let me go alone, as the greatest crime, though the village was not distant above half a mile. After having distributed my provisions, the baron said to the prisoners, that he would rather deprive himself of their company, than be subjected a second time to the inquietude he had just now suffered. This young man, said he, has been trusted to my care by his parents; and I cannot again consent to suffer him out of my sight. I thought I remarked in the eyes of the surgeon some looks which spoke incredulity: this made me blush prodigiously, and I resolved with myself that we would get away from these people as soon as they were asleep; a refreshment which they seemed to have great occasion for; but an unexpected accident prevented us, for I seemed destined to prove in this fatal voyage all manner of sufferings:

on a sudden my husband changed colour, and immediately after fell in a swoon. Imagine, if possible, the shocking ideas that assailed me at this critical moment; my husband was become dearer to me than my life; I could not attribute his accident to any thing but the uneasiness I had caused him. What will become of me if Heaven in its anger takes him from me? Indeed, it was a stroke more violent than I thought myself capable of supporting; the humanity of our companions surpassed what I could have expected from people of their profession, for the sea is apt to render the heart a little hard; but the surgeon, in particular, endeavoured to bring him to himself, with a zeal which I never shall forget. I had about me a chrystal bottle, which you made a present of to me on your marriage, the chain of which you know was of diamond. This toy was sufficient to discover us; but I never considered that, for I was quite beside myself; I immediately put it into the hands of Monsieur Dulac, the name the surgeon had taken, who, after rubbing the baron's temples and nostrils, made him swallow a certain tincture he carried in his pocket, which quickly brought about the desired effect; a black bile, which the remedy forced him to throw up, gave him great ease; and Dulac assured me, that if he had not been assisted in time, he would have risked an appoplexy. Good God! In what a situation should I have found myself had this accident happened. Two hours later, and in a place where I was only with him; but, as I laid, the abundant evacuation put him out of danger; though, as you may imagine, it left him extremely weak. The captain and lieutenant now began to snore

like men, who, after a long journey and a severe fast, had eaten a good meal: Dulac was well inclined to follow their example; but his desire to tell me what he had in his head, was stronger than his love of rest. It is difficult, said he to us, to impose upon men of my profession; the delicacy of this lady's features immediately discovered to me her sex; and the rich smelling bottle she just now gave me, tells me her condition: your mutual inquietudes, the love you have for one another, and the modesty which shines in her countenance, assures me that you are a married couple, or likely to become so. Be not alarmed, said he, I am not the only person who may make these remarks; but certainly, no person can make them with less danger for you than I and my companions: two years in prison, have given me sufficient time to know them; and I leave you to judge of their probity, from the motives of their present escape. This captain and lieutenant were taken before the declaration of war, as well as myself; so that we do not think ourselves prisoners according to martial-law; however, we should not attempt to escape, had we not been assured that the enemy would force us aboard vessels destined for the attack of Quebec. These two men knew perfectly the river St. Lawrence, and would risk being hung at the mast-head, rather than not endeavour to sink the ships they should conduct there; and what honest man would not rather be torn alive than introduce a foe into his country? Now, when one is capable of sacrificing one's life to one's duty, one cannot be suspected of a design to distress the unfortunate. Follow then the advice which I give you; discover yourself to my companions; I assure

you, you have nothing to apprehend from them, and your confidence will excite their zeal: I know the captain; he is a man fertile in expedients, and he told me, not an hour ago, that he would answer to make you go all over England at your ease, and without danger, if you would sacrifice the sum of twenty guineas.

We were at the discretion of these men; they seemed full of sentiments of honour, and really were so. My husband read in my looks my thoughts upon this occasion; and he answered the surgeon, by drawing from his bosom a little pocket-book, in which was the certificate of our marriage; the reading of which, instructing Dulac of our birth, redoubled his respect, and he assured us we were not only safe among them, but that he could answer for his comrades, as well as himself, who would risk their lives in our service, if it was necessary. After these protestations, we gave way to that sleep of which we had so much need; and it is astonishing, that, in the situation we were, it lasted for near nine hours. My dear, that is to say, we went to sleep about eight o'clock in the morning, and it was five in the evening when we awoke; but, no doubt, Heaven afforded us this refreshment, to prevent our sinking under the last trial which it would make us undergo. My husband had no other complaint than a weakness, caused by want of nourishment. During our repass, the captain, to whom they had declared my sex, said to us, I conjecture from what the old man told this lady, that we can easily get to Shrewsbury this night; after which the can easily, speaking English, procure for each

of us a decent coat, our present dress ferying only to make us remarkable, and subject us to an arrest: she may then boldly hire a chaise for herself and her husband: we will take horses, and follow as persons in their suite, and nobody will take us for what we really are; however, for the greater security, we must be careful to stop at such places as lie a little out of the way. In this manner, I make no doubt, I shall be able to arrive at Bristol in safety, and shall not scruple to go in person to the merchant's house to whom I am directed.

Notwithstanding what the captain said, the project appeared to me very hazardous, nor had we at that time an opportunity of putting it in execution, as you will hear presently; however it succeeded with us in part. When we came to the necessity of attempting it, we waited for the night with great impatience, to put ourselves again in motion; and as I feared that the baron might again be seized with his illness, I pretended that I must have somebody to ride before me on the horse, to oblige him to mount. We were all surprised at the poor creature's vigour, who carried us admirably; happily we met one of those troughs, which are often in the road, where the poor beast began to quench his thirst. This trough was at the door of a public house, and a servant wench hearing a horse drink, it, asked if we would not alight. I answered, No, but begged her to fill me a bottle with strong beer, and to give a little oats to my horse. Our companions, on the opening of the door, advanced a little, and waited for us at the end of the village, with much despondence; they confessed to us afterwards, that

they thought we had laid hold of that opportunity to quit their company, but never suspected that we would betray them.

You will, perhaps, be surprised, that we should continue to associate ourselves with the prisoners, whom we could have left, only giving them a little money: but our reason was this; the captain was provided with a passport; a thing, without which, in time of war, nobody can embark in any of the ports. In spite of my disguise, Mr. Darby had described me so strongly, that I never should have dared to present myself to those, who had commission to deliver them; and my husband spoke bad English, which might have occasioned his being stopped as a deserter. Thus we were prisoners in England, without hopes of escaping, otherwise than by means of the captain. We asked the person, who gave the oats to the horse, how far it was from thence to Shrewsbury. Judge of my mortification when he answered seventy-five miles. I expected to arrive there the day after to-morrow, says I to him. You must travel a good pace then, replied the boy; and your horse does not seem very strong: neverthelss, as the weather is fine, if you get forward to-day a few miles, you may lie to-morrow night at Bridgnorth, which is about sixteen miles off: I payed the lad; and our horse, which had recovered strength, set out such a pace as surprised the servant. Our companions began to be tired with waiting for us, and were charmed to see us return. The strong beer which I brought, had the same effect on them, as the oats on the horse; and they walked so stoutly, that the surgeon, who had a wonderful sagacity in guessing

at the vicinity of towns by his smell, assured us we were near Bridgnorth. It was scarcely day-break, which we took the advantage of, to turn out of the main road, and concealed ourselves in a thicket, which was at a small distance. We settled ourselves there as well as we could; but had hardly been there above a quarter of an hour, before a coursing dog, which belonged to some sportsmen, kept barking round us. He at length discovered us, and then retired with precipitation. The huntsmen being torn up close to us, our captain rose up, and desired them, in his bad English, not to injure persons, who had never done them harm. As they were only two, and we were five in number, they feigned pity, and repeated several times, Poor men! They then left us, but not long; and, while we were deliberating what to do, returned with a dozen country fellows, armed with scythes and pitchforks, who threatened to kill the first that offered to stir. The baron's first motion was to throw himself on his pistols: his second to put them in his pockets, for fear of bringing some accident on me. The countrymen seized us, and conducted us to the town, where we were carried before a justice of peace. He interrogated us very politely in his bed-chamber, for he was not yet stirring, which gave me an opportunity of concealing myself from his notice. Do not ask me all that passed in such a long conversation; I was so abashed, so frightened, and so humbled, to find myself in such circumstances, that I was incapable of paying the least attention to the thing. We were all sent to the town dungeon; and, that this word may not fright you, my dear, what is called by this name in England, has no connection with

what that word signifies in France. Imagine a little room about ten foot square, or rather a box, for it was wainscoted all round, and entirely unfurnished. We begged for a little clean straw; and, as we offered to pay for it, the gaoler brought it immediately, and obligingly offered us whatever we should have occasion for. I stretched myself on the straw more dead than alive; and my husband, mixing his tears with mine, plainly showed me how ill an end he expected our adventure would have. Certain of my innocence, he was not less so of my unshaken resolution to perish rather than accuse my father. It was to be feared we should be conducted to London; and how could we escape the sight of such an infinite number of inquisitive persons! If our names were asked, on board what vessel we were taken, what answer must we make? I was within a few moments of being known; and what would have been thought of my marriage, flight, and being found in company with deserters? indeed, I wonder I did not lose my senses on this occasion. My companions in misfortune endeavoured to console me, and the captain, hurried away through custom, swore heartily, he would perish, or find a means to restore me my liberty. Can you perform miracles, replied I, and is it possible without, to escape from this place, which has but one window, and that secured with iron bars; and, besides, not wider than half a foot? But, says he, I do not pretend you shall make your escape through this window. Indeed, I must brave greater dangers to escape from this place of confinement: however, only give me till after dinner, and look upon me as the greatest rogue in the world, if we do not make our escapes

before they receive any orders from the admiralty about us. The confidence with which Dulac and the lieutenant received these promises, was not capable of inspiring me with any; and if I appeared more tranquil, it was because I considered myself as in the hands of him who always disposes of the fate of his creatures with wisdom and goodness. My husband, to whom I communicated this reflection, eagerly embraced it; and, in proportion as it took possession of our minds, our resignation increased, and disposed us to wait, without murmuring, what God should ordain concerning our fate.

In about two hours, our gaoler returned to enquire, whether we chose to dine? We want air more than victuals, says the captain: if you will be so kind as to suffer us to dine in the yard, we will pay you for our dinner, and shall be obliged to you for your company. What are you willing to give? replies the gaoler. A shilling a head, exclusive of our drink, answers he. You seem very honest people, returns the gaoler, and I am a good-natured man; make yourselves easy about half an hour, and you shall hear from me again. He did not exactly keep his word, in point of time, but, in about an hour, let us into the prison yard; which was large, and paved with great stones; where we found a table set out with seven plates: for the gaoler had a very ugly daughter. An indifferent dinner was served up, which our companions eat with as good an appetite, and as much cheerfulness, as if they had been at home. They had said, I did not understand a word of English; and thus, I was dispensed with from joining in the

conversation which past. I eat, notwithstanding, out of complaisance to my husband; and, if I had not been overwhelmed with affliction, I should not have been able to have kept a serious countenance, to hear the encomiums they bestowed on the gaoler's daughter. Dulac had the impudence to tell her she was very pretty; and I was afraid she would have scratched his eyes out, the irony was so strong: but what was my surprise, to see the poor creature swallow greedily all his flattery! What poor wretches we are! How open to the most absurd adulation! In such cases we are so credulous, that there is no merit in deceiving us. Excuse this reflection, it occurred of course.

While Dulac cajoled the girl, and the lieutenant made the father drunk, the captain examined every part nicely; which circumstance did not escape me. The walls of the yard were not very high, and if the gaoler would have suffered us to pass the night in the yard, I should not have despaired of being able to get over them; but this was a favour not to be expected. Towards the end of our meal, the gaoler told us we were at liberty to dispose of our horse. We must drink him, replies the captain; our host will soon find an opportunity to get rid of him; for, blind as he is, he is worth his weight in gold. Stay a little, says Dulac, I had rather drink nothing but water, and buy a good horseman's coat. I am ashamed to appear in such a ragged condition, before such a charming young lady. Miss smiled, and undertook to procure him one. We were forced to reenter our box: and the captain ordered a sucking pig for supper, and a pudding to please miss. We were hardly

shut in, before the captain jumped with joy; or, rather, made a motion towards it, for his head touched the ceiling. Make yourself easy, fair lady, says he to me, the devil shall be very cunning if we are here three days longer to work, my friends. At the same time, they drew their knives; and, in truth, I could not conceive what they meant to do. Having removed the straw, they soon broke up a board of the floor; and digging up the earth with their knives, removed it in their hats to the other side, and artfully laid it under the straw. I then began to comprehend a part of their design, without imagining it was possible to execute it. My husband and I, nevertheless, would partake of the labour; and before night, they had made a hole four feet deep at least, and three feet in length on that side next the yard. A large piece of timber, which they at last found in their way, almost distracted them, because it directly cross the passage they were opening, and prevented all possibility of escaping that way. But of what are not minds capable animated with the desire of recovering their liberty! They undertook to saw this beam through with their wretched knives; and as it drew towards night, they dexterously replaced the board they had wrenched from the floor; so that nothing but the earth, which was concealed under the straw, could discover us. As soon as it was quite dark, we were released from our confinement, and were introduced into the gaoler's house. I admired the confidence of this man, who had only a maid-servant and his daughter in the house, yet trusted himself in the power of five men, who might have used him ill. It must be acknowledged, the English are not distrustful, and do not suspect in

others those crimes they are incapable of committing themselves: another reflection, which escapes me, in favour of my companions.

While supper was getting ready, Dulac pushed on his affair with the daughter, and gave her to understand, that he had an estate in his own country; but, that he hardly wished ever to see it again, since he had the happiness of knowing her. I had one of those little hoop-rings which cost about thirty shillings, and which he begged of me, to make a present to his sweetheart. As he had no doubt of gaining her confidence, I made no scruple of giving it him: I put it in my purse, which was crimson and gold, along with twenty guineas. You see us clothed like beggars, says Dulac to her: this was an artifice to conceal our flight; but, since we are flopped, we could wish to be dressed better: for, to tell you the truth, our cloaths are full of a certain animal I should be sorry to mention. The girl having assured him there was no difficulty in procuring us cloaths; Dulac pulled out his purse, and gave her a little lift of what he wanted; among which, he did not forget some boots. I expect, says he, we shall soon travel towards London; and, as we are in circumstances to procure us horses, it would be disagreeable to ride without boots. He gave her twelve guineas, and, at the same time, begged her acceptance of the ring; pretending to be ashamed to offer her so trifling a present. She made some excuses, but at last accepted it; and showing it to her father, told him, she saw by our behaviour that we were gentlefolks; and added, that Dulac had a purse full of gold; and she thought so, because the bottom of the

purse was filled with shillings, wrapped in bits of paper, to prevent their mixing among the gold.

The girl published our riches all over the town the next morning; and we had several visits, through our little window. Dulac entertained the lasses who came there, and told them, if the gaoler would give us leave, and they could procure him a violin, he would treat them with a dance in the prison-yard. I heard the girls say, the French are very polite, and it is a great pity we are at war with them. Several of them pressed the gaoler so much, that he promised to let them have a dance in the evening; and this good man thought us so well settled with him, that he would have sworn not to have left Dulac a single guinea, therefore had not the least suspicion of our desire to escape out of his clutches. During these conversations through the bars of the window, the work went forward; and to gain time to finish it, we pretended to be sleepy after dinner. Our companions had given their rags to the servant, and had dressed themselves in their new cloaths, not forgetting their boots. How many vows did I make to Heaven for the success of our design in the interval! We are very devout on such occasions, I assure you; and at present, now I have reached the port, I can recollect the burlesque prayers of our seamen without laughing: these people are so accustomed to swear, that they interlard their prayers with oaths. At last, after having been well sweated, and having well cursed the hardness of this piece of timber, and having heartily prayed to God to assist them in their work, they gained the better of

it, and began to undermine gently the pavement of the yard. I was directed to feign myself sick after supper; and I did not pretend sickness; the approach of the time of the execution of our design, and the uncertainty of the consequences, threw me into a real fever. They drank hard, to have an opportunity of retiring the earlier, and the gaoler, his daughter, and maid, were a good deal disguised in liquor, when they rose from table. They had, however, sense enough left, to lock us up closely, and my rats, enough to get to work again. The hole being finished, and the clock having struck twelve, our business was to exert all our strength to lift up the stone which closed our tomb; I, say, improperly, our strength; for they entertained so indifferent an opinion of mine, that they did not think it worthy of trial. After a number of ineffectual attempts, the captain gained the victory, and kept the stone lifted up with his back, till Dulac had squeezed himself through the opening, and supported it with a piece of wood: for they were afraid the noise it would make, if thrown down, should betray us. Besides, they were desirous of leaving it in its place, in order to give us time to get at some distance. Dulac had invented another stratagem; the success of which I am ignorant of. He had wrote a letter in bad English, and had laid it near the door of the dungeon. In this letter, he protested to his fair one, that the desire alone of being in a condition to ask her of her father had obliged him to deceive her; that he hoped this consideration would induce her to conceal our escape, at least for two days, to give us time to reach Ipswich, where a packet-boat waited for us; and gave her to understand, he was of a

much higher rank than he appeared to be; and that, in return for the favour he begged, he would make her a great lady.

During dinner, the captain had taken notice of a ladder that was set against an apple-tree, at the further end of the yard; he acquainted us of it, and told my husband, that it was customary in prisons for him who paid for the hole, to pass through it first ; and that, therefore, he offered us the ladder first. This was not a time for politeness. Having placed it firmly against the wall, the baron held it fast for me to climb, and was almost as soon as myself on the top of the wall; and my companions, by the help of their hands and feet, were quickly there too; and having jumped down on the other side, I sat on the wall, and slid down into the captain's arms very luckily. There were three or four gardens enclosed with hedges, to clear, which we easily did, at the expence of some scratches. You guess, perhaps, we directly took the road to Bristol: our captain was too experienced to commit such a mistake. We had passed in sight of a fine town in the middle of the night which proved so fatal to us; he directed our course towards that part of the country; for people could hardly imagine we would return back the same way. We had nine miles to get there; and, as we intended to enter the town by day-light, we did not hurry ourselves. The captain and the two new horsemen's coats went first, and my husband and I followed as their servants. When we arrived at the inn, I entered first, and enquired of the landlord, whether my master could have a room there? Upon his showing an apartment, I held the door

respectfully till he and his two companions were entered. I afterwards ordered tea; and I and my husband waited on them in the most respectful manner in the world. I had been asked the name of my master in the kitchen; and know, my dear, I had the impertinence to name your husband; and it was in his name that I hired two chaises, in which our gentlemen placed themselves, and my husband and I got up behind. I had payed generously, so that they had not the least suspicion; and as our horses were excellent, we arrived at Bridgnorth at seven o'clock in the morning, an hour when the gaoler and his daughter were certainly fast asleep. You may well suppose, I did not perform this journey behind the chaise. Soon after we had got out of the town, I called to the postillion to flop, because I found myself very ill, and my pretended master being alone in his chaise, had suffered me to ride within. I forgot to mention, also, that I had ordered a spare horse for my master; because he frequently chose to get out and ride. The postillion, who found himself embarrassed with this horse, told my master so; and I, by his orders, bid my husband mount it: such acts of humanity are not uncommon in England; and besides, I had told the postillions, I had one of the best masters in the world, though he was of a very melancholy disposition, which rendered him silent whole days together, and that he only travelled to relieve his lowness of spirits.

This was the first moment we had been at liberty to speak to each other without witness since our last misfortune. I opened my lips to

ask pardon of the baron for having made him a partner in my unhappiness; at the very instant, when he testified the most lively regret, at not having it in his power to put an end to my troubles, at the expence of his own life. If I may trust what I feel, they are drawing towards a period; and I flatter myself, the justice of God, satisfied with a punishment so severe as I have undergone these six days, will forget my former ill conduct. You do not yet know your guilty husband, my dear Clarissa, whom you complain of having made a partner in your misfortunes. Alas! it is I who ought to tremble for having united you to a wretch, whom divine justice has pursued these two years. The baron would then have began to inform me of the events which had reduced him to the abject condition in which I found him: I refused to hear him: he wanted rest, and I begged him to endeavour to procure it; and he the more willingly yielded to my request, as he knew I had need of rest myself.

We made such quick dispatch, that we arrived at Bristol on the third day, without the least unlucky accident: we had fetched such a compass about in our journey, that it was night when we entered this city. I abridge a recital already too long. As an exception to the rule, the merchant, who was the captain's friend, was the son of a French refugee, and yet hated not his countrymen; and as we seemed surprised at it, he opened a drawer, out of which he took a handsome purse, which to us seemed empty; and, in fact, it contained only a small piece of French money, value about a penny English, and said

to us, I hope this piece will be preserved in my family from generation to generation. This is the only fortune my father possessed when he arrived in England, and he hardly left any thing more behind him in France, where he gained his living by the trade of watchmaking. He got money at London by his industry, put me apprentice to a merchant, and had the satisfaction to see me rich before he died. He frequently laughed with me at the folly of his companions. Most part of them, said he to me, were, like myself, born to wear wooden shoes, yet they are perpetually lamenting the fortunes they quitted in France. There was particularly a little toad of a tradesman, named V., whose father left behind him in France nothing but the vermin which devoured his flesh, and who now is worth thirty thousand pounds sterling. This little animal had such a hatred for France, that he was almost out of his senses at the birth of the dauphin : I myself heard him say on this occasion, that he was in hopes the king would have had daughters only; and that a civil-war, on account of the succession, would have set the whole kingdom in flames. For my part, added my father, I shall all my life love my nation and king, Louis XIV. Whatever his enemies may say, was a good and great prince. Persecutions were raised under the fanction of his name, but he never knew the excess to which they were carried, and we had given reason for it. We are republicans through principle, and have never known the bounds between what we owe to God and what we owe our mailers; I do not say this because he was the occasion of my making my fortune, but out of regard to truth.

Our lieutenant, who was a protestant, was a little displeas'd with this discourse, and protested to the merchant, whose name was Martineau, that the king of France had no faithfuller subjects than the Calvinists. You are right, with respect to the present, who are as good Frenchmen as their fathers were bad, because they no more read the satires and foolish sermons, which enthusiastic medlers published towards the end of the last age; therefore they are now regarded as good and faithful subjects and have justice done them.

Pardon me this anecdote, my dear; it is a testimony (which I could not help mentioning) of the good understanding of our deliverer: he procur'd us passports, and furnish'd the captain with money sufficient to reimburse me what I had advanced; which I was oblig'd to accept, for fear of affronting this honest man, who, notwithstanding the rough behaviour attached to his profession, has a great deal of merit. Nothing can exceed the attention which he and his companions paid to us during our five weeks voyage. I was very ill the first six days, as well as the baron; since this interval we have enjoy'd a perfect state of health, and amuse ourselves with the recital of the artifices which poor prisoners employ to recover their liberty: it is not astonishing that they run all risks to obtain it; they are treated with a barbarity that shocks human nature, through the insatiable avarice of inferior officers who are entrusted with their maintenance: it certainly is not the intention of the government, which supposes they are treated better. I am drawing up a memorial in their favour,

which I shall address to the lords of the admiralty; they will shudder, I am sure, at an account which seems almost incredible, and yet, unhappily, has but too much reality.

We set out in two days for Agen, a village, nine leagues distant from Bourdeaux, where my mother-in-law resides, and where I desire you to direct your answer. I expect, with impatience, an account of my mother's escape: be her secretary, my dear Harriet, if her weakness does not permit her to write herself. I shall say no more about my gratitude. I repeat it again, you and your husband have done so much for me, that I can never have it in my power to make you both amends.

LETTER XVI. CLARISSA TO MRS. DARBY.

Heaven then has restored you to my wishes, my dear, my tender, and respectable mother! What a happiness for me not to have learnt your danger till after your recover! I do not think I should have been capable of supporting the fear of losing you for ever, together with all my other misfortunes: consider them, my dear mother; or, rather, strive to forget them: such thoughts are only proper to rack a heart sensible like yours. I must own, there are moments in which the dangers I have undergone, are so strongly painted on my imagination, that my hair stands upright with horror; a cold sweat creeps over me; and, if I was left to myself in these dreadful moments, I know not whether nature would not sink under the terrible impression of this recollection. My husband, who perceives it, does not leave me an instant: the sight of him throws me into sentiments so opposite to those I have just described, that I am astonished I have strength to undergo this contract. God has conducted me to the greatest happiness, by ways seemingly very strange. I am not a woman blinded by her passion, who figures to herself imaginary virtues in the object of her tenderness. I love, nay more, I loved my husband from the first moment I beheld him; but I dare presume sufficiently on myself to assure you, that his exterior qualities would have caused on me only a momentary impression, if he had possessed them only: he possesses not only those virtues which are commonly found in those who are called gentlemen, but he carries them to heroism. I will give you two

examples of this, which, if you please, shall be for yourself only; he has respected my delicacy. Though nothing essential to our union is wanting, Mr. Baker informed me, that some formalities were necessary in France; the most essential of which, in my opinion, is your content. I have not been able to consider myself as truly married, till these formalities are complied with; and he has consented to live with me in a manner agreeable to this opinion. Another proof of my husband's noble way of thinking, is, his insensibility with respect to a misfortune that would have appeared the greatest in the world to a vulgar mind. I have observed to you, that the fear of accidents, prevented my carrying my diamonds about me in my journey from Stafford: we had unnailed the lining of the chaise, and hid them underneath it so artfully, that it was impossible to have perceived them: you may readily imagine, that, in the confusion we were in through fear of being stopped, it was easy for us not to think of these jewels; my husband chose rather to lose them entirely, than leave me alone in the open country; so that, by selling the pearls which I left in pawn at Stafford, I shall scarcely have two thousand pounds sterling. I am only sensible of this loss, from its putting it out of my power to procure independency for all that is dear to me. The baron reproaches me for my uneasiness, and thinks me too rich by half; he maintains, that, moderate as you are, we have enough to provide abundantly for all the necessary wants of life, and that more would only embarrass us. Conceal this circumstance from our friends, I conjure you; Mr.

Balfour is not rich, and would consent to be less so, if I could resolve to partake his fortune.

Providence declares itself, it ordains I should be poor. I wrote to Mr. Baker when I embarked, and desired him to direct his answer to me at Bourdeaux: I have this moment received the letter, and the contents of it are as follow.

You know, my dear mama, that my worthy aunt was an Irish woman, and that the greatest part of her estates was situated in Ireland: my father has claimed them as a Protestant; and, as the law gives the inheritance to the nearest relation, in prejudice even of children, if the first changes his religion, and the children remain Catholics, he has stripped me of every thing from that quarter. I cheerfully resign to him all he has taken from me; my whole fear is, that the remainder of my fortune will not be considerable enough to engage him to sacrifice his strong desire to have us considered as parricides: perhaps he will let the action he has brought against us subsist, without prosecuting or annulling the accusation, with a view of keeping us perpetually abroad. I have informed Mr. Baker, by a letter, that you had a considerable sum concealed in a private chest of drawers at Old Windsor, and desired him to charge some trusty person to be attentive to what passes in that quarter. My father never liked the house; he perhaps will sell it, and dispose of the furniture; I begged of him, if this was the case, to buy this chest of drawers, which I particularly described to him, at any price. The Jew, to whom I

pledged my necklace, is become a bankrupt; and our witness, who had borrowed the money in his own name, having declared himself a creditor, has received only two hundred guineas for 9000 l., fifty of which he has expended in searching after the carrier whom he procured for us at Stafford: this person came from London, and was not known at this town. The baron must be contented; he thought my fortune was still too considerable: behold it reduced to 24000 French livres, for he will not suffer me to part with some valuable trinkets I have about me. I have equipped myself at Bourdeaux conformable to my present condition; no laces, no silks; my respectable mother-in-law wears none, and I should be sorry to appear better dressed than her: he has confessed to me, that the little fortune on which she lives, does not exceed twelve guineas a year; he is therefore right in saying we are rich with what I still have, since this amounts to three times as much. God preserve me from greater misfortunes than that of being poor; I have not occasion for a very strong dose of resignation to support poverty: so little is wanting for the real necessaries of life, when we are capable of annihilating imaginary wants.

However violent an inclination I have to embrace you, prudence commands me to repress it. My husband loves his mother infinitely; this seems to me a good presage of his character. Notwithstanding his filial piety might deceive in this respect, magnify his good qualities, and lessen his defects, I know what duty directs me to do in such a

case; I must accommodate my humour to his; and, through the grace of God, I feel no repugnance in submitting to those he has ordained my superiors ; but, my dear mama, I should feel an infinite deal to see you suffer in the least; you have only the duties of charity and of christian condescension to fulfil with regard to this lady, and these are much less extensive than mine; stay then with my friend till you have determined whether you could live agreeably with us. The baron earnestly desired me to assure you of his affectionate duty; he assures me he has not the least uneasiness about the peace of our future society; but if it should possibly happen not to be perfectly agreeable to you to live with your children, he shall be always ready to resign to you the income of my trifling fortune.

LETTER XXVII. LADY HARRIET TO CLARISSA.

I am ignorant how romances are composed, my dear, since I have never read but one; but, I am very certain, there can be none so affecting or interesting as the history of your misfortunes. I have followed you in your escapes, and into your prisons; I have felt myself almost suffocated in passing through the hole made with such dispatch and labour: in short, my dear, though your letter was dated from a place where you was in safety, and that you had set sail the very moment it was directed to me, I could not persuade myself you had surmounted all the obstacles which opposed your escape. My dear, my charming Clarissa, passing the night in the fields, hoisted upon a blind-horse, dragged into a dungeon, laid on straw, among three desperadoes! For your sailors, whom I would heartily embrace, if I had them here, were, nevertheless, rough unpolished men; witness the energy of their expressions, which must appear very strange to the delicate ears of my incomparable friend. It would doubtless have been much worse if they had been ignorant of your sex; for I am persuaded these good honest seamen, at present, pique themselves upon the reserve and politeness with which they behaved in your presence. I would lay a good wager, from the knowledge I have of your disposition, that you will accuse me of injustice on reading this: you are accustomed to see people on the bright side, and to forget whatever might lessen your good opinion of them. Oh! I do not oppose this good opinion. Have not I told you, I would embrace them

heartily? Then, you know, that I embrace those only whom I love. Yet, this good friendship shall not prevent my thinking you were not made for this sort of company; and at the second reading of your letter, I could not help laughing whenever you called them my companions. A fine expression in the mouth of my Clarissa! It cost me tears at first, because I was not thoroughly satisfied you were escaped from this prison; four and twenty hours were necessary to convince me of it, and from that instant, I re-assumed all my former good humour. I don't know what would have bore up my spirits against tempests and accidents, if you had been forced to pass the Streights of Gibraltar. I should have perpetually fancied I saw you fall into the hands of Corsairs. In the rout you took, you only run the risk of being a prisoner of war in France: a trifling misfortune for the wife of a Frenchman. At last, you are happily arrived in your new country, with an husband worthy of you. What extraordinary events lead thereto! Might it not be said, Heaven has preserved you, and would not leave to man the care of providing for you? How happy are we, my dear Clarissa! We have no need of a passion which time diminishes, to be enchanted with our lot, and reason applauds our sentiments in favour of our husbands. Assure yourself these two men render all others contemptible, in my mind, and that I find them a parcel of poor wretches: some day I will amuse myself with pointing out to you the characters of the greatest part I see, and you will acknowledge that their poor ribs would be very excuseable in being jealous of our fate.

I must own to you, my dear, a foolish thought which has come into my head. Could it be an effect of jealousy? It was in speaking of this hideous passion that I recollected this extravagant thought. I have read over and over again all the letters you have wrote me since our separation; I have weighed all your words, all your acions, to see if I could not find out some one, to which I might attribute such strange misfortunes. Is it spite, at finding you so superior to your poor Harriet, who seeks to find you in fault, to raise herself at your expence? Alas! If my pride had this fine idea without my knowledge, it has been paid for it according to its deserts. I have endeavoured to turn and twist you every way; but I have found you yourself in every thing, even in a very critical circumstance. To explain myself, if I had been in a like situation, I don't know whether I should have had the courage to sacrifice a prejudice to my reputation. We have two sorts of it, my dear: that which concerns the morals, prudence and modesty; and there are few women of a certain rank, who, having been well educated, put themselves in danger through their own fault of losing this: our other reputation is that of the mind, of our understanding, of a certain haughtiness of sentiment, which we call nobleness of spirit; there is a great number of women who are still more jealous of this second reputation than of the first. I improve amazingly since I am at Paris, except in the art of writing intelligibly; for I very much doubt your understanding this nonsense: an example will render it more intelligible: we hardly dare to despise the mistress of a king; the inobleness of her choice justifies it. This woman, who does not blush

at the shameful title, would have hid herself from the whole world if she had married her footman, though he were the honestest man in the world, and the most capable of making her happy. Even though she were under the greatest obligations to him, all these motives would not in the least excuse her choice; the most favourable would say, she had a vulgar foul, and had been guilty of a meanness: nevertheless, in fact, it is better to be the wife of the lowest plebeian, than the mistress of a king; we therefore set more value on what is called greatness of soul, than on virtue. You have judged otherwise; you have preferred the reputation of a modest prudent girl, to that of a girl of noble sentiments: your virtue might perhaps have been suspected, if you had travelled about in company with an amiable young man; and you have rather chose to be suspected of possessing sentiments less exalted than your birth: you are therefore an heroine, the Lucretia of the age, and the antient one does not deserve to be compared with you. I should not say so much if you had thrown yourself into the danger, or if you had had any other means of escaping the crime which your father endeavoured to force you to commit. Also God, who saw the purity of your motives, has made use of your misfortunes to elevate you to the height of good fortune; he conducts you so visibly, that I can no more find fault with the intention in which you persevere, with regard to your fortune: abandon it to... should I say your father? Yes; another name, which was at my tongue's end, would shock your delicacy. Set the world an example of moderation. Sanctify, ennoble a middling condition, a

state of poverty if you will; we leave you at full liberty in this respect, provided you permit us to take all the precautions we think necessary, to secure the fortune of your children.

You comprehend, by this discourse, that your mother has not judged it proper to keep the secret you required of her; it is true, she would not acquaint us with it but under very hard conditions; we have subscribed thereto, do not complain in the least. Justice requires you should, in this respect, trust to the judgment and conduct of my lord. What right have you to disinherit your children before their birth? How do you fulfil the intentions of your dear aunt? Did she leave you her fortune to be dissipated in debauchery? I have at last found out the foible of my Clarissa's conduct; seduced by an apparent good, she has committed a real fault. I acknowledge, few girls would have been capable of committing such a fault; but it is one, notwithstanding, and must be repaired. Hear what your mother says on this subject; you have no right to mistrust her counsel, or to disobey her orders.

Mrs. Darby writes.

Yes, my dear daughter, the virtues have bounds which we cannot exceed without falling into criminal extremes. I shall never recollect, without shedding tears of tenderness, that, to my safety, my Clarissa has sacrificed her immense fortune; that she has joined to this motive, so worthy of admiration, that of healing a heart embittered against her, by the preference that has been given to her. Let my virtuous daughter prove to her father, that he owes to her filial duty only, the gift she

has made him. Easy about my fate, let her not alter her first resolution, but confine herself to the loss of the income of her fortune, without giving up her property in it. In spite of the law, which gives it to your father, my dear Ciarissa, Mr. Balfour has an infallible method to oblige him to resign this property, and restore it to you; this is an act of justice which you cannot oppose, without becoming culpable. Do not imagine poverty terrifies me for my dear child and her posterity; if God gives her children worthy of her, they will always be rich enough ; if an earthquake, bankruptcies, or other accidents, which seem to come immediately from God, should annihilate all your possessions, as the loss could not be attributed to you, it would neither cost me a tear, or occasion a single sigh. Leave Providence to strip your children, if they put your fortune to an ill use; join your sincere prayers with mine to beg it of God, but do not in the least assist to deprive them of it yourself.

Do not upbraid me with having disclosed your situation to Mr. Balfour; I first obtained the most inviolable promise from him not to endeavour to change it; but by such ways as cannot possibly call a blush in your face. His word, more than the present state of his fortune, places bounds to his generosity; and he will suffer you to enjoy the christian pleasure of being poor, whatever it costs him: he requires, as a recompence for the violence he does himself in this respect, that I will not leave his wife during his journey to London about your affairs. I approve of your reflections concerning too

precipitate a reunion. If unfortunately you may have reason to think I should not be able to agree with your husband's mother, nothing shall prevent my settling in your neighbourhood; and I had rather be accused of oddity, for being so near you, without living in your family, than run the risk of disturbing your domestic peace. I shall not even be under a necessity of lessening your poor pittance; Providence has provided for my subsistence. Poor Mrs. Cosby has thought it her duty to leave me what little she had; which, added to the sale of my trinkets that I wore the day you was torn from my arms, makes double the sum you possess. Whatever desire I have to embrace you, another motive still keeps me at Paris till next spring. I could not refuse the intreaties of my second daughter. You are surprised, my dear Clarissa! You do not know of any filter: I flatter myself, notwithstanding, that you will not disapprove the addition I have made to my family. You have taken the liberty to give me a son, why should I refuse to accept a second daughter? I have done it the more willingly, as I am persuaded you will cheerfully approve my adoption of your Harriet; and what daughter, excepting Clarissa, could have carried her affection for me farther? Has she not risked her life to preserve mine? I shall not undertake to particularise her marks of tenderness; I tell you, all, in saying, that you could not have done more than her. There is another account which you expect from me; I am about to satisfy you, and acquaint you with things which cannot fail of interesting you.

Lady Harriet continues.

Yes, my dear sister, I have at last the happiness of a mother, and I don't know if I could possibly have had more tenderness and respect for her whom God deprived me of before I was of a sufficient age to know her, than I have for her he has now given me. No jealousy: if you please, you shall be the eldest; I yield to you the first place in her heart. I content, she loves you a little better than me, on condition you permit me to love her as well as you do yourself: your sister holds the pen, Clarissa; but it is your mother dictates.

Recollect, my child, the pleasure with which I saw the time arrive, when your fate was to be fixed: you have only known the joy your marriage gave me; you are ignorant how much it cost me to reconcile myself to this establishment. The figure of Montalvo was amiable; his mind was cultivated; his heart seemed excellent; he was of a great family, and his fortune surpassed my utmost wishes; yet, in spite of all these advantages, I felt at first fight an antipathy for him, which I thought unjust, because it had no reasonable foundation. I therefore endeavoured to combat, surmount, or justify it. I examined this man with the eyes of a mother, who fears for all that is dear to her; and, there were moments when I suspected a mystery I could not penetrate. Surprised your lover in melancholy fits, which did not seem natural in a person of his age, whose situation was entirely agreeable; the care he took to conceal his melancholly, as soon as he perceived my intention to examine him, increased my suspicions. I learnt from himself (and the sequel shows he spoke the truth) that he could not

succeed to quiet his remorse, Montalvo had always been virtuous; a want of vigilance, had occasioned his committing a first fault; which, having thrown him into despair, had obliged him to quit his state. He wanted courage to confess this to him, who had always the care of his conscience; and the fear of committing sacrilege, had determined him to make his escape. We advance a great pace in the road of guilt, when we have the misfortune to engage therein. The poisonous discourse of persons, who were dear to him, assisted to stifle his confidence; his faith grew weak, he thought it extinct; and flattered himself he had erected a wall of brass, between him and his conscience; and did not know he was mistaken, till the moment, the guilty union, which was to secure his fortune and your unhappiness, was proposed to him. He was shocked to the last degree, at this proposal; and you could not have refrained from tears, at the recital of the torments he endured. He went out of the house like a distracted man; and wandered a long while about London streets, without knowing where he went. I am endeavouring to recollect the picture he drew of his situation; and to make use of his own terms.

After having walked a great way, says he to me, a numerous crowd forced me to slacken my pace. It was a holiday; and, by the singing of priests, I found I was near a chapel; and, that all those, who were near, waited for the finishing of high-mass, to enter. It was not possible for me to continue my rout; my trembling knees shook under me; and I was forced to rest myself against a wall, to prevent my falling down.

How happy are these people! says I, casting my eyes on this crowd: in a few minutes they go with joy, to unbosom their hearts at the foot of the altar: and I, wretch that I am I have drove myself from the sanctuary of mercy. This reflection threw me into a deep melancholly; I wept bitterly, and felt such an excessive uneasiness of mind, as is impossible to be expressed. I was well dressed, and attracted the attention of a woman, who was near me. I fancy, Sir, says she, you are not well, the fun may increase your disorder; follow me, and I will procure you entrance through the ambassador's house; for you seem a stranger, and, perhaps, don't know the way. The voice of this woman seemed to me an order from Heaven, which I dared not resist; I followed her with the thoughts of a criminal, whom the officers of justice conduct before his judge. She spoke to the porter, and he opened a door, which led to the chapel by a private stair-case. When I had got to the top of the stairs, my terrors increased to such a degree, that I had not courage to enter. I sat down on a little bench in the passage in sight of the altar; I was alone in this obscure place; and abandoned myself without restraint to all the impetuosity of my emotions. I hid my eyes with my hands, as if to conceal my face from my angry judge; I shed abundance of tears; and doubt not but I drew the attention of those near me; for, indeed, I sobbed bitterly. I remained above a quarter of an hour in this situation, almost insensible; I was as it were annihilated: I, at length, by degrees, came to myself; and viewing the immense distance which I had placed between God and me, I felt so cutting an anguish, that I thought my

heart would have broke. You may imagine, perhaps, that these motions of grace worked my conversion? You are mistaken. Alas! how easy it is to commit sin! and how difficult to return to virtue! It is certain I detested mine, and would have sacrificed my life at this moment to have annulled them; but yet, when I thought of the means to expiate them; I felt, as it were, tied, bent down, attached to the earth, without strength to assist the violent impulse, which caused me to detest them. Several persons received the sacrament. O my God! I exclaimed, from the bottom of my heart, take my life; let it end, if necessary, in the most cruel torments; so that I have the happiness to receive you once more, without committing sacrilege. I passed about an hour in this situation; and full of indignation against myself, I offered this prayer with an ardor, that I never in my life felt before; Lord, give me strength to break my chains, or take my life. It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of thy justice; nevertheless, I desire rather to deliver myself thereto, than continue to live in sin. I felt myself eager after this ejaculation; I fancied God had heard me favourably; and I arose with a firm resolution not to consent to the sacrilegious union which was proposed to me. I was so altered when I returned home, to my mother's, that she was frightened. Mr. Darby, whom I would have acquainted with the occasion of it, laughed at my scruples; and told me, I must resolve to attend him immediately after dinner. I shall not repeat the impieties he uttered to fortify my staggered conscience; they did not make so great an impression on me, as the dreadful picture of my situation, if I refused to enter into

his views. What would you do in your community? says he: for you must either return there, or perish with hunger in London. You will there meet with the worst usage; and when your apostacy is thought sufficiently expiated, and you are released from a tedious and close confinement, you will find yourself without the least consideration in your order, and without esteem. Your flight is a blot, which will be never effaced, unless you go to la Trappe.

A couple of years there will do your business; and you will die a martyr to a ridiculous opinion; a phantom decorated with a fine name, and which frightens women only, or those like them.

This frightful view weakened the salutary impulses, which the mercy of God had excited in my soul. I suffered myself to be drawn away, and the sight of the charming Clarissa contributed to stifle them entirely. I express myself badly; my remorse seemed to gain new strength, in proportion as I endeavoured to overcome it; and I frequently declared to my father, I should never have force to resist it: this induced him to hasten the ceremony, which was to seal my crimes.

I have much weakened, I am certain, the pathetic of Montalvo's discourse. I shall never forget the impression it made on me; and I am sensible I cannot put it to paper. His struggles with grace caused those emotions in him, which did not escape me, though I could not guess at their cause. Yet my dislike of him did not diminish, and I was angry with myself for it. I found him one day at the end of the garden,

wrapped up in a profound reverie; I was close to him before he perceived me; and not having time to shut a book, which lay open near him; he endeavoured to conceal it from my sight, by sitting upon it. I am not naturally curious; and I was astonished at my violent desire to see what he endeavoured to hide. We were familiar enough, for him not to be offended at the trick I had a mind to play him. I let my snuff-box fall, and, while he attempted to pick it up, I opened the book, and was surprised to find it St. Augustin's Confessions, which he had taken from the book-case. He blushed at seeing the book in my hands; and I, transported with joy, attributed this confusion to a laudable modesty on which I paid him a compliment. This accident having determined the subject of our conversation, he talked of the happiness of innocence, of the difficulty of recovering it when lost, like a man affected by the truths of religion. From this instant, my repugnance for him ceased, and gave way to very opposite sentiments. I looked upon your marriage with him as a singular favour of Heaven. I flattered myself the friendship of Mr. Darby for the person who was to be his son in-law, would be the means, through God, of his conversion; and ever since, I wished to hasten your marriage with one whom I thought so deserving of esteem. Judge my surprise, at your exclamation, when he approached to support you, when you was ready to faint on entering the room. As I could not imagine what could have caused such an alteration in your ideas, within a quarter of an hour, I own I was afraid you was a little disordered in your mind. The words of your father removed this idea. He complained of having

been betrayed; there must be then some secret which had come to your knowledge. I had not time to endeavour to guess the nature of it; I could only tremble for my dear child. You spoke to the minister who came forward to marry you, with so majestic an air, that you seemed something more than human: your menaces struck him motionless; but Montalvo's moment of mercy was come; he was affected by them in such a manner, that he fancied a storm of lightning suspended over his head; and that a fixed resolution of repairing his crimes, could alone prevent the stroke; he formed it, and had scarcely conceived the design before he felt himself like a man freed from a heavy burden which oppressed him. His knowledge of your father's sentiments, forced him to dissemble his own; and in the private discourse they had together at the end of the room, he employed no other motive to engage him to desist from using force, than the fear of making a noise. Your cries might awaken the servants, and he would be obliged either to abandon his design, or afford you an infallible opportunity to complain of the violence he offered you. To avoid this inconvenience he conducted you to a place where your cries could not be heard; and to have nothing to fear from my side, he had the cruelty to stop my mouth with a handkerchief, and drag me into a distant room, where he fastened me strongly. I say, he dragged me, and it literally was so. I laid hold of every thing I met with in the way: I was furious as a lioness robbed of her whelps; and having grasped a banister of the stair-case, I held it so fast, that Mr. Darby could not possibly force me to quit my hold. Furious at my

resistance, he left me in the hands of Montalvo, and ran to fetch his sword with a design to run me through the body. For God's sake, madam, says this young man, pay some regard to what I say; yield to a violence which might have irreparable consequences. I call Heaven, the avenger of perjury, to witness that I will find a way to deliver you and Clarissa too. I thought I discovered an air of truth in Montalvo's oath, which forced me, to use the expression, to surrender myself to his management; Heaven doubtless permitted it, for it was not natural I should trust to his promises in such circumstances. He threw himself on Mr. Darby, who had drawn his sword to run me through; and my resistance having ceased, he chained me to the floor as I have already told you. Oh! my dear child, what assistance from Heaven had I not occasion for in these dreadful circumstances, to prevent my falling a prey to despair? I was under the most dreadful apprehensions for you; I gnawed my flesh; I struggled to break my bonds; I uttered useless cries, since my mouth was stopped with a handkerchief. In short, I consider the preservation of my life and reason as a miracle. After some hours were elapsed, my spirits became a little more quiet; I had the happy thought of lifting up my eyes towards the celestial regions, and indeed from thence alone I could expect assistance. I recollected, with trembling, that by a useless resistance, I might have made myself an accomplice of the homicide who was going to kill me. Ah! what would have become of my soul, if I had rendered it up to my Creator, in the midst of the dreadful transports with which I was agitated? They were not voluntary, it is true; but their violence

declared, that this resignation to the will of God, which I flattered myself I possessed, was very weak. I did not suffer myself to be cast down with this humiliating reflection; I was convinced of the imperfection of my virtue, and made the greatest efforts to repair my weakness, by a courageous submission to what God should please to ordain concerning us. I considered you under his immediate protection, tho' all human succour was denied us; and my confidence began to revive. I endeavoured to strengthen myself in this confidence, when I heard a dispute at my chamber door, and plainly distinguished the voices of James and Montalvo. The first kept the keys of my room, and refused to deliver them to Montalvo, who insisted on having them. This desire of opening my prison doors, seemed to me a consequence of his oath; at last, Montalvo losing all patience, laid hold of a large piece of wood which he found near him, and with redoubled blows, attempted to break the door open. As this apartment was inhabited by this servant only, its repair had been neglected; and as it was old, the door soon gave way. Montalvo ran to me, and whilst he cut the handkerchief off my face which almost suffocated me, said, Madam, your daughter is in a place of safety; we must get the start of Mr. Darby's return, who has pursued her in vain, and follow her. Do not deceive me, Montalvo, says I, in a feeble voice: leave me to die here, if your intention is to separate me from my child; death is near at hand to free me from your cruelty: in fact, I found myself so exhausted, that I thought my last hour was come. And what place could be so proper to remove you from your daughter as this?

replies he. All the servants except James think you have fled with her. It is not in the middle of the night, by stealth, that I mean to take you away; a post-chaise waits at the door; choose, to conduct you, any person in the village whom you think you can best trust; order him to carry you where you please in London. If my company is suspicious, I will leave you alone; though as I have some sad secrets to reveal, I hope you will suffer me to join you there. I was ashamed of having distrusted a man who acted with such openness; and my suspicions entirely vanished, when I heard James exclaim that Montalvo had betrayed his master: he was in such a rage, that I thought he would have fell into convulsions. I am resolved to accompany you, said I to Montalvo; and at the same time put to rights my cloaths and head-dress which were in disorder, and gave him my hand. I found the chaise, surrounded by the whole village, whom James excited to stop my passage, by exclaiming that I was a wicked woman, since I willingly made my escape with a ravisher. His endeavours were fruitless; the people made way for me to get into the chaise, and I heard from every mouth, God bless you, as well as madam Clarissa. I reaped the fruits of your beneficence, my dear child; and, notwithstanding the confusion and affliction I was in, the blessings of these poor people, who loudly proclaimed the charities you had bestowed on them, agreeably flattered my ear.

When we were out of the village, Montalvo requested my orders a second time; and as I knew nobody at London but the mistress of the

house where we lodged some time, I desired him to conduct me there. Our chaise went surprisingly fast; and I am persuaded, we were not more than an hour, and a half on our journey. I had counted the mile stones, and we were no more than five miles distant from London, when we turned out of the main road towards the right. Do not be surprised, madam, says Montalvo, that I quit the usual road; we might meet Mr. Darby in the environs of London; I am even persuaded he waits at the turnpike to stop miss Clarissa, so that I am obliged to go a good deal round about to avoid him. Ah, Heavens! cried I, have you not assured me my dear child was in safety? He does not know it, replies Montalvo, and thinks she has taken the road to the capital; but, madam, suffer me to repeat the favour I begged of you, to suspend your curiosity till you arrive at the asylum you have chose. He had eluded my questions twenty times, and not being able to get him to answer me, I had been silent till now. If I had been capable of any uneasiness about myself, I should perhaps have suspected my guide, for we passed thro' very bye places: at last I perceived the spires of Westminster, and immediately entered the outskirts, and soon arrived at the house I had mentioned; I expected to hear of you there, at least. Montalvo begged me to permit him to leave me half an hour, and promised to acquaint me afterwards with what I was so desirous of knowing. Oh! my poor child, how long did this half hour seem! but my impatience was insupportable, when I found hours elapse without hearing of Montalvo: he arrived at last. Madam, says he, accosting me, I would willingly have brought you more positive news; but all I can

assure you is, that miss Clarissa has escaped her father's pursuit, witness the rage in which I found him at Mrs. Colby's. Mrs. Cosby in London! cried I. At these words, Montalvo, throwing himself at my feet, declared every thing that is contained in this letter, and ended thus: it was five o'clock in the morning, when miss Clarissa's footsteps were discovered in the garden; and, according to all appearance, she had escaped several hours before. I conceived, from your husband's discourse, that your life was not safe; yet, with a view of screening his innocent daughter from his first fury, I did not choose to lose sight of him. There is not a village within six miles round, where we have not made an enquiry: one woman only told us, she met miss Clarissa at day-break. We went to the next village, but could get no intelligence of her, whence I concluded she had luckily met with some carriage. Mr. Darby thought the same, and without considering she had the start of him by two hours, flattered himself he should overtake her with a horse already jaded, and declared he would give a description of her to the turnpikes. I applauded a design, which I could not hinder, and must acknowledge I was not void of fear during the whole pursuit. I offered him to continue the search myself, and flew to your succour. We were to meet at my mother's. I there met him, foaming with rage, damning those who had made such a well-conducted project, and so near a conclusion, prove abortive; and not being able to imagine how it was discovered, he told me he would immediately return to Windsor, and put you to the torture, to find out whether you knew any thing of it, or where your daughter was gone. He was

scarcely gone, before my mother with tears deplored her misfortune, in being concerned in such odious projects, and threatened me with the wrath of Heaven, if I did not risk every thing to save you from the danger which threatened you. Her sorrow seemed so natural, added Montalvo, that I owned to her what I had just done: she testified such marks of joy at the news, as thoroughly convinced me she really detested her errors; and the caution she advised, clearly showed how very desirous she was of repairing her faults. She provided a trusty person to watch Mr. Darby, and ordered him to stay at the inn, and give us the earliest intelligence of miss Clarissa. After the departure of this man, my mother acquainted me that she was the person who informed this innocent young lady of the sacrilege she was on the point of committing: she has the utmost desire to throw herself at your feet, to beg pardon for all the misfortunes she has occasioned you. Think, madam, whether you can pardon two wretches, who with joy would spill the last drop of their blood, to put an end to your unhappiness?

Ah! every thing is pardoned and forgot, cried I: she repays with usury every thing I have done for her, since she has saved my poor child. Alas! what is become of this dear child Who will restore her to her distracted mother? who will strengthen me against the fear of seeing her again, in the power of her barbarous tyrant? After a thousand other lamentations, which melted Montalvo, I desired him to conduct me to his mother's; he would not content to it. Who knows, replied

he, but some unfortunate accident may bring your husband back there. I was sensible of the imprudence I was going to commit, and when this penitent came to me, I would not permit her to mention any past circumstances; and we busied ourselves only in consulting what steps to take. She confirmed what I knew before too well, that your father is implacable in his hatred, and capable of running all risks to satisfy it. She convinced me, that Montalvo had every thing to fear from his resentment, and begged of me to permit him to partake of my asylum. You are sensible, my child, I could not refuse them this favour; the repentance of these two criminals, had entirely effaced their faults in the eyes of God; I hoped so at least, and should I harbour the least resentment against them? Alas! my heart detested the thought, and I could say on the contrary, they were become dear to me. Nevertheless, my uneasiness about your fate increased every moment. Montalvo at his return, told me a circumstance which quieted my fears a little. Mr. Darby had published a reward of a hundred guineas for any person who would discover you: this promise had produced no effect; therefore, you had got to London, or perhaps were gone to France; you was sure of meeting with an asylum with your friend. I greedily swallowed this hope; one circumstance only prevented my being satisfied entirely with it. I knew your tenderness, and could hardly believe that you would have quitted England, without first being acquainted with my fate. And it is the lively interest she takes therein, says Montalvo, which has hurried her departure. What could your tender daughter do for you,

when her virtue obliges her to respect your common persecutor? Has she not judged you had need of a more powerful protection; and, do you think she has neglected that of a man who too well knows what your husband is capable of, to be astonished at the dreadful confidence she must be obliged to repose in him? Yes, madam, Miss Clarissa is either in France, or in some family of honour, from whence she will not fail writing to lady Harriet. The clergyman who was the instrument of God to strengthen Mrs. Cosby in her good resolutions, confirmed Montalvo's conjectures, and advised me to follow my daughter. If she is in France, says he to me, you will soon be reunited. If she is still in England, Mr. Balfour will have the generosity to fly to her assistance. These considerations staggered me; our express, who returns to-morrow, will determine my resolution. It is certain Mr. Darby has had no news of you; I therefore think you saved from his pursuits, and I set out. You know the rest, my dear child; the goodness and attention of my new children is beyond expression. Mr. Balfour leaves us in a few days; I shall not quit his wife, till she is happily recovered from her lying-in, and I have had the honour of standing god-mother to the child, agreeable to her request.