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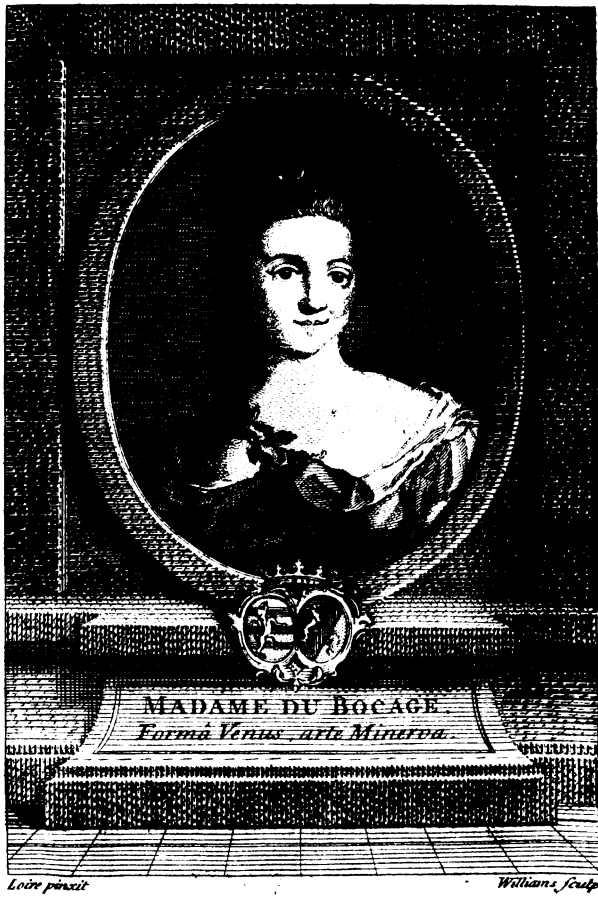

Loire pinxit — Williams sculp.

LETTERS

CONCERNING

ENGLAND, HOLLAND AND ITALY.

By the Celebrated

MADAM DU BOCAGE,

Member of the Academies of

PADUA, BOLOGNA, ROME and LYONS.

WRITTEN

During her Travels in thoſe Countries.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

— Quæ mores hominum multorum vidit et urbes.

In TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
Printed for E. and C. DILLY in the Poultry.

M DCC LXX.

THE

PREFACE.

THE learned and ingenious author of the following LETTERS, has been long in poſſeſſion of a ſeat on Parnaſſus, in conſequence of her elegant POEMS, by which ſhe has gained immortal reputation. Theſe were printed at different times in *France*, and at length collected in Two Volumes, and publiſhed at *Lyons* in 1764. The Firſt contains her *Paradis Terreſtre*, imitated from MILTON; *Les Amazons*, a Tragedy, acted in 1748; the *Temple of Fame*, imitated from Mr POPE; a Poem which obtained the prize

at the Academy of *Rouen*, where this gallic SAPPHO was born; Miſcellaneous Pieces; and a Funeral Oration on Prince EUGENE, written in Italian by Cardinal PASSIONEI, and tranſlated by this Lady into French. The Second comprehends the *Colombiade*, an Epic Poem on the diſcovery of the new world, in which CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS figures as her hero; and the *Conſpiracy of Walſtein*, tranſlated from the French of M. SARAZIN into Italian. The merit of theſe performances gained this Lady a ſeat in the Academies of *Padua*, *Bologna*, *Rome*, and *Lyons*. In ſhort, the judgment paſſed on them by connoiſſeurs, and the different elogiums of them echoed from all parts of *Europe*, are ſo well known, that one muſt be quite a ſtranger in the republic of letters not to have heard of them.

To the Two Volumes of Poems, Madam DU BOCAGE was afterwards perſuaded

ſuaded to add a Third, containing LETTERS to her Siſter, during her Travels in *England*, *Holland*, and *Italy*. Thoſe concerning the two former countries are dated in 1750, and thoſe on the latter in 1757. They are penned with an artleſs ſimplicity, free from the leaſt appearance of affectation or ſtudy: yet they abound with delicacy of taſte and ſentiment, with natural ſtrokes of genius, and with ſtrong marks of penetration and diſcernment. Her ſtile is lively and animated, her manner of viewing objects new and intereſting, her reflections ſolid, her deſcriptions pictureſque. But her attention is more engaged with the painting of manners and cuſtoms, than with the deſcription of towns and palaces. Objects of this kind, with which the relations of modern travellers abound, are here only ſlightly touched upon, except when they happen to preſent us with ſomething new and engaging. She ſeems to have had no intention of entering

into a circumſtantial detail, but only of drawing ſuch ſketches of the grand objects, as ſhe thought moſt deſerving of the public notice. Her colourings and fine touches dicover the hand of a firſt rate genius. As ſhe went abroad with a view of improving by the obſervation of foreign manners, ſhe appears no way prejudiced in favour of the cuſtoms of her own country. The manner ſhe expreſſes herſelf in with regard to the Engliſh nation, will ever do honour to her judgment and impartiality. In particular, the encomiums which ſhe paſſes on the learning, wit and politeneſs of the Earl of CHESTERFIELD, cannot fail of meeting with the univerſal approbation of readers of all claſſes and ſtations in life.

Her LETTERS, however, on *Italy*, are undoubtedly the moſt intereſting; in deſcribing that country ſhe is exact and methodical, and enlivens her narrative with anecdotes and curious details. Thus ſhe

ſhe gives a new turn to a ſubject which one would imagine to be exhauſted; a ſubject however that perhaps will never be perfectly known, according to the obſervation of a learned critic *, but by means of theſe Letters. There are few objects worthy the attention of a judicious obſerver, which we do not find pointed out in theſe Letters, or particularly deſcribed. We travel in imagination with the agreeable rover, and follow her footſteps with a ſort of ineffable pleaſure, that leaves no room for laſſitude. Her motion is light and rapid, and her narrative ſo conciſe and expreſſive, that it would be ſcarce poſſible to abridge it, without ſtripping it of ſome part of its native graces.

But it is particularly at *Rome*, that every thing ſeemed to engage our fair author's attention: ſhe contemplates its

* Journal des Scavans for the month of March, 1765.

various beauties with aſtoniſhment, and deſcribes them with a rapture of enthuſiaſm. The monuments of the polite arts and of antiquity, the manners, cuſtoms, and uſages of the inhabitants, all come under her examination, and nothing eſcapes the accuracy of her pencil. With ſo great a ſhare of taſte and paſſion for the polite arts, it was impoſſible but this Lady muſt have been enchanted with that once miſtreſs of the world: and when we add to this the honourable reception ſhe met with among perſons of the very higheſt dignity and rank, it is natural to think ſhe was extremely loth to quit ſo agreeable a reſidence. "The diſtinguiſhed manner, ſays a very ingenious writer *, in which Cardinal PASSIONEI received Madam DU BOCAGE, his aſſiduous

* M. DE GROSLEY, author of a moſt learned and entertaining work, intitled, *New Obſervations on Italy and its inhabitants, by two* Swediſh *Gentlemen*. The above quotation is from vol. II. p. 170. in the tranſlation publiſhed by Mr LOCKYER DAVIS.

assiduous attendance on her, his eagerness to bring her into the best companies, had excited the astonishment of all *Rome*. The Roman Ladies were not a little piqued at seeing a French woman triumph over a man, who had never shewn the least regard to the sex, and who in no very obliging terms, roundly made known to them the reason of his giving this Lady the preference. The Pope did not fail to avail himself of this extraordinary change: when the Cardinal went out in his coach with Madam Du Bocage, he took care to be at the window, and gave them repeatedly his benediction, saying, he had even declared himself the Cardinal's rival, and pretending to be as good a judge of the Lady's merit as himself. The eagerness, with which these two Octogenarians vied with each other in this intercourse, rendered it somewhat more than entertaining to the charming object of it, who, if we may judge by the respect shewn her in all places, and

by

by the presents she received from the Pope at her departure, was treated as a Princess. The Cardinal has more than once said to me upon occasion of our taking the air in the piazza of St PETER: "Here Madam DU BOCAGE and I have "often walked together; I was her "Squire. All these scoundrels said that "I was in love with her; and indeed "they said no more than what was true: "but it was not the beauty or attractives "of the sex, that I loved in her; it was "the ease and affability peculiar to her "nation, heightened by her erudition, "and dignified by her uncommon abi-"lities."

The Portrait prefixed to this Volume, is taken from a painting done by Mademoiselle LOIR: the elegant inscription, *Forma* VENUS, *Arte* MINERVA, happily expresses the graces which embellish the figure, and the wit and learning so conspicuous in this Lady's productions. We may

may properly conclude this account of the portrait and the original, with Monsieur ALLEMAND's beautiful verses on the publication of the Tragedy of the *Amazons*.

Dum canit innocuos *Evæ* BOCAGIA lusus,
  In paradisiacos me rapit *Eva* locos.
Dum canit Antiopes *Scythicas* BOCAGIA flammas,
  In *Scythiam* Antiopes captus amore feror.
At dum se ipsa offert oculis BOCAGIA nostris,
  Qualis ab oceano, PHOEBE, redire soles;
Nec *Scythiæ* campos, paradisi nec moror hortos,
  Nec placet Antiope, nec placet EVA parens.
LESBIA, *Amazonibus* vitam vocemque dedisti,
  Ut placeant, oculos, LESBIA, junge tuos.

Thus translated.

Whilst DU BOCAGE the joys of *Eden* sings,
Full to my view all paradise she brings;
Whilst she relates the flames midst *Scythian* snows,
With which ANTIOPE's fair bosom glows,
Struck with the *Amazon*'s deluding sight,
To *Scythia*'s coast I wing my rapid flight.
But when BOCAGE herself stands forth confest,
Like PHOEBUS rising from his bed of rest,
The groves of *Eden*, and the *Scythian* shore,
ANTIOPE and EVE can please no more:
To *Amazons* fair LESBIA life supplies;
Still they want charms to please without her eyes.

LETTERS

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

To my Sister *.

London, April 1, 1750.

I DID not write to you during my journey, my dear Sister; we travelled with too much hurry and confusion; we were fatigued three days by riding post; eight hours tormented by the tossing of a stormy sea; and four and twenty jolted in a wretched coach from *Deal* to *London*.

You will probably ask me, why we did not land at *Dover*? Know then, that a terrible apprehension of finding the time hang heavy on our hands at *Calais*, made us quit it when the weather was doubtful. It soon ceased to be so; the winds and the rain redoubled: Though the storm we underwent well deserves a poetical description, I shall not vainly attempt to give one; what could I do after our great poets? The truth from my pen would not be equal to their fictions. Let me then simply declare, that the infernal noise of the

* Widow of Monsieur DU PERRON, Counsellor of the Parliament of *Paris*.

waves, the tackle and the sailors, and the constant oppression at my heart, prevented me from expressing my fears: My griefs were succeeded by the most excruciating ideas. What, said I to myself, shall I no more see my Sister, nor my Friends, whom I forsook? Shall I not even see *England*, to visit which was the intention of my voyage? My friends will blame my indiscreet curiosity, and will soon forget me.

Whilst I gave myself up to these melancholy reflections, the Pilot came, and said to me abruptly, "You cannot enter the harbour "of *Dover* till to-morrow morning, the sea "is too high; if you choose it, we will get "you a small vessel to carry you to *Deal*, a "little port at the distance of two leagues."

An eager desire to be extricated out of our perplexity made us accept this sad proposal. The Captain took me into his arms to help me into the boat, which the waves constantly drove from the vessel, so that a slip which he made upon the ladder obliged him to let go: by good luck, instead of falling into the water, I found myself alone upon this skiff in the midst of the rowers, at the mercy of the waves, and trembling with fear lest Mr DU BOCAGE should not be able to come to me. He caused our baggage to be let down, and with horror saw me overwhelmed with the waves that kept off the boat. My fear redoubled; the rowers brought

brought me back; he made new efforts to come to me, and at last succeeded.

Upon changing the vessel, I took heart: a moment's tranquillity composed my spirits: I descried a little fleet, two vessels of which perished whilst they doubled a cape in order to enter the *Thames*. This sight, which had a horrid effect, appeared as a dream to my agitated soul.

I was extricated out of it by a new misfortune. In the little port which we sought, the water being too low prevented the boats from entering. The Sailors, or if you will, Tritons, walking up to the knees in the sea, conducted us to the shore. Judge of my earnest desire to change my wet clothes, tho' none were arrived at my inn, where I was perishing with cold, hunger, and fear, being alone with my chamber-maid DUCASTEL, who was in as great disorder as myself.—Twenty Sailors and Porters, whose language I did not understand, importuned me for money to drink; the Officers examined our coffers at the Custom-house, where my fellow-traveller cursed them, and paid them, that they might make the more haste. In fine, in about an hour's time I contrived to dry my clothes. But whilst the vessel, which now lay at a considerable distance, was in such distress, we quite forgot our provisions; the place supplied but little, our wretched lodging was however better than could be found

in *France* at ſuch a place. We were highly ſatisfied both with our ſupper and our bed. It is cuſtomary when we would repreſent people as poſſeſſed of happineſs, to ſay, that they are in the ſame ſtate with travellers after a voyage. There is always ſome truth in old proverbs; but we purchaſed our happineſs too dear; I do not wiſh you may enjoy the ſame: it was followed by our luckily meeting with a hired coach near the town of *Deal*, which carried us to *Canterbury* to dinner, where we ſaw the Cathedral, a great, gothic building, erected upon a ſubterraneous Church which is ſtill darker, and appears to me better adapted to holy myſteries. The Druids and Pagan Prieſts did not light out their temples to exceſs, and herein they were right. The chriſtian temples, excepting only thoſe of modern building, are all alike, ſo I ſhall ſay no more at preſent of the church of *Canterbury*.

We left this city in order to make the beſt of our way to *Rocheſter*, where we eat excellent oiſters, and ſlept well. In the morning we were ſerved with bread, butter and tea, though we did not deſire it. The travellers who were with us ſaid that it was cuſtomary to pay this breakfaſt, and to eat without being hungry, in order to do honour to the inns, where every thing is indeed very good, and equally dear. The *Engliſh* in their fits of poetical phrenzy, which they call amorous moments,

moments, are apt to ſcrawl verſes with charcoal upon the walls of the rooms where they eat. Here are ſome worthy of the place and the ſubject, which to divert you I tranſlated into *French*, whilſt we were waiting till the horſes were put to.

DAMON dit en mangeant d'un *Cheſter** plein de mites,
Tel que SAMSON, j'en tue un mille en un moment :
Il eſt vrai lui repond MELITES ;
Tu te ſers du même inſtrument.

Eating a mity cheeſe, elate with pride,
I SAMSON-like ſlay thouſands, DAMON cry'd :
To him MELITES quick reply'd, 'Tis true,
And the ſame weapon ſerv'd both him and you.

Rocheſter, which is very populous, is a league in length, and has a conſiderable port. From thence to the metropolis we met with fields which bloom with the freſheſt verdure; numerous flocks of ſheep of a larger ſize than ours, and peaſants who appear to be in better circumſtances. The inns and country houſes are neat, but not magnificent. We took notice of one remarkably elegant oppoſite to *Greenwich*, from whence we diſcovered a foreſt of maſts which cover the *Thames*. A fooliſh fellow being once told of the fine appearance they made, complained that they prevented him from ſeeing the ſhore.

* A ſort of cheeſe much eſteemed in *England*.

At the foot of the hill, which commands a fine prospect, a suburb of great length, badly paved and badly built, leads to the metropolis, which makes no magnificent appearance. In the new buildings where we live, and in the neighbourhood of the court, the streets are broader, and the houses better adorned. When we have seen their inhabitants I shall give you an account of them.

LETTER II.

London, April 8, 1750.

I Promised you, my dear Sister, to amuse the solitary hours you spend in your country-seat, with a narrative of my adventures. Our friendship renders them important to you. There is as much agitation and hurry in my life, as there is tranquillity in yours. I am quite taken up with my toilet, with messages and visits. Fifteen or twenty Ladies of the first quality have done me the favour to be beforehand with me. It is customary here for those to whom any one is recommended, to intreat their friends to visit the stranger, before she is presented to them. My Lady ALLEN, and Mistress CLEVELAND, women of great wit, to whom Mr DE CHAVIGNI, formerly our Minister at *London*, was so good as to write in my favour, were kind enough

to

to conduct me. I immediately paid my respects to our ambassadress, who did us the honour to invite us to dine with her the next day. We accepted of her invitation, and shall endeavour to deserve her kindness. Her merit is equal to her birth, and her rank procures her all the pleasure which she can enjoy in this place. Routs, which begin at seven o'clock and end at eleven, conclude the pleasures of the day. The *English* lately borrowed this custom from the *Italians*; but they have not, like them, spacious palaces; and this occasions great constraint to their company. In the morning, breakfasts, which enchant as much by the exquisite viands, as by the richness of the plate in which they are served up, agreeably bring together both the people of the country and strangers. We breakfasted in this manner to-day at Lady MONTAGU's, in a closet lined with painted paper of *Pekin*, and furnished with the choicest moveables of *China*: A long table, covered with the finest linen, presented to the view a thousand glittering cups, which contained coffee, chocolate, biscuits. cream, butter, toasts, and exquisite tea. You must understand, that there is no good tea to be had any where but at *London*. The Mistress of the house, who deserves to be served at the table of the gods, poured it out herself; this is the custom; and in order to conform to it, the dress of the *English* Ladies, which suits exactly to their

ſtature, the white apron, and the pretty ſtraw-hat, become them with the greateſt propriety, not only in their own apartments, but at noon in St *James*'s Park, where they walk with the ſtately and majeſtic gait of nymphs.

This park, whoſe rural beauty is embelliſhed by their charms, is their favourite walk, eſpecially about noon. They make a leſs brilliant appearance in the evening at their aſſemblies, and in the morning at court, when dreſſed according to the *French* faſhion. I cannot conceive why all *Europe* ſhould be ſo complaiſant as to adopt our modes, the changes of which the inhabitants even of our own provinces cannot poſſibly conform to, which foreign nations receive very late, and never in the ſame manner in which they were introduced at *Paris*. Every country has its peculiar language, manners, and ideas, and ought in conſequence to have its peculiar mode of dreſſing, which muſt always ſuit better to the ſhape and make of the inhabitants than any borrowed habit; but we here meet with many perſons, whoſe munificence, behaviour, and merit, would do an honour to every country, amongſt others Lord and Lady CHESTERFIELD, who behave to us with the utmoſt politeneſs. My Lord, after having with great honour filled the moſt important places in the ſtate, is ſo far from regretting them, that in an agreeable retirement he enjoys himſelf and his friends with the higheſt reliſh: he has

viſited

visited most foreign courts, and acquired all that was worth acquiring in them, a more extensive knowledge of mankind, the art of pleasing in conversation, the talent of speaking several languages, a select library, the best pictures to adorn his palace, and knowledge to build it in the justest taste of architecture.

They propose carrying me to see the entertainments of the town, and visit the public monuments: I shall give you an account of them presently. Mr Du Bocage helps me to make my observations; why are you not with me too? the sagacity and sprightliness of your genius would always fix mine upon the objects which most deserve a description. I will give you a true account of our actions and our remarks: you shall have them faithfully described; I will even lay before you the letters which have been written to me. I have just received one in verse from a lover of eighty-six years of age, who lives at *Montauban*, and thinks me at *Paris*, but has never seen me. I send it you, together with my answer to it. I availed myself of a day of rest to write it, and you have time more than sufficient to read it. The old Gentleman cajoles me in this manner:

Daughter

Daughter of PHOEBUS, who doſt ſhine
With graces and with charms divine,
So long I've ſtrove by verſe thy name
To conſecrate to laſting fame,
That now 'tis time I ſhould give o'er,
I cannot praiſe thee as before.
Soon as we reach the vale of years,
The face of nature cold appears.
But when in wonder loſt I trace
The beauties of thy portray'd face,
I find, alas! that CUPID's dart,
Spight of my age, will reach my heart.
When on thy works I fix my eyes,
My ſoul is fill'd with ſtrange ſurpriſe;
I recollect my amorous flame
Firſt with ſuch agitations came.
Whilſt I remote from *Tarn* * reſide,
And our two ages differ wide;
My love I freely may explain,
And virtue bluſh not at the ſtrain;
But thou with all the loves wilt ſmile
To hear me talk in amorous ſtile.
I know, with PHILOMELA's voice
The woods in ſpring alone rejoice;
Yet in the winter of my days
I ſigh for thee, and ſing thy praiſe.
In thy bright eyes I ſee the fire
Which does thy writings all inſpire;
And every noble ſtroke of art,
Conſpicuous there affects my heart.

When

* A river which runs through *Montauban*.

When by description in thy lines,
Each charm of blooming *Eden* shines;
Where the all-bounteous Maker shed
His blessings upon ADAM's head;
Their beauties there so plain I trace,
I curse the first of human race,
Who did the fatal apple eat,
By which we lost that blissful seat.
His boldness I still more detest,
When, by thy pencil's power express'd,
I take a view of all the woe
Which did from his transgression flow.
How bright, DU BOCAGE, dost thou shine!
Talents and beauty both are thine.
In youth when love, of passions best,
My faculties entire possest,
Wit without beauty I despis'd,
Nor e'er unmeaning features priz'd:
Then say, in a maturer age,
Could other charms but thine engage?

ANSWER.

What phrenzy makes me thus despise
The various dangers that may rise,
And bids me to the north repair,
Whilst you, LA MOTHE, with soul sincere
Declare yourself for ever mine,
And liberty for love resign!
Still VENUS loves your happy plains,
And CUPID there for ever reigns;
There at all ages men with ease
Learn how to love and how to please.

Thence

Thence ſurly reaſon takes its flight,
By zephyrs borne on pinions light
To diſtant climes, where northern lands
Are ever bound in frozen bands;
The tranſient heat of amorous fires
In thoſe cold regions ſoon expires.
There CUPID cannot, as of yore,
Make lovers ſwim from ſhore to ſhore;
And there no promontories claim
Like *Seſtos* or *Abydos* fame;
Yet I in *England* would remain,
If I could there but find my ſwain.
A CELADON about fourſcore
May ſet the rabble in a roar.
The more he love-engagements flies,
We women more the conqueſt prize.
Prudent, and not to changing prone,
He ſighs for one, and one alone.
Though virtue ſhould oppoſe her laws,
Example pleads the old man's cauſe.
AURORA thus with love inſpir'd,
TITHON in hoary age admir'd;
By merit won, a royal fair
Choſe for her ſhepherd St AULAIRE *.

* The Marquis of St AULAIRE, belonging to the Court of the Dutcheſs of MAINE, preſerved to the age of an hundred the agreeable delicacy of his genius. A little before his death, the Princeſs being curious to diſcover ſomething that he was willing to hide from her, received the following anſwer:

A goddeſs aſks me to impart
The hidden ſecret of my heart;
Were I APOLLO, for a Muſe
That goddeſs I would never chuſe;
To her as THETYS I would bend,
And ſo the day ſhould quickly end.

Since ſuch her choice, be ours the ſame,
Let's love without conſtraint or ſhame
A ſwain, whom all the nine inſpire,
Though old, with true poetic fire;
Who in his tuneful verſes tries
To raiſe his miſtreſs to the ſkies.

LETTER III.

London, April 15, 1750.

THE kind treatment which we receive here, my dear Siſter, makes the place highly agreeable to us. Yeſterday I breakfaſted at my Lady SHAUB's; the Prince of *Wales* came there incog. I was appriſed of this, and humoured the deceit, that he might have the ſatisfaction of thinking me impoſed upon. He was pleaſed to queſtion me in a very obliging manner upon ſeveral different ſubjects, to aſk me to favour him with my works, and to protract the converſation ſo long, that I had time to perceive that he was very well acquainted with *French* literature: I make no doubt but that of the *Engliſh* is equally known to him. The converſation being over, the Prince charged the Miſtreſs of the houſe to introduce me the next day at the court of the Princeſs. I appeared there this morning. The goodneſs of her Royal Highneſs would have given me confidence, had

had it been possible to avoid being intimidated in the presence of two hundred spectators. What strange weaknesses are we subject to! Yesterday the presence of a King's son in disguise did not lay me under the least constraint; to-day he made himself quite familiar with me, and yet I stood in awe before him; I plainly see that it is not Kings who are feared, but the croud that surrounds them.

This august assembly is held at one o'clock: the Ladies form a circle, and the men stand behind them in three ranks. Their Highnesses, followed by the two young Princes, enter at one door and go out at another, after having spoken to the persons whom they condescend to honour with their conversation. This tedious ceremony lasts about an hour. The time of waiting, both before and after, makes those who assist at it very glad to seat themselves at their return. I am resting myself whilst I write to you, and I endeavour to recal the remembrance of what I proposed to tell you concerning the public diversions.

The Oratorio, or pious concert, pleases us highly. *English* words * are sung by *Italian* performers, and accompanied by a variety of instruments. HANDEL is the soul of

* This language appears to be admirably adapted to music. The ingenious Mr ADDISON observes, that its conciseness suits with the natural taciturnity of his countrymen; that the hissing, for which it is remarkable, resembles an instrument with strings; and that the articulate pronunciation of other languages resembles the music of wind instruments.

of it: when he makes his appearance, two wax lights are carried before him, which are laid upon his organ. Amidst a loud clapping of hands he seats himself, and the whole band of music strikes up exactly at the same moment. At the interludes he plays concertos of his own composition, either alone or accompanied by the orchestra. These are equally admirable for the harmony and the execution. The *Italian* opera, in three acts, gives us much less pleasure: The tedious declamation of the recitative makes us buy dearly a few pleasing airs, with which it terminates. The theatre is beautiful: the performers however of this year are but indifferent. Their representations end with the winter: those of the *English* comedians last the greatest part of the year. They play low comedy in a much more natural manner than the *French*. With them a Cobler, or a Waiting-maid, have exactly the language and dress of persons in their station of life. The *English* BARON †, GARRICK, who is their great performer both in Tragedy and Comedy, has the most just and affecting expression. In their Tragedies the declamation appears to us like singing; but I am not well able to form a judgment of it: as I am obliged to carry a book with me to the theatre, in order to understand the piece; whilst I am reading it,

† BARON was a celebrated *French* Comedian; he died at *Paris* in 1729, aged 77.

it, I cannot give a proper attention to the players; and as ſoon as I look off my book, and view their actions, I underſtand them no longer. In their Farces it gives them high delight to introduce the character of a ridiculous *Frenchman*. He is ſo powdered, takes ſo much ſnuff, ſo often looks at his watch, and ſo often patches his face, that he appeared to us a ridiculous caricature. We ſoon perceived, to our great concern, that the ſatire is but too juſt. Our actreſſes are much ſuperior to foreigners in noble and elevated parts, and dreſs themſelves to greater advantage. Thoſe whom we have now upon our ſtage, greatly ſurpaſs the beſt in *London*: we yeſterday ſaw a fat CLEOPATRA, who was fit for nothing but to play the part of a Nurſe.

As human nature is the ſame in all countries, the ſtage of *London*, though very different from ours, reſembles it in many reſpects; but there are here entertainments of which we have no idea; I do not mean horſe-races, cock-fights, or combats of prize-fighters; I leave it to men to deſcribe thoſe ſhocking amuſements, and ſhall dwell upon more pleaſing ſubjects; ſuch as the gardens of *Vauxhall*, which are to be ſeen upon the delightful banks of the *Thames*. There in the morning the proprietor furniſhes all comers with bread and butter, milk, coffee, tea, and chocolate, beſide muſic, for the ſmall price of

of a ſhilling *. In the evening there is an illumination, a concert, and all ſorts of refreſhments, but then the ſhilling is not ſufficient, there is ſomething to pay over and above: ſometimes there are balls for a guinea a head; and for this trifle all that repair to it are entertained in the moſt elegant manner; there are ſongs, dances and maſquerades, which in elegance equal any thing to be ſeen at the *Paris* opera. The Ladies never take off their maſks. There are but few balls at theſe aſſemblies; perſons of all ranks and ages come in a negligent dreſs, from all quarters, to ſooth their cares by innocent amuſement. The *French* look upon it as a phenomenon, that there ſhould be ſo much order and ſo profound a ſilence in the midſt of ſuch a multitude, whilſt with us the ſmalleſt aſſembly occaſions a ſtunning noiſe. We are informed by Monſieur DE FONTENELLE †, that in his time it was not cuſtomary for all preſent in company to ſpeak together. As at that period there were fewer, who could become half ſcholars by gleaning up learning from Journals and Dictionaries; for that reaſon perhaps there were fewer fools, who thought they

* Theſe morning entertainments have been ſince ſuppreſſed.

† A ſage very different from other old men. This is the only circumſtance of times paſt which I ever heard him praiſe.

had a right to prevent men of ſenſe from being heard.

You are well acquainted with the diſturbance which our Coachmen make whenever they run foul of each other: ſuch accidents often happen in the ſmalleſt ſtreets of *London*, when waggons and large carts are paſſing: upon ſuch occaſions the drivers come down and extricate themſelves with the utmoſt labour, ſometimes without uttering an unneceſſary word.

From *Vauxhall* let us take a ſtep to *Ranelagh*, where no greater noiſe is made. The gardens which there have fewer ornaments, preſent to the eye a vaulted amphitheatre of a hundred feet diameter, and with three rows of ſeats, in the midſt of rural thickets; the floor is matted, which makes walking eaſy and agreeable; in the midſt there is a furnace with four fronts, ſurrounded with a baluſtrade, to which the heat penetrates without being exceſſive, and makes winter paſs unnoticed. This magnificent incloſure pleaſed me ſo much, that I could not but prefer it to all the enchantments of *Vauxhall*. Though few are of my opinion, I can ſupport it by good authority, that of the Earl of CHESTERFIELD, who requeſted of me to write a few verſes in praiſe of the place which I undertook to defend; the pleaſure I take in obeying his commands made me attempt to give a deſcription of it. There is a reſemblance between my picture

picture and the original, at least I have been flattered that there is: you cannot form a right judgment of it; I send it you however to give you an idea of the public diversions of this country.

VERSES *upon* RANELAGH.

MUSE, charmer of my leisure hours,
Paint to the *French* those blissful bowers,
Where joy and peace and gay desire
In just proportion still conspire,
And, more to elevate each heart,
To nature add the charms of art.
A thousand instruments around
In jocund concert there resound,
And fast beside a limpid stream
Unnumber'd * lamps diffuse a gleam;
And though a thousand storms arise,
With varied pleasures feast our eyes.
To paint to each succeeding race
The charms of this delightful place,
Like VOLTAIRE I should verse indite,
And like ALBANO charm the Sight.
Permit me, *Ranelagh*, to shew
The joys thy happy shades bestow,
And in obscure and humble verse
Thy noble monuments rehearse.
Thy architecture now displays
The grandeur of *Rome*'s ancient days;

* The lights are inclosed in globes of crystal.

Beneath a dome with ſculpture grac'd,
(Thy galleries ſucceſſive plac'd)
Proud pillars of each order riſe,
And a vaſt circus ſtrikes the eyes.
A fire, that ceaſes ne'er to burn,
'Midſt winter's blaſts makes ſpring return,
And by that Altar Liberty
Is ſeen, from wild diſorder free.
No Pagan temple here we find;
A citizen this work deſign'd;
To him VITRUVIUS' art was known,
He made the public good his own,
And, the ſpectator to delight,
Bid uſe and pleaſure both unite.
In this elyſian, bliſsful ground,
HANDEL's ſweet ſymphonies reſound,
With which *Italian* ſtrains combine
To charm the ſoul by airs divine.
PICCINI there the liſt'ning ears
Delights like muſic of the ſpheres;
Trade, which connects each diſtant ſhore,
Which makes men various climes explore,
To all the gifts this land affords,
Adds *Chineſe* Tea to crown their boards;
Coffee of *Moca*, which beſtows
Tranquillity and calm repoſe;
And the black *Indian* bev'ridge fam'd,
Ambroſia by the *Spaniard* nam'd.
There ſmiling Pleaſure, gay Delight
Mix, and confound each rank and right;
Theſe plains which conſtant joys ſupply,
Delight the taſte, the ear and eye.

Vaunt

Vaunt not thy combats of the field,
Greece, thou to *Ranelagh* muſt yield;
There Victors won a laurel crown
Which gave a fleeting, vain renown:
A thouſand nymphs theſe plains adorn,
Who ſeem to charm all mankind born;
With hats in which gay flowers are ſeen,
They walk majeſtic o'er the green;
The prize of beauty is their aim,
'Tis that alone they juſtly claim.
From thence that ſummum bonum ſprings,
Which, as the ſage LUCRETIUS ſings,
From indolence alone takes riſe,
Though ZENO gives it to the wiſe:
That happineſs, ſo much deſir'd,
By all men wiſh'd for and admir'd;
Which all endeavour to define,
Though none its nature can divine.
The *Engliſh* in this circus find
This ſweet deluſion of the mind;
Here COMUS ſtill in revels reigns,
And grief approaches not theſe plains;
Thus upon LETHE's famous ſhore
When mortals drank, their cares were o'er.
There graveſt Politicians dance,
And loſe their enmity to *France*;
There lovely PHILLIS by her charms
The jealous Patriot diſarms.
The Merchant's agitation's o'er,
He thinks of ſtormy ſeas no more;
He whom antiquities can pleaſe,
Enjoys the preſent hour in eaſe.

Old Ladies ſip their Tea, nor pine
To ſee young HEBE's charms divine.
The Courtezan ſo debonair,
Aſſumes a ſerious prudiſh air.
The games of FLORA † ſeek no more,
Where *Rome* exhauſted all her ſtore;
London thoſe wanton ſports proſcribes,
Where the looſe proſtituted tribes
To PLUTUS yielded all their charms,
And gladiators ſhone in arms;
Whilſt others won, to their diſgrace,
The prize of drinking, and the race.
I ſing thoſe feaſts ſo much renown'd,
Where oft the mutual loves are crown'd,
Of the diſcreet tho' amorous ſwain,
And nymph who hides her charms in vain;
But love in this enchanting ſhrine,
Doubts where he ſhould the palm conſign.

LETTER IV.

London, April 25, 1750.

My dear Siſter,

I Have not yet ſpoken to you of the grand edifices of *London*; I ſhall begin with St *Paul's*. This church is built of *Portland* ſtone, which is not liable to injury by the deſtructive fumes of ſea-coal. It is five hundred

† Games which were celebrated at *Rome* in honour of FLORA, a famous Courtezan.

hundred feet long, a hundred in breadth at the entrance, and two hundred and twenty-three at the croſs †. A little ſquare, ornamented with a ſhort ſtatue of Queen ANNE, conducts to the portal. You go up to it by twelve ſtone ſteps under a periſtilium of ſix columns, forty feet in height. The ſecond order touches the cornice of the temple, and they compute three hundred and forty feet from the ground to the ſummit of the dome. A trifling duty upon ſea-coal was almoſt ſufficient to pay the expence of erecting this vaſt pile of building; which is however ſaid to be inferior in ſize to its model, that of St *Peter* at *Rome*, leſs beautiful, and likewiſe heavier, and overcharged with ornaments.

Beyond this cathedral is to be ſeen the famous Tower built by our King WILLIAM the Conqueror. This fort is a mile in circumference; it contains the ſtate-priſoners, the archives, the mint, the lions, and the arſenal, where arms artfully ranged in order, form upon the walls, ſuns, ſerpents, Meduſa's heads, and many other ſtrange figures. In this hall are to be ſeen the ſtatues of thirty or forty kings on horſeback, armed cap-a-pee, and in ſtature equal to the life.

† St *Peter's* at *Rome* has 226 feet in breadth at the entrance, 442 at the croſs; in height it is 578, and in length 669. *Notre Dame*, at *Paris*, is in length 408 feet, in breadth 163 feet, but its turrets are only 200 feet high.

The heroes to whose honour the city of *London* erects statues, shine only by their reputation, and not by the ability of the sculptors. Their masterpiece is the statue of CHARLES I. in copper, which was sold by the pound during the civil wars by the Parliamentarians. The brazier who bought it, buried it, and afterwards restored it to the State, by which it was set up at *Charing-Cross*, where this unfortunate King seems still to contemplate the window at *Whitehall*, from which he passed to the scaffold. An accidental fire consumed this palace, which JAMES I. began to rebuild according to the most elegant taste of architecture. He finished only the banquetting-house, where his apotheosis is painted upon the cieling by RUBENS. Should mortals think of being enrolled in the number of the deities? This folly a Christian King was guilty of, who for a moment forgot that one GOD reigns in heaven. The walls on one side represent the union of the three kingdoms, which was effected by the same monarch; on the other Envy, Heresy, and Discord in chains. Cardinal WOLSEY made a present of this palace to HENRY VIII. which the present King should finish. His place of residence, notwithstanding the embellishments that have been made in it, is but an ordinary edifice, and has no external decorations. The Kings, his predecessors lived at *Westminster*. The ruins of this great

gothic

gothic palace, which was burned in the sixteenth century, are still extant. In the abbey-church are to be seen the monuments of the Kings, and of many eminent persons whom this country has produced.

Honours inspire people with emulation more than pensions. The *English*, though they are not so generous to the learned as we are, know better how to flatter their vanity. Marks of distinction encourage men of genius much more than sustenance. Too much food makes them heavy; praise is a light aerial substance, which strengthens and animates them. The hopes of being buried in *Westminster*-Abbey is a powerful incentive to persons endowed with abilities, to endeavour to distinguish themselves in their life-time. In this abbey likewise are interred the remains of remarkable and extraordinary men; such as THOMAS PARR, whose epitaph gives us to understand that he died at the age of one hundred and fifty-two years in 1635, and lived in the reigns of ten Kings, from EDWARD IV. to * CHARLES I. We also saw the waxen figures of several Kings in their robes of state, like that of King GEORGE in the great hall of the palace of *Westminster*. It is there that the Parliament meets, and Ladies are admitted on the day that it rises. Our astonishment was great: we thought we were entering

* I read not long ago in the Gazette that his grandson died in the county of *Cork*, at thirty-two years of age.

entering into one of the moſt auguſt places in the world; the very name of it filled us with awe; we expected to ſee the one hundred and ſeventy Lords, ſpiritual and temporal, ſitting with a dignity ſuited to their important ſtations. It was quite the reverſe; we found them all jumbled together in ſcarlet robes faced with ermine, and not knowing where to ſeat themſelves; they had given up their places to the Ladies; a croud of whom in rich dreſſes filled the whole hall, excepting only a little corner reſerved for the King. His Majeſty's approach being announced by the firing of cannon, he came and ſeated himſelf upon the throne, with his crown upon his head, the Prince of *Wales* ſtanding upon his right hand, and the Duke of *Cumberland* on his left, ſurrounded by the great officers of the kingdom: one carries the ſcepter, another the ſword of ſtate; and a Speaker, choſen by the 558 members of the Houſe of Commons, comes to the bar to make a ſpeech. The King anſwers by the clerk of the crown in old *French*, *Soit fait ainſi qu'il eſt requis*; "Let it be done as deſired;" *Le Roy le veut*, "It is the King's pleaſure, or, *Vous remercie de votre benevolence*, He thanks you for your good will." Then the King makes a ſpeech, which is ſeldom very long: both houſes return him thanks; and his Majeſty goes back to St *James*'s with the ſame ceremony of guns firing, in a large

gilded

gilded coach, of which but few are to be seen in this country.

The town is dirty and ill paved *: and the reason assigned for this is, that in a free nation citizens pave as they think proper, each before his own door: it is often necessary to break up the pavement, in order to mend the pipes; all the houses in *London* are furnished with water from the *Thames* or the *New River*. The Ladies are carried in sedan chairs within the barrier where passengers walk. In the evening two rows of lamps, which hang upon posts, give light and make a gay appearance. The houses have half a story under ground; this obliges people to ascend a few steps to come to the street-door, which is exceeding narrow: it is the same thing with regard to the court-yard, where coaches can seldom enter, and therefore put up in a lane behind the house. The footmen wait by a fire side at the bottom of the stairs to avoid dirtying them, and a hair-cloth or mat prevents their masters from soiling the steps.

There is no antichamber before the saloon where the company meets, which is adorned with little glasses, and has generally a closet belonging to it. About a dozen buildings which are here called Palaces, but at *Paris* would

* How greatly would this Lady be surprized to behold the change made in so short a time in this metropolis, which is no longer subject to the above reproach of foreigners, but may now be reckoned the best paved and best illuminated city in *Europe!*

pass only for large houses, and which men of fortune amongst us would find many faults with, are highly esteemed in *London*; but there are many large squares, that have something very grand in them. To tell the plain truth, though there is great luxury in *England*, it does not come up to ours, which the people of this country imitate nevertheless, as all the other nations of *Europe* do, to their destruction. There are scarce any arm-chairs * in their apartments; they are satisfied with common chairs. The women, who use no paint and are always laced, (as was the custom formerly in *France*) are fond of these seats: in their court-dresses they resemble the pictures of our great-grandmothers; but they are extremely affable and obliging in their behaviour. If these Ladies do not always seem polite enough to the *French*, our women often carry politeness to excess, and the art which many of them have recourse to, in order to conceal a trifling defect of nature, causes them to make a thousand grimaces.

There are more women to be seen here at assemblies and at the public diversions than at *Paris*; they frequent them even in the decline of life, without being afraid of shewing their wrinkles: Mothers carry their Daughters with them, who live in much less constraint

* There have been some alterations lately made in this and other particulars.

ſtraint than young Ladies amongſt us. I yeſterday had the pleaſure of ſeeing the Counteſs of YARMOUTH at the Duke of BEDFORD's; ſhe appeared extremely beautiful to me: the company conſiſted of perſons of the firſt quality; a row of card-tables on each ſide of a large gallery exhibited what is very rarely to be ſeen in *London*, where the apartments are ſeldom very large, even in the houſes of noblemen.

The apartments at the Duke of RICHMOND's, where we dined, are very agreeable, as they afford a pleaſing proſpect of the *Thames*, and are beautified with the richeſt ornaments; but the opulence of this nobleman ſerves only to add a luſtre to the nobleſimplicity of his manners. His taſte for literature determined him to entruſt the education of his ſons to Mr TREMBLAY, a citizen of *Geneva*, famous for the diſcoveries he has made concerning the Polypus *. Let us return to the Dutcheſs of RICHMOND, who, amongſt other amiable qualities, is remarkable for taking particular care of her family. She herſelf prepares her daughters for inoculation, and during the operation ſhuts herſelf up with them at an Apothecary's; for fear her children in the cradle, brought up under her inſpection, ſhould have the ſmall-pox before the proper age.

Few

* A little animal that inhabits the water; if it be cut into ſeveral parts, each of the parts becomes an entire Polypus.

Few of our † women of fashion have so much maternal tenderness as to deprive themselves of pleasure during six weeks for the good of their families. I mention these instances, to prove the maternal tenderness of the *English* Ladies of all ranks. The satisfaction which they have in thus carefully discharging their duty, more than compensates the want of those vain amusements, which take up our time without satisfying us.

THE fair one's blest in wisdom's lore,
Contented with her frugal store;
True virtue limits her desires,
Her soul no happier lot requires.
Her duty only claims her cares,
Her Husband in each pleasure shares.
Her Children from their tenderest age
All her maternal thoughts engage.
The conduct of the virtuous dame,
Shews that their good is all her aim.
Their hearts by reason's power she gains,
By tenderness she o'er them reigns.
The *Baucis*, whom my verse recites,
Enjoys youth's pleasures and delights;
When life declines, and beauty flies,
With her own works she feasts her eyes:
Delights, she can no longer taste,
Are by tranquillity replac'd;

Her

† Many of our Ladies, respectable for their laudable resolution this way, have lately refuted this reflection which was made ten years ago.

Her ſoul outrageous time defies,
Thus virtue with compoſure dies.
Here ſadly let us contemplate
A brilliant beauty's hapleſs fate,
Who fain would ever ſhine and pleaſe,
And live in luxury and eaſe.
No pleaſures can her hours amuſe;
Still anxious care her ſteps purſues;
Gayly to dreſs in youth's bleſt prime,
Engroſſes all her thoughts and time.
But ſoon luxurious bliſs betrays
To woe, and ſpoils her halcyon days.
If ſhe forgets through wild deſires
What duty's pow'rful voice requires,
She dreads a Huſband's jealous rage,
Whoſe ſoul no tender thoughts engage.
Her Lover with deluſive art
Deceives, whilſt ſtill he ſooths her heart.
The Children, whom her pride neglects,
With coldneſs pay her their reſpects;
Such outward forms her caprice craves;
Suſpiciouſly ſhe eyes her ſlaves.
When from her cheek the colour flies,
Her livid paleneſs ſhocks the eyes,
And in her ſad, forſaken age
The world inſpires regret and rage.
Death, which ſhe dreads, draws near each day,
She feels a gradual decay:
The ills, which all her life muſt laſt,
Reproach her with her pleaſures paſt:
Who would ſo dearly pleaſures buy?
Who would ſo live, if ſo to die?

LETTER.

LETTER V.

London, May 25, 1750.

My dear Sister,

I Received this morning the most delightful presents in the world; my Lady MONTAGUE sent me a new and elegant edition of MILTON; my Lady ALLEN sent me two little vessels of *Agate*; and the Duke of RICHMOND a present of Fruit, which I did not know what to make of, being used only to comfits. So many marks of affection please me the more, as the *English* are thought to be sincere in their friendships. They are falsly accused of receiving foreigners ill. I cannot believe that their favours are confined to us. It is true, we but little resemble the natives of our country, who dislike every opinion that is not familiar to them. But the more the customs of foreign nations differ from ours, the more our curiosity is gratified when we see them. Travellers do not visit foreign parts to communicate their modes, but to observe the diversity of manners in different kingdoms. There is nothing which should more excite our wonder, than to see how much more prevalent the spirit of patriotism is here than amongst us. In the reign of Queen ELIZABETH, GRESHAM, a merchant

merchant of *London*, built at his own expence the *Royal Exchange*, a College, and five Hospitals, and left funds for the support of Professors. Dr HARVEY, who first discovered the circulation of the blood, bequeathed his house and his whole estate to the faculty. Sir HUGH MIDDLETON, sorry to see a great part of the town in want of wholesom water, was at a vast expence to supply this want, by turning the course of the *New River* towards it. Sir JOHN COTTON left to the State the *Westminster* Library *; that of the Duke of NORFOLK belongs to the Royal Society, founded by CHARLES II. Mr FOLK is the President; our great FONTENELLE recommended me to his care, by the honourable appellation of his daughter; you may judge then that I have been well received. Yesterday he carried us to one of his assemblies, where we breakfasted with his daughter, who is very pretty. He shewed us the plan of *London*, which he had drawn, and we were convinced by it that this metropolis is as big as *Paris*. He is of opinion likewise that the number of inhabitants is nearly equal in both cities. They tell us, that its walls were built by CONSTANTINE, since which time it has been so extended, that its circumference is thirty miles. The fire in 1666 burned down 13000 wooden houses, St *Paul*'s cathedral, and many other churches.

* Now deposited in the *British* Museum.

The loſs was computed to amount to two hundred millions of money, *French* coin. In three years time ten thouſand houſes were rebuilt, and a hundred public edifices, either of ſtone or brick. The inhabitants availed themſelves of this opportunity to enlarge many of the ſtreets. The rich citizens had an inclination to embelliſh ſuch quarters of the town as had been deſtroyed by the fire; but their feeble attempts evidently prove, that their taſte for architecture was then only in its infancy; it has ſince been ſomewhat improved; but in commerce they have made a much more conſiderable progreſs.

I thought that a philoſophical ſpirit was more general amongſt the *Engliſh* than it is; we were ſurprized the other day to ſee ten thouſand of the inhabitants of *London* run away to their country-houſes for fear of an earthquake, which had been foretold by a ſoldier; the falſe prophet was puniſhed for his impoſture by a ſhort confinement, by which he payed for the folly of the credulous. Such a prediction would never have occaſioned ſo much terror in *Paris*. Notwithſtanding theſe remains of Superſtition, many books filled with profound philoſophical reaſonings are every day publiſhed in *England*; but correctneſs and elegance in Writing, and a juſt taſte in Architecture, Painting and Sculpture, are there ſtill in their infant ſtate. They have, however, a fine column of the doric order,

order, two hundred feet high and fifteen in diameter, erected in commemoration of the terrible fire which I ſpoke of above. One of the inſcriptions aſcribes this calamity to the machinations of the papiſts. Gun-powder treaſon, which happened in the reign of JAMES I. is another of the crimes which they are accuſed of by the proteſtants. The monument erected in remembrance of the fire of *London*, is upon the right as you come to *London* Bridge, where the large veſſels lie at anchor.

On the other ſide, the river offers to the view a thouſand watermen, who are always ready to carry paſſengers from one end of the town to the other. We are told that they took upon the *Thames*, in the year 1200, a Sea-man, which they ſupported on ſhore for ſix months, and then threw it again into the water. In 1606, the tide, which there riſes very high, brought up with it a whale, and carried it back again. The mariners in their mock fights bring a croud of people to the quays, which makes a diverting ſight.

As we go up the river, we meet with *Chelſea*, celebrated for a magnificent hoſpital for decayed ſoldiers, a China manufacture, and Sir HANS SLOANE's Cabinet, which is famous all over *Europe* for its curioſities *. We examined fourteen rooms which were filled with books and rarities, and we ſaw in

* Now depoſited in the *Britiſh* Muſeum.

the garden the skull of a whale, which, in size, equals a table that holds twelve dishes. This curious old Gentleman intends, as it is said, to bequeath these fruits of his inquiries to the Royal Society of *London*, which is already rich in things of this nature. Dr MEAD, a celebrated Physician, is likewise possessed of great literary treasures. He shewed us coloured plans of all the ancient Fresco Paintings, which have been preserved since the days of old *Rome*; a fine collection of the pictures of several different schools; a head of HOMER, saved out of the fire of *Corinth*; *Egyptian* bronzes, and the pictures of the greatest Poets and most eminent Philosophers of his country; ornaments worthy the care of a good citizen. He presented us with Chocolate made after the *Mexico* fashion. I easily use myself to these foreign dishes, and even to the simple cookery of the *English*, of which we have so bad an opinion, (their substantial meat, their plumb-pudding, their fish) which is cheaper here than at *Paris*, and is served up at every meal, and their fowls with buttered sauce, are excellent. They make wine, like ours, of cherries, which very much resembles *Burgundy*, and with it they serve up in baskets, made of rushes or of silver, little bits of bread, like our consecrated cakes; the share of six persons would hardly satisfy me. I had been told that they seldom entertained foreigners; but I, for my part,

part, found them ſtrict obſervers of the rites of hoſpitality. We have hitherto paſſed only two days without being invited to dinner. The morning is with them very long: they do not ſit down to table till about four a clock.

The men go out early in the morning, dreſſed in frocks, either to take a walk or a ride; at their return, they generally dine at a tavern; they moſt of them go incognito to the Play or to *Vauxhall*; it is not thought neceſſary to dreſs except to appear at the Opera or at the places where they are invited to dine. Men of quality reſort to a Chocolate-houſe, where the proprietor furniſhes them, for three hundred guineas a year apiece, candles, firing, refreſhments, and ſuppers plentiful enough to cauſe frequent indigeſtions; deep gaming is there ſo common, that a whole fortune may be eaſily loſt. Theſe ſocieties conſiſt of about a hundred perſons; no candidate is admitted into them without being elected by the unanimous ſuffrages of all the members; and whoever behaves ill, is expelled the ſociety. People of all ranks have clubs, which they regulate by ſuch laws as they think proper; there is one now in *London*, where none of the members is allowed to ſpeak above a few minutes; a very eloquent Baker who is preſident of this ſociety, holds a watch in his hand and a hammer, with which he

gives a ſtroke as ſoon as ever the time is expired; every one preſent liſtens in ſilence; and the deſire of expreſſing his thoughts with perſpicuity, makes the ſpeaker very conciſe. It would be well if our ſtory-tellers were laid under the ſame reſtraint. People of faſhion, who have a curioſity to aſſiſt at this aſſembly, are admitted upon the ſame conditions. The *Engliſh* gentry are neither ambitious of titles nor honours; yet the common people here pay more reſpect to the nobility than amongſt us, though they do not exact it. The odes and prefaces addreſſed to them, are at leaſt as full of praiſes as thoſe of our authors.

At the entertainments of the lovers of literature, we did not fail to celebrate the ingenious authors of *Tom Jones* and *Clariſſa*. In our turn we have been often aſked an account of the author of *Marianne* and the *Fortunate Peaſant*. The famous Aſtronomer, BRADLY, does honour to the Royal Society. *Parnaſſus* has no longer a SHAKESPEARE or an ADDISON * in this country. I have met with Mrs PRINCE, of our city of *Rouen*, who compoſes excellent treatiſes concerning the education of young perſons, and is very ſucceſsful in reducing them to practice. An *Italian*, whoſe name is MATI, publiſhes a Journal

* Ladies who were acquainted with this divine moraliſt informed me, that the evenneſs of his temper made him always equally agreeable in company; whereas POPE was good company only by ſtarts.

Journal here, which is in great esteem all over *Europe*. You know what high favour VOLTAIRE and MONTESQUIEU are in with the *English*; yesterday we drank their healths at the Earl of CHESTERFIELD's, after a meal which was by no means philosophical, that is to say frugal: this learned Nobleman has the misfortune of having a *French* cook. Noblemen, in all probability by the advice of Physicians, whose interest it is to destroy their stomachs, have recourse to these poisoners. Our senseless luxury will by degrees corrupt all nations: but we shall not see them in the state to which it has reduced us; it will annihilate us before their fall.

You who love the frugal life of our shepherds, must applaud the harangues which I repeatedly make against luxury and effeminacy. This hatred is hereditary to me; my Father had it before me; I take the liberty to make him a compliment thereon, and request it of you to present it to him, in order to supply the place of a Letter.

To my FATHER.

To thee, whose care first form'd my youth,
I send these lines inspir'd by truth:
Thou, who didst ev'n when young and gay,
To sacred wisdom homage pay,
Art blest tho' far advanc'd in age
With vigour, as in life's first stage.

The keenness of thy appetite
Makes all thy frugal meals delight;
In vain MOURIER † with all his art,
Would to the great such joys impart;
Their taste by Luxury's destroy'd,
They are not satisfy'd, but cloy'd.
DIOGENES, that cynic sam'd,
The great, through pride and passion, blam'd.
Thy mind is simple, void of art,
No guile a place finds in thy heart.
Thy soul is from ambition free,
But yet to praise thee all agree.
Without despising rank or gold,
Thou ease the good supreme dost hold:
Not that at which LUCRETIUS aim'd,
Such slothful indolence is blam'd;
Nor apathy, of which before
Rome made her boasts in days of yore;
But that calm sunshine of the mind
Which men of sense rejoice to find,
When age their heads hath silver'd o'er,
And when of Love they think no more.

As you do not understand *English*, I thought it unnecessary to send you the verses, which were composed here in my praise; but to amuse your solitary hours, or perhaps only to teaze and pester you, I am every day sending you some of my own. I here subjoin the copy of verses I wrote to thank Lady Mon-

† A famous Cook.

MONTAGUE † for the edition of MILTON, of which she made me a present, and for doing me the honour to desire a sight of my works.

THY noble presents strike my heart,
And prove in thine I have a part:
My works, not worthy to be shewn,
I send, to make my duty known.
Thus heavenly favours to return
Mortals sing hymns, and incense burn.
Thy favours always please me more
Than bounteous fortune's richest store,
When favours she bestows, how blind!
To importunity how kind!
But still thy penetrating eye
Can easily true merit spy;
Thy presents then convince me best,
That kind indulgence fills thy breast.

LETTER VI.

London, May 12, 1750.

Dear Sister,

YOU complain that I never give you an account of my health; it is in so variable a state, that whatever I should say of it would no longer be true, by the time my letters came to

† A relation of the celebrated Lady WORTLEY MONTAGUE.

to hand. With regard to the *English* government, of which you desire to hear my opinion, you might receive better information from books than from any letters of mine; but you could never learn from them my sentiments concerning it. To me it appears, that the diversity of parties necessary to support a balance of power, gives rise to too great a spirit of contention in this kingdom, whence proceeds insincerity in debates; and no man steady in his principles can continue faithful to his party, which in process of time is liable to change. Have not we seen the Whigs and Tories alternately maintain the opinions of the opposite party; insomuch that historians are at a loss how to ascertain their respective tenets? The case was the same with the Guelphs and Gibelines in *Italy*, and so it will be in all great factions. In this country the love of Liberty seems to make slaves of its defenders. The Members of the House of Lords hold their places by hereditary right, they are therefore under no necessity of making interest to be elected; but their credit in parliament is always proportioned to the number of creatures they have in the House of Commons: as it is of the highest importance to them to have their relations and friends elected into this assembly, they are under a necessity of courting the populace, by whose votes every candidate for a seat is chosen or rejected

In

In the country towns, when the time of election is at hand, he who is at most expence in treating all comers, and making them drunk at his own cost in the public houses, which are upon that occasion kept open, is always sure of getting the most votes for the candidate whom he patronises. When the competitors are rich and obstinate, the expence is enormous. If the parliament of *Paris* were elective, the *French* Ladies would find means by intriguing to procure many a Counsellor a seat. In this country they have but little influence in public affairs, yet they are admitted to wear the crown, and govern the nation. Peeresses have seats, and distinguishing ornaments at all great public ceremonies. Our Ladies (though the *French* nation is famous for its galantry) have no distinguished rank; all access to the throne is denied them; and they are not even admitted to hold a place in any Academy. Let us at present pass over these contradictions which are so frequent in the world, and return to the subject of the vast sums which the *English* Gentlemen spend at elections; though at a distance from their seats, they are under a necessity of keeping open house there, in order to entertain the gentry of the neighbourhood. Such trouble are they at to acquire the good-will of the people round about.

I was

I was yesterday admiring the elegance of a Court-Lady's toilet, whereupon she told me, that if one of her tenants were to take a fancy to breakfast upon it, she would be obliged to comply, in order to gain him over. In *France* we cringe to the great, in *England* the great cringe to the populace: but to compensate for this, people of inferior rank often stand in need of the patronage of the great, and for that reason pay them a voluntary homage. From this mutual dependence springs the best form of government that can be conceived, were it possible to rectify its abuses; but what human institution is free from such? The world is full of them; our neighbours, however, by resisting the yoke, become hard to be led, and reserve to themselves a right of choosing their leaders.

The Lord Mayor of *London*, who is at the head of a considerable jurisdiction, is annually elected by the city: his government, though but short, is brilliant: there is a large palace built for his reception; but though he does not inhabit it, it serves him upon Court-days, and when he is called upon by any ceremony. On the day of his installation he treats the Nobility and the Royal Family at this palace, which is called the Mansion-House. In 1356, a Lord Mayor, whose name was PICARD, had the honour of seeing four Monarchs at his table:

EDWARD

EDWARD III. King of *England*, the unfortunate King JOHN of *France*, DAVID II. King of *Scotland*, and a King of *Cyprus*, of the name of LUSIGNAN.

Sovereign Princes are looked upon in a very different light at *London*, from what they are at *Paris*. The ſpirit of Liberty, which makes the people leſs complaiſant, admits likewiſe of all ſorts of religions, Preſbyterians, Anabaptiſts, Catholics, Epiſcopalians, Jews, *&c.* We went the other day to a Quaker's Meeting. I aſſumed the ſimple habit of a female Quaker, imitated their compoſed behaviour, and took my ſeat amongſt their women. If any of them happen to be enlightened by a prophetic ſpirit, they riſe, like the prieſteſs of the oracle at *Delphi*, make a thouſand contorſions, and preach upon a ſtool inſtead of a tripod. We were very deſirous of ſeeing one of them in the enthuſiaſtic fit; but the Spirit gave us an opportunity of hearing none but men, who uttered their inſpirations in a wretched manner, and repeated the ſame thing a thouſand times over; perhaps the profane are not capable of underſtanding them. We were of that number; however, their deliberate pronunciation made it very eaſy for us to underſtand their *Engliſh*. From the Quakers Meeting we went to the Jewiſh Synagogue, whence the frightful cries of their Hebrew prayers made us fly with all ſpeed.

After

After having dwelt so long upon what struck us most in *London* during our short residence in that Metropolis, it is time to give you an account of the little excursions which we made in the environs.

We dined yesterday nine miles from town, at the Lord Chief Justice's; the gravity of whose habit and noble simplicity of deportment, are truly worthy of a senator. His wife conforms to the same manners; and even their villa is built in the same taste. The structure is regular; the apartments are large and well furnished; the dining-room, which resembles those of our ancestors, presents two great side-boards of plate; and the tables plenty of every thing good, but no ragouts. The Park, according to the custom of the country, is stocked with deer, whose tender flesh, though it is but little liked by the *French*, is highly esteemed by the *English*. We have different meats, different manners, and different prepossessions: even the practice of physic is here so different from what it is with us, that as I cannot conceive how the distance of a hundred leagues is able to produce such a variation, I am tempted to think that it is a science founded entirely upon hypothesis. In *Italy* beef-broth is thought the fittest for sick persons, in *France* veal broth, and in *England* mutton and chicken broth; the meat of which the broth is made is never eaten, it is

thought

thought too much done; and the broth of that which is eaten, is generally thrown away. Great lobsters, crabs and raddishes are served up at all tables, as helps to digestion. Their Physicians require exorbitant fees, seldom prescribe bleeding, and clysters but rarely; blisters are generally applied to those that are in a dying condition; their drink is beer, and their food bread and butter; in *Holland* it is cheese and tea; in *Ireland* potatoes, the ordinary food of the inhabitants. People die in all countries alike notwithstanding.

When we take a view of the world, of books and of life, we easily perceive, that the different ways people have of dressing themselves, of impairing their constitutions, of curing their disorders, of lodging, of eating, of gaining each others favours, and of cheating, are all in effect much the same. You will then very probably say, it is unnecessary to give one's self the trouble of travelling. Excuse me, it is an advantage to have it in our power to convince ourselves by experience of what by reason we could only conjecture: in fact, we see that both extremes are in all countries much the same: the want of bread amongst people of the lower class, and of honours amongst Courtiers, reduces them to the same meannesses; in the middle class human nature lying under less restraint, varies according to education

education and climate. But I must take my leave of you, I am suddenly called off from these moral reflections to visit *Kensington*, a country-seat belonging to the King, which is not far distant from the Metropolis. I must therefore bid adieu to you for the present.

LETTER VII.

London, May 16, 1750.

Dear Sister,

WE are now arrived at *Kensington*. The outside of the Palace is irregular, and built of Brick. We entered by a sort of dormitory, which leads to a great staircase painted by an *Englishman* of little genius; but he was so great a master of perspective, that his figures appear in fact to lean over the balustrade. The apartments are large and well furnished; pictures by BASSANO and TINTORET adorn one of the galleries; in the other are to be seen the portraits of all the Kings and Queens of *England* that reigned since HENRY VIII. The eye is next delighted with a great piece of water, and lawns very much admired for the beauty of the verdure. All the walks, instead of being strewed with sand, are covered with green-sod; notwithstanding the care that is every

every day taken to mow and level it with a rolling-ſtone, it moiſtens the feet whenever it rains: this makes theſe gardens reſemble ſmooth green meadows, which have no ſtatues in them, and command no proſpect. An artificial mount, ſurrounded with pine-trees, ſeems very proper for opening a view to the plain; but the turret which crowns it turns uſeleſly upon a pivot; the trees overſhadow it, and the dry ſoil which nouriſhes them, offers nothing pleaſing to the eye. Let us now take a view of the other palaces.

As we go up the *Thames* in queſt of them, we ſee the country-ſeat and fine terraſs of Mr VANECK, a famous Banker, by whom ſtrangers are received in the moſt generous and hoſpitable manner. At a little diſtance from thence you diſcover *Richmond*, one of the King's houſes, where he ſometimes dines. A vaſt terraſs covered with a graſs-plot, which runs along the river ſide, conſtitutes its principal ornament: the numerous and pleaſant thickets preſent to the view a place of conſiderable extent, called the Foreſt; where, the better to imitate nature, art has, without any order, planted great trees, ſome of them erect, ſome of them crooked, one half withered away, another ſurrounded with ſhrubs. The Park, which is filled with deer and all ſorts of game, would have been nothing but meadows, if taſte had not varied and divided them into cultivated lands, or raiſed them

into eminences ſurrounded with canals, which have a communication with the *Thames*. Theſe canals lead to a Grotto, the ſtones of which, unpoliſhed without-ſide, form within a vault adorned with ſculpture. The famous MERLIN, Counſellor to King ARTHUR, who was believed to be begot by an incubus, has there likewiſe his cave, made in imitation of that which he occupied in *Wales*, the place of his nativity. The late Queen, who was a lover of ſubterraneous caverns, cauſed one to be conſtructed in the form of a labyrinth, in which narrow, dark and winding alleys conduct the ſteps of the curious. We there meet with the figures of travellers, who ſeem to walk trembling all the way towards the entrance of the cavern. A low and gothic door, filled with hieroglyphics, leads to this awful place, to which you deſcend by a walk covered with pebbles over-grown with moſs. The enchanter ſits upon a tripod, loaden with books of magick and armillary ſpheres. ANN BOLEYN and Queen ELIZABETH conſult him, accompanied by their nurſes, perſons very proper to aſſiſt at theſe puerile myſteries.

Oppoſite to theſe places, and on the other ſide of the river, is to be ſeen *Sion*, a vaſt palace belonging to the Dukes of *Northumberland*, with four fronts, and flanked with towers. The enemies of the church of *Rome* report, that it was formerly inhabited by monks, who

visited a female convent at *Richmond*, by means of a vault, which, it is said, is still in being, and runs under the *Thames*.

This fine river waters *Hampton-Court*, which was built by Cardinal WOLSEY, Minister and favourite of HENRY VIII. WILLIAM the third, King of *England*, lived in this palace and embellished it; four courts, surrounded with four different piles of building, contain fifteen hundred apartments magnificently furnished: in one of the largest are the seven famous Cartoons of RAPHAEL *, which represent the acts of the apostles; LEWIS XIV. could not purchase them for two millions of livres. The inside of the apartments not only gratifies our curiosity, but the country round about presents to the view a most delightful prospect. A great canal crosses the gardens, planted with yews, like our ancient parterres, which are now out of fashion.

There are here some thickets laid out in our modern taste, in which the *English* think there is too much symmetry. They prefer to spouting waters those which have a level surface, as more natural; and winding walks to straight alleys, the extremity of which is immediately taken in by the eye. They even make canals run in a serpentine form, that they may appear the more natural, and cast unequal shades upon the banks, which are covered with green turf and trees, in the form

 in

* Now removed to the Queen's Palace.

in which they are produced by nature. We saw a delightful artificial rivulet of this sort at Lord BURLINGTON's near *London*. His gardens are large and beautifully adorned: it is said that the house is a miniature of the famous Palace of the Marquis of CAPRA at *Vicenza*, which was built according to a plan given by PALLADIO; but the proportions of a lofty edifice, when reduced to a small compass, lose all their grace, and no longer produce the same effect.

The *English* often travel to *Italy*, and there contract a taste for columns and pediments; but they reduce these antique colossus's to porticos and castles for pigmies. The Earl of BURLINGTON has spent three millions of livres in embellishing his gardens, and building near his house his little *Italian* Palace, which is filled with the most precious rarities. He has notwithstanding a revenue of three hundred thousand livres a year, which he spends in retirement, by setting artists to work.

In this country Noblemen are richer than in ours, and spend their money in gratifying their particular tastes, whilst they throw away much less money than ours upon the articles of footmen, dress, pagods, and jewels: the necessity they are under to improve their minds with study, in order to make a figure in Parliament, keeps them from those vain amusements to which the desire of pleasing enslaves

enſlaves the *French* Nobility. At our Court preferment is to be obtained only by the intrigues of Women and Miniſters; for this reaſon it is neceſſary for courtiers to become ſupple, and cultivate the art of pleaſing. In *London*, reſolution and a maſculine eloquence lead to honours: in order therefore to attain them, they are obliged to ſtudy ancient authors, and improve their minds with wiſe maxims; and if they aim to ſhine in the adminiſtration, they are equally obliged to ſtudy politics. Hence the deſire of riſing, which makes the nobility amongſt us have recourſe to frivolous amuſements and diſſipation, induces the great in this country to attach themſelves to ſtudy. They endeavour by travelling to improve their reaſon, which has before been exerciſed by books, and that often till the age of twenty, at *Oxford* or *Cambridge* Univerſities. I am now going to ſet out for the former of thoſe learned ſeminaries, of which I ſhall give you an account at my return.

LETTER VIII.

London, May 30, 1750.

Dear Sister,

YOU appear to me to be satisfied with my mother's health, with your own, and my punctual correspondence. I read the letter, in which you give me this information, with the highest satisfaction, upon my arrival at *Oxford.* We were accompanied by two *English* Knights in this little excursion. We first passed by *Windsor*, whose forest Mr POPE has celebrated in an admirable poem.

The Duke of *Cumberland* has here a hunting-seat, separated by a long avenue from the Royal Castle, which stands upon a hill, from whence we discover a vast and fertile plain, watered by the *Thames.* Ever since the reign of WILLIAM the Conqueror, the *English* Kings have been constantly lavishing embellishments upon this abode, favoured by nature. EDWARD III. who made the Countess of *Salisbury*'s garter a mark of distinction, there fixed the residence of the order of the Garter, and built the castle in a taste very pleasing to the eye. Perhaps I may herein discover a want of taste, but I must own I like gothic buildings, such as St OWEN's Church at

at *Rouen*. It has few admirers like me; but my taste is supported by the concurrence of persons, whose opinion is of more weight than that of a multitude. The Chapel at *Windsor*, where HENRY VIII. and CHARLES I. were buried, is in this romantic taste of architecture. The boldness of the vault surprizes connoisseurs, and the singing of the choir, accompanied by the organ, delighted my ear like celestial melody. The evening and the place contributed to my delusion. I would gladly have passed the whole night in hearing prayers and anthems. This enchantment was broke by another, which appeared to me equally exquisite. The terras of the castle by moon-light has a most delightful prospect. From this gentle gleam the architecture derived new charms; it shed a lustre upon the *Thames*, and formed distant prospects to which my imagination gave an indefinite length.

I was almost equally pleased the day following. This spacious terras affords a delightful view. The apartments in the castle are large and well furnished.

In St GEORGE's Hall, where the feast of the Knights of the Garter is celebrated, there is a picture in which EDWARD the black Prince is represented bringing to his father EDWARD III, our King JOHN, and two other Kings, who were formerly prisoners at *Windsor*. There are likewise chimney

pieces which are very much admired, and frames adorned with white wood, cut into the form of flowers and all sorts of animals, with surprizing art. The artist to whom the world is indebted for these extraordinary works, lived in the reign of Queen ELIZABETH, who was at great expence to bestow decorations upon the places which I am now describing.

It was with regret we left them in order to visit the famous castle of *Blenheim*, which was built at the expence of the parliament to perpetuate the memory of the Duke of *Marlborough*'s victories. These monuments, which cost the nation twenty millions of livres, reflect as much honour on it as on the hero whom they immortalize. The tapestry hangings and the paintings of this palace represent the exploits of the Duke; the library in the gallery, which has neither pictures nor gilding, and the bottom of which is adorned only by a picture of Queen ANNE, is embellished with sculptures in an excellent taste: a colonade leads to the Chapel, where is to be seen a superb Mausoleum of the duke of *Marlborough*: The edifice, which is of a rich and immense architecture, is too low and too heavy; this fault had been frequently committed by VANBRUGH, who gave the plan of it, and this occasioned the Epitaph, in which the author alludes to the ancient custom of wishing that the earth may lie light

upon

upon the dead; the words, which are either Mr POPE's or Doctor SWIFT's, are as follow;

Lie heavy on him earth, for he
Laid many a heavy load on thee.

The *English* have brought the art of polishing steel to great perfection. At *Woodstock*, near *Blenheim*, are to be seen the masterpieces of this sort of workmanship. They shew their goods to strangers as they pass this way, who generally buy some of them, and set out next day for *Oxford*. We were travelling to that place, where we arrived betimes. This city, which was set apart by King ALFRED for the education of youth, presents to the view on every side Colleges, Libraries, Gardens, Doctors with four cornered caps, Scholars in their gowns, and Shops and Markets to supply their necessities. Whatever might interrupt the studies of the Scholars, as gaming, plays, and complaisant beauties, are banished from this place. The very air of the country breathes the purest precepts of morality. Every object that offers there inculcates virtue and science. The theatre, which has a fine dome built by SHELDON Archbishop of *Canterbury*, in which the public exercises of the university are performed, is one of its finest buildings. There is erected hard by a noble edifice, in which are cabinets for chemistry, medals and natural

ral history; we there saw the ancient *Arundelian* marbles, the correct press of *Clarendon*, and an anatomical theatre, where they shew the skeleton of a widow who had ten husbands, and was hanged at thirty six years of age, for having poisoned four of them.

What disgusted me in this learned city, during the short stay we made in it, was to feel in the month of *May*, a *December*-wind, which gave me a sore throat; to find a sharp pavement which hurt my feet; and to see the *Parian* or *Arundel* marbles thrown carelessly to the bottom of a damp cellar. Is it possible that the *English*, in seeking for the precious remains of *Greece* and *Rome*, resemble conquerors or lovers, who are eager to acquire at a great expence the object of their wishes, and equally ready to neglect it when once it is in their possession? There is likewise another circumstance which one cannot approve of, I mean the custom of distinguishing the *Oxford* Scholars according to their birth and fortune, by a gown more or less rich. At the Muses seats all ranks ought to be equal. It is more allowable to boast of wit, beauty, strength, health and riches, than of birth; because the former gifts may be useful to others; but of what benefit is an honourable family without merit? In order to suppress that vanity, which springs up too naturally in the minds of young persons, it would be advisable to use them from their early

early youth to ſet a value upon no praiſe but that which is acquired by virtue. I would recommend this precept to my nephews, to whom I here give my compliments. You inform me that the Chevalier is received in the corps of muſqueteers: If I take pleaſure in giving leſſons, he will no doubt often afford me occaſion to exerciſe my talent that way: in the mean time, I endeavour to learn by ſtudying books as well as men. All the books in the Bodleian library are chained upon the ſhelves: oppoſite to the deſks are ſeats for thoſe that read. This is an excellent contrivance, it prevents thoſe that come to ſtudy from carrying off any thing more than the ſoul of the book, the body is always left behind. I have ſeen at Sir HANS SLOANE's a machine contrived in ſuch a manner, as to enable a reader to conſult ſeveral books at a time. It is a great wheel that turns upon two pivots ſurrrounded with ten or twelve deſks, which turn at the pleaſure of the reader, who is ſeated in his arm chair; and it is ſo contrived that none of the books can either ſhut or fall down. Theſe deſcriptions take up ſo much of my time and paper, that I am obliged to defer to another opportunity the concluſion of this account of my ramble to *Oxford*. Farewel.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

London, June 4. 1750.

Dear Sister,

I Can no longer defer sending you the conclusion of what happened to us in our excursion to *Oxford*. We left it in the evening and lost our way as we were going to *Green-castle*, which however is distant from it but three miles. Baron SCHUTZ, keeper of the King's wardrobe, to whom it belongs, and his Lady, pressed us warmly to spend a few days with them. The place where we saw them, is embellished both by nature and art, and their politeness made the time we stayed with them pass away in the most agreeable manner imaginable. We took many a pleasant walk there. Our hosts first shewed us a little antique temple, an obelisk, and other ornaments of their gardens, and accompanied us upon grass-plots to the banks of a little natural rivulet, which after many turnings and windings ends at a grotto of shell-work, towards which its course is turned. From a small eminence, which was also formed by their hands, they shewed us MILTON's house, to which I bowed with all the reverence with which that poet's memory inspires me. And that we might be the more thoroughly ac-

quainted

quainted with the manners of the country, our curiosity was not satisfied with taking a view of the villa's of the nobility and gentry in the neighbourhood; we visited even the cottages of shepherds and the houses of farmers. People of this class have their houses well furnished, are well dressed, and eat well; the poorest country girls drink tea, have bodices of chintz, straw hats on their heads, and scarlet cloaks upon their shoulders. Their husbands swill themselves with liquor at their leisure, their cattle lies under the open air without being afraid of wolves, which were long since destroyed in this country, and corn is kept a whole winter at the mill without being spoiled. In *France* our farms ruin us by the number of buildings we erect upon them; but it would be a difficult matter to reconcile our country peasants to this œconomy. Men are always complaining of their customs, yet are incensed at those who attempt to reform them: I shall treat farther of this subject in a proper place; in the mean time let me return to my excursion.

We stopped for a while to take a view of a collection of the pictures of great men by VANDYKE, at a fine seat built by the famous CLARENDON, ancestor of Lord HYDE: you have seen the latter at *Paris*, where he contracted that taste which made him furnish it in the French fashion at his return. His sister, the Dutchess of QUEENSBURY, as famous for her

her wit as her beauty, honours me with her friendſhip. I ſhall here give you a ſtroke of her character. We are told that ſhe once handed about ſome verſes of POPE's, which offended the King to ſuch a degree that his Majeſty forbid her the court. The Dutcheſs was ſo little concerned at this, that ſhe anſwered, "I am much obliged to your Majeſty for baniſhing me the court, the attendance I have given there has been a long time very irkſome to me." What a difference there is between courtiers in this country and *France!* I tell you this ſtory in order to make you ſenſible of it. It has diverted me from my ſubject, but I reſume it in order to give you an account of my arrival at *Stow*, a ſeat of Lord COBHAM's, two miles from *Buckingham*. The dwelling-houſe, by no means magnificent, is of ſuch a ſize that, with the green-houſe, it is reckoned to be a thouſand feet broad where it fronts the gardens, which anſwer to it in extent. We walked there three hours together, accompanied by a guide, yet did not ſee the whole. There are few marble ſtatues there; they are very ſcarce in *England*: they do not, like us, multiply the images of the Pagan gods, which chriſtianity ſhould conſign to oblivion; inſtead of this, they immortalize their great men: the ſtatues erected to their honour are, like ſeed, capable of producing others to all eternity. The fine gardens which we walked through, preſented us at the end of each alley,

(adorned

(adorned with a variety of different ſorts of ſhrubs) ſometimes a turret, ſometimes an obeliſk, mills, a circus, elyſian fields, colonades, a pretty temple dedicated to the god of Love, with this inſcription,

Nunc amet qui nondum amavit,
Quique amavit nunc amet :

A monument dedicated to friendſhip, in which the maſter of this fine ſeat placed the buſts of all his illuſtrious friends: here is alſo a proteſtant church of gothic architecture, where the following verſes of CORNEILLE are engraved upon the frontiſpiece:

Je rends graces aux Dieux de n'etre pas Romain
Pour conſerver encore quelque choſe d'humain:

A column of ſeventy feet high, erected by an ARTEMISIA to the memory of a COBHAM: The temple of Virtue, which appears on every ſide falling in ruins: The ſaloon of Sleep, where the following inſcription is to be read round a garland of poppies.

Cum omnia ſint in incerto, ſave tibi.

An *Egyptian* pyramid in miniature, with all its proportions: An hermitage made of clay and the roots of trees, furniſhed with a bed of moſs, earthen veſſels, and *Latin* inſcriptions, which

which record the virtue of those Anchorites who made a VENUS of snow to quell their ardent desires, or of those who, in order to put their constancy to a trial, slept between two youthful shepherdesses, as did ROBERT D'ARBRISSEL. Well-chosen motto's characterise with taste each of these little edifices. Obelisks and grottos adorn the fountains. We saw issue from an artificial mount pine-trees and shrubs, which the rocks produce, and three springs, which dart through crevices, after many turnings and windings, form a lake, and lose themselves in subterraneous caverns lined by pebbles; where, after their fall, they form baths. The roaring of the waters, which pleases at the same time that it terrifies, constitutes the whole charm of this lake. Of the chancel of a Roman Catholic church, they have formed a Sibylline cave, the inscriptions of which answer to the design. A hill called the Parish, transformed into a Parnassus, contains an APOLLO, the Muses, and the waters of *Hippocrene*. At the back of a temple, erected to celebrate and represent the sages of the nation, we read in *Italian* verse the following inscription to the memory of a traveller born beyond the *Alps*, which I translate thus.

Here lies, whom not the vain desire
Treasures and fortune to acquire,

But

But to subsist in plains and fields
On what the earth all-bounteous yields,
Brought from his native country o'er
To *Albion*'s fair and blissful shore:
No praise of friends he e'er requir'd,
Caresses only he desir'd.
Tho' oft admitted to the great,
He was no pimp nor spy of state.
Their orders always he obey'd,
But compliments to vice ne'er paid;
Nay though no bigot, would repair
To church sometimes at hours of prayer.
If he who nature's laws obeys,
And never from her dictates strays,
Is thought to have a right to claim
The sage's honourable name;
Whoe'er deserv'd that title more
Than he whose loss I now deplore?
A constant lover who never ly'd,
A friend in whom one might confide;
In vigour and the prime of life
Had many young ones by his wife;
He saw them in his last decline
Thrive like himself, and gaily shine;
And more, to crown his life with praise,
He pass'd the evening of his days
In an old hermit's hut retir'd,
Where his example was admir'd.
Here adulation rais'd no shrine,
Nor honour'd him with rites divine.
But he whom all these honours grace
Was never sprung from human race,

'Twas faithful *Tray*, his Lord's delight,
Poſſeſs'd theſe qualities ſo bright.

I ſhould hardly ever make an end, if I was to deſcribe all the beauties of the gardens of *Stowe:* the Chineſe-houſe in the midſt of a lake; that of VENUS, artfully formed of the fineſt pebbles and ſhells; the temple of DIANA of the doric order, which is now compleatly built in the *Greek* taſte: and many other monuments, the plan of which often does much more honour to the genius of the nobleman to whom they belong, than the execution to the artiſts; and which ſurprize as well by their multiplicity as by the immenſe ſums that have been ſpent upon them.

From this elegant habitation we went to another, a few miles diſtant from it, which belongs to Mr LEE, nephew of the Lord Chief Juſtice, who was ſo obliging as to accompany us in our rambles, and invite us to paſs four or five days with him. The place is fine, and well ſituated. At this ſeat they lead a life of freedom and eaſe; if a *Frenchman* had the ſame revenue of 70000 livres a year, he would make much greater ſhow than the maſter of this place.

Immediately after the Pudding is diſpatched they drink warm Punch. After the Deſert, eſpecially in the country, the cloth is taken away, and the women retire. The table is of fine Indian wood, and very ſmooth; little round

round vessels, called *sliders*, which are of the same wood, serve to hold the bottles, and the guests can put them round as they think proper. The name of each different sort of wine is graved upon a plate of silver fastened to the neck of the flask; the guests chuse the liquor to which they give the preference, and drink it with as serious an air as if they were doing penance, at the same time drinking the healths of eminent persons, and fashionable beauties; this they call *toasting*. This appellation, and custom, owe their origin to a mistress of one of the Kings of *England*, who was bathing: one of the Courtiers galantly drank a glass of the water the nymph was bathing in; all the rest drank one after another; when it came to the turn of the last, he said, "I'll "keep the toast for myself," alluding to the common practice of putting a toast into liquor. Such is the etymology of the *English* word *toast*, of which you have no doubt heard frequent mention. This custom is more observed at the taverns in *London*, and even at those where Noblemen meet, than at their own tables; I think so at least, though possibly I may be mistaken in my observations. I do not make a stay long enough to satisfy either my curiosity or yours with regard to the manners of the people; the time of our departure for *Holland* is at hand.

LETTERS

CONCERNING

HOLLAND.

LETTER X.

Hague, June 20, 1750.

Dear Sister,

I Have not written to you since I left *London*, that I might have the more to tell you at once. We found ourselves so ill after our passage from *Calais* to *Dover*, that we had not the courage to venture a longer passage from *Harwich* to *Holland*. A calm sea has brought us back to *Calais*, to take our *Berlin* again, and continue our travels by land. As I passed by *Dunkirk*, I recollected the unhappy times when *England* had so much the advantage of *France*, as to force us to demolish it: It is much to be feared that our neglect of maritime affairs will one day again reduce us to the same abasement. *Ypres* likewise recalled to my memory all we suffered on account of its Bp JANSENIUS, who died of the plague in that city. All things perish, all things tend to decay: *Ghent*, that seat of the ancient Counts of *Flanders*, that immense metropolis, is half dispeopled. The churches filled with

pictures by the greatest masters, still retain a gothic simplicity. After we had spent some time in admiring them, we had a mind to take an airing: the coachman thereupon drove us about a square where we constantly saw the same coaches, and asked him every now and then when we should be at the end of our jaunt. You have been there and back again several times within this hour, answered he; this they call *Balocher*. This custom, which was borrowed from the *Spaniards*, at the time that their women lived in constraint and confinement, is said to be still a common amusement with the Ladies of *Madrid*: that may be; but I could never take any pleasure in this sort of diversion.

The day after this airing we bent our course to *Antwerp*, through the upper part of *Flanders*. To prevent time from hanging heavy upon our hands, we often run into danger: we were under a necessity of passing the *Scheld*, which is in that place very broad and rapid; the ferry-boat was on the other side; how then could we think of waiting for it above two hours? We chose rather to leave our coach to the care of our servants, and indiscreetly entrust ourselves to a very small skiff. The waves tossed us about a long time in imminent danger of our lives, prevented us from approaching the shore, and obliged us to ascend by a ladder from the bark to a vessel fastened to the port, which occasioned us

us not a little perplexity. We at last arrived, and not having any carriage, we crossed the city on foot, and had the better opportunity of seeing the gothic tops of the houses which are higher than at *Ghent*, and in better condition. Notwithstanding my infirm state of health, the habit of exercise to which I have happily accustomed myself, and the short *English* dress, which I wear in my journey, and which is exactly suited to my stature, enable me to surmount the difficulties I have to struggle with. I therefore easily reached my inn, with an appetite which would have made me think the fish of *Antwerp* excellent, even if it had been quite the reverse; the next day we went to see the churches and the fine pictures which are there preserved with care.

This was the country of VANDYKE and RUBENS; it can still boast a famous painter in water-colours, whose name is SMITH; but at present there are but few eminent artists in this city. Commerce has been there in a declining condition, since that of *Amsterdam* and *Rotterdam* attained to a flourishing state. We continued our journey to the last-named city, through *Moerdick*, where we left our carriage, to embark aboard a wherry, the master of which resembles the CHARON so much celebrated in ancient Mythology. The wind was high: to encourage us he took care to give us an account of the Prince of ORANGE who was drowned

in this little sea in 1711: we were, however, much more easy here than in the shocking Post-waggon in which we were jolted to the *Maes*. We passed it twice in a ferry-boat to arrive at the place of ERASMUS's nativity, whose statue we saw from the windows of our inn.

Rotterdam is a rich and populous city, well built; and through it there pass several large canals supplied with water from the *Maes*, upon which first-rate vessels sail down to the midst of the city. The confused prospect of the masts of ships, trees planted on each side of the canals, steeples and turrets, gave us an agreeable surprize. We were no less struck with what we found at Mr BISCHOP's, who sells all sorts of thread by retail, which he himself delivers to his customers in a wretched shop. To gratify our curiosity, this old man led us with an uncouth and pensive air by a little dark staircase to a chamber surrounded with chests of a miserable appearance, which contain notwithstanding immense treasures. They are above a hundred in number, filled with the choicest Flemish pictures, antique vases of gold and enamels, japan ware, the finest *Saxon* plate I ever saw, a variety of miniatures of flowers and fruits admirably done by a pastry-cook; charming landscapes painted by a cook, which an optic glass throws to an immense distance. The possessor of these master-

masterpieces has his country house also full of rarities; but his country house is as large as his shop is little. This singularity gives you a just picture of the manners of a republic, where the rich citizen, being entirely void of pride, does not sacrifice to pleasure a single moment, by which his opulence may be increased.

Upon leaving *Rotterdam* we bent our course to *Delft*, where the air rung with the chimes of a hundred steeples. We there saw the tombs of GROTIUS and Admiral TROMP, and that of a Husband and Wife who died at a hundred years of age, in the same month, after having lived seventy-five years together in the strictest union and amity. As we had no doubt concerning the possibility of a lasting and tender conjugal union, we staid but a short time to contemplate this monument; we were much more curious to see that erected to the memory of the Prince of ORANGE, assassinated at *Delft*. The sculptor has represented a dog dead of grief for his loss, and lying at his feet. How many lessons do these monuments of the vanity of human greatness suggest to a thinking mind!

We were full of these reflections in a journey of three leagues, which led us to the finest village in *Europe*. The *Hague*, of which I now give you a description, is an assemblage of squares, of fine walks, of canals somewhat muddy, and of palaces rather elegant than well-

well-built. They are inhabited by Ambassadors, Deputies of the States, and the rich nobility. We expected to see nobody there but the *French* Ambassador; but the Earl of CHESTERFIELD, without ever apprising us of it, was so good as to write in our favour to the Earl of HOLDERNESSE the *English* Ambassador. I never knew one of his country have a more fashionable air: his merit equals his munificence, and his kindness to us surpasses any thing I could say of it. The beauty of the Countess, set off by a noble and polite simplicity of manners, is not more easy to be described. I had not brought with me proper clothes to accompany her to the court of the Princess, where her obliging intention was to introduce me. Our Ambassador accompanied my fellow-traveller to the Stadholder's. Both their Highnesses were so complaisant as to converse with him, and the several persons present, in the language of their respective countries, which they spoke with as much facility as if they had been natural to them. Their children learn them with success, and discover a promising genius. At this court people live just as at all others; they game, take the air, doze away their time in insipid languor, and go to see the *French* comedians, who have a handsome theatre, and to the *Italian* concert.

The assemblies are here just the same as at *London*; and we are so happy as to be as well

well received here as in that capital. The *Spanish* Ambassador, DEL PUERTO, yesterday gave us an entertainment, which consisted of forty dishes in the best taste. Our dinner at the Prince of NASAU's to-day was equally elegant. The true Cape-wine is drunk here; ours is spurious. Fatigue is so good for my health, that it gives me strength to support it. How is it possible to bear up under such a weight of pleasures? I must make haste to enjoy them, the time of departure approaches: we did not think of renewing these agreeable scenes, but my Lady HOLDERNESSE will have it so, and she is so obliging as to insist upon our paying her a second visit, when we have seen the other towns of *Holland*. We receive numerous invitations, and I readily yield to such kind importunities. This morning we went two leagues to see *Ryswick*, a palace famous for the peace of 1697; and this evening we set out for *Amsterdam*, from whence I will write to you if I possibly can: the journies I make, and the several amusements I meet with, scarce leave me time to set my foot upon the ground.

I who by nature was design'd
For sweet tranquillity of mind,
Rack'd by unceasing toils, in vain
A peaceful port aspire to gain.

But

But You, whom PALLAS form'd to pleaſe,
And captivate each heart with eaſe,
You, who receiv'd from every grace
Thoſe charms that win all human race,
Too oft to rural ſhades retir'd,
Live joyleſs, by no crowds admir'd.
Reaſon, whoſe juſt and ſage control
Rules every motion of your ſoul,
Through a long dreary path your flight
Speeds to the gloomy realms of night.
To that ſame goal my courſe I bend,
The goal where all purſuits muſt end.
To reach thoſe manſions of the dead,
Sometimes in rugged paths I tread;
Sometimes I rove thro' flow'ry plains,
Where ſmiling plenty ever reigns.
The ſtars which o'er our lives preſide,
Through different ways our footſteps guide;
Though torrents roar and mountains riſe,
Though dreary proſpects meet our eyes,
Hard by miſhapen rocks are ſeen
Luxuriant vales and meadows green,
Where FLORA, deck'd in trim array,
Adds a new luſtre to the day.
But thoſe who one ſafe road purſue,
Where pleaſing objects are but few,
Partake leſs good, endure leſs ill:
Such is high Heav'n's reſiſtleſs will.
On us poor mortals fate beſtows
In equal meaſure joys and woes;
Grief, hope, and love, and hate and fear,
Diverſify each rolling year.

In

In a word, this life is but a ſhort pilgrimage. I was this morning ſtruck with a fable in the Spectator upon this ſubject. "A Derviſe travelling through *Perſia*, arrived at laſt at the metropolis; and as he knew that the great men of that country often exhauſt their treaſures in building and founding caravanſeras, he took the palace of the King of *Perſia* for one of thoſe magnificent houſes of public entertainment. Quite abſent in thought, he croſſed the firſt and ſecond court, aſcended the galleries, laid his cloak-bag upon the ground, and was going to ſleep upon it as a bolſter. One of the guards took notice of him, told him what a place he was profaning, and was going to turn him out directly. During the diſpute the King paſſed by, ſmiled at the traveller's blunder, and aſked him how he could miſtake the palace of a monarch for an inn? Shall I beg leave to aſk your majeſty one queſtion, modeſtly anſwered the Derviſe: to whom did this ſumptuous palace belong before you came to the throne? To my father, my grandfather, and all my anceſtors in their turns, anſwered the King. And for whom, added the Derviſe, are theſe immenſe edifices intended after you? For the Prince my Son, without doubt, cried the monarch, with aſtoniſhment. Ah, Sir, returned the Pilgrim, a houſe which ſo often changes its inhabitants, is not a palace but a caravanſera."

LETTER

LETTER XI.

Amsterdam, June 30th, 1750.

Dear Sister,

IN *Holland* we meet with barks in all places, which set out every hour without waiting for any body. We took one for *Leyden*, and at our arrival had a desire to see the celebrated MUSCHENBROECK; but he is a man very much advanced in years, and, as night approached, he was just going to bed: we did not care to disturb him, and so we passed the evening with Mr LALLEMAND, professor of physic. He tried several experiments to amuse us; one of them was upon the new artificial loadstone, whose force is equal to that of the real magnet; another upon the catapulta of the ancients, as powerful, if we may believe historians, as cannon in battering down the walls of a besieged city, and much more easily moved. These machines gratified our eyes, a good supper our stomachs, and the next morning the anatomy-room offered to our curiosity a cat, an *Indian* ape with wings, the hand of a sea-nymph, and the skeleton of a young man who in the seventeenth century swallowed a knife, whilst he endeavoured to draw out a fish's bone which almost choked him. In order to get out this morsel so hard

of

digeſtion it was thought neceſſary to open his ſtomach, and he lived eight years after the operation.

Amongſt other extraordinary things, they ſhew near the *Hague* the place where MATILDA was formerly delivered of three hundred children, which was a judgment inflicted upon her for wiſhing that a poor woman might prove barren. At *Leyden* they likewiſe preſerve a loaf, transformed to a ſtone, as a judgment upon a girl who refuſed one to her ſiſter at the time of a famine.

The univerſity of this place boaſts of having had a number of learned men of all countries, and in the moſt different branches of literature; as GROTIUS, HEINSIUS, VOSSIUS, BURMANNUS, SCALIGER, DESCARTES, SALMASIUS, GRONOVIUS, GRÆVIUS, BAYLE, BASNAGE, LE CLERC, &c. In 1512, FREDERICK of *Toledo*, when *Roerden* was ſacked, ſpared nobody but the learned HORTENSIUS. Science, which is productive of ſo many advantages may, as you ſee by this example, ſometimes even preſerve our lives. "The Muſes, ſays CICERO*, nouriſh youth, cheriſh old age, give new charms in proſperity, afford conſolations in adverſity, ſerve as a refuge to the unfortunate, are no hindrance

* Hæc ſtudia adoleſcentiam alien, ſenectutem oblectant, ſecundas res ornant, adverſis perfugium & ſolatium præſunt delectant domi non impedium, forio, peregrinantur nobiſcum, ruſticantur.

hindrance in business; pass the night with us, travel with us, and even accompany us into the country." I am sensible this wise consul was in the right: study and labour have a better effect than pleasures in making the hours pass away like moments. On the contrary, an idle life flows slowly like a sluggish stream, always presents the same surface, and offers to the mind nothing that can either terrify or surprize, but gives it up to irksomness. In the hurry of business, time is as a torrent whose agitation rouses the mind, banishes the remembrance of past sufferings, the dread of future contingencies, lightens present care, and at the same time enlivens and elevates us with desires and hopes, which are our only resource.

From the famous Museum, which led me to these reflections, we went to take a view of the garden of plants. Coffee, which is there cultivated in warm green houses, bears a fruit that resembles a cherry. Bohea Tea has a round leaf, Green Tea a sharp pointed one; that of the cinnamon tree resembles the laurel leaf; the sugar canes, which are a sort of reeds, have a long, marrow leaf: here art subdues nature; here the fruits of all climates ripen; we at this season eat excellent melons, pine-apples, grapes, large pears, brought to maturity by hot-beds at a monstrous expence. It is common enough to see gardens of a moderate size, the keeping

of

of which ſtands the owners in twelve or fifteen thouſand livres a year. The gardeners who work in them don't earn leſs than four livres a day, paſs part of their time in ſmoaking and drinking tea and coffee; and the maſters are obliged to regale their journeymen with them. Theſe liquors are ſold in public places, juſt as lemonade is at *Paris*. It is ſomething extraordinary that the Inhabitants of *Europe* cannot live without foreign commodities; chocolate made of cocoa nuts, *American* ſugar, Coffee made of *Arabian* beans, and tea which is furniſhed by the leaves of *Chineſe* ſhrubs. Should theſe remote regions ſupply our fertile countries with utenſils, linnen and clothes? We pity theſe poor *Europeans*, ſay the *Chineſe*, the ſterility of whoſe climate obliges them to exert all their induſtry to build fine ſhips, in order to come to our ſea port towns in queſt of the neceſſaries of life.

Indian utenſils are in great plenty here. Every thing is to be found in *Holland*, though the climate produces nothing: the four elements are there deficient; the marſhy air is very unwholeſome, the bad taſte of rain water obliges me to drink *Briſtol* water, which is in this country as dear as wine; for want of wood they burn turf. The earth has the appearance of a puddle, drained by dykes, which are always ready to burſt. They are ſupported by conſtant labour, eſpecially in

the neighbourhood of *Harlem*; the way thither is over a sluice, on one side of which the sea is higher than on the other. There is nothing remarkable in this city but the loud sound of the organs of its church, the pipes of which are as thick as a man's body.

Three leagues beyond *Harlem* stands *Amsterdam*, the capital of *Holland*, surrounded by three large canals; along the sides of those canals are rows of trees, between which and the houses is the space of a street, and a path to walk in; the houses are adorned with marble, with paintings and rich carpets; but displaying more elegance and neatness than true taste of architecture. In this city three hundred thousand inhabitants are constantly in action, and bring together by their industry the treasures of the two worlds. A considerable number of public edifices delight the eye; they dare not venture to raise their steeples too high, their buildings being upon so sandy a foundation. In one of their churches is to be seen the monument of DE RUITER, who rose from a common sailor to be an admiral. After returning safe from ten voyages to the *Indies*, and eight engagements at sea, he was at last killed near the *Sicilian* coast, fighting against our Admiral DUQUESNE, another hero of fortune; there are few but such in the sea service: this calling requires a constant practice, with which the attachment of our men of quality to pleasure

ſum and the court is by no means conſiſtent.

The *Dutch* have poſſeſſed themſelves of ſeveral ſettlements in *Aſia* by means of their maritime power. To conform to the exaggerated phraſes of the country, they aſſume the following titles; ſovereigns of *Java*, *Amboyna* and other iſlands, commanders over all the ſeas in the world, protectors of the Kings and Princes of *Europe*, ſupreme moderators in all the affairs of chriſtendom. Their *Eaſt-India* company has fifty veſſels at ſea, their land-forces compoſe a body of fifty thouſand men; their company gains immenſe ſums, whilſt ours has been continually loſing during ten years that it has parried on this commerce.

I thought I ſhould ſee no beggars either in *England* or in *Holland*, but there are too many in all countries; and for the honour of humanity it would be happy if there were none to be ſeen any where, except in the workhouſes erected for their ſupport. In *Amſterdam* we likewiſe ſee, in the midſt of a variety of perſuaſions that are there tolerated, the ſame religious parties which have ſo long diſtreſſed our country; there are nine *Janſeniſt* and thirteen *Moliniſt* churches eſtabliſhed in that city. Thoſe who embrace theſe oppoſite parties never intermarry, and they hate each other more bitterly than they do the Calviniſts and the Lutherans. The doſtre which

so many tolerated sects have to gain the esteem of each other, may very probably contribute to keep up a severity of manners in this country. Plays are here but seldom exhibited; pleasure is in but little request: love finds, doubtless, admittance even here; but the ardour of his flames with difficulty subdues the coldness and rigid virtue of the *Dutch* beauties. Idleness does not oblige their husbands to leave their houses in quest of amusements. So much are they attached to business, that they would regret even the loss of a moment.

I once was so happy as to meet at the house of one of these industrious bankers three men of merit in three different branches; our consul, Monsieur DE ST SAUVEUR*, Monsieur DE TRONCHIN, an eminent physician, and the Chevalier DE JAUCOUR, as famous for his learning as his noble birth. He travels without any ostentatious appearance, and is on that account the more respected. These gentlemen were so obliging as to sacrifice a few moments to shew us the cabinet of Mr BRAMCAMP, who has a great number of fine *Flemish* pictures, and the finest piece by WANUZZEN† that I ever saw in my life: the silk manufactures; the fine villa of Mons. PINTO, a gentleman of learning and taste; and the Town-house built upon thirteen thousand

* He now resides at *Petersburgh*.

† A Painter famous for flower-pieces.

thousand piles, in fine modern architecture, a hundred and ten paces long and eighty broad, but too low. The city guard patroles in the night round this house, in which immense sums of money are deposited. The dark halls are adorned with the pictures of the principal citizens, painted partly by VANDYKE, REMBRANDT and RUBENS. The senators who are elected by the populace*, govern the city and send deputies, in the same manner as the other six provinces, to the provincial states, which afterwards appoint deputies to the states general at the *Hague*. The Stadtholder, whose dignity descends by hereditary right, even to his daughters, has no vote in that assembly, yet in a manner governs it by his great credit and influence.

It would be a vain attempt for me to endeavour to give you an idea of this sort of authority; I have been assured, that though it is sensibly felt, it cannot be explained. Before the last war, the same families which retained for each other by turns the elective places of Burgomasters, destined to the profession of arms young persons who were without a capacity for business, and void of emulation. Ignorance of the military art prevailed in the troops, discord in the senate; to banish which they made chains for themselves. The Province of *Holland* had a desire

* This I apprehend to be a mistake; the election of Senators is left to the Senate themselves, which renders the government oligarchical rather than democratical.

fire to support the ancient republican form of government; the other provinces got the better, and again placed the house of ORANGE at the helm of affairs. The good order which the Princes of that house endeavoured to introduce in the state, has not lowered the price of Provisions, which is exorbitant in this country; the imposts necessary in order to keep the dykes in repair, exceed the revenues of the lands; and commerce is in a declining condition, because there are so many adventurers in that way all over *Europe*. The inhabitants of *Amsterdam* are themselves of opinion, that the grandeur of their country, which is already upon the decline, will every day tend to a total extinction; but a view of the port by no means favours this opinion: vessels from every point of the compass bring thither commodities of all sorts in abundance.

As we sailed yesterday towards *North Holland*, we were struck with admiration at seeing a forest of masts, which over-shadowed the whole shore. In order to arrive at it, we were desirous of making trial of the only carriage formerly known in this country; figure to yourself the body of a coach upon a sledge, like those that transport merchandise in trading towns. At present there are many who purchase from the government the permission to have wheels to them: but still they continue the sledges. We made use of

of one of these carriages; a great horse with a collar, led slowly by a footman who stands by the coach-door, drew us along, tearing up the pavement all the way till we came to the shore; but a fine boat which we hired, carried us easily to *Sardam*, a village, where the Czar Peter passed two years disguised like a carpenter, in order to learn the true construction of men of war. One day his Majesty took by mistake the tools of one of his rude companions, who abused him in the grossest language for his mistake: the Monarch acknowledged his fault, and was willing to submit to any punishment. What might not be expected from a Prince as just as courageous? In the place which I now describe, we should render the homage due to his virtues and kiss the traces of his footsteps.

The streets, which are paved with brick, are cleaner there in all weathers than the best scoured pewter. Women carry their husbands upon their backs, when they have no slippers to give them, in order to prevent them from dirtying the floor. They scour the very stables for cattle, or they tie up their tails for fear they should dirty them. The Servant-maids all over *Holland* would not chuse to live with a master, if he did not allow them every Saturday to carry all the moveables to the garret, in order to wash the house from top to bottom, and every day they

must wash the windows and the walls of the house, both within and without; they are often new painted, as well as the window shutters and door-cases, that they may always have an air of new houses. The little squares of delft ware, which lined the inn where we lodged at *Sardam*, are very pleasing to the eye; and their perches and eels equally delightful to the taste.

After dinner we went to see a prodigious number of paper mills, as well as of mills to saw boards, and grind mustard, and all sorts of grain. In this country machines act like men, and men like machines. The people here seem to be too heavily formed for thinking. As we advanced in *North Holland*, we every where met with the same industry and cleanliness, the same taste for gardens. The inhabitants of the north are extremely fond of fruits and flowers, which nature bestows upon them with a sparing hand; we were informed by the registers of *Alkmaer*, that in 1737. a public sale of a hundred and twenty tulip roots brought in two hundred thousand livres. The *Dutch*, who may be almost considered as creators of the land they cultivate, improve it at the expence of NEPTUNE, and preserve it in spite of him. When the swelling ocean overflows the dykes, their industry stops its violence by an infinite number of large sails which they place before the waves, at the same time uttering, no doubt,

some

some terms of magic. Every country has its fabulous traditions. They tell us, that in the XVth century a company of young girls caught a mermaid amongst the reeds upon the banks of *Zuiderzee*, that they taught her to spin, and to make a courtesy; but notwithstanding all the pains they took with her, she was always as silent as a fish. This land of wonders gave birth to the house of HORN, and to SCHOUTTEN, who, without being a conjurer, sailed round the world, and discovered in 1660, beyond the streights of *Magellan*, a passage which still goes by his name.

Thus have I told you all I could learn in this part of the world. We are now setting out for *Utrecht*, in order to make farther observations which we will not fail to communicate to you upon our return to the *Hague*.

LETTER XII.

Hague, *July* 4. 1750.

Dear Sister,

I SHALL now give you an account of our journey to *Utrecht*. To arrive at that city after leaving *Amsterdam*, we went in a boat eight leagues upon a large canal, on each side

side of which are to be seen fine country houses; and three leagues before we came to it we had a prospect of the town, which is adorned on both sides with painted villas, gilt statues, grottos in shell-work, and yew trees cut in a variety of forms. Even the imagination of Romance-writers has not conceived a more delightful shore to conduct to the dwellings of the Fairies:

I stood in need of these enchanting scenes to dissipate my weariness. I always find travelling by water tedious and melancholy; every body tells me that tranquillity is to be found in such carriages; I tell them in answer, that there is still more tranquillity to be found in the grave, though nobody goes thither in quest of it.

After having travelled in this slow manner for above two hours, we at last arrived at *Utrecht*, where the learned Mrs SCHURMAN was born, who died at an hundred years of age in the last century. This city is famous for its last congress, for its fine Mall, St *John*'s-square, the cathedral, and the anatomical theatre, where they preserve a canoe made of the bark of a high tree and sharp-pointed; it holds a little Savage in the attitude wherein he was taken at the straits of *Davis*, fastened to a hole in the midst of his boat, so that he seems to make a part of it; the rest of the canoe is covered, and it may be overturned; and the water not enter

enter it. As the word *centaur* conveys the idea of a creature half man and half horse, there should also be a word to signify a creature half man and half boat, like this little mariner, who is furnished with two short oars. His teeth, his hair, and his cap, are still to be seen. We are told by his historian, that as soon as he found himself in the hands of foreigners, he abstained from all nourishment, and died of grief.

Hard by this relick, they shew us in a great hall the inside and outside of the temple of Solomon, such as it is described in scripture. Without the city is a convent which is inhabited by eight Carthusians who fled their country on account of *Jansenism*. Father Le Sellier, a capuchin, and a man of good sense, leads a retired life in the city with one of these anchorites, who resided nineteen years in *North Holland*; he passed his life in indigence, and fed upon milk, for want of other food, yet always enjoyed a good state of health. The walk I took with them was the first I ever had in the company of a Carthusian and a Capuchin. They attended us to the suburbs, where we saw the famous silk manufacture of *Waumale*, which by a single water-mill sets in motion fifteen hundred reels, and fills the basons of a superb garden adorned with marble statues and grottos of shell-work, the workmanship of which is admirable. The most considerable consists

sists of colonades, chapiters, cornishes, domes adorned with busts, monsters, cornucopias set off with wreaths of flowers and fruits; the whole represented in the most natural manner in mother of pearl, precious stones and coral. The cascades and jet-d'eaux produce a surprizing effect, and the parterres strewed with broken china form in these delightful places a most pleasing enamel.

After having taken a view of all these striking objects, in order to return to the *Hague*, we hired a calash, which carried us through a narrow road by the side of a canal where passengers are in danger of being overturned, if the driver be aukward. Ours drove us as swift as the wind across a hundred narrow bridges without rails. In this manner we arrived happily at a fine village, where Lady HOLDERNESSE was so good as to come to meet us in a gilt yacht belonging to the states. We had an excellent dinner, music, and the best of company. You may well suppose that the six leagues which remained, appeared to us but short; and when we arrived, though it was very late, the company obliged me, notwithstanding the dishabille I was in, to go to the public concert, where I was received in the most obliging manner imaginable. After having heard the finest Italian music, we were again invited to a most elegant supper. Pleasures, you see, are not wanting to me; but I am wanting to

them.

them. So many dissipations require more strength than I am mistress of; sleep, however restored me sufficiently to be able to visit Baron GRONENGUEN, who is a curiosity worth seeing; he has not thrown off his night-gown these nineteen years. He is quite distracted with the fear of being poisoned; but as I was recommended by the Earl of CHESTERFIELD, who assured him that I no way resembled the Marchioness de BRINVILLIERS, he condescended so far as to admit my visit. I arrived at his fine garden, and was very richly dressed; Mr DAIROLES, Minister from *Hanover*, gave me his hand, and was in doubt whether the Baron would make his appearance. That moment he issued from his grotto with a savage air, which however softened as he approached My benevolent appearance encouraged him. "Muse, said he to me, you "do not in the least answer to my idea of "your features; what, could not study and "application of mind make your charms "languish and fade away? What an agree-"able surprize is this!" You may easily guess what my answer was: he compleated his politeness by repeating one half of my tragedy of the *Amazons* by heart.

In order to put an end to the astonishment which I shewed at the choice of the pieces with which he loaded his memory; he said to me: your tragedy in the *Greek* taste charms me by the simplicity of the subject. Sin-

said

said I, you admire it for its defects: this is something like the partiality of love; I hope the indulgence you shew to those that are recommended by the Earl of CHESTERFIELD, will give you the same prepossession in favour of all my other works. After this introduction he made me sit down, stood at a considerable distance from me, and astonished me by his memory, his volubility, and his great knowledge of literature ancient and modern, in all the different languages; he even shewed himself acquainted with the vast number of useless pamphlets published in our language. I listened to his conversation a full hour, and then took my leave of him, resolving to give you an account of so extraordinary a personage.

The company I travel with has a desire to stop here to see salmon fished for upon the *Mass*. I find it difficult to resist their importunities, but my Mentor, whose advice should have greater weight with me than their solicitations, presses me to return to the country of *Caux*, whither his affairs call him. At my arrival I will give you an account of what occurred to me during the remainder of my journey.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Tosse, *July* 20, 1750.

Dear Sister,

WE are now very near you, but too remote notwithstanding, as we have it not in our power to join you. My father-in-law's little country seat appears a dismal solitude to me, after the life of hurry and dissipation which I have lately led. I have time abundantly sufficient to recollect my ideas, and give you an account of whatever struck me, upon my return hither.

We left the *Hague* on the eighth instant about noon. Many ladies were so kind as to come to take their leave of me, and the appearance of sincerity which accompanied these marks of affection to me, made me the more regret their loss; I shed tears; and I ascended the calash with a heavy heart. Being quickly arrived at *Rotterdam*, we embarked in the evening on board a yacht, to avoid going in a post waggon, to join our coach at *Mardyk*. After having crossed that arm of the sea in the night, we took post at day break; and passing through *Antwerp* and *Mechlin*, we arrived at four o'clock in the afternoon at *Brussels*, travelling on the side of a broad canal next to which runs a fine avenue. The speed we advanced with had given me a megrim:

megrim: after ſupper I found it ſomewhat aſſwaged, a night's ſleep cured me compleatly, and the next day we viſited the ramparts of the city: the plain which they command renders the proſpect very agreeable. The ſquare before the town-houſe is ſpacious. This gothic building ſupports a tower three hundred and ſixty foot high, and contains a vaſt hall for the aſſembly of the States, hung with rich tapeſtry; one of them repreſents the abdication of CHARLES V. but not his regret for loſing the empire, nor the joy of PHILIP II. who takes poſſeſſion of *Spain* and the *Low-countries*. On the othe ſide is to be ſeen the eſtabliſhment of the order of the Golden-fleece by PHILIP the Good. The cathedral, which is very much adorned, as the churches of *Flanders* are in general, has in it a fine picture by *Rubens*, in which CHRIST is repreſented preaching to his Apoſtles. The palace belonging to the Archduchess was burned; but the ſtatues in bronze of the ancient counts of *Flanders*, are ſtill to be ſeen upon the columns round the court. Prince CHARLES lives in an ancient palace, rather large than commodious. His highneſs is more conveniently lodged at the opera: his balcony, which is well fancied, fronts the theatre; ſo that whilſt a perſon warms himſelf at the fire, he ſees all that paſſes upon the ſtage in a chimney glaſs. The theatre is large and has four rows of boxes one over another

another. The public *Italian* concert which we were at, bears a ſtrong reſemblance to thoſe of our provinces. The handſome Ladies of this place are ſaid to be now in the country. A Librarian ſhewed us ſome cabinets belonging to CHRISTINA queen of *Sweden*, adorned with figures wrought in precious ſtones. One of them contains a clock, the entrance of which is guarded by a lion of bronze: its diamond eyes have a motion which correſponds with the balance: chimes iſſue from his throat, and his foot beats the hours. The Counts of *Aremberg*, *Taxis*, *Egmont* and *Grimbergue*, have fine houſes in this city. Amongſt the public fountains is to be ſeen one where four nymphs pour water from their breaſts which they preſs with their fingers, and another where a child is repreſented as piſſing out water with all his might. This odd attitude has procured him magnificent habits from ſeveral princes. LEWIS XV. even at the time of the laſt war, beſtowed a very rich one upon the little maniquet, as it is called.

As I am acquainted only with the outſide of *Bruſſels*, I ſhall ſay nothing to you of the manners of this capital. Upon quitting it we ſet out for *Enguien*. This ſeat of the Duke of AREMBERG's has nothing in it remarkable, but its vaſt and well planted gardens. The Duke is ſtill buſy in embelliſhing it. A colonade erected in the midſt of the

water, upon an eminence ſhaped like a ſugar-loaf, diſcovers to the view almoſt all the walks of the park, which terminate there, and form a delightful proſpect. We viſited theſe enchanting ſcenes with the higheſt pleaſure, and then took poſt again for *Tournay*, a beautiful and ſpacious city, where ſome of our Kings formerly reſided. The canal which croſſes it has, over and above thoſe of other towns, a baluſtrude of iron which ſupplies the place of rails, and trees on both ſides, which form a delightful walk. The cathedral is large, has five ſteeples, and rich canons belonging to it. The fortifications were injured during the laſt war. The inhabitants ſhew a part of the breach where a Princeſs of *Epinoi* formerly received a wound in the arm, whilſt ſhe was defending the place for her ſick huſband. I cannot forget any remarkable example of a lady's courage that I hear related; but as I paſſed but one day at *Tournay*, I am able to give you no account of its inhabitants.

In travelling over the plains of *Flanders*, that vaſt tomb of the troops of almoſt all the nations of *Europe*, inſtead of noblemens ſeats we meet with nothing but abbeys. No country has a greater number, nor ſuch high ſteeples, nor ſo many villages beautifully adorned, and well built towns. *Douai* is one of them; it is a pretty place, and well fortified. We ſaw at *Arras* a ſquare large enough

for

for ten thouſand men to draw up in. If the pillars which ſurround it were loftier and more exactly proportioned, this ſquare would be a place very worthy of notice.

At the towns where I now arrive I conſtantly make inquiry whether ghoſts do not ſometimes appear to the inhabitants, and am ſure immediately to be told ſome dreadful ſtory: I next aſk about the miracles frequently ſaid to be worked in this country; you may well judge that they ſhewed me at *Arras* the holy candle which was brought by a virgin in the twelfth century to Biſhop LAMBERT, to cure a fever by which his flock was deſtroyed. The patient ſwallows a few bits of it, the cure is infallible, and the remedy is never exhauſted.

Every town in this country boaſts being immediately under the protection of heaven. At *Douai* the Hoſt happened to fall, but immediately raiſed itſelf up, and JESUS CHRIST appeared in his cradle upon the altar, then in his full growth nailed to the croſs, and next, after his reſurrection, upon a rain-bow, by which he is crowned: at *Tournai*, they tell us, that St MARTIN brought a dead man to life. Even Princes carry their offerings to the miraculous images of *Hall*. HENRY VIII. a little before his ſeparation from the church, made a preſent to this virgin of a ſun in vermilion of a prodigious weight: the proteſtants themſelves have recourſe to the ſtole of St HUBERT, to preſerve them from phrenzy:

without diminiſhing it in the leaſt they conſtantly draw from it threads, which they fix in the ſkin of the patient in the ſame manner as in the operation of inoculating for the ſmall pox; thus the diſorder is eaſily cured and never returns a ſecond time. At *Tongres* the Biſhop, St MATERNE, who died in 128, aged 115 years, is thought to be the ſon of the widow of *Nain*, who was raiſed from the dead by Jeſus Chriſt.

I cannot recollect the miracles performed at *Liſle*, which is a great and beautiful city. We did not take it in our way hither; but we went to ſee it at the time of laſt war, in our tour to the camp at *Dunkirk*. I then gave you a deſcription of the harbour of that Town and the marſhes of St *Omers*.

In a vaſt lake, formed by waters that run thither from every ſide, are ſeveral floating iſlands, which are drawn by cords, like boats; the regularity with which they appear, the fine verdure which they are covered with, and the numerous herds of cattle that graze upon them, form ſuch a proſpect as I recollect with pleaſure. Our intention was to return directly to *Paris*, but as my fellow-traveller has a fit of the gout, we are under a neceſſity of ſtaying here a little longer; in order to drive it away, I have compoſed the following Exorciſm:

Hi her no more, vile Gout, reſort,
Here wiſdom ever holds her court:

Fly hence, deteſted paraſite,
To rich men, who thy ſteps invite,
By Luxury, by Love and Wine,
To which they all their ſouls reſign.
In *Scythia*, bleakeſt land on earth,
O Gout, thou never hadſt thy birth;
Among ſoft *Sybarites*, thou firſt
In luxury and eaſe waſt nurſt.
Why doſt thou viſit theſe retreats?
Thy power calm temperance defeats;
And ſtudy, which employs the mind,
Lets wearineſs no entrance find.
Here friendſhip that from worth takes riſe,
Her never-fading joy ſupplies:
Hypocriſy, by artful wiles,
Here with no borrowed maſk beguiles.
Free from vain pomp true pleaſure reigns
For ever in our happy plains.
Vile Gout, thou doſt miſtake the place,
Fly hence, nor more theſe plains diſgrace.

I do all I can to amuſe you in your ſolitude; and the pleaſure of writing to you helps to diſſipate my languor. If you were with me, I ſhould forget that there is a happier place in the world than a corner of the province of *Caux*, where I am almoſt frozen to death even in ſummer. Farewel; I hope this long letter will give you a moment's amuſement in one of thoſe hours which I would gladly paſs with you.

LETTER XIV.

Dieppe, *July* 30, 1750.

Dear Sister,

TO procure a compleat cure of the Gout we are come to pass a few days at our little villa upon the sea-side. Our amusement at present is to adorn the garden with a statue of Love: The leisure I enjoy in this solitude makes me sing its praise, and gives me a desire to send you my rhymes. I adorn with all the exaggeration of poetry a truth, which you would perhaps like better if it were presented to you without any disguise.

A Fairy who in power was great,
Made by the sea-side a retreat;
The beauteous verdure you might there
To FLORA's gayest dress compare.
Here echoes spread their murmurs round,
And make the neighbouring waves resound:
The feather'd songsters of the sky,
Seraphic concerts form on high.
A mount, where nature art supplies,
Presents to our admiring eyes
A hundred bowers with verdure gay,
Which all the Fairy's art display.
What can the will of fate oppose,
To pow'r supreme! there CUPID rose:

Then

Then ſoon in thoſe enchanted plains
The turtle coo'd in ſofteſt ſtrains:
All take new forms; ſome new deſire
Does ſoon each inmate's heart inſpire;
No other wind but *Zephyr* blows;
New beauties grace the bluſhing roſe:
A tepid warmth the air pervades,
And orange groves perfume the glades.
The ſhepherdeſs who there reſides,
Smiles wantonly and care derides;
And theſe attractives are not vain,
They make her dearer to her ſwain:
Oft may they in this cool retreat
Love's pleaſures and ſoft joys repeat!

Before I leave the country from whence I now write to you, I muſt anſwer the Earl of CHESTERFIELD, who has juſt ſent me a fine preſent: he has favoured me with the buſts of the four greateſt poets that *England* ever produced, MILTON, DRYDEN, POPE and SHAKESPEAR; Read the letter of thanks I ſent him, which is, I fear, unworthy of his approbation.

To the Earl of CHESTERFIELD.

My LORD,

I Waited my return hither in order to return you thanks for the rich preſents which you were ſo good as to ſend me to *Holland*. Solitude, thought I to myſelf, will furniſh me with expreſſions worthy of the

subject. I hoped that your great men would teach me to anſwer one of thoſe who is beſt acquainted with their merits, and who adds to their literary abilities thoſe of a Stateſman, and a Citizen of all nations. Full of this idea, I could not help reproaching theſe famous buſts with having paſt the ſeas without being accompanied by yours; I ſhould preſer, ſaid I to them, the ſtatue of the illuſtrious perſon who ſends you, to the buſts of all you illuſtrious dead men. His features would conſtantly recall to my memory the marks of kindneſs which he has ſhewn me, and I ſhould have hopes of one day enjoying the pleaſure of his converſation. MILTON, who, though blind, had a ſoul inſpired with the knowledge of the future and the paſt, (as thoſe generally are who ſee into the infernal ſhades) anſwered me thus; while his three brother poets liſtened to him with reſpect.

You, whoſe extravagant deſire
Does at my hand ſo much require,
Your importunities give o'er,
And ſtun me with your cries no more.
In gilded palaces the great
Have CHESTERFIELD portray'd in ſtate:
But ſo rever'd, ſo grand a face,
Your humble dwelling would diſgrace.

I imagined that the injury I did this great poet, had dictated to him theſe harſh truths; but

but the answer I received from the rest was not more favourable.

For DRYDEN laughing loudly said,
What frenzy can have turn'd your head?
Think you a genius so refin'd,
Who props the rights of human kind,
Who has the greatest deeds perform'd,
Whose care the calendar * reform'd,
To whom, though now retir'd from court,
The Arts and Muses all resort,
Who more than any modern knows,
Will care to hear what you propose?
Great SHAKESPEAR, when he made an end,
Cry'd, I my way to *Neustria* bend,
I'm there directed by a sage
To supervise and guide your page.
Tir'd of CALLIOPE divine
Do you to some new Muse incline?
Whatever Muse attends your call,
Your stumbling Pegasus may fall:
Whilst you to verse your mind apply,
From *Scylla* and *Charybdis* fly,
The airs of opera's detest,
And maxims stiff and ill express'd.
These the sagacious critic tribe,
As in a wretched taste proscribe:
Your verse which wants poetic fire,
Does still much furbishing require;

The

* The reformation of the *English* Calendar was chiefly effected by the care of the Earl of CHESTERFIELD.
I apprehend this to be a mistake of Madam DU BOCAGE, and the praise to be due to the Earl of MACCLESFIELD.

The supercilious critics all
At PROCOPE's † will such writing maul;
The fable of your piece should be
Brought to a just catastrophe;
Let CATILINE's destructive rage
Less than soft MEROPE engage;
ALZIRA, CINNA, both admire.
And RODOGUNE, replete with fire.
A creature not than ESOP bigger,
And who resembled him in figure,
His conversation then address'd
To me, and thus his thoughts express'd:
"Whatever is, is right," he cry'd;
Favour'd by STANHOPE, nought beside
Should in you raise a fond desire;
To higher glory ne'er aspire;
The name of such a friend at court
Will all your vanity support.

I took them at their word, my Lord, and thought it would be downright presumption to ask your picture. I shall therefore only give you my most humble thanks, and in order to make known to the world the respect I have for your busts, and the great authors they represent, I intend them as ornaments for my little library at *Paris*. My haste to be there does not prevent my sentiments from agreeing with yours, my Lord, when you wish me at *London* or *Greenwich*. My mind is constantly possessed with the desire

† A coffee-house at *Paris*, frequented by critics.

desire of returning thither, and I flatter myself with the hope, that I shall again be able to assure you in person of my profound respect and gratitude, *&c.*"

The next time you write to me direct your letter to *Forges*. When I return to *Paris*, I shall take the opportunity of drinking the waters, and pass the remainder of the Autumn in that country.

LETTER XV.

The Second Season at *Forges*, 1750.

Dear Sister,

WE have this week past been drinking at the springs of health; there is not so much company here now, as there was the first season. Every body, through politeness rather than curiosity, is eager to ask me questions concerning my travels, but never listens to my answers; this is the way of the world: the same persons often ask me the same questions in a morning. I give the same answer, which is perhaps hardly believed; ignorance makes men either too credulous, or too sceptical; and when they hear any thing different from their manners and customs, they always doubt the truth of it.

They have the most implicit confidence in the praises and the remedies that are offered them,

them, at a venture. The first of these antidotes cures the weaknesses of their minds, which take their rise from vanity; the other alleviates the diseases of the body by the hopes of a recovery.

As the vast number of diseases produced by intemperance, brings people from all parts of the world to drink the waters, and as none of them have the fortitude to seek the true remedy from sobriety and exercise, they all chuse rather to subject themselves to the caprice of Physicians, who here bear sovereign sway. The little knowledge they have of the machine they are to regulate, the disorders of which they can never examine till death has stopped the motion of its springs, and their diversity of opinions with regard to the means of retarding our dissolution and restoring the equilibrium of the fluids, render it very difficult for me to conform exactly to their prescriptions. I therefore drink the mineral waters without the usual preparation of Bleeding and Purging, and I every day find myself grow better.

I dine at home heartily, but always keep within the bounds of temperance. I seldom dine abroad, as amidst good company and too great a number of dishes we are too apt to indulge our appetite. Company is equally agreeable, and less dangerous at the public assemblies. In order to deserve their favour, I walk, and even dance, as much as they desire;

desire: this is my regimen. That of our Ladies, is just the same as at *Paris*. They are equally perplexed how to kill their time, and equally careful about their dress: even the devout and religious are solicitous about these trifles. All the difference, to outward appearance, is, that the latter do not paint, that they are more nice with regard to their eating, require easier chairs, and go every day to mass; but their minds may be very different from those of women of the world, and that I have no manner of doubt of. It is much easier to become in fact what one desires to appear, than constantly to wear a mask, which seldom fails to discover the spots it is intended to conceal. Truth secures whatever is supported by its solid foundations; impostures, on the contrary, endeavour to prop each other mutually, till the whole edifice falls to the ground.

Let us return to our mineral waters, which are, perhaps, as salubrious, though not so agreeable, as those of foreign countries. The *English* Ladies meet with a thousand amusements at *Bath* and *Tunbridge*, where lodgings are prepared for their reception: plays, balls, coffee-houses, music, and other entertainments, bring together not only the infirm, but those who want to destroy their health by debauchery and excess. *Forges* offers but few amusements of this kind, is badly situated, and the houses are ill contrived

and

and inconvenient: in a word, they are the dwelling-houſes of the Burghers, which are ſomewhat enlarged that they may be let out to ſtrangers.

But you are deſirous of knowing what ſort of lives we lead here: the obliging compliments you pay me for my narratives, and my leiſure encourage me to borrow the language of the Muſes, in order to give you the ſatisfaction you require.

O thou, whoſe praiſes ſtill conſpire
To fill me with poetic fire,
Teach my enraptur'd ſoul to trace
The ſweet amuſements of this place;
Here folks, with cuſtom to comply,
Drink of the ſtream, though ſeldom dry;
Here formal viſits oft are paid,
In which the truth is e'er betray'd;
The compliments prepar'd by art,
Are contradicted by the heart:
But notwithſtanding all this guile,
Such calm repoſe might pleaſe a while,
If calumny, and envious ſpight
Did not embitter our delight.
Our water-drinkers, as at court,
Apt with each others faults to ſport,
Talk when they're in the talking vein,
But all their ſpeeches nothing mean.
Like thoſe who live in cloyſter'd cells,
Where kind affection ſeldom dwells,

Without

Without esteem they often part,
Their friendships never reach the heart.
But of the medal's fine reverse
'Tis time the beauties to rehearse.
Behold! What scenes of pleasure gay
Abridge the tedious hours of day:
As soon as PHOEBUS gilds the morn,
Like hunters rous'd by early horn,
To drink the waters all repair,
And trip along as light as air:
The ball, the play, the chearful glass,
Conspire to make the evening pass.
In humble roofs, to pride unknown,
With cheap conveniency alone,
Good chear, by neatness high refin'd,
Conveys new pleasure to the mind.
The plain repast, devoid of art,
Where exercise supplies its part,
A relish gives, which ne'er can cloy,
And elevates the heart with joy.
Here the poor labourer, who lies
Protected from inclement skies,
In his thatch'd hut upon the ground,
Where sheafs of corn are heap'd around,
From morn till night with toils oppress'd,
Glad to sit down at length to rest,
Eats with a greedy appetite;
Thus labour adds to his delight.
The tender partner of his cares
His savoury repast prepares;
A relish there from hunger springs,
'Midst all their wealth unknown to kings.

In

In *Forges* and its happy plains
Rural ſimplicity ſtill reigns,
Which by the Ladies is admir'd,
Of indolence and pleaſures tir'd.
An Abbeſs, ſurfeited with eaſe,
Hither repairs, without diſeaſe:
And hither too retire the great,
Loſt to ambition and the ſtate:
Attracted here by pleaſure's lure
Youth feed the pain they fain would cure:
Here Beauty comes by CUPID led;
And age appears with drooping head;
But, ever by new pains oppreſt,
Age ſeeks in vain its needful reſt.

I give you my word, dear Siſter, that as ſoon as I reach the metropolis, I will no longer trouble you with my verſes: Perhaps you are ſorry by this time, that you ever deſired me to write any. The inexhauſtible fund of news, with which the countries to which I am going ſupply travellers, or rather my expreſſions of affection, if I were not afraid of tiring you with them, will furniſh out ſufficient matter for my future letters. Farewel.

LETTERS

LETTERS

CONCERNING

ITALY.

LETTER XVI.

Turin, *April* 25, 1757.

Dear Sister,

YOU are desirous of hearing an account of my tour to *Italy*, like that which I sent you seven years ago of my travels to *England*. I have always considered my word as something sacred and inviolable; but the task is now by far more arduous: many curious travellers have given an account of this fine country; what can I add to their researches? If I confine myself to my own history, our friendship will render it interesting; but you will tire those to whom you read my letters. True it is, that the affectation of speaking always of oneself, which is considered as vanity upon all other occasions, should no longer have that appellation, in a correspondence that has no other aim, but to communicate to each other the things which concern and affect

us most. I will therefore endeavour by laying before you all that relates to myself, to amuse you by a narrative of whatever has occurred to me most striking. A hundred different persons look at the same object, and see it in different points of light; may the observations I make, render my account of the places I pass through, interesting and entertaining to you.

Last *Easter* Monsieur Du Bocage and I set out very much fatigued with the preparations for our journey, censured by those who were acquainted with our weakly constitutions, concerned at leaving our friends and the delightful house where we lived, earnestly desirous of seeing novelties, and, notwithstanding all the dangers we were threatened with upon the road, in great haste to depart. You know the nature of these contrary emotions of the mind. In this confusion of our ideas, and the hurry inseparable from the streets of *Paris*, we passed through that metropolis in profound silence. Scarce were we come out at the gate, when wind, hail and snow almost overwhelm'd us in our coach, which was made in the *Italian* taste. We had been assured that it would hold out for a thousand leagues; we at least thought that though the hinges might be loose, the wheels would not break for some time. In our very first stage a little wheel broke, and it took up two hours to mend it: what an omi-

nous

nous beginning of a journey was this! Had we believed in augury, like the ancients, we ſhould have returned back directly; but as this is a philoſophical age, we were above the influence of ſuch prejudices, and with great intrepidity continued our journey to *Fontainbleau*; we found it neceſſary to ſtop there to get new wheels made to our carriage: never did days appear ſo long to me, or occaſion me ſo much perplexity, as the two which we paſſed at a place, whoſe ſituation and irregular beauty would at another time have amuſed me agreeably. The only amuſement I had here was the converſation of an old man, who told me, that ever ſince the reign of LEWIS the Young, this caſtle was the hunting-ſeat of the Kings of *France*: St LEWIS retired there thro' devotion, and FRANCIS the Firſt to cultivate and encourage the arts; he brought thither from *Bologna* PRIMATICCIO, pupil of JULIO ROMANO, and ſent him back to *Rome*, to take models of the LAOCOON, TRAJAN's pillar, &c. This Monarch was deſirous of erecting a marble one in imitation of it at *Fontainbleau*. By his order the Equeſtrian ſtatue of MARCUS AURELIUS was erected, in imitation of that at the capitol, in the court of the Fountains, built by PHILIBERT DE LORME; PILLON, ſculptor of the fine fountain of the Innocents, adorned it with buſts under CHARLES IXth; FREMINET, in the reign of LEWIS XIII. painted the

roof of the chapel. HENRY the Fourth formed the canal. Every prince that came to the throne was eager to beautify this delightful retreat; and the different plans they purſued occaſion its beautiful irregularity. I walked there a long time, impatiently waiting the moment of my departure, the Poſt-maſter aſſuring me, that he was forbid to tell which was the beſt road to *Lyons*. We gave the preference to that which leads through *Burgundy*, without knowing the reaſon why, and we found it a good one. There is nothing in it worthy of notice but *Dijon*, a well-built and populous town, and remarkable for having given birth to BOSSUET, CREBILLON, RAMEAU, BUFFON, &c. The vineyards which afford all *Europe* ſuch excellent wine, enrich the land as far as *Macon*, where the country girls are prettily dreſſed; but the road is bad, and that of *Moulins* would be preferable in the winter.

Coming from *Burgundy*, one does not enter *Lyons* by a fine gate; long narrow ſtreets lead to the brilliant quarter of the town. Our ſtay there was ſo ſhort, that I have nothing particular to ſay of it; I defer giving you a deſcription of *Lyons* till my return. We there took voiturins, as it would have been impoſſible to ride poſt in rough and irregular roads. A good cauſeway however reaches as far as the *Alps*. We dined at *Pont Beauvoiſin*, upon the confines of *Savoy* and *Dauphiné*,

Dauphiné, where I heard at table that they sometimes keep cheeses of goat's-milk a hundred years, which they set so high a value upon, as to preserve them for weddings; that they bake their bread for a year, or at least six months; and that those who live in the valleys, though afflicted with swellings in their throats, as well as those who live on the mountains, despise the latter as mountaineers, and will upon no account intermarry with them.

After getting out of the *French* territories, one is obliged to travel upon the borders of a precipice, where a roaring torrent rolls between two rocks, in a narrow road cut through the stone. There are rails in some places made of wood, in others of stone, and here and there broken, which were made for the convenience of the Princesses who are going to *Turin*: this slight fence encourages passengers, and dispels the terror of so frightful a road. Near *Chambery*, CHARLES EMANUEL, Duke of SAVOY, caused to be cut in the rock a vault fourscore foot high, a quarter of a league in length, where two carriages can pass abreast: an inscription made in 1670 immortalises the munificence of that Prince. The laudable actions of kings are engraved upon brass, ours upon sand; our glory is of consequence the greater, we do good without any hopes of recompence; but it is not now a

time to reason, when I am giving an account of my travels.

Upon coming out of this defile, where the caverns we meet with resemble the habitations of Gorgons, we saw cascades which fall a hundred foot from rock to rock, and form torrents which are crossed upon tottering bridges. Thus are we obliged to follow, sometimes high, and sometimes low, on the brink of precipices, the course of the waters which first formed these hollow ways. The castle of *Chambery*, which was the place of residence for the ancient Dukes of SAVOY, has nothing in it remarkable.

Montmelian is a dismantled fortress, we dined there, and then went to lie at *Aigue-belle*, by a narrow and steep descent. We generally pass these dangerous parts of the road on foot. The badness of the highways quite fatigued me. My weariness obliged me to stay a day at this wretched hole, which appears to be a high mountain, covered with low huts, where the inhabitants pass the winter under the snow. The narrow valley offered nothing to the view in the midst of the river, but a vast hard rock, which fell from the mountains, and stands by itself.

We went from thence to St JOHN of *Maurienne*; where we found a bridge: a miserable road paved with sharp stones, leads from thence to St MICHAEL, where the King of *Sardinia*'s envoy to *Spain*, was so good as to

to apprize me, that it was necessary to get myself carried in an arm-chair for three leagues, before our arrival at *Mont Cenis*. This piece of advice was of great service to me. Monsieur DU BOCAGE repented of his intrepidity in continuing in the coach; the men that carried me being more speedy than his driver, conducted me in an arm-chair thro' mountains and vallies, attended by a servant on horseback, almost drowned with rain, stifled with a cold, and in all the terror and apprehension imaginable. How much obliged am I to my mountaineers! they might have carried me wherever they thought proper: but they were so honest as to conduct me to *Lanebourg*, where I waited an hour for my fellow-traveller, in the utmost inquietude and anxiety. He had, like me, got over the dreadful pass of *Termignon*.

We made a good supper upon bad meat, and slept better upon a very hard bed than voluptuous people upon a bed of down. Whilst we were asleep, they took our carriages to pieces in order to convey them over mount *Cenis* upon the backs of mules. We ascended that mountain in the morning in arm-chairs carried by porters: I took six to be in greater security. Notwithstanding the snow, which was so deep that it covered them up to the middle of their legs, I found that travellers had exaggerated the danger of passing this mountain; but though forewarned, I was

so little aware of the cold which is in all seasons excessive in that quarter, that I had not taken the precaution of putting on a dress sufficiently warm. The consequence was, that the frost pierced me through and through; and my hoarseness rendered it impossible for me to make myself heard by the men that carried me; and if it had not been for the charitable monks at the top of the mountain, who suffer travellers to warm themselves by their fire, I should have died. I might have had fine trouts in a neighbouring lake, if it had not been frozen; but I was too ill in health to regret them: I was so dejected, that it hardly gave me any satisfaction not to have a mountain to pass, which rose like a Colossus just at the back of that which we had got clear of. I muffled myself up as well as I could, in order to arrive at the valley. What did I see at the bottom of the immense abyss by the side of which I passed! A black and muddy torrent precipitates into it with a prodigious noise, and with its foam whitens the rocks which obstruct its course. I had scarce any doubt but it was the infernal river of *Cocytus*; the length of the bridges that I went over, and my carriers, whose appearance bore a strong resemblance to that of demons, confirmed me in the opinion, that I was descending to hell; the jolting of the chair gave me a megrim; my eyes were so dazzled with the snow, and the rapidity of the water, that

when

when I cast a glance upon this dreadful gulph, I thought I saw a thousand spectres wandering upon it. You cannot form a just idea of these lofty mountains without having passed over them. The dreary prospects which are there to be seen might furnish matter to the imagination of poets, but it is impossible for any picture to come up to the reality; and for that reason I am afraid to give you a sketch of them. The description of the *Alps*, drawn by the ingenious HALLER, whose capacity enabled him to give an adequate idea of those prodigious mountains, turn more upon the felicity of the inhabitants of his country, than upon the landscape of innumerable rocks, the summits of which, covered with eternal snow, reach to the clouds, oblige them to dissolve, and by excavation to form deep channels, in which their waters being collected, run from every side, to fertilise the plains. What can we say of these mountains after the *Latin* poets, who had always an opportunity of seeing them? But I have scribbled so much in the poetical way, that you would not forgive me if I did not write something upon so striking a subject. I will therefore make an attempt:

These rocky piles, which in perspective rise,
Like hosts of giants, seem to brave the skies:
Deep as black *Styx* rolls in th'infernal shade,
So high these *Alps* the heav'nly vaults invade.

There

There PHOEBUS shines in vain; no summer there
Is known with Zephyr's breath to fan the air;
They shade the earth, the lofty clouds sustain;
And wing those storms, which heave the roaring main.
In those chill'd climes eternal winter reigns,
No smiling harvests grace these barren plains.
Yet e'en this savage wild a prospect yields
Of a few flow'ry meads, and verdant fields.
There blust'ring torrents echoes loud repeat,
And to deep gulphs precipitate retreat:
The chaos wild excites a strange surprize,
And the rude beauties strike the rapt'ur'd eyes.

The strong desire I had to send you a description of the labyrinth of the *Alps*, (of which I have however given you but a faint sketch) made me quite forget my journey to *Turin*. In our way to it we passed through *Rivoli*, a country seat where VICTOR AMADEUS sadly ended his days, after his abdication. From this fine castle an avenue of elms, seven miles long and a hundred broad, leads to the town, which is well built and regularly fortified. The villas upon the neighbouring hills command the *Po*, which washes the ramparts, where trees are planted on each side; this walk excited my admiration when I saw it: notwithstanding my head-ach, I was the same evening able to visit our worthy Ambassador, the Chevalier

ller CHAVELIN, with whom I had long been acquainted. During three days which I have passed here, I have been so happy as to be always in his company, as well as in that of the marquis of CARACCIOLI, Plenipotentiary of *Naples*, whose dry pleasantry is highly entertaining; I own I had been greatly delighted with it at *Paris*. The first moments in which friends meet, after a long separation, are exquisitely pleasing. I will now give you a short account of whatever is remarkable in the town.

The King's palace has but a mean appearance outwardly, but the inside is richly ornamented. The bed-chamber is adorned with the four elements of ALBANO. In the closets are to be seen the dropsical woman of GIRARDON, several fine *Flemish* pictures, and excellent miniatures. The front of the palace of the duke of CHABLAIS is built in an elegant taste; the Opera theatre has a grand roof, and the court of the University is well built. The King encourages the arts, and does his utmost to make them flourish. He has an antiquary, named BARTOLI, who likewise cultivates poetry. Would you think that the first verses I was complimented with upon entering *Italy*, were *English*, and composed by Lord BARNWALL. I dare not send you a translation of a panegyrick made upon me, I shall therefore send you the original

Amongst

Amongst the honours, wondring *Europe* pays
To MILTON, father of immortal lays;
If ought can touch his happy soul below,
It is the glory he receives from you*.
Now *Britain* with you should divide his crown:
For had you not, to make his beauties known,
In your soft language turn'd his noble theme,
Her greatest Bard had got but half his fame.

I apprehend I shall return to *Turin*, and give you a longer account of this city when my journey is near at an end: our Ambassador was so kind as to invite me to pass a fortnight with him there. His merit and his character equally contribute to make him the idol of every body. Yesterday at the Rings, where I saw several fine coaches and beautiful ladies, one of them intending to oblige him, threw a copy of verses into his chariot, in which I then happened to be: he read them with great earnestness, and thought they were composed extempore: he was quite mistaken, it was a compliment which Monsieur DE VOLTAIRE sent me ten years ago with his Tragedy of SEMIRAMIS. How should it come here? I know nothing of the matter, I never communicated it to you, nor to any body else; but since it is public I think I have reason to be proud of the lines, here they are:

A VOW

* Madam DU BOCAGE published a poem, intitled, *Paradis Terrestre*, imitated from MILTON.

I made a vow, both rash and vain,
To sing in one connected strain
Wit, graces, and the pow'rful art
To captivate and charm each heart;
The happy talent to unite
The Muses and the God of soft delight.
This sole pursuit engross'd my thought:
The union rare I eager sought;
My search was fruitless, vain my care,
I saw DU BOCAGE, and stopp'd there;
For in that Sister of the Nine
Those gifts and graces all combine.

LETTER XVII.

Venice, two days before the Carnival of the *Ascension*, 1757.

Dear Sister,

AFter having left *Turin*, we crossed the river seven times in a ferry boat, and passed through shady and fertile plains which are often overflowed with water. The rice that grows there requires a moist soil; it is drained by ditches which border the road as far as *Milan*, of which city you will find a description in every author that gives an account of these parts. The Cathedral is a fine gothic building covered both within and without with marble, dug out of the quarries of the country, adorned with six domes, three hundred and sixty columns, and four thousand

thousand statues; most of which are the works of eminent artists. The following words are engraved upon that of St BARTHOLOMEW, in praise of its extraordinary beauty:

Non me PRAXITELES *sed* MARCUS *finxit Agrati.*

Time defaces these master-pieces of art, whilst they have been three hundred years labouring, at an immense expence, to complete this vast edifice. The nails of the horses shoes upon which CONSTANTINE rode in triumph, adorn the vault; they are taken down, and fixed up again once every year with the utmost ceremony and pomp. The subterraneous caverns contain the magnificent tomb of St CHARLES, patron of the church. There is another treasure in the *Ambrosian* Library, given to the public by Cardinal BORROMEO, nephew to St CHARLES; it is a learned manuscript, which LEONARDO DA VINCI, a painter, and a man of universal genius, wrote with his left hand; he died in the arms of FRANCIS I.

Our fashions and amusements are more followed in this great city than any where else in *Italy*. I had the happiness of being recommended there to the Countess SIMONETTI, who is a zealous patroness of whatever comes from *Paris*; she has her cloaths made there, speaks the *French* language well, has all the politeness of our nation, and was

so

so kind as to lend us her box at the Play-house. Its magnificence appeared by the manner in which it was lighted and provided with refreshments. This Lady permitted me to follow her to the ring. This is the first time I ever saw people take the air without moving. We stopped before a church in a public square; I was quite astonished at our being thus motionless, and took the liberty to ask what our coach, and the other coaches that had stopped in the same manner, were waiting for. I was told, in answer, that they were taking the air according to the custom of the country. We were puzzled to guess the origin of such a custom, and the most probable conjecture we could form was, that it took its rise from the constraint in which the *Italian* women formerly lived. The pretext of taking the air gave gallant cavaliers, whom they could not have seen at home, an opportunity of speaking to them at their coach doors: and though they enjoy full liberty there at present, the custom derived from their former restraint subsists to this day: our conversation upon this subject lasted a long time.

My kind conductress, not satisfied with instructing me in the manners of the country, and admitting me to her table and her assemblies, invited us to pass the night before our departure at her country seat at *Vaprio*, where we were very well entertained, and enjoyed the most delightful prospect. An orangery, in

in terrasses, which extends itself on one side of the house, has the command of a canal navigable for all sorts of vessels that sail to *Milan*; and thirty foot below it, which is something very extraordinary, runs the river *Adda*, separated from the upper canal only by a wall twelve feet thick. Upon the opposite shore are two villages, the houses of which are exceeding handsome: beyond them a beautiful plain, woods and verdant hills extend as far as the *Alps*, the summit of which, covered with snow intermixed with clouds, forms an admirable landscape.

Upon leaving this delightful retreat, we continued our journey upon a road which is very rough; except three leagues of it, which the noble ERIZZO, who is now Ambassador at *Paris*, caused to be repaired whilst he was Governor of *Bergamo*, an antient city remarkable for its Fairs and its Harlequins. We were then conducted by a stony road to *Brescia*, which Cardinal QUIRINI, its late Bishop, adorned with a magnificent church, not as yet entirely finished: He began by causing his tomb to be erected within the inclosure, and his bust over the door. Thus the desire of making a figure in this world, and the fear of punishment in the next, equally contribute to multiply pious foundations every where.

From

From this which is a considerable fortified town, we proceeded onward to *Verona*, upon a causeway which is still extreamly hard. Low carts, drawn by six or eight oxen yoked together, seem there to sink in the mire. The *Venetians*, who are strict observers of their laws, do not seem to have any for keeping their high roads in repair, and taking care of the pavement of their towns. This which we are now going to pass through, should however be a little better paved than it is. There one sees fine palaces and noble remains of antiquity, chiefly an Amphitheatre built in the time of AUGUSTUS; excepting the first row, which is sunk into the ground through the great antiquity of the building, the whole inside is entire. The Marquis MAFFEI, a person of the most exquisite taste, has repaired forty four steps, which are in breadth twenty five inches by eighteen. I examined them all to the very top; my imagination placed a hundred and fifty thousand upon those marble seats which were made to hold them, filled the area with wild beasts, and formed to itself the finest sight imaginable. This idea is sometimes realized, when people are brought together at this amphitheatre on public festivals. Why was I not present at some of these entertainments? There are a few verses of CLAUDIAN upon this amphitheatre, which I translated by way of amusement.

A savage lion, in the forests bred,
To the full Amphitheatre is led;
Quick he's attack'd; he fights a while, then [flies,
And wounded struggles 'midst the people's cries;
Unterrify'd he views the crouds around,
Though hisses thro' the Circus wide resound.

The country of the Marquis MAFFEI every where discovers traces of his learned labours. He has caused to be incrusted upon the walls of the Academical Theatre several pieces of ancient marble covered with inscriptions, and divers figures in basso relievo. His marble bust, which has a striking resemblance, crowns the gate, and makes a great figure in the square of the town-house. This method of honouring eminent men is too much neglected amongst us. Would not the heads of CORNEILLE, MOLIERE, LA FONTAINE, BOSSUET, COLBERT, TURENNE, &c. convey more pleasing ideas than the grotesque figures, and saxon or china ware, with which we fill our houses at an enormous expence? M. ZENOBRIO, Governor of *Verona*, that I might have the pleasure of seeing the whole country at one view, was so obliging as to accompany me to St PETER's castle, built upon the ruins of an ancient Theatre, from whence we discovered the *Adige*, which runs through the town and waters a fertile plain. We had a fancy to visit the dark and narrow

Cathedral

Cathedral, where the following inscription is to be read upon the tomb of pope LUCIUS III.

OSSA LUCII.

I am so much a friend to short Epitaphs, that I thought proper to transcribe it. That of the SCALIGERS, who were formerly Sovereigns of the place, and from whose family the two pedants of the name of SCALIGER (one of whom died in *France*, the other in *Holland*) boasted themselves descended, is at Santa Maria *Antica*. VITRUVIUS, FRACASTORIUS, CORNELIUS NEPOS, PLINY the Naturalist, the gallant CATULLUS, and the Emperors VESPASIAN and DOMITIAN, were likewise born in this Town.

I say nothing of the pictures of the most eminent masters of the *Lombard* school, nor of the curious cabinets which this place is possessed of; there are many books extant which give an account of them.

But you are desirous of accompanying me in my travels: let us now proceed to *Vicenza*. Many monuments in this city shew it to be the country of the famous PALLADIO, who died in 1580. The finest edifices now remaining from his plans, are a triumphal Arch, and a Hall in the form of a demi-circus, formed according to the description given by VITRUVIUS of Theatres of this kind. We are informed by PLINY, that SCAURUS caused two

to be erected at *Rome* in wood, which turned upon a pivot, could be easily joined together in a moment, and formed a circus for chariot-races. It was proposed to us to go to visit the Olympick Theatre; I had heard of all the wonders of *Italy* before, except this alone. I expected to see only an enclosure for young persons to contend for the prize at all sorts of bodily exercises; how agreeably was I surprized upon entering a place where *Roman* spectacles were exhibited? five streets, adorned with fine houses, on every side, end at a square, in which the most elegant architecture is displayed, and where the performers make their appearance. At the foot of the foremost scene is the Orchestra, where the Consuls and Vestals were formerly seated. Around this place are erected, in a semi-circle, sixteen benches crowned with a balustrade, adorned with thirty statues, above the human size, and all made of white marble. The space between each of them, and the colonade which surrounds them, left us room to go round, and to contemplate the decorations of the Theatre; to which we again descended, to visit the several streets, where the DAVUS's and CHREMES's entering upon the stage could speak without seeing each other. I was then convinced that the long speeches they make *aside* were no way incongruous or unnatural.

In

The better to form an Idea of the art by which the players made themſelves heard in a place ſo extenſive, we viſited every corner which returns the voice. This curious Theatre, a plan of which I carry with me, is now made uſe of only for the balls given at the famous fairs which are held in all the towns of *Lombardy*. I ſhould have been glad to be preſent when an attempt was made to act a play there; and am very ſorry I did not cauſe the Amphitheatre to be lighted, (that I might ſee the effect produced by the illumination at our return;) whilſt the Marquis of CAPRA, who accompanied us, carried us to his country-houſe, to partake of an entertainment. This delightful country-ſeat, where the pictures of SCAMMOZZI and PALLADIO, who built it, are to be ſeen, furniſhed the model of that of MARLI, NAVARRE, and BURLINGTON, of which I gave you an account in my voyage to *England*.

To pay due homage to the genius of PALLADIO, before we left *Vicenza*, we ſtopt oppoſite to the little palace of his own conſtruction in which he lodged himſelf; and we went out of the town through fields planted with trees checkerwiſe, according to the manner of the whole country. Vines twine round the other trees, and paſs from one to another in the form of Garlands. The land till'd under the ſhadow of theſe trees is ſo much the more

fertile: this garden conducted us to *Padua*, so much renowned for its University, its great extent, its streets adorned with porticos on each side, its botanic garden, and the immense Town-house, where are the tombs of its founder, ANTENOR, of LIVY the historian, who was born in this country, and of the Marchioness DOBIZZI, who so far surpassed LUCRETIA and SUSANNA in chastity, that she preferred death to adultery, and died before the crime was committed. The CONTARINI's, noble *Venetians*, whom we had known at *Paris*, and whom we met accidentally, shewed us all these curiosities, and gave us to understand, that the tomb of PETRARCH is at *Arqua* near *Padua*.

The *Timavus* of the ancients, now called the *Brenta*, runs round this city; we were carried upon it to the neighbourhood of *Venice* in very convenient boats, by as fine a canal as that which leads from *Amsterdam* to *Utrecht*; it is not so much adorned with trees cut in the form of crescents, but the villas on each side of it are larger, and built in a more elegant taste; the statues much finer, and the thickets better laid out, especially those which belong to the Nobles PISANO and LOREDANO.

After having sufficiently viewed these superb habitations, we again entered our little boat. My fellow traveller observed near *Venice* several black gondolas, and thought that some great personage was going to be buried: lamps

lamps fastened on the inside of them, which he took to be fonts to hold holy water, confirmed him in this opinion; but as we went farther we perceived that all the gondolas were of the same gloomy hue. The cluster of islands which appeared to our view, separated insensibly before our attentive eyes, like the clouds of a theatrical decoration, and displayed a floating town, into which we entered by a long canal adorned with palaces of an enchanting beauty; the most delightful were those of GRIMANI, PISANI, FOSCARINI, MOROSINI, CORNARO, and a hundred more. The description SANNAZARIUS has given of this fine and surprizing city, which, tho' without fortifications, is impregnable by its situation, is universally known.

Viderat Adriacis Venetam NEPTUNUS in undis
Stare urbem & toti ponere jura mari.
Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantumvis JUPITER arces
Objice, & illa tui mœnia Martis, ait,
Si pelago Tyberim prefers, urbem aspice utramque,
Illam homines dices, hanc posuisse deos.

We lodge at the hotel d'*Angleterre*, the master of which is a *Frenchman*; he makes us pay exorbitantly on account of the Carnival of the ascension, which begins to morrow. At

other times one may live here reasonably enough. A gondola may be hired for six livres a day. They are light boats, which, in order to pass under four hundred bridges built across the canals, are low, sharp pointed and glide along the water like fishes. Two gondoliers, one of whom stands fore, and another aft, with oars in their hands, disengage themselves from a multitude of gondolas, which they pass by without once hitting against them. Coaches however are more convenient and more expeditious. I should likewise prefer a habitation built upon a solid foundation, to a city built upon piles, which seems to be always immersed under water. On one side of the houses, the water comes up to the door; on the other side one may escape it by narrow streets paved with large stones. I will give you a farther account of this city in my next.

LETTER XVIII.

Venice, *June* 1, 1757.

Dear Sister,

YOU ask me how I can find means to get myself introduced to good company in places where I am unknown?

Politeness in *Italy*, as well as at *London*, and even in *Holland*, requires that the natives should be beforehand with strangers in visiting

ing

ing them; the friends of the persons to whom they are recommended consider this as a duty. We have the happiness of being recommended to two noble *Venetian* Ladies of the Families of CONDOLMER and CORNARO. The latter, who was lately married, made me a present of the Poems printed to celebrate her nuptials. The custom of all countries obliges versifiers, who are acquainted with a new-married couple, to write a Sonnet or an Epithalamium in their honour upon these occasions. This species of composition was entirely new to me. I was however obliged to make a beginning, and to praise, without well knowing what to say. I here send you this pretended extempore composition, which I produced at my leisure at *Paris*. I had been apprised of the custom, and the marriage.

Fast by a fertile hill, bespread with green,
Where the bright Naiad of the silver *Seine*
The voice of fame diffuses all around,
What shouts throughout the plains below resound!
'Tis said a beauty on the banks of *Po*
Prepares on HYMEN triumphs to bestow.
Venice shall soon behold the nuptial rites;
The god with lighted torch the guests invites,
His curling locks to fanning breezes play,
With sweetest garlands crown'd of flowrets gay.

The

The god, whom such a glorious conquest charms,
Consigns CONDOLMER to CORNARO's arms.
Their names in history so high renown'd
My feeble voice presum'd not to resound;
But PHOEBUS soft commands, my voice I raise,
And strive to celebrate the lovers praise:
From *Benacus* to the *Loire*, each deathless name
My Muse shall consecrate to lasting fame.
Both with each virtue and endowment shine,
Which grac'd for ages their illustrious line.
Favour'd by MARS, the god of war, one springs
From the fam'd race of ancient *Cyprian* Kings*.
The goddess VENUS, at whose blissful shrine
The grateful *Cyprians* offer rites divine,
With mutual love our hero's heart inspir'd;
The nymph for wit and beauty was admir'd.
A Pontif † sprung from that illustrious line,
Prostrate for her before the sacred shrine,
Breath'd forth his fervent and his pious vows,
That heav'n might bless her with a faithful spouse.
Better to celebrate the happy pair,
Be PAN with choirs of joyous dancers there:
Muse of *Eridanus*, their love divine
By tuneful strains to deathless fame consign.
I offered

* A queen of *Cyprus*, who gave this island to the *Venetians*, was descended from the race of CORNARO.

† Pope EUGENE IV, of the house of CONDOLMER.

I offered these verses and some *Paris* trifles, upon which the foreign Ladies were so obliging as to set a value, to the bride and to her mother, who is but a young woman. They are so good as to direct me by their advice, and take upon them to be my guides. I am as you may well imagine, more indebted to their kindness for marks of favour and friendship than I could even have presumed to hope.

These Ladies carried us, in one of the Galleys belonging to the public, to the Ceremony of the *Bucentaure*. A Mariner, who stands upon the tower of St MARK to observe the heavens, is said to answer with his life for the vessel aboard of which the *Doge* is embarked; you may judge then if he be not attentive to make it re-enter the harbour at the least appearance of an impending storm. Represent to your imagination shores crowded with a multitude of people, whose shouts pierce the air, a sea covered with gondolas and feluccas, with a band of music in each, the report of the cannon, both of the castles and the vessels, a hundred streamers waving in the air, and a distant prospect of the summits of the mountains of *Tirol* covered with snow, in spight of the sun which shines upon the tops of the houses; such a picture as this delighted our eyes at noon on the day of the Ascension. The masquerade habits which people assume upon that occasion are not laid aside in less than a fortnight after, and are

worn

worn ſeveral times in the year. Women, fond of elegance, are at a great expence to embroider with the ſame colour the long black mantle worn at this maſquerade. The fineſt black lace forms the hood, which, under a black hat adorned with a plume of black feathers, covers their head and ſhoulders. Under this dreſs they have all their uſual clothes, their hoops, and even large noſegays. Notwithſtanding all the pains they are at, this diſguiſe appears to me to be diſmal, inconvenient and deſtitute of variety. Men and women wear the ſame ſort of clokes, hoods and hats, all black, with white maſks; ſo that when they lie down in their black gondolas, as they frequently do, you may gueſs what ſort of appearance they make. No one is to be ſeen in public at the time of Carnival without this diſguiſe. They are indeed at liberty to take off their maſks and their hoods in the Theatre, and at the Aſſemblies; but this habit has been ſo often worn, that one would think it was high time to fancy one more becoming.

At the firſt viſits and ceremonies the men are in robes, the Ladies in black, which they ſet off with a quantity of precious ſtones and lace. I ſaw a great number of them the other day aſſembled and dreſſed, to aſſiſt at the ceremony of taking the veil by the daughter of a Senator, at one of the convents, in which none are received but women of noble fami-

lies.

lies. One half of the ſenate aſſiſted upon this occaſion: both the inſide and outſide of the church were richly adorned; but nothing can equal the appearance of the gallery thro' which the victim advanced towards the grate. It was of a great length, vaulted, and terminated by the ſea; the walls, that were on both ſides painted red, and lined with real orange trees mixed with figures of paſteboard, which admirably imitate alabaſter, formed the moſt ſurprizing decoration imaginable. The conſecrated bride, crowned with flowers, and ſupported by two venerable matrons, advanced ſlowly upon a blue carpet ſtrewed with roſes, pronounced her vows in the preſence of a Prelate, and then went up again to the parlour. All the ladies went thither, two by two, to ſalute her; Madam DE LORDANO, ſiſter to the Doge, who was the only Lady in colours there, in order to do me honour as a ſtranger, was ſo obliging as to carry me to this ceremony. Refreſhments of all ſorts were ſerved up. Thirty thouſand ducats are ſpent at one of thoſe ceremonies. The regulations made here for preventing the increaſe of luxury, cannot put a ſtop to theſe uſeleſs expences. Young Ladies who have no hopes of being married to advantage, are very willing to take the veil. They are not laid under any great reſtraint by the convent; for they have every evening aſſemblies at the grate, and their habit ſets off inſtead of con-

cealing

cealing their beauty. Madam MICHAELI, with whom I had the happiness of being acquainted, in this dress gave me an idea of angelic appearances. I never saw a figure more beautiful, more striking, and more amiable. All people are eager to pay their court to her at the parlour. Foreign Ministers are admitted there. The policy of the country forbids the Nobles to converse with the latter; this occasions the highest perplexity to persons who, like us, have the honour of visiting both. Count ROSENBERG, Ambassador from *Vienna*, and the Nuncio BRANCIFORTE, who brought to *Paris* from the Pope the swadling-clothes of the Duke of *Burgundy*, gave us a grand dinner. In return, the Abbe DE VILLEFONT, who is charged with the affairs of *France*, invited, together with these two Ambassadors, one of the Princes CORSINI, who travelled so much to his improvement all over *Europe*; the beautiful Marchionesses SAINT PRIE' of *Turin*, and CORSI of *Florence*, who were brought to *Venice* by the Carnival; and us poor travellers, to give us a most elegant entertainment. The place proved answerable to his care. His dining rooms, in one of which the meat was served up, in another the fruit, and in a third the coffee, are between a garden leading to them, and the sea which washes the lower part of the windows. After the entertainment we went to visit hospitals famous for their ravishing

concerts

concerts, which are performed by choirs of girls: the voices, the instruments, and every thing relating to them, are divine; their harmonious symphonies make the vault resound, and charm the ear. A grate, which has a curtain before it, conceals them from curious eyes, and gives their songs a still stronger resemblance to angelic melody.

The churches at *Venice* are of an extraordinary magnificence. You will find a description of them in the writings of all travellers, as well as of the pictures of the greatest masters with which they are adorned. At the church of SANTA MARIA DELL HORTO, is to be seen the noble monument of the CONTARINI's. In the church which goes by the name of DEI FRATI, is that of the celebrated TITIAN. At the church of St LUC that of ARETIN, born at *Arezzo*. I have made an attempt to translate his epitaph, which I subjoin here.

Condit ARETINI ceneres lapis iste sepultos,
Mortales atro qui sale perfricuit.
Intactus Deus est illi; causamque rogatus,
Hanc dedit, ille, inquit, not mihi notus erat.

Here the fam'd ARETINUS' bones repose,
Who in his satires spar'd nor friends nor foes;
But to the author God was quite unknown,
And God he in his satires spar'd alone.

As

As I am a lover of poetry, every body here is so obliging as to use this language, in order to flatter me, and to seize every opportunity to make me hear it. You were acquainted with JOSEPH FARCETI, a noble *Venetian*, and a man of learning, at *Paris*. His cousin, who is of the same name, and has a taste equally exquisite, invited us yesterday to dine with him, and GOLDONI the celebrated comic poet, together with the countess GOZZI, who has obliged the world with a translation of TERENCE, and took the trouble to translate my Tragedy of the *Amazons* into *Italian* verse, and get it printed at her own expence. I wrote her the following verses by way of acknowledgment.

The *Amazonians* when I sung,
My tuneful lyre the Muses strung;
Envenom'd satire then in vain
Will pour its poison on my strain.
Near *Adriatic* shores a dame,
Who vies with *Amazonian* fame,
Consigns by her immortal lays
My *Amazons* to lasting praise.
To PHOEBUS dear her art divine
Procures me favour at his shrine;
And to the sacred valley leads
My *Thracian* bands of warlike maids.
Muse, who to *Po* dost guide my flight,
Such favours how can I requite?

By

By honours due to heavenly pow'rs,
By votive offerings, or by flow'rs?

The husband of this SAPPHO, who is now translating my *Terrestrial Paradise*, and Monf. QUIRINI, who, like me, has taken COLUMBUS for his hero, has been ten years composing ten cantos upon the subject of his voyages, and has just published his work as well as I, were of the company. This extraordinary resemblance made us enter into a conversation, which lasted during a long and agreeable entertainment. After coffee (which they drink all the day long at *Venice*) M. LANDINI, author of the *Temple of Philosophy* in *Martellian* verse*, and who has the greatest talent at singing *Italian* poems by heart†, of any man in that country, where it is commoner than in any other, took his Mandoline§, and in a recitative but little varied, sung according to their custom several verses, some of which were very good, upon any subject that was proposed. This talent, of which we have no idea, astonishes us: I do not know whether our language is susceptible of it; the *Italian* tongue is more copious, and admits of greater liberties. I was

* Or *Alexandrine*. MARTELLI was the first inventor of this species of *Italian* verse, which consists of fourteen syllables.

† This the *Italians* call *improvisare*.

§ A sort of musical instrument.

in the house of the Medici. Our eyes were enchanted by harmony; our ears were equally ravished by the beauties of painting and sculpture. The owner of these wonders has a choice collection of pictures, and brings over upon the *Adriatic* all the fine flames of the *Arno* and the *Tiber*. BENEDICT XIV. permits him to take moulds of them, upon condition, that for every figure of which he takes the model in plaister, he shall send a copy of it to the Academy of the Institute at *Bologna*, where that Pope was born. This fine collection, which cost M. FARCETTI a hundred and fifty thousand livres, furnishes one of the most curious galleries I ever saw in my life. He joins a taste for modern ornaments to the love of the fine antique: He has resided a long time in *France*, and has taken pains to copy the best plans of that country in his entresoles, which look on a broad canal. There a hundred gondolas, or boats, reflected by the looking glasses, form moving pictures. Whilst these mirrors reflect real images, the master-pieces of RAPHAEL and TITIAN in the gallery above, record the past transactions by the admirable strokes of their art. Upon the same canal Mr SMITH, a rich *English* gentleman, has built an agreeable habitation for himself entirely in the *English* taste; the very tables and locks of the gates are made after the manner of that country; but he is not indebted to *London* for his fine

collection

a collection of admirable pictures, of books in the learned languages, and curiosities of all sorts.

Though the noble *Venetians* have superb palaces richly furnished after the manner of our ancestors, they reside at them but seldom, rarely invite company, and retire to little country-houses less embellished with ornaments, and much in the same nature as those which we call little houses in *France*. Husbands and wives have separate seats, and sometimes more than one; and it is customary with them to go to these without any attendants but their gondoliers. The ladies upon these occasions, are always accompanied by a Cicisbeo or Squire. SACRAMOZO, knight of *Malta*, an amiable man, of extensive knowledge, and a great traveller, whom I had known in *Holland* and at *Paris*, was so good as to attend me in this capacity upon occasion. The first time he did me the honour of accompanying me in my visits, he perceived me under some uneasiness at having forgot my cards; would you think it, that he had taken the precaution to provide himself with printed ones! It is an article of my function, said he; and I am also to attend you to the coffee-house, when you go there to take any refreshment; as likewise when you take a walk of an evening at St. Marks's square or by the great canal, which is extremely agreeable during the heat of summer.

Thus the Ladies go about accompanied by their Cavaliers only, who in some measure resemble the ancient Knights of the round table: the disguises are uniform: the gondolas, which are all of the same colour, may be shut at pleasure; they carry the key of the little country-house in their pockets; a nun's lamp lighted upon the stairs of a citizen's house, part of which forms the country-seat, directs the way. They enter, they rest themselves either in company, or *tête à tête*, as they think proper, without incurring any sort of scandal. I have seen several of these familiar retreats, and must beg leave to tell the Ladies, who were so kind as to admit me to them, that they have a wrong notion of the liberty of *French* Ladies, as theirs greatly surpasses it.

When I read in MISSON, that the Ladies of *Venice* live in the greatest constraint imaginable; I am convinced that the manners of a people undergo a total change in the space of a century. I have been assured, that here a young Lady, whether married or not, if she happens to be tired of the Opera, after midnight, proposes to her Cicisbeo an amusement which must give high delight to those that are so much used to go upon water; this is to ride post. They immediately imbark aboard a gondola, sail three quarters of a league in order to gain the land, then ride post in a chaise, drink coffee, and return to their boat which brings them back by

day-

day-break to the town. The great indulgence which the *Venetian* Ladies meet with, prevents them from making a bad use of their liberty.

There are many beauties in *Venice*, much fairer than ours in *France*. I attribute their fine complexions to the narrowness of the streets, which are neither incommoded by the sun, nor the dust, as no sort of carriages, horses or mules, are suffered in that city. The Ladies sail under the shade of trees in their gondolas, and seldom go abroad in the day-time. Their routs do not begin in summer till ten o'clock; before they go there, they amuse themselves by taking a walk at St. Mark's square, which is magnificently built, surrounded with porticos three hundred paces in length, and a hundred and fifty broad. The fair, by which it is now cut into a multiplicity of fine allies, prevents me from seeing its extent; but the decorations of the illuminated shops, and the great number of people in masquerade, with which they are filled, delight the eye of the spectator. On one side are to be seen puppet-shows, rope-dancers and jugglers. On the other fortune-tellers, who, upon a little theatre covered with astronomical instruments, utter their oracular predictions through a long pipe, by which they are conveyed to the ear of the astonished inquirer. The Mountebanks, who surprise me the most, are the Story-tellers,

who are surrounded by a crowd of auditors, whom they find means to amuse without telling them nostrums. The subject of their narratives is generally an amorous Monk, or a Husband cuckolded by a wanton Wife, by intrigues resembling those so humorously described in BOCCACE's novels. This amusement is still very much in vogue amongst the *Italians*. There is likewise a sport to be seen there of which mention is made by *Claudian*. They form a pile of men, who stand upon each other's shoulders. A boy who stands at the summit, in order to destroy this edifice, leaps down into the arms of his father, who receives him; the remainder of the pile is dissolved in the same manner amidst the acclamations of the spectators.

The *Venetians* have no bowling greens, nor places to take the air either on foot or on horseback; they have no opportunity of hunting, nor are they by any means addicted to drinking. Amours, farcical entertainments, and mock sea-fights are their chief amusements. The populace here is much better acquainted with the works of their best Poets, than the lower sort of people amongst us are with the poetical compositions of their countrymen. A gondolier begins a canto of ARIOSTO or TASSO; his comrade sings the stanza following, the first begins again, where he leaves off; and thus they go on, till the memory of one or the other begins to fail.

These

These verses are chanted in a recitative, which monotony has no variety to please the ear; but their songs and the musical instruments of their country girls, who are well dressed, and dance at gentlemen's doors what ever they think proper to give them, enchant the hearer with a delightful harmony. Though they are neglected by the natives, whose ears are surfeited with them, strangers are ravished by this novelty. They are not equally satisfied at first with the *Italian* opera. The performers are in a Carnival base no sort of reputation. I shall send you an account of them, when we have seen better. I am now much more disposed to the study of the French than to hold a conversation. The French I contracted in passing the Alps, joined to the little knowledge I have of the language, renders what I say hardly intelligible. There are but few here who speak the *French* tongue fluently, and they are all so officious as to ask me a thousand questions, so that you may judge of my perplexity. I shall be under a necessity of leaving them, without giving satisfactory answers.

I have just received a letter from Cardinal PASSIONEI, who is so kind as to remind me of my promise of repairing to *Rome* to see St. PETER's fine work; we shall be there without fail. If I have accidentally forgot any particulars worth your notice, I shall take care to lay them before you in my next.

LETTER XIX.

Bologna, *June* 9, 1757.

Dear Sister,

I Have still a great deal to tell you of Saint MARK's square at *Venice*. The church which goes by the same name, and is built in the form of a Grecian cross, occupies one of the fronts, is covered with five domes, and has at its frontispiece four horses of gilt bronze from NERO's triumphal arch, which is still engraved upon some of his medals. CONSTANTINE enriched the circus of CONSTANTINOPLE with it: and the *Venetians*, who were for some time in possession of that metropolis, intended them for ornaments of their cathedral, as well as the five brazen gates of the mosque of St SOPHIA that stand before its entrance, and some pillars of Alabaster, which are said to be taken from the temple of SOLOMON. In this Basilica, adorned from the vault to the pavement with ancient Mosaic work, is to be seen a great number of statues brought thither from *Athens*. The table of the high altar is of massy gold enrich'd with precious stones; but the Treasury did not appear to me to deserve the extravagant encomiums that had been lavished upon it.

The great hall of the palace, furnished with excellent pictures by the *Venetian* school,

is

is a hundred and fifty foot long, and seventy three broad. The Library, of which that of the famous PETRARCH makes part, contains a prodigious number of *Greek* manuscripts, the presents of Cardinal BESSARION, born at *Nice* in *Bithynia*.

After having shewn us these curiosities, they made us take notice in the galleries, of the muzzles of certain animals which appear very frightful to the citizens. It is customary to convey by these into a box depositions against any inhabitant that is become obnoxious to his neighbours. The state inquisitors keep the keys of these, and open them when they think proper.

The Senate, which is composed of the whole body of the nobility, consists of a hundred and twenty members, who decide of war and peace; it moreover furnishes the members of the college of the twenty-six, whose business is to receive foreign Ambassadors, and report their demands to the senate. The Patriarch presides at the convocation, where religious controversies are decided. A committee of these several councils called the council of Ten, determines all things without appeal, and even has power to depose the Doge; but he seldom puts them to this trouble. He is closely watched, his power is a meer shadow, and has nothing in it real; his salary amounts only to sixty thousand livres; and the expences of his re-

ception,

cepion, added to that of disbursing what he is obliged to disburse to strangers, amounts to fifty thousand crowns. At the public ceremonies he wears a robe, and a mitre lined with ermine, and a four-cornered *Phrygian* cap. His palace has a prospect of the sea, and contains the *Broglio*, where the Nobles (for fear of giving umbrage by holding particular assemblies) transact all their affairs. This second square is joined to the first by an angle.

We had the curiosity to ascend St MARK's tower, which is irregularly situated before the church, and three hundred feet high. Its body contains winding stairs, so convenient a structure, that a horse can ascend them. From thence a spectator may see at one view not only *Venice*, with the ports and numerous islands belonging to it; but *Lombardy*, the mountains of *Istria*, the place where the *Alps* give rise to the *Apennines*, and the tract where the *Po* empties itself into the sea.

I forgot to speak of the Arsenal, which forms an island twenty stadia in circumference, guarded by mastives and enclosed by walls, which are flanked with towers and watched day and night by a noble *Venetian*. A spring of fresh water, which is said to be insusceptible of infection even from poison, supplies water to two thousand artificers, who work at their trades in fifty chambers, in

which

which most of them are burnt and die, without ever putting them on. They keep always in repair the tackle necessary for a multitude of vessels, each of which stands under an arch, and is washed by the waves of the sea. We ascended one of the largest, that stood upon dry land. From the bottom of the keel to the rudder, it seems as if one was to ascend by stairs to the top of a high house, of so great a length, that two persons could hardly see each other at the opposite ends of it.

The Gentlemen and Ladies of the CONTARINI and COLLALTO Families, who, according to the polite custom of the country, took the trouble to accompany us when we visited these places, the assemblies on the public diversions, and even when we went to masq, and that for three weeks together, were so good as to cross the sea on the day of our departure, in order to conduct us to *Chioggia*, a town two miles distant from *Venice*, and whose salt-pits enrich the republic. At the victory there gained by its forces in 1380, fire-arms were used by the *Venetians* for the first time. There our obliging conductors treated us with a sumptuous dinner, and we had the pleasure of seeing the best of company. Messieurs FARCETTI, and SAGREDOZO, Knight of *Malta*, of whom I have already made mention, were present, amongst others, and the Abbe GHIARI, who upon that good occasion complimented me with verses in my praise.

and

and made me a present of his Comedies, Romances and Philosophical Letters, written in the taste of POPE's Ethic Epistles. This emulator of GOLDONI, like him, makes successful efforts to improve the *Italian* Comedy; they would fain banish buffooneries and masks, both of which were borrowed from the ancient *Greeks* and *Romans*. How could people of such delicacy suffer them upon their Theattes? I would allow the use of them in personating Devils, Satyrs, or Cyclops, of which nature supplies no model; but they should not prevent us from beholding how human passions operate upon the countenance. We should likewise do well were we to oblige our dancers to lay them aside. But this digression makes me lose sight of our feast at *Chiozza*, which I quitted with reluctance in order to embark.

We were advised to go by water to *Ferrara*. The amiable persons with whom we had been in company, followed us a long time with their eyes from the shore, and even shed tears, which I returned them an hundred fold. As a last instance of their regard they recommended us to their friends upon the road, at whose country-houses we were to be accommodated with lodgings. The next day it rained from morning till night. This obliged us to be all the time under deck, so that we passed our time in the most disagreeable irksomeness, and were under

der constant terror and apprehensions. Our carriages went before in a bark, to which ours was fastened, that the cord might not make us approach too near the shore; but the overflowing of the *Po* kept us so far distant from our horses, that notwithstanding all our precautions we often sailed close to the banks. The proverb is just, "Let no one travel by "water that has an opportunity of going "by land." If it had not been for the badness of the weather, the prospect of the islands and the shores would have agreeably recalled to my memory the fable of PHAETON: many poplar trees, with long branches, trace to the imagination the ingenious metamorphosis of his sisters.

We stopped but one day at *Ferrara*. That time is sufficient to see the remaining grandeur of a city, which was in a flourishing condition under its Dukes, but is now quite deserted, and badly paved. The great number of Priests, Monks and Nuns, must certainly contribute to depopulate these fine countries. Yet were our religion to have more professors, the more God would be honoured by it, as I said to Count VARANO, a Gentleman descended from an ancient family in this country, who was so good as to make me a present of his excellent Tragedies, and to accompany me to the cathedral. GREGORIO GERALDI (according to whose memorials the *Gregorian* Calendar was made) is there buried. We

also

also belonged to the monastery of the Benedictines, [illegible] Ravenna in the tomb of Ariosto, whose Epitaph I shall here subjoin. It is to be seen every where, but I will save you the trouble of looking for it.

Novus Hesperiis jacet hic Ariosto Latinis,
Cui musa genuit nomen Etrusca dedit,
Sed satyram in vita exercuit, seu comica fuit,
Seu cecinit grandi bella decesque tuba.
Hos summo vates, cui summa in vertice Pindi,
Pergamina licet cingere fronde comas.

The ashes of DANTE, born at *Florence*, repose at *Ravenna*, which was formerly a superb town beyond the *Rubicon*, and a place of residence for the Emperors of the West. This Poet being of the Gibeline party, was banished thither by the Guelphs. Cardinal BEMBO, a *Venetian* by birth, repaired his tomb, and caused this new Epitaph to be inscribed upon it.

Exigua tumuli DANTIS hic forte jacebas,
Squallenti nulli cognite penè situ.
At nunc marmoreo subnixus conderis arcu,
Omnibus & cultur splendidiore nites.
Nimirum BEMBUS musis incensus Etruscis,
Hoc tibi, quem primis hæ coluere, dedit.

We

Now the *Pisatello*.

We arrived at *Bologne* the sixth instant, very desirous to see Count ALGAROTTI again, whom we had known at *Paris*, to which city he had twice made a tour. He has since visited the northern courts. You have heard a great deal of his works, and the deserved favour of the King of *Prussia* which he has long enjoyed. His health obliges him to quit that monarch for some years. These he passes agreeably in this city, where his company is very much courted: I am greatly obliged to him for his civilities during my stay in this place. Judge how many questions we had to propose to each other. Our conversations are extremely lively. We often talk of Mr DE VOLTAIRE's agreeable and surprizing fertility of genius. I communicated to him a letter, which I had received from that eminent author in answer to one that I wrote to him in *Italian*, whilst he was at *Lyons*, giving him to understand that my being invited to see the ceremony of the Doge's marriage with the *Adriatic* sea, prevented me from paying a visit at his seat near *Geneva*, called *Delices*. Here is the answer he made me:

O thou, who bearest o'er Parnassus sway,
Speed to the *Roman* capitol thy way:
Thence PETRARCH's myrtles, TASSO's laurels bring:
Were they alive, thy praises they would sing:

And

And could they thy bright eyes, or verses see,
Would surely die of love, or jealousy.

The original of this letter is in *Italian*, as here follows; but the verses are in *French*.

Dunque, O Signora, doppo ch'ella aurà veduto il cornuto sposo del mar Adriatico, vedrà il Padre della chiesa, sarà coronata nel campidoglio dalle mani del buon Benedetto. Ella dovrebbe ritornare per via di Ginevra, e trionfare tra gli Eretici, quando aurà ricevuto la corona poetica dei Santi Catolici; ma il suo viaggio è tutto per la gloria, e nel suo gran volo ella transcorrà nostri lieti benche umili tetti. Il zio e la nipote bacciano affettuosamente la mano, che a scritto tante belle cose, e si raccommandano alla sua benignità con ogni ossequio.

"So, Madam, after you have seen the horned Husband of the *Adriatic* sea, you will behold the Father of the church, and be crowned in the capitol by the hands of the pious BENEDICT. You should return by the way of *Geneva*, and triumph amongst the Heretics, after having received a poetical crown from the hands of the holy Catholics; but your voyage is productive of glory wherever you go; and may you in the course of your peregrinations pass by our happy but humble roof. Both the Uncle and the Niece affectionately

tionately kiss the hand that has composed so many fine productions, and recommend themselves to your friendship with the utmost obsequiousness.

Good journey MILTON's *daughter*, CAMOEN's *sister* *.

Depend upon it, Madam, that we will never forgive you for not having taken *Geneva* in your way."

Mr ALGAROTTI says, that our *French* HOMER writes the language of TASSO in great perfection. We are every day confirmed in the opinion that he has two or three souls at command. One alone can never embrace such a variety of objects. A great Monarch, who is a friend to this illustrious Poet, after a grand entertainment which the Count gave us yesterday, occasioned us new subject of astonishment. The Count shewed me the printed works of this ingenious Sovereign, no less remarkable for the valour and conduct he shews in battles, than for his picturesque manner of describing it in his Poem upon that sanguinary art, which he has dedicated to his brother.

I am apprehensive for *Europe*, lest the present war should make him as much dreaded as his various talents cause him to be admired; but as the *Italian* proverb has it, *Buon re degli*

* These words VOLTAIRE wrote in *English*.

degli altri è re di se stesso, "He that is a good "King over others, can reign over himself." His familiar Epistles abound with such judicious reflexions, often placed in a light entirely new, that our best Poets might be proud of them. It is something astonishing that a foreign prince, who has the whole burden of state-affairs upon him, not having the assistance of a prime minister, should succeed so well in *French* poetry, the composition of which is so difficult. If he sometimes offends against grammar, this should be ascribed to the too scrupulous exactness of our language. His making choice of it to write in does us so much honour, that I long impatiently to see this collection of Poems published. He has given copies only to his particular favourites, who will take care of them no doubt. I would not have the Count entrust me with one; neither does he intend it, he would be apprehensive of having a copy taken. We read the Poem together every evening. He has also shewn me some pretty *Italian* sonnets, and a fine *English* ode upon Death, written by Lady WORTLEY MONTAGU, with whom we had the pleasure of conversing at *Venice*, which is her settled place of residence. You have, doubtless, been informed, that upon her return from her embassy to *Constantinople*, she had the resolution to have her only son inoculated: her example was universally followed by the *English*. M.

DE

DE LA CONDAMINE, famous for his learning, his travels, and his zeal for the public welfare, advises us to avail ourselves of the talents of this celebrated Lady. *France* is indebted to our Abbé YART * for excellent translations of several of her works. I took the liberty to ask her how she passed her time in her retirement; and, as all languages are familiar to her, we were inclined to think that the great number of authors ranged upon the shelves of her library, employed many of her leisure hours. "No, Muse, returned she, "time has taught me that metaphysical systems, and even historical facts delivered "for truths, are far from being so in deed; "I therefore amuse myself with the most "agreeable fictions, and read nothing but "romances: notwithstanding my fondness "for these trifles, and my being a rebel "against the laws of *Rome*, behold and admire the picture of the present Pope, amongst the great men who adorn my closet."

I likewise saw there that of Lord BOLINGBROKE, with whom she was personally acquainted, as she is well versed in his writings. Her opinion of him is, that he is a learned and profound author, but that his works are too prolix. The caresses with which this Lady honoured me, ended with her assuring

* Of the Academy of *Rouen*; he has translated some of the best pieces of *English* literature.

me, that if she was ten years younger she should not be able to resist her inclination to accompany me to *Naples*, the situation of which she highly admired. She likewise thinks *Constantinople* a delightful place to any one that is not quite bigotted to the Opera and the *Tuilleries*.

But it is time to return to the agreeable entertainment at *Bologna*, where I had the pleasure of seeing Count CASALI, mathematical Professor of the Academy of the *Institute*, and the learned ZANOTTI, perpetual Secretary of that Museum. This Gentleman, who may be looked upon as a second FONTENELLE, retains in an advanced age great gaiety and politeness. The Marchioness of SCAPPI, Niece to the Archbishop, who joins the beauties of the mind to the exterior graces of her person, added one to the number of our amiable guests. This fair Lady was so good as to take me under her protection, and to accompany me from the public walks to the Comedy, where the PAMELA of GOLDONI, the *Italian* MOLIERE, was represented, which gave us both high satisfaction. The next day she gave me leave to accompany her to the assembly. The apartment is hired by the Nobility, and they pay a person to keep it in order. The refreshments which he furnishes are, without doubt, sufficient to defray the charges of cards and wax candles. In the second rate towns of *Italy*, this publicus rendezvous

rendezvous enables people to pass the evening in company without having the trouble of receiving visits. Foreigners, who are introduced by any one that has made an agreement for the season, are admitted. We were not there yesterday, I was so fatigued: we spent the day in taking a view of the pictures which adorn the fine Church of Saint PATRONIUS, and the long meridian-line of CASSINI set in the pavement. In the afternoon we visited the Academy of the *Institute*, where I had the honour of being admitted a member; this mark of distinction I may justly boast of; there are but three female members of it, the studious LAURA BASSI, who is professor of Physic, and gives public lectures in *Latin*; the famous Geometrician AGNESI, who is retired to a Convent at *Milan*; and the illustrious *Neapolitan* Princess DE COLLOMBRANO. The Marchioness of CHATELET was as worthy a member of this Academy of Sciences (which was founded by THEODOSIUS the Younger, and is one of the richest and most ancient in *Europe*) as I am the reverse. It was improved by CHARLES the Great, and other Princes. The present Pope, in order to do honour to his country, has added several volumes to the forty thousand belonging to the Library, and in pursuance of his intentions, M. FARCETTI has adorned one of the galleries with choice antique statues, the models of which were taken in plaister, as I have observed above.

The edifices are beautiful and ſpacious, and contain the ſeveral inſtruments of Artillery, Aſtronomy, Natural Hiſtory, with a variety of plans of Fortifications, ranged in admirable order; each branch has a ſeparate apartment, the name of which is to be ſeen over the door; here Profeſſors of all the different ſciences every day deliver public lectures. We aſſiſted at one of theſe learned harangues, and after it was over, Signora Bassi, with equal complaiſance and exactneſs, ſhewed us a variety of experiments concerning irritability.

Thus you ſee that my day was well employed. This morning we followed the grand proceſſions of the holy ſacrament, which bring together a multitude of foreigners; the Pope's Legate and the Archbiſhop, who are both Cardinals, aſſiſt at it in pomp. The broad and lofty galleries erected on each ſide of the ſtreet, are the principal decorations upon this occaſion. Between each of the pillars of theſe porticos, garlands and real orange-trees mixed with ſtatues made with great ingenuity in paſte-board, afford a ravithing proſpect. Carpets ſtrewed with flowers cover the pavement, and others adorn the windows, which are filled with Ladies. Noblemen and rich citizens hang their fineſt pictures upon the walls of their houſes. The famous ſchool of this city has furniſhed all their churches; the architecture of which is

equal

equal to the beauty of the pictures that embellish them.

If the palaces of the noblemen discover their opulence, the munificent piety of the citizens is equally conspicuous in a portico three miles long, built at their own expence, in order to shelter them in their pilgrimages from the city to St LUKE upon the *Apennine*. We did not fail to go thither; from thence all the richness of the country round about is to be seen. This sumptuous devotion does not hinder profane expences. They are now building at the public charge a vast opera house, upon which so much attention is bestowed, as even to erect coach-houses for the convenience of the Nobility and Gentry who come to the theatre.

The public diversions are here renewed every year on the 8th day after the procession of the holy sacrament. The Ladies dress themselves in all their finery, in order to do it honour. The multitude of people brought hither by this festival, meet with pleasures which increase their attachment to their religion. Which do you think is the best policy, to make religion dreaded, or beloved? I long to be at *Rome*, in order to hear your answers to my questions; in the mean time, in compliance with your desire, instead of writing you letters, I write you whole volumes, and to morrow I set out for *Florence*.

LETTER XX.

Florence, *June* 18, 1757.

Dear Sister,

THE number of visits I had to pay or receive, my weakly state of health, and a thousand things I had to see, have prevented me from writing to you on my arrival at this city.

Upon leaving *Bologna*, we immediately quitted the fertile country which surrounds it. In order to enter *Tuscany*, we are obliged to pass the mountains, which divide *Italy* into two equal parts, from *Lombardy* to the end of the boot.

Son of the *Alps*, great *Apenninus* reigns
Within these fruitful and thrice happy plains;
His lofty front high reaching to the skies,
With plenteous streams the vale below supplies.
His branching arms extending far and wide,
Hesperia into twenty states divide:
He forms a range of hills at *Pisa*'s plains,
And near *Ancona* rolling billows chains:
Torrents which from its sides their course derive,
To both the seas precipitately drive.

Notwithstanding this pompous description the half-paved causeway, which is built upon the

the back of these mountains, puts travellers to great trouble to pass them. But the precipice called *il Giogo*, dreaded by the most resolute travellers, no longer serves as a barrier to the grand Dutchy. The Emperor has caused a steep but easy road to be cut through it *, which conducts travellers to *Florence*, and presents a delightful prospect to the eye. On a *Sunday* we walked down the hills covered with houses, woods and verdure, which surround it. How great was our astonishment to see them inhabited by lovely Nymphs, with straw hats adorned with flowers, elegantly shaped, who dazzled our eyes with their necklaces and bracelets; and whose dress in every respect resembled that of our shepherdesses at the Opera! I have been assured, that their accent is as elegant as their deportment, especially in the neighbourhood of *Sienna*; and that their answers are so pertinent and proper, that a Member of the Academy *della Crusca* could not alter a syllable in them for the better. I attribute this great refinement of manners and language, which has insensibly penetrated even to the cottages in this country, to the continued cultivation of laws and arts. They enlightened *Hetruria*, long before they were known at *Rome*: the Princes of the family of MEDICIS

* The inhabitants of *Bologna* have lately done the same, so that the Passage of the *Apennines* is become much more easy than it was.

ers fixed them there by the masterpieces of art, antient and modern, with which they embellished their palace. Two galleries, four hundred feet long, joined by an angle, and adorned with a double row of statues or busts, lead to apartments filled with curiosities, which the eye of the curious and learned spectator is never tired of admiring. One of them presents to the view two hundred portraits of painters done by themselves, and many pictures of persons illustrious in a variety of different ways; the other displays the finest porcelain and idols of the most grotesque figures. The Marquis VENUTI, a great Connoisseur, and COCCHI, an able Physician, shewed us the cabinet of Medals which are kept by the latter. We next entered the halls in which the curiosities that illustrate Natural History are contained. It is unnecessary to repeat the detail which has been given by other travellers; but I cannot be silent with regard to the gallery: It is an octagon saloon twenty feet in diameter, lighted only by one lamp, which hangs from a dome covered with mother of pearl. The walls are embellished with the finest pictures and glass-chests through which the variegated lustre of precious stones darts a glittering light; such as a head of one of the CÆSAR's cut upon a torquoise as big as an egg; vessels of agate, lapis and rock-crystal, set with gold and diamonds: the saloon is furnished with

a

a celestial Globe, the stars of which are of rubies; a large table of smooth stones incrusted in each other, and six *Greek* statues, upon which all the efforts of art were exhausted; two wrestlers who throw each other; a peasant who pretends to sharpen his pruning-hook, whilst he is listening to CATILINE's conspiracy; a Faun dancing; two VENUS's six feet high, which would charm the beholder, if they were not eclipsed by the VENUS of *Medicis*; the latter is somewhat lower, but possessed of that inexpressible somewhat which attracts one's whole attention. I have translated some verses which were written to be placed under this celebrated statue: they were explained to me, for I don't understand *Greek*, and I am very sorry for it: why am I not ten years younger? if I was, I would learn it. But let us hear what VENUS says.

Γυμνην ὅιδε Παρις μεν Ανχισης τε Αδωνις,
Τες τρεις οιδα μονες. Πραξιτελης δε ποθεν.

By PARIS I've been naked seen I own,
And by ANCHISES, but by them alone:
Where then could PRAXITELES my body see,
That Art and Nature thus so well agree?

We are told by some authors, that this prodigy of art was found at *Tivoli*. The magnificent saloon which contains it has but one arm-chair; this I seized, and sat two hours opposite

opposite to these antiques, and found their company so attractive that I could not possibly quit it. We returned there the next day; the Count of LAURENCY, a man of wit, and our King's Minister at the Court of the grand Duke, was so obliging as to accompany us thither, as likewise his Lady, who is young and handsome. After we had paid a second visit to the *Greek* VENUS, he carried us to the country-seat of one of the handsomest modern VENUSES now living, I mean the Marchioness CAPPONI, who acquits herself in the most graceful manner in doing the honours of her house. We admired from her terrace the rich neighbourhood of *Florence*, and walked under the shade of her cedars. Those of this country are famous for their exquisite odour and their magnitude. Odoriferous plants, which diffuse their perfumes to a little distance, should not be raised too high; these may perhaps be of the number. We see none but such as have low stalks; the arbours they form would make a much better appearance if they were higher; but then we should receive less enjoyment from them: our great orange trees, which we admire so much, throw their odoriferous exhalations up to heaven, and deprive us of the pleasure of gathering their fruit with ease; their trunk only is within our reach, and makes a shocking appearance. The *Italians* place these trees in large earthen pots, and do not let them

exceed

exceed the size of shrubs. They are great admirers of lofty vaults in their apartments, but they seem to make them too low in their gardens. I took care not to hint this to the mistress of the house, who was so obliging as to shew it to me; but I requested her likewise to shew me her house in town: We found it answer the descriptions we had read of it, as well as the CORSINI palace, which is a habitation worthy of the Nephews of the late Pope, who was a native of *Florence*. The fine taste of the owner, and the beauty of the pictures, done by the most eminent hands, are there equally conspicuous. At the top of the great stair-case is an immense saloon, adorned with columns and antique statues. The painted roof is surrounded by a gallery very convenient for hearing the Music: the remaining apartments equal this in beauty. The vast palace of the noble family of the STROZZI pleases me highly by its *Tuscan* outside. These stones rudely cut put one in mind of the first habitations of men, in barbarous and ignorant ages; a rock excavated to make a commodious dwelling; solidity there conspires with beauty: the palace of LUXEMBURGH, which is partly in this taste, gives you the model of the palace of PITTI, the last habitation of the Family of MEDICIS. There is still the most compleat collection of pictures; but the gardens, which have long been reckoned amongst the wonders of the world,

world, are now in such disorder that it is a difficult matter to walk in them. They seem calculated only to remind a considerate person of the transitory state of all human things.

The darkness of the evening yesterday furnished matter to my moral reflexions, when a phenomenon quite new to me suddenly interrupted my meditations. A swarm of shining flies fluttered about the thickets. I took it for a wandring fire, and as I approached, the flames fled from me. I never before saw above two or three of these glittering insects together. The great number of them delighted and astonished me, *parva leves capiunt animos*. Fatigue made me leave off walking, to partake of a frugal supper, such as I like: I then thought my hard bed excellent. When I awoke in the morning, I received, in a letter from Count ALGAROTTI, a diploma of the celebrated Academy of *Padua*, which does me the honour to admit me as one of its members. I endeavoured to give an answer suitable to the favour bestowed upon me, when my studies were interrupted by a visit from the Chevalier ADAMI, an excellent Antiquary, and Dr LAMI, a man of taste and genius, author of a *Journal* which is very much esteemed. We both regretted the loss of Abbe BUONDELMONTE, who died not long ago, and whose poetry I am very well acquainted with. These learned gentlemen informed me, that the best *Italian* translation

translation they have of ANACREON, is that of our REGNIER DESMARETS, and that one of their prettiest pieces was composed by MENAGE. I shall here set it down by Memory, but I may perhaps make some omission as I have not a copy of it before me.

O maraviglia strana!
Eh chi lo crederia?
A te pur sola dissi,
A te pur sola scrissi,
Il mio amaroso affanno,
A tutt' altri lo celai:
E pur tutti lo sanno,
Tu sola non lo sai.

I attempted to translate it in the manner following.

O AMARANTHA, heavenly fair,
Was such a wonder ever known?
To you I tell my secret care,
And tell it but to you alone;
And yet the flame with which my bosom glows,
Altho' unknown to you, all mankind knows.

When we had sufficiently admired this tender Madrigal, we amused ourselves by talking of the merits of our own poets, as well as of those born beyond the *Alps*, especially TASSO, my favourite, and ARIOSTO, to whom the *Italians* give the preference with regard

regard to invention and ſtile: they likewiſe, with a greater appearance of juſtice, prefer CORNEILLE to RACINE; but if they were as well acquainted with our language as their own, the correctneſs of the latter would win the majority of their ſuffrages. The moderns in all countries appear to me to be too much delighted with an animated ſtile, and the novelty of Ideas poured out without any ſort of connection. However, this charm of the *Orlando Furioſo*, this uncouth aſſemblage of unconnected beauties, often reſembles the ravings of a madman. Is not the moſt lively extempore eloquence ſometimes uttered by perſons diſordered in their ſenſes? inſtead of captivating our homage in this indirect way, unity of ſentiments in the various different ſituations, and ſolid judgment, were always the honourable marks of humanity, and the ſource of every virtue. This true merit is now but little conſidered, and there is nothing to be hoped from the chimerical ſyſtems, or from the enthuſiaſm ſo much admired in this our age. Whoever attempts to acquire reputation by talents uſeleſs to the public, becomes juſtly an object of their contempt. I agree with the ancients in eſteeming men and their ſhining abilities, in proportion as they diſcover more or leſs ſolidity in the conduct of their writings. It is then that the wonders of art, in which good ſenſe is equally diſplayed, as in the works of the author of

Cinna,

Cinna, enchant me, and make me look upon these happy genius's as men inspired by the gods; but without this basis, the most alluring ornaments, the most specious arguments, dispersed like fleeting clouds, fall and mutually eclipse each other in my sight, whilst I endeavour in vain to prop and support them: It is not that I set a value upon none but serious compositions; reason may sometimes sport; but a judicious mind requires a regular plan even in works of Amusement. But I have dwelt so long upon this subject, that I must for the present defer a description of the delightful places from which I write.

LETTER XXI.

Sienna, *June* 25, 1757.

Dear Sister,

BEFORE I say any thing of the Town at which I am just arrived, I must finish my description of the monuments that excited my admiration at *Florence*.

In the magnificent church of the holy cross is to be seen the tomb of MICHAEL ANGELO, born at *Arezzo*, and who died at the age of ninety, in 1564. The arts in which he excelled, as Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, are there emblematically represented. To this renowned Virtuoso we are indebted for the magnificent chapel of the NICOLINI, which adorns this monastery. The

cloister contains the precious ashes of GALILEO, whose letters and other curious works, never before published, are now in the press. PICUS of *Mirandola* lies interred at St *Mark's*, BOCCACE at the Church of *Santa Maria della novella*. The finest sepulchral chapel in the world is that of the MEDICI family at St *Laurence*. Art and precious stones are there equally conspicuous on every side. During the course of a century, in which Duke FERDINAND gave six hundred thousand livres to build it, ninety millions have already been spent upon the designs of MICHAEL ANGELO. The library belonging to this church is famous for a great number of manuscripts. Amongst others, we meet with the works of VIRGIL, transcribed at the time of THEODOSIUS, and a description of the whole *Greek* chirurgy, adorned with figures painted upon vellum.

We proposed to pass the day in visiting the Churches. After a grand dinner at Signor BORROMEO's the apostolical Nuncio, where we had the pleasure of seeing the Abbe NICOLINI, a man of quality and learning, and extremely agreeable in company; we went to see the cathedral, which is a gothic building, but spacious and magnificent. The inside and outside being of variegated marble, appear as if they were covered with China ware: It seems probable, that it derives from thence the name of our Lady of the Flowers: this

this variety is to me extremely agreeable. The dome which is an octagon, ſtrikes the eye by its loftineſs, and the diverſity of its paintings. You aſcend by an hundred and twenty ſteps to it, and go round it, both within and without, by triple galleries. The gilt ball of the dome, which covers the choir, is ſeven feet in diameter; and the tower, which is adorned on the outſide with compartments of red, black and white marble, is a hundred and eighty feet high. The front of this cathedral is not yet finiſhed, no more than thoſe of many other churches in *Italy*; whoſe plans being too extenſive are not eaſily carried into execution. Oppoſite to the portal is the font, which is likewiſe of a variety of ſplendid colours. It is ſaid to have been formerly a temple of MARS. Its triple gates of braſs, which are of admirable workmanſhip, coſt GIBERTO FLORENTINO fifty years labour. MICHAEL ANGELO thought them worthy of being the gates of heaven; baptiſm gives the key to them: is not this an anticipated paradiſe?

If it be proper to paſs from things ſacred to profane, we ſaw no grand *Italian* Opera at *Florence*, but we met with excellent burlettas. This ſort of muſic, which is the neweſt, is conſequently the moſt faſhionable in *Italy*. I made too ſhort a ſtay in the fine city which I have been deſcribing, to be well acquainted

with it; but we propose visiting it again at our return. Its situation is happy, and its soil extremely fertile. This country has produced eminent men of all sorts, as CIMABUE, who restored painting in *Italy*, AMERICOS VESPUCIO, from whom the new world derives its name; the famous General STROZZI; MACHIAVEL the Politician; the illustrious writers PETRARCH, DANTE, and BOCCACIO: the most renowned Painters and best Sculptors were likewise born at *Florence*. The inhabitants are equally remarkable for industry and genius; their women are beautiful, and their streets well paved with large stones; the squares, gardens, fountains, churches and palaces, are magnificently adorned. Besides the public libraries, there are many excellent ones which belong to individuals; such as that of Messrs MARUCELLI, and others, where strangers are received with the utmost politeness. The *Hetrurian* seed of arts constantly produces new fruits in *Tuscany*. Before we were out of this fine dutchy, we had like to have perished at *Poggibonzi*. The lightning dazzled the postilions; the hail, which cut the traces of the horses, darkened our windows, obliged us to keep them shut, and even prevented us from seeing the precipice which we knew to be on each side of us; as it was impossible for us to stop, for fear of going backwards,

we

we with the utmoſt difficulty made our way forward againſt the wind. I was afraid ſo long, that at laſt I feared no more, and my ideas grew confuſed: but the heads of our conductors, accuſtomed to ſtormy weather, were never diſconcerted; ſo that they eaſily extricated us out of our perplexity.

At length we arrived at *Sienna*, of which city the Abbe FRANCHINI was then governor; who, after having reſided twenty years at *Paris*, as Miniſter of the grand Duke, had left that city twenty years ago. Our firſt interview was diverting enough. After we had reciprocally paid each other a few compliments upon the little change in our appearance ſince our ſeparation, he eagerly enquired after all our common acquaintances. A regard to truth laid me under the melancholy neceſſity of anſwering thus: the agreeable Gentleman whom you formerly met every where, is now confined to his chamber, and almoſt crippled with the gout; that Lady who was once ſo complaiſantly attentive, is deaf; the bel Eſprit is now in his dotage; that Gentleman died of an apoplexy; and that promiſing youth of the ſmall pox; that lovely nymph is now of a gigantic ſtature, and grown horrid ugly: ſuch are the comfortable topics of converſation which generally occur to thoſe, who meet after a long ſeparation; *Flos levis, umbra fugax, bulla caduca ſumus.* In order to baniſh theſe melancholy truths from

our thoughts, the Abbe accompanied us to see the Cathedral. It may be compared to a gem of a prodigious size. The decoration, which is coloured in black, is so far from disgusting, that it constitutes its whole charm. Both the out and inside are inlaid with black and white marble, the several pieces of which are ranged in so regular an order, that the eye is delighted instead of being fatigued with the sight. We ascend to it by broad marble steps, which extending from the middle of the square, reach the front and embellish it. The pavement of the church, upon which some parts of the Bible are sketched out, is an admirable piece of workmanship with regard to the execution. The library of this theatre is adorned with the travels of Pope *Pius* the Second, painted in fresco according to the admirable designs of RAPHAEL, and song-books embellished with excellent miniatures. The monks of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries distinguished themselves by this sort of industrious patience. At present their leisure produces nothing that can be of any service in this world; we must look forward to the next, if we expect to reap any benefit from them.

The square before the town-house of *Sienna* is large, built with great uniformity, of a figure somewhat circular, like an amphitheatre; so that a fountain of water which stands in the center may by overflowing it make room

for

for a naumachia. Do but think how much I want reſt at night. After having yeſterday ſeen all I have been deſcribing to you, fatigue made me retire to my bed; to day the Abbe, who made ſuch a figure at *Paris* twenty years ago, invited me to dine with him with the once famous *Seneſino*, who has long lived in retirement, and who, though ſeventy years of age, has ſtill a ſtrong, expreſſive and flexible voice. He was ſo obliging as to give us a ſpecimen of his remaining talents, and even ſung a *chaſon a boire*, which is uncommon in this country, where love is the ſubject of all their ſongs. If he is not paid for celebrating its rites, to make up for this, his voice has procured him a very handſome houſe, which he has built himſelf, and furniſhed entirely in the *Engliſh* taſte, with the guineas without number which he brought from *London*. I likewiſe aſked to drink tea with him after the *Engliſh* faſhion. He is perhaps the only man on this ſide the *Alps*, where the uſe of tea is not in vogue, who could give me any of the right ſort. He is in the ſecure poſſeſſion of a handſome income, and a neat houſe upon his eſtate; *but* his ſole heir makes him mad; there is always a *but* to deſtroy human happineſs: the reaſon aſſigned is this. "In times of yore, Pleaſure, offſpring of the Day and of Virtue, reigned in heaven. Pain, the offſpring of the Night and Vice, was in poſſeſſion of hell. The middle region

was

was inhabited by creatures endowed partly with good, partly with bad qualities. JUPITER, affected by the precarious fate of mortals, seeing that some were too much perverted to merit any happiness; and others too deserving to be exposed to misfortunes, gave orders that Pleasure and Pain should inhabit the earth. As soon as these children of darkness and light arrived amongst us, one in obedience to the supreme command of JOVE, was going to take the virtuous, the other the vicious; but upon examining the objects that offered, instead of meeting with beings that fell precisely under one or the other denomination (such as they had formerly seen in their respective places of abode) they did not meet with a single mortal exempt from a mixture of good and evil; and both, of consequence, arrogated an equal right to every individual. Therefore, to put an end to a lasting dispute, and assert a mutual empire over all hearts, they entered into an indissoluble alliance; insomuch that Pleasure is constantly preceded or followed by Pain; and Pain is always asswaged or caused by Pleasure." I find this to be true by experience; I took great pleasure in telling you this story, and now I have wrote so long that I have got a head-ach. You are right in ascribing my ill-state of health, in a great measure, to my over intense application of mind. Almost from my infancy I was desirous of becoming

coming learned, and equally fit for the duties and diſſipations of ſociety: this is the way never to be either the one or the other. The world and ſtudy equally engroſs the whole ſoul; ſcarcely were my powers equal to one of them. You know better how to apply yours, and give yourſelf up entirely to your friends, who find an inexhauſtible fund of amuſement in your happy turn of wit; my active mind graſps at a hundred objects at once, and fooliſhly dreads a languid ſtate more than fatigue or diſeaſe. I am indolent enough notwithſtanding; in a word, I do not know what to make of myſelf: but who underſtands his own nature? Two perſons of the moſt oppoſite tempers are leſs at variance, than the two different wills that diſtract us inwardly. I am ſo little able to reconcile them, that the tea, of which I ſpoke to you awhile ago, reminds me that I never had reſolution enough to lay aſide the pernicious habit of taking it at leaſt every morning. It would be in vain for me to obſerve to my nephews how dangerous the ſlighteſt bad habit is; the errors of the fathers, ſays the wiſe FONTENELLE, are not of the leaſt ſervice to their poſterity. I ſhall therefore add nothing further upon this ſubject, but go to take my repoſe. We ſhall ſoon ſee St PETER'S at *Rome*, and many of your letters; judge of my impatience to arrive at that metropolis.

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