THE

WORKS

OF

GRAY.

VOL. II.

Multum et veræ gloriæ, quamvis uno libro, meruit.

QUINCTILIAN.

W*I*CROWFOOT

THE

WORKS

OF

THOMAS GRAY;

Containing his

POEMS, AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH SEVERAL EMINENT LITERARY CHARACTERS.

To which are added,

MEMOIRS

OF

HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS,

BY W. MASON, M. A.

THE THIRD EDITION, CAREFULLY CORRECTED.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MEMOIRS,

&c.

LETTER X.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WEST.

London, May 27, 1742.

MINE, you are to know, is a white Melancholy, or rather Leucocholy for the most part; which, though it seldom laughs or dances, nor ever amounts to what one calls Joy or Pleasure, yet is a good easy sort of a state, and ça ne laisse que de s'amuser. The only fault of it is insipidity; which is apt now and then to give a sort of Ennui, which makes one form certain little wishes that signify nothing. But there is another sort, black indeed, which I have now and then felt, that has somewhat in it like Tertullian's rule of faith, Credo quia impossibile est; for it believes, nay, is sure of every thing that is unlikely, so it be but frightful; and, on the other hand, excludes and shuts its eyes to the most possible hopes, and every thing that is pleasur-

able; from this the Lord deliver us! for none but he and sunshiny weather can do it. In hopes of enjoying this kind of weather, I am going into the country for a few weeks, but shall be never the nearer any society; so, if you have any charity, you will continue to write. My life is like Harry the Fourth's supper of Hens. "Poulets a la broche, Poulets en Ragôut, Poulets en "Hâchis, Poulets en Fricasées." Reading here, Reading there; nothing but books with different sauces. Do not let me lose my desert then; for though that be reading too, yet it has a very different flavour. The May seems to be come since your invitation; and I propose to bask in her beams and dress me in her roses.

Et Caput in vernâ semper habere rosâ.

I shall see Mr. * * and his Wife, nay, and his Child too, for he has got a Boy. Is it not odd to consider one's Cotemporaries in the grave light of Husband and Father? There is my Lords * * and * * *, they are Statesmen: Do not you remember them dirty boys playing at cricket? As for me, I am never a bit the older, nor the bigger, nor the wiser than I was then: No, not for having been beyond sea. Pray how are you?

I send you an inscription for a wood joining to a park of mine; (it is on the confines of Mount Cithœ-

ron, on the left hand as you go to Thebes) you know I am no friend to hunters, and hate to be disturbed by their noise.

Ἀζόμενος πολύθηρον ἑκηβόλε ἄλσος ἀνάσσας
τᾶς δεινᾶς τεμένη λεῖπε, κυναγὲ, θεᾶς
Μὴ νοι ἄρ ἔνθα κύνων ζαθέων κλαγγεῦσιν ὐλαγμοὶ
ανταχεῖς Νυμφᾶν ἀγροτερᾶν κελάδῳ *.

Here follows also the beginning of an Heroic Epistle; but you must give me leave to tell my own story first, because Historians differ. Massinissa was the son of Gala King of the Massyli; and, when very young at the head of his father's army, gave a most signal overthrow to Syphax, King of the Masæsylians, then an ally of the Romans. Soon after Asdrubal, son of Gisgo the Carthaginian General, gave the beautiful Sophonisba, his daughter, in marriage to the young prince. But this marriage was not consummated on account of Massinissa's being obliged to hasten into Spain, there to command his father's troops, who were auxiliaries of the Carthaginians. Their affairs at this time began to be in a bad condition; and they thought it might

* In the 12th Letter of the first Section, Mr. Gray says of his friend's translation of an Epigram of Posidippus, "Græcam illam "ἀφελείαν mirificè sapit." The learned reader, I imagine, will readily give this tetrastic the same character.

be greatly for their interest, if they could bring over Syphax to themselves. This in time they actually effected; and, to strengthen their new alliance, commanded Asdrubal to give his daughter to Syphax. (It is probable their ingratitude to Massinissa arose from the great change of affairs, which had happened among the Massylians during his absence; for his father and uncle were dead, and a distant relation of the royal family had usurped the throne.) Sophonisba was accordingly married to Syphax; and Massinissa, enraged at the affront, became a friend to the Romans. They drove the Carthaginians before them out of Spain, and carried the war into Africa, defeated Syphax, and took him prisoner; upon which Cirtha (his capital) opened her gates to Lælius and Massinissa. The rest of the affair, the marriage, and the sending of poison, every body knows. This is partly taken from Livy, and partly from Appian.

SOPHONISBA MASSINISSÆ.

EPISTOLA.

Egregium accipio promissi Munus amoris,
  Inque manu mortem, jam fruitura, fero:
Atque utinam citius mandasses, luce vel unâ;
  Transieram Stygios non inhonesta lacus.
Victoris nec passa toros, nova nupta, mariti,
  Nec fueram fastus, Roma superba, tuos.

Scilicet hæc partem tibi, Massinissa, triumphi
  Detractam, hæc pompæ jura minora suæ
Imputat, atque uxor quòd non tua pressa catenis,
  Objecta & sævæ plausibus urbis eo:
Quin tu pro tantis cepisti præmia factis,
  Magnum Romanæ pignus amicitiæ!
Scipiadæ excuses, oro, si tardius utar
  Munere. Non nimiùm vivere, crede, velim.
Parva mora est, breve sed tempus mea fama requirit:
  Detinet hæc animam cura suprema meam.
Quæ patriæ prodesse meæ Regina ferebar,
  Inter Elisæas gloria prima nurus,
Ne videar flammæ nimis indulsisse secundæ,
  Vel nimis hostiles extimuisse manus.
Fortunam atque annos liceat revocare priores,
  Gaudiaque heu! quantis nostra repensa malis.
Primitiasne tuas meministi atque arma Syphacis
  Fusa, & per Tyrias ducta trophæa vias?
(Laudîs at antiquæ forsan meminisse pigebit,
  Quodque decus quondam causa ruboris erit.)
Tempus ego certe memini, felicia Pænis
  Quo te non puduit solvere vota deis;
Mæniaque intrantem vidi: longo agmine duxit
  Turba salutantum, purpureique patres.
Fæminea ante omnes longe admiratur euntem
  Hæret & aspectu tota caterva tuo.

Jam flexi, regale decus, per colla capilli,
  Jam decet ardenti fuscus in ore color!
Commendat frontis generosa modestia formam,
  Seque cupit laudi surripuisse suæ.
Prima genas tenui signat vix flore juventas,
  Et dextræ soli credimus esse virum.
Dum faciles gradiens oculos per singula jactas,
  (Seu rexit casus lumina, sive Venus)
In me (vel certè visum est) conversa morari
  Sensi; virgineus perculit ora pudor,
Nescio quid vultum molle spirare tuendo,
  Credideramque tuos lentius ire pedes.
Quærebam, juxta æqualis si dignior esset,
  Quæ poterat visus detinuisse tuos:
Nulla fuit circum æqualis quæ dignior esset,
  Asseruitque decus conscia forma suum.
Pompæ finis erat *. Totâ vix nocte quievi;
  Sin premat invitæ lumina victa sopor,
Somnus habet pompas, eademque recursat imago;
  Atque iterum hesterno munere victor ades.

* * * * * *

---

* There is so much of nature in the sentiment, as well as poetry in the description of this triumphal entry of young Massinissa, that it seems much to be regretted the author did not finish this poem. But I believe he never proceeded further with it. I had therefore my doubts concerning the printing of so small a part; but as I thought it the best, because the only original specimen

Immediately after writing the preceding Letter, Mr. Gray went upon a visit to his relations at Stoke; where he writ that beautiful little Ode which stands first in his collection of Poems. He sent it as soon as written to his beloved friend; but he was * dead before it reached Hertfordshire. He died † only twenty days after he had written the letter to Mr. Gray, which concluded with "Vale, & vive paulisper cum vivis." So little was the amiable youth then aware of the short time that he himself would be numbered amongst the living. But this is almost constantly the case with such persons as die of that most remediless, yet most flattering of all distempers, a Consumption. Shall Humanity be thankful or sorry that it is so? Thankful, surely. For as this malady generally attacks the Young and the Innocent, it seems the merciful intention of

---

of Mr. Gray's Ovidian verse (the rest of his Hexameters and Pentameters being only translations either from English or Italian) I was willing to give it to the reader.

* This singular anecdote is founded on a marginal note in his common-place book, where that Ode is transcribed, and the following memorandum annexed: "Written at Stoke the beginning of "June 1742, and sent to Mr. West, not knowing he was then "dead."

† He was buried at Hatfield (the House called Popes being in that parish). On a grave-stone in the chancel is the following plain inscription: "Here lieth the body of Richard West, Esq. "only son to the Right Honourable Richard West, Esq. late Lord "Chancellor of Ireland, who died the 1st of June, 1742, in the "26th year of his age."

Heaven that, to these, death should come unperceived, and as it were by stealth; divested of one of his sharpest stings, the lingering expectation of their dissolution. As to Mr. Gray, we may assure ourselves that he felt much more than his dying friend, when the letter, which inclosed the Ode, was returned unopened. There seems to be a kind of presentiment in that pathetic piece, which Readers of taste will feel when they learn this anecdote; and which will make them read it with redoubled pleasure. It will also throw a melancholy grace (to borrow one of his own expressions) on the Ode on a distant prospect of Eton, and on that to Adversity; both of them written the August following: for as both these Poems abound with Pathos, those who have feeling hearts will feel this excellence the more strongly, when they know the cause from whence it arose; and the unfeeling will, perhaps, learn to respect what they cannot taste, when they are prevented from imputing to a splenetic melancholy, what in fact sprung from the most benevolent of all sensations. I am inclined to believe that the Elegy in a Country Church-yard was begun, if not concluded, at this time also: Though I am aware that, as it stands at present, the conclusion is of a later date; how that was originally, I have shewn in my notes on the poem. But the first impulse of his sorrow for the death of his friend gave birth to a very tender Sonnet in English,

on the Petrarchian model; and also to a sublime Apostrophe in Hexameters, written in the genuine strain of Classical majesty, with which he intended to begin one of his books, " De Principiis Cogitandi." This I shall shortly give the Reader: but the Sonnet, being completed, is inserted amongst the rest of his Poems.

It may seem somewhat extraordinary, that Mr. Gray never attempted any thing in English verse, (except the beginning of Agrippina, and a few translations) before the first Ode lately mentioned. Shall we attribute this to his having been educated at Eton, or to what other cause? Certain it is, that when I first knew him, he seemed to set a greater value on his Latin poetry, than on that which he had composed in his native language; and had almost the same foible then, which I have since known him laugh at in Petrarch, when we read that most entertaining of all books, entitled " Memoires pour la vie de François Petrarque tirés de " ses œuvres," &c. I am apt to think that the little popularity which M. de Polignac's Anti-Lucretius acquired, after it had been so long and so eagerly expected by the learned, induced Mr. Gray to lay aside his didactic Plan. However this may be, he writ no Latin verse after this period; except perhaps some part of the 1st book of the Poem just mentioned. This

therefore seems the proper place to introduce that fragment; which being the most considerable in itself of all his Latin compositions, and perhaps the most laboured of any of his Poems, it were to be wished that I could give the reader more insight into his design, than the few scattered papers, which he has left, enable me to do. It is clear, however, from the Exordium itself, that he meant to make the same use of Mr. Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding, which Lucretius did of the Dogmas of Epicurus. And the first six lines plainly intimate, that his general design was to be comprised in four books.

The 1st. On the origin of our Ideas.

Unde Animus scire incipiat------

The 2d. On the distribution of these Ideas in the Memory.

--------- quibus inchoet orsa
Principiis seriem rerum, tenuemque catenam
Mnemosyne------

The 3d. On the Province of Reason and its gradual improvement.

------ Ratio unde, rudi sub pectore, tardum
Augeat imperium------

The 4th. On the Cause and Effects of the Passions.

--------- & primum mortalibus ægris
Ira, Dolor, Metus, & Curæ nascantur inanes.

But he has not drawn out any of the Arguments of these Books, except a part of the first; and that only so far as he executed of it. This it will be proper here to insert; and also, for the ease of the reader, to repeat the several parts at the bottom of the subsequent pages.

General plan of the Poem.------First, Invocation to Mr. Locke. Address to Favonius, shewing the use and importance of the design.---Beginning.---Connection of the soul and body; Nerves, the instruments of sensation.---Touch, the first and most extensive sense, described.---Begins before the birth; Pain, our first idea when born.----Seeing, the second sense.----Digressive encomium of light. The gradual opening and improvement of this sense, and that of Hearing, their connection with the higher faculties of the Mind; Sense of Beauty and Order and Harmony annexed to them. From the latter, our delight in Eloquence, Poetry, and Music derived.---Office of the Taste and Smell.---Internal sense of Reflection, whereby the mind views its own powers and operations, compared to a young Wood-nymph admiring herself in some foun-

tain.---Admission of Ideas, some by a single sense, some by two, others by every way of Sensation and Reflection. Instance in a person born blind, he has no ideas of Light and Colours; but he has those of Figure, Motion, Extension, and Space, (objects both of the sight and touch). Third sort, those which make their entrance into the mind by every channel alike; as Pleasure, and Pain, Power, Existence, Unity, and Succession. Properties of Bodies, whereby they make themselves known to us. Primary qualities: Magnitude, Solidity, Mobility, Texture, and Figure. * * *

DE PRINCIPIIS COGITANDI.

LIBER PRIMUS.

AD FAVONIUM.

* UNDE Animus scire incipiat: quibus inchoet orsa
Principiis seriem rerum, tenuemque catenam
Mnemosyne: Ratio unde rudi sub pectore tardum
Augeat imperium; & primum mortalibus ægris
Ira, Dolor, Metus, & Curæ nascantur inanes, 5
Hinc canere aggredior. † Nec dedignare canentem,
O decus! Angliacæ certe O lux altera gentis!

---

* Plan of the Poem. † Invocation to Mr. Locke.

Si quà primus iter monstras, vestigia conor
Signare incertâ, tremulâque insistere plantâ. *
Quin potius duc ipse (potes namque omnia) sanctum 10
Ad limen, (si ritè adeo, si pectore puro,)
Obscuræ reserans Naturæ ingentia claustra.
Tu cæcas rerum causas, fontemque feverum
Pande, Pater; tibi enim, tibi, veri magne Sacerdos,
Corda patent hominum, atque altæ penetralia Mentis. 15
Tuque aures adhibe vacuas, facilesque, Favonî,
(Quod tibi crescit opus) † simplex nec despice carmen,
Nec vatem: non illa leves primordia motus,
Quanquam parva, dabunt. Lætum vel amabile quicquid
Usquam oritur, trahit hinc ortum; nec surgit ad auras,
Quin ea conspirent simul, eventusque secundent. 21
Hinc variæ vitaï artes, ac mollior usus,
Dulce & amicitiæ vinclum: Sapientia dia
Hinc roseum accendit lumen, vultuque sereno

---

* It has been already observed in the Note on Let. 17. Sect. I. p. 172, that Mr. Gray's Hexameters, besides having the variety of Virgil's Pauses, closed also with his Elisions. For Virgil, as an attentive reader will immediately perceive, generally introduces one Elision, and not unfrequently more, into those Lines which terminate the Sense. This gives to his Versification its last and most exquisite grace, and leaves the ear fully satisfied. Mr. Gray could not fail to observe, and of course to aim at this happy effect of Elisions in a concluding Line; of which the present Poem, in particular, affords indubitable and and abundant proofs.

† Use and Extent of the Subject.

Humanas aperit mentes, nova gaudia monstrans, 25
Deformesque fugat curas, vanosque timores:
Scilicet & rerum crescit pulcherrima Virtus.
Illa etiam, quæ te (mirùm) noctesque diesque
Assiduè fovet inspirans, linguamque sequentem
Temperat in numeros, atque horas mulcet inertes; 30
Aurea non aliâ se jactat origine Musa.
* Principio, ut magnum fœdus Natura creatrix
Firmavit, tardis jussitque inolescere membris
Sublimes animas; tenebroso in carcere partem
Noluit ætheream longo torpere veterno: 35
Nec per se proprium passa exercere vigorem est,
Ne sociæ molis conjunctos sperneret artus,
Ponderis oblita, & cœlestis conscia flammæ.
Idcircò † innumero ductu tremere undique fibras
Nervorum instituit: tum toto corpore miscens 40
Implicuit latè ramos, & sensile textum,
Implevitque humore suo (seu lympha vocanda,
Sive aura est) tenuis certè, atque levissima quædam
Vis versatur agens, parvosque infusa canales
Perfluit; assidué externis quæ concita plagis, 45
Mobilis, incussique fidelis nuntia motûs,
Hinc indè accensâ contage relabitur usque
Ad superas hominis sedes, arcemque cerebri.
Namque illìc posuit solium, & sua templa sacravit

---

* Union of the Soul and Body. † Office of the nervous System.

* Mens animi: hanc circum coëunt, densoque feruntur
Agmine notitiæ, simulacraque tenuia rerum: 51
Ecce autem naturæ ingens aperitur imago
Immensæ, variique patent commercia mundi.
Ac uti longinquis descendunt montibus amnes
Velivolus Tamisis, flaventisque Indus arenæ, 55
Euphratesque, Tagusque, & opimo flumine Ganges,
Undas quisque suas volvens, cursuque sonoro
In mare prorumpunt: hos magno acclinis in antro
Excipit Oceanus, natorumque ordine longo
Dona recognoscit venientûm, ultròque serenat 60
Cæruleam faciem, & diffuso marmore ridet.
Haud aliter species properant se inferre novellæ
Certatim menti, atque aditus quino agmine complent.
† Primas tactus agit partes, primusque minutæ
Laxat iter cæcum turbæ, recipitque ruentem. 65
Non idem huic modus est, qui fratribus: amplius ille
Imperium affectat senior, penitusque medullis,
Visceribusque habitat totis, pellîsque recentem
Funditur in telam, & latè per stamina vivit.
Necdum etiam matris puer eluctatus ab alvo 70
Multiplices solvit tunicas, & vincula rupit;
Sopitus molli somno, tepidoque liquore
Circumfusus adhuc: tactus tamen aura lacessit

* Sensation, the Origin of our Ideas.

† The Touch, our first and most extensive Sense.

Jamdudum levior sensus, animamque reclusit.
Idque magis simul, ac solitum blandumque calorem 75
Frigore mutavit cœli, quod verberat acri
Impete inassuetos artus: tum sævior adstat,
Humanæque comes vitæ Dolor excipit; ille
Cunctantem frustrà & tremulo multa ore querentem
Corripit invadens, ferreisque amplectitur ulnis. 80
* Tum species primùm patefacta est candida Lucis
(Usque vices adeò Natura bonique, malique,
Exæquat, justâque manu sua damna rependit)
Tum primùm, ignotosque bibunt nova lumina soles.
† Carmine quo, Dea, te dicam, gratissima cœli 85
Progenies, ortumque tuum; gemmantia rore
Ut per prata levi lustras, & floribus halans
Purpureum Veris gremium, scenamque virentem
Pingis, & umbriferos colles, & cærula regna?
Gratia te, Venerisque Lepos, & mille Colorum, 90
Formarumque chorus sequitur, Motusque decentes.
At caput invisum Stygiis Nox atra tenebris
Abdidit, horrendæque simul Formidinis ora,
Pervigilesque æstus Curarum, atque anxius Angor:
Undique Lætitiâ florent mortalia corda, 95
Purus & arridet largis fulgoribus Æther.
Omnia nec tu ideò invalidæ se pandere Menti
(Quippe nimis teneros posset vis tanta diei

* Sight, our second Sense. † Digression on Light.

Perturbare, & inexpertos confundere visus)
Nec capere infantes animos, neu cernere credas 100
Tam variam molem, & miræ spectacula lucis:
* Nescio quâ tamen hæc oculos dulcedine parvos
Splendida percussit novitas, traxitque sequentes;
Nonne videmus enim, latis inserta fenestris
Sicubi se Phœbi dispergant aurea tela, 105
Sive lucernarum rutilus colluxerit ardor,
Extemplo hùc obverti aciem, quæ fixa repertos
Haurit inexpletum radios, fruiturque tuendo.
Altior huic verò sensu, majorque videtur
Addita, Judicioque arctè connexa potestas, 110
Quod simul atque ætas volventibus auxerit annis,
† Hæc simul, assiduo depascens omnia visu,
Perspiciet, vis quanta loci, quid polleat ordo,
Juncturæ quis honos, ut res accendere rebus
Lumina conjurant inter se, et mutua fulgent. 115
Nec minor ‡ in geminis viget auribus insita virtus,
Nec tantum in curvis quæ pervigil excubet antris
Hinc atque hinc (ubi Vox tremefecerit ostia pulsu
Aëriis invecta rotis) longèque recurset:
Scilicet Eloquio hæc sonitus, hæc fulminis alas, 120
Et mulcere dedit dictis & tollere corda,

* Sight, imperfect at first, gradually improves.
† Ideas of Beauty, Proportion, and Order.
‡ Hearing, also improvable by the Judgment.

Verbaque metiri numeris, versuque ligare
Repperit, & quicquid discant Libethrides undæ,
Calliope quotiès, quotiès Pater ipse canendi
Evolvat liquidum carmen, calamove loquenti 125
Inspiret dulces animas, digitìsque figuret.
* At medias fauces, & linguæ humentia templa
Gustus habet, quà se insinuet jucunda saporum
Luxuries, dona Autumni, Bacchique voluptas.
† Naribus interea consedit odora hominum vis, 130
Docta leves captare auras, Panchaïa quales
Vere novo exhalat, Floræve quod oscula fragrant
Roscida, cum Zephyri furtìm sub vesperis horâ
Respondet votis, mollemque aspirat amorem.
‡ Tot portas altæ capitis circumdedit arci 135
Alma Parens, sensûsque vias per membra reclusit;
Haud solas: namque intùs agit vivata facultas,
Quâ sese explorat, contemplatusque repentè
Ipse suas animus vires, momentaque cernit.
Quid velit, aut possit, cupiat, fugiatve, vicissìm 140
Percipit imperio gaudens; neque corpora fallunt
Morigera ad celeres actus, ac numina mentis.
Qualis Hamadryadum quondam si fortè sororum
Una, novos peragrans saltus, & devia rura;
(Atque illam in viridi suadet procumbere ripâ 145

---

* Taste. † Smell.

‡ Reflection, the other Source of our Ideas.

Fontis pura quies, & opaci frigoris umbra)
Dum prona in latices speculi de margine pendet,
Mirata est subitam venienti occurrere Nympham:
Mox eosdem, quos ipsa, artus, eadem ora gerentem
Unà inferre gradus, unà succedere sylvæ 150
Aspicit alludens; seseque agnoscit in undis.
Sic sensu interno rerum simulacra suarum
Mens ciet, & proprios observat conscia vultus.
* Nec verò simplex ratio, aut jus omnibus unum
Constat imaginibus. Sunt quæ bina ostia nôrunt; 155
Hæ privos servant aditus; sine legibus illæ
Passìm, quà data porta, ruunt, animoque propinquant.
† Respice, cui a cunis tristes extinxit ocellos,
Sæva & in æternas mersit natura tenebras:
Illi ignota dies lucet, vernusque colorum 160
Offusus nitor est, et vivæ gratia formæ.
‡ Corporis at filum, & motus, spatiumque, locique
Intervalla datur certo dignoscere tactu:
Quandoquidem his iter ambiguum est, & janua duplex,
Exclusæque oculis species irrumpere tendunt 165
Per digitos. Atqui solis concessa potestas
Luminibus blandæ est radios immittere lucis.

---

* Ideas approach the Soul, some by single Avenues, some by two, others by every Sense.

† Illustration.—Light, an Example of the first.

‡ Figure, Motion, Extension, of the second.

* Undique proporrò sociis, quacunque patescit
Notitiæ campus, mistæ lasciva feruntur
Turba voluptatis comites, formæque dolorum 170
Terribiles visu, & portâ glomerantur in omni.
† Nec vario minus introïtu magnum ingruit Illud,
Quo facere & fungi, quo res existere circùm
Quamque sibi proprio cum corpore scimus, & ire
Ordine, perpetuoque per ævum flumine labi. 175
Nunc age quo valeat pacto, quá sensilis arte
‡ Affectare viam, atque animi tentare latebras
Materies (dictis aures adverte faventes)
Exsequar. Imprimìs spatii quam multa per æquor
Millia multigenis pandant se corpora seclis, 180
Expende. Haud unum invenies, quod mente licebit
Amplecti, nedum propriùs deprendere sensu,
§ Molis egens certæ, aut solido sine robore, cujus
Denique mobilitas linquit, texturave partes,
Ulla nec orarum circumcæsura coërcet. 185
Hæc conjuncta adeò totâ compage fatetur
Mundus, & extremo clamant in limine rerum,
(Si rebus datur Extremum) primordia. Firmat
Hæc eadem tactus (tactum quis dicere falsum
Audeat?) hæc oculi nec lucidus arguit orbis. 190

---

* Pleasure, Pain, of the Third.
† Also Power, Existence, Unity, Succession, Duration.
‡ Primary Qualities of Bodies.
§ Magnitude, Solidity, Mobility, Texture, Figure.

Inde potestatum enasci densissima proles;
Nam quodcunque ferit visum, tangive laborat,
Quicquid nare bibis, vel concava concipit auris,
Quicquid lingua sapit, credas hoc omne, necesse est
Ponderibus, textu, discursu, mole, figurâ 195
Particulas præstare leves, & semina rerum.
Nunc oculos igitur pascunt, & luce ministrâ
Fulgere cuncta vides, spargique coloribus orbem,
Dum de sole trahunt alias, aliasque supernè
Detorquent, retròque docent se vertere flammas. 200
Nunc trepido inter se fervent corpuscula pulsu,
Ut tremor æthera per magnum, latèque natantes
Aurarum fluctus avidi vibrantia claustra
Auditûs queat allabi, sonitumque propaget.
Cominùs interdum non ullo interprete per se 205
Nervorum invadunt teneras quatientia fibras,
Sensiferumque urgent ultrò per viscera motum.

* * *

DE PRINCIPIIS COGITANDI.

LIBER QUARTUS.

HACTENUS haud segnis Naturæ arcana retexi
Musarum interpres, primusque Britanna per arva
Romano liquidum deduxi flumine rivum.
Cum Tu opere in medio, spes tanti & causa laboris,

Linquis, & æternam fati te condis in umbram! 5
Vidi egomet duro graviter concussa dolore
Pectora, in alterius non unquam lenta dolorem;
Et languere oculos vidi, & pallescere amantem
Vultum, quo nunquam Pietas nisi rara, Fidesque,
Altus amor Veri, & purum spirabat Honestum. 10
Visa tamen tardi demùm inclementia morbi
Cessare est, reducemque iterum roseo ore Salutem
Speravi, atque unà tecum, dilecte Favoni!
Credulus heu longos, ut quondàm, fallere Soles:
Heu spes nequicquam dulces, atque irrita vota! 15
Heu mœstos Soles, sine te quos ducere flendo
Per desideria, & questus jam cogor inanes!
At Tu, sancta anima, & nostri non indiga luctûs,
Stellanti templo, sincerique ætheris igne,
Unde orta es, fruere; atque o si secura, nec ultra 20
Mortalis, notos olìm miserata labores
Respectes, tenuesque vacet cognoscere curas;
Humanam si fortè altâ de sede procellam
Contemplêre, metus, stimulosque cupidinis acres,
Gaudiaque & gemitus, parvoque in corde tumultum 25
Irarum ingentem, & sævos sub pectore fluctus;
Respice & has lacrymas, memori quas ictus amore
Fundo; quod possum, juxtà lugere sepulchrum
Dum juvat, & mutæ vana hæc jactare favillæ.

* * * *

END OF THE THIRD SECTION.

SECTION IV.

THE three foregoing Sections have carried the Reader through the juvenile part of Mr. Gray's life, and nearly, alas, to half of its duration. Those which remain, though less diversified by incidents, will, notwithstanding, I flatter myself, be equally instructive and amusing, as several of his most intimate friends have very kindly furnished me with their collections of his letters; which, added to those I have myself preserved, will enable me to select from them many excellent specimens of his more mature judgment, correct taste, and extensive learning, blended at the same time with many amiable instances of his sensibility: They will also specify the few remaining anecdotes, which occurred in a life so retired and sedentary as his: For the Reader must be here informed that, from the winter of the year 1742 to the day of his death, his principal residence was at Cambridge. He indeed, during the lives of his mother and aunts, spent his summer vacations at Stoke; and, after they died, in making

little tours on visits to his friends in different parts of the country: But he was seldom absent from college any considerable time, except between the years 1759 and 1762; when, on the opening of the British Museum, he took lodgings in Southampton Row, in order to have recourse to the Harleian and other Manuscripts there deposited, from which he made several curious extracts. *

It may seem strange that a person who had conceived so early a dislike to Cambridge, and who (as we shall see presently) now returned to it with this prejudice rather augmented, should, when he was free to choose, make that very place his principal abode for near thirty years: But this I think may be easily accounted for from his love of books, (ever his ruling passion) and the straitness of his circumstances, which prevented the gratification of it. For to a man, who could not conveniently purchase even a small library, what situation so eligible as that which affords free access to a number of large ones? This reason also accounts for another singular fact. We have seen

* These, amounting in all to a tolerably-sized folio, are at present in Mr. Walpole's hands. He has already printed the speech of Sir Thomas Wyat from them in the second number of his Miscellaneous Antiquities. The Public must impute it to their own want of curiosity if more of them do not appear in print.

that, during his residence at Stoke, in the spring and summer of this same year 1742, he writ a considerable part of his more finished poems. Hence one would be naturally led to conclude that, on his return to Cambridge, when the ceremony of taking his degree was over, the quiet of the place would have prompted him to continue the cultivation of his poetical talents, and that immediately, as the Muse seems in this year to have peculiarly inspired him; but this was not the case. Reading, he has often told me, was much more agreeable to him than writing: He therefore now laid aside composition almost entirely, and applied himself with intense assiduity to the study of the best Greek authors; insomuch that, in the space of about six years, there were hardly any writers of note in that language which he had not only read but digested; remarking, by the mode of common-place, their contents, their difficult and corrupt passages, and all this with the accuracy of a critic added to the diligence of a student.

Before I insert the next series of letters, I must take the liberty to mention, that it was not till about the year 1747 that I had the happiness of being introduced to the acquaintance of Mr. Gray. Some very juvenile imitations of Milton's juvenile poems, which I had written a year or two before, and of which

the Monody on Mr. Pope's death was the principal *; he then, at the request of one of my friends, was so obliging as to revise. The same year, on account of a dispute which had happened between the master and fellows of Pembroke-Hall, I had the honour of being nominated by the Fellows to fill one of the vacant Fellowships †. I was at this time scholar of St. John's College, and Bachelor of Arts, personally unknown to the gentlemen who favoured me so highly; therefore that they gave me this mark of distinction and preference was greatly owing to Mr. Gray, who was well acquainted with several of that society, and to Dr. Heberden, whose known partiality to every, even the smallest degree of merit, led him warmly to second his recommendation. The Reader, I hope, will excuse this short piece of egotism, as it is written to express my gratitude, as well to the living as the dead, to declare the sense I shall ever retain of the honour

* The other two were in imitation of "l'Allegro & il Pensero," and intitled "Il Bellicoso & il Pacifico." The latter of these I was persuaded to revise and publish in the Cambridge Collection of Verses on the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748. The former has since got into a Miscellany, printed by G. Pearch, from the indiscretion, I suppose, of some acquaintance who had a copy of it.

† Though nominated in 1747, I was not elected Fellow till February, 1749. The Master having refused his assent, claiming a negative, the affair was therefore not compromised till after an ineffectual litigation of two years.

which the Fellows of Pembroke-Hall then did me, and to particularise the time of an incident which brought me into the neighbourhood of Mr. Gray's College; and served to give that cement to our future intimacy, which is usually rendered stronger by proximity of place.

The Letters, which I select for this Section, are from the date of the year 1742 to that of 1768, when Mr. Gray was made Professor of Modern History. This, as it is a considerable interval of time, will perhaps require me the more frequently to resume my narrative; especially as I cannot now produce one continued chain of correspondence.

LETTER I.

*MR. GRAY TO * DR. WHARTON.*

Cambridge, Dec. 27, 1742.

I Ought to have returned you my thanks a long time ago, for the pleasure, I should say Prodigy, of your

* Of Old-Park, near Durham. With this Gentleman Mr. Gray contracted an acquaintance very early; and tho' they were not educated together at Eton, yet afterwards at Cambridge, when the Doctor was Fellow of Pembroke-Hall, they became intimate Friends, and continued so to the time of Mr. Gray's death.

Letter; for such a thing has not happened above twice within this last age to mortal man, and no one here can conceive what it may portend. You have heard, I suppose, how I have been employed a part of the time; how, by my own indefatigable application for these ten years past, and by the care and vigilance of that worthy magistrate the Man in Blue *, (who, I assure you, has not spared his labour, nor could have done more for his own Son) I am got half way to the top of Jurisprudence †, and bid as fair as another body to open a case of impotency with all decency and circumspection. You see my ambition. I do not doubt but some thirty years hence I shall convince the world and you that I am a very pretty young fellow; and may come to shine in a profession, perhaps the noblest of all except man-midwifery. As for you, if your distemper and you can but agree about going to London, I may reasonably expect in a much shorter time to see you in your three-cornered villa, doing the honours of a well-furnished table with as much dignity, as rich a mien, and as capacious a belly, as Dr. Mead. Methinks I see Dr. * *, at the lower end of it, lost in ad-

* A Servant of the Vice-Chancellor's for the time being, usually known by the name of Blue Coat, whose business it is to attend Acts for Degrees, &c.

† *i. e.* Bachelor of Civil Law.

miration of your goodly person and parts, cramming down his Envy (for it will rise) with the wing of a Pheasant, and drowning it in neat Burgundy. But not to tempt your Asthma too much with such a prospect, I should think you might be almost as happy and as great as this even in the country. But you know best, and I should be sorry to say any thing that might stop you in the career of Glory; far be it from me to hamper the wheels of your gilded chariot. Go on, Sir Thomas; and when you die, (for even Physicians must die) may the faculty in Warwick-lane erect your statue in the very niche of Sir John Cutler's.

I was going to tell you how sorry I am for your illness, but I hope it is too late now: I can only say that I really was very sorry. May you live a hundred Christmasses, and eat as many collars of brawn stuck with rosemary. Adieu, &c.

Though I have said that Mr. Gray, on his return to Cambridge, laid aside Poetry almost entirely, yet I find amongst his papers a small fragment in verse, which bears internal evidence that it was written about this very time. The foregoing Letter, in which he employs so much of his usual vein of ridicule on the University, seems to be no improper introduction to it: I

shall therefore insert it here without making any apology, as I have given one, on a similar occasion, in the first section.

It seems to have been intended as a Hymn or Address to Ignorance; and I presume, had he proceeded with it, would have contained much good Satire upon false Science and scholastic Pedantry. What he writ of it is purely introductory; yet many of the lines are so strong, and the general cast of the versification so musical, that I believe it will give the generality of Readers a higher opinion of his poetical Talents, than many of his Lyrical Productions have done. I speak of the Generality; because it is a certain fact, that their taste is founded upon the ten-syllable couplets of Dryden and Pope, and upon these only.

HAIL, Horrors, hail! ye ever gloomy bowers,
Ye gothic fanes, and antiquated towers,
Where rushy Camus' slowly-winding flood
Perpetual draws his humid train of mud:
Glad I revisit thy neglected reign,
Oh take me to thy peaceful shade again.
But chiefly thee, whose influence breath'd from high
Augments the native darkness of the sky;
Ah Ignorance! soft salutary Power!
Prostrate with filial reverence I adore.

Thrice hath Hyperion roll'd his annual race,
Since weeping I forsook thy fond embrace.
Oh say, successful do'st thou still oppose
Thy leaden Ægis 'gainst our ancient foes?
Still stretch, tenacious of thy right divine,
The massy sceptre o'er thy slumb'ring line?
And dews Lethean thro' the land dispense
To steep in slumbers each benighted sense?
If any spark of Wit's delusive ray
Break out, and flash a momentary day,
With damp, cold touch forbid it to aspire,
And huddle up in fogs the dangerous fire.
  Oh say---she hears me not, but careless grown,
Lethargic nods upon her ebon throne.
Goddess! awake, arise, alas my fears!
Can powers immortal feel the force of years?
Not thus of old, with ensigns wide unfurl'd,
She rode triumphant o'er the vanquish'd world;
Fierce nations own'd her unresisted might,
And all was Ignorance, and all was Night.
  Oh sacred Age! Oh Times for ever lost!
(The School-man's glory, and the Churchman's boast.)
For ever gone---yet still to Fancy new,
Her rapid wings the transient scene pursue,
And bring the buried ages back to view.

High on her car, behold the Grandam ride
Like old Sesostris with barbaric pride;
* * * * a team of harness'd monarchs bend
* * * * *

LETTER II.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Peterhouse, April 26, 1744.

YOU write so feelingly to Mr. Brown, and represent your abandoned condition in terms so touching, that what gratitude could not effect in several months, compassion has brought about in a few days; and broke that strong attachment, or rather allegiance, which I and all here owe to our sovereign Lady and Mistress, the President of Presidents and Head of Heads, (if I may be permitted to pronounce her name, that ineffable Octogrammaton) the power of Laziness. You must know she had been pleased to appoint me (in preference to so many old servants of hers who had spent their whole lives in qualifying themselves for the office) Grand Picker of Straws and Push-pin Player to her Supinity (for that is her title). The first is much in the nature of Lord President of the Council; and

the other like the Groom-Porter, only without the profit; but as they are both things of very great honour in this country, I considered with myself the load of Envy attending such great charges; and besides (between you and me) I found myself unable to support the fatigue of keeping up the appearance that persons of such dignity must do, so I thought proper to decline it, and excused myself as well as I could. However, as you see such an affair must take up a good deal of time, and it has always been the Policy of this court to proceed slowly, like the Imperial and that of Spain, in the dispatch of Business, you will on this account the easier forgive me, if I have not answered your Letter before.

You desire to know, it seems, what character the Poem of your young friend bears here *. I wonder that you ask the opinion of a Nation, where those, who pretend to judge, do not judge at all; and the rest (the wiser part) wait to catch the judgment of the world immediately above them; that is, Dick's and the Rain-

* Pleasures of the Imagination: from the posthumous publication of Dr. Akenside's Poems, it should seem that the Author had very much the same Opinion afterwards of his own Work, which Mr. Gray here expresses: since he undertook a reform of it, which must have given him, had he concluded it, as much trouble as if he had written it entirely new.

bow Coffee-houses. Your readier way would be to ask the Ladies that keep the Bars in those two theatres of Criticism. However, to shew you that I am a judge, as well as my Countrymen, I will tell you, though I have rather turned it over than read it, (but no matter; no more have they) that it seems to me above the middling; and now and then, for a little while, rises even to the best, particularly in description. It is often obscure, and even unintelligible; and too much infected with the Hutchinson jargon. In short, its great fault is, that it was published at least nine years too early. And so methinks in a few words, "à la mode "du Temple," I have very pertly dispatched what perhaps may for several years have employed a very ingenious man worth fifty of myself.

You are much in the right to have a taste for Socrates; he was a divine man. I must tell you, by way of news of the place, that the other day a certain new Professor made an Apology for him an hour long in the schools; and all the world brought in Socrates guilty, except the people of his own College.

The Muse is gone, and left me in far worse company; if she returns, you will hear of her. As to her child *

* He here means his Poem "De Principiis Cogitandi." See the last Section.

(since you are so good as to inquire after it) it is but a puling chit yet, not a bit grown to speak of; I believe, poor thing, it has got the worms that will carry it off at last. Mr. Trollope and I are in a course of Tar-water; he for his present, and I for my future distempers. If you think it will kill me, send away a man and horse directly; for I drink like a Fish. Yours, &c.

LETTER III.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, Dec. 11, 1746.

I Would make you an excuse, (as indeed I ought) if they were a sort of thing I ever gave any credit to myself in these cases; but I know they are never true. Nothing so silly as Indolence when it hopes to disguise itself: every one knows it by its saunter, as they do his Majesty (God bless him) at a Masquerade, by the firmness of his tread and the elevation of his chin. However, somewhat I had to say that has a little shadow of reason in it. I have been in Town (I suppose you know) flaunting about at all kind of public places with two friends lately returned from abroad. The world itself has some attractions in it to a solitary of six years

standing; and agreeable well-meaning people of sense (thank Heaven there are so few of them) are my peculiar Magnet. It is no wonder then if I felt some reluctance at parting with them so soon; or if my spirits, when I returned back to my cell, should sink for a time, not indeed to storm and tempest, but a good deal below changeable. Besides, Seneca says (and my pitch of philosophy does not pretend to be much above Seneca) "Nunquam mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid "ex eo quod composui, turbatur: aliquid ex his, quæ "fugavi, redit." And it will happen to such as us, mere imps of Science. Well it may, when Wisdom herself is forced often

in sweet retired Solitude
To plume her feathers, and let grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of Resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.

It is a foolish thing that without Money one cannot either live as one pleases, or where and with whom one pleases. Swift somewhere says, that Money is Liberty; and I fear Money is Friendship too and Society, and almost every external blessing. It is a great, though an ill-natured, Comfort, to see most of those who have it in plenty, without Pleasure, without Liberty, and without Friends.

I am not altogether of your opinion as to your historical consolation in time of trouble: A calm Melancholy it may produce, a stiller sort of despair (and that only in some circumstances, and on some constitutions); but I doubt no real comfort or content can ever arise in the human mind, but from Hope.

I take it very ill you should have been in the twentieth year of the War *, and yet say nothing of the retreat before Syracuse: Is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life? And how does Xenophon or Plutarch agree with you? For my part I read Aristotle, his Poetics, Politics, and Morals; tho' I do not well know which is which. In the first place, he is the hardest author by far I ever meddled with. Then he has a dry conciseness, that makes one imagine one is perusing a table of contents rather than a book: it tastes for all the world like chopp'd hay, or rather like chopp'd logic; for he has a violent affection to that art, being in some sort his own invention; so that he often loses himself in little trifling distinctions and verbal niceties; and, what is worse, leaves you to extricate him as well as you can. Thirdly, he has suffered vastly from the transcribblers, as all authors of great brevity necessarily must. Fourthly and lastly, he has

* Thucydides, L. vii.

abundance of fine uncommon things, which make him well worth the pains he gives one. You see what you are to expect from him.

LETTER IV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

Cambridge, 1747.

I Had been absent from this place a few days, and at my return found Cibber's book * upon my table: I return you my thanks for it, and have already run over a considerable part; for who could resist Mrs. Letitia Pilkington's recommendation? (By the way, is there any such gentlewoman †? or has somebody put on the style of a scribbling woman's panegyric to deceive and laugh at Colley?) He seems to me full as pert and as dull as usual. There are whole pages of common-place stuff, that for stupidity might have been wrote by Dr. Waterland, or any other grave divine, did not the flirting saucy phrase give them at a distance an air of

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* Entitled "Observations on Cicero's Character," or some such thing; for I have not the book by me, and it has been long since forgot.

† This Lady made herself more known some time after the date of this letter.

youth and gaiety: It is very true, he is often in the right with regard to Tully's weaknesses; but was there any one that did not see them? Those, I imagine, that would find a man after God's own heart, are no more likely to trust the Doctor's recommendation than the Player's; and as to Reason and Truth, would they know their own faces, do you think, if they looked in the glass, and saw themselves so bedizened in tattered fringe and tarnished lace, in French jewels, and dirty furbelows, the frippery of a stroller's wardrobe?

Literature, to take it in its most comprehensive sense, and include every thing that requires invention or judgment, or barely application and industry, seems indeed drawing apace to its dissolution, and remarkably since the beginning of the war. I remember to have read Mr. Spence's pretty book; though (as he then had not been at Rome for the last time) it must have increased greatly since that in bulk. If you ask me what I read, I protest I do not recollect one syllable; but only in general, that they were the best bred sort of men in the world, just the kind of *frinds* one would wish to meet in a fine summer's evening, if one wished to meet any at all. The heads and tails of the dialogues, published separate in 16mo. would make the sweetest reading in *natiur* for young gentlemen of

family and fortune, that are learning to dance*. I rejoice to hear there is such a crowd of dramatical performances coming upon the stage. Agrippina can stay very well, she thanks you, and be damned at leisure: I hope in God you have not mentioned, or shewed to any body that scene (for trusting in its badness, I forgot to caution you concerning it); but I heard the other day, that I was writing a Play, and was told the name of it, which nobody here could know, I am sure. The employment you propose to me much better suits my inclination; but I much fear our joint-stock would hardly compose a small volume; what I have is less considerable than you would imagine, and of that little we should not be willing to publish all * * * †

* This ridicule on the Platonic way of dialogue (as it was aimed to be, though nothing less resembles it) is, in my opinion, admirable. Lord Shaftsbury was the first who brought it into vogue, and Mr. Spence (if we except a few Scotch writers) the last who practised it. As it has now been laid aside some years, we may hope, for the sake of true taste, that this frippery mode of composition will never come into fashion again; especially since Dr. Hurd has pointed out, by example as well as precept, wherein the true beauty of Dialogue-writing consists.

† What is here omitted was a short catalogue of Mr. West's Poetry then in Mr. Gray's hands; the reader has seen as much of it in the three foregoing sections as I am persuaded his friend would have published, had he prosecuted the task which Mr. Walpole recommended to him, that of printing his own and Mr. West's Poems in the same volume; and which we also perceive from this letter, he was not averse from doing. This therefore seems to vindicate

This is all I can any where find. You, I imagine, may have a good deal more. I should not care how unwise the ordinary run of Readers might think my affection for him, provided those few, that ever loved any body, or judged of any thing rightly, might, from such little remains, be moved to consider what he would have been; and to wish that heaven had granted him a longer life and a mind more at ease.

I send you a few lines, though Latin, which you do not like, for the sake of the subject*; it makes part of a large design, and is the beginning of the fourth book, which was intended to treat of the passions. Excuse the three first verses; you know vanity, with the Romans, is a poetical licence.

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the Editor's plan in arranging these papers; as he is enabled by it not only to shew what Mr. West would have been, but what Mr. Gray was, I mean not as a Poet, for that the world knew before, but as an universal Scholar, and (what is still of more consequence) as an excellent moral Man.

* The admirable Apostrophe to Mr. West, see page 22.

LETTER V.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

Cambridge, 1747.

I Have abundance of thanks to return you for the entertainment Mr. Spence's book has given me, which I have almost run over already; and I much fear (see what it is to make a figure) the breadth of the margin, and the neatness of the prints, which are better done than one could expect, have prevailed upon me to like it far better than I did in manuscript, for I think it is not the very genteel deportment of Polymetis, nor the lively wit of Mysagetes, that have at all corrupted me.

There is one fundamental fault, from whence most of the little faults throughout the whole arise. He professes to neglect the Greek writers, who could have given him more instruction on the very heads he professes to treat, than all the others put together; who does not know, that upon the Latin, the Sabine, and Hetruscan mythology (which probably might themselves, at a remoter period of time, owe their origin to Greece too) the Romans ingrafted almost the whole religion of Greece to make what is called their own? It

would be hard to find any one circumstance that is properly of their invention. In the ruder days of the republic, the picturesque part of their religion (which is the province he has chose, and would be thought to confine himself to) was probably borrowed entirely from the Tuscans, who, as a wealthy and trading people, may be well supposed, and indeed are known, to have had the arts flourishing in a considerable degree among them. What could inform him here, but Dio. Halicarnassus (who expressly treats of those times with great curiosity and industry) and the remains of the first Roman writers? The former he has neglected as a Greek; and the latter, he says, were but little acquainted with the arts, and consequently are but of small authority. In the better ages, when every temple and public building in Rome was peopled with imported deities and heroes, and when all the artists of reputation they made use of were Greeks, what wonder, if their eyes grew familiarised to Grecian forms and habits (especially in a matter of this kind, where so much depends upon the imagination); and if those figures introduced with them a belief of such fables, as first gave them being, and dressed them out in their various attributes, it was natural then, and (I should think) necessary, to go to the source itself, the Greek accounts of their own religion; but, to say the truth, I suspect he was little conversant in those books and

that language; for he rarely quotes any but Lucian, an author that falls in every body's way, and who lived at the very extremity of that period he has set to his inquiries, later than any of the poets he has meddled with, and for that reason ought to have been regarded as but an indifferent authority; especially being a Syrian too. His book (as he says himself) is, I think, rather a beginning than a perfect work; but a beginning at the wrong end: For if any body should finish it by inquiring into the Greek mythology, as he proposes, it will be necessary to read it backward.

There are several little neglects, that one might have told him of, which I noted in reading it hastily; as page 311, a discourse about orange-trees, occasioned by Virgil's "inter odoratum lauri nemus," where he fancies the Roman Laurus to be our Laurel; tho' undoubtedly the bay-tree, which is *odoratum*, and (I believe) still called Lauro, or Alloro, at Rome; and that the "Malum Medicum" in the Georgick is the orange; tho' Theophrastus, whence Virgil borrowed it, or even Pliny whom he himself quotes, might convince him it is the cedrato which he has often tasted at Florence. Page 144 is an account of Domenichino's Cardinal Virtues, and a fling at the Jesuits, neither of which belong to them: The painting is in a church of the Barnabiti, dedicated to St. Carlo Borromeo,

whose motto is HUMILITAS. Page 151, in a note, he says, the old Romans did not regard Fortune as a Deity; tho' Servius Tullius (whom she was said to be in love with; nay, there was actually an affair between them) founded her temple in Foro Boario. By the way, her worship was Greek, and this king was educated in the family of Tarquinius Priscus, whose father was a Corinthian; so it is easy to conceive how early the religion of Rome might be mixed with that of Greece, &c. &c.

Dr. Middleton has sent me to-day a book on the Roman Senate, the substance of a dispute between Lord Hervey and him, tho' it never interrupted *their* friendship, he says, and I dare say not.

LETTER VI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

Cambridge, March 1, 1747.

AS one ought to be particularly careful to avoid blunders in a compliment of condolence, it would be a sensible satisfaction to me (before I testify my sorrow, and the sincere part I take in your misfortune) to know for

certain, who it is I lament. I knew Zara and Selima, (Selima, was it? or Fatima) or rather I knew them both together; for I cannot justly say which was which. Then as to your handsome Cat, the name you distinguish her by, I am no less at a loss, as well knowing one's handsome cat is always the cat one likes best; or, if one be alive and the other dead, it is usually the latter that is the handsomest. Besides, if the point were never so clear, I hope you do not think me so ill-bred or so imprudent as to forfeit all my interest in the surviver: Oh no! I would rather seem to mistake, and imagine to be sure it must be the tabby one that had met with this sad accident. Till this affair is a little better determined, you will excuse me if I do not begin to cry;

"Tempus inane peto, requiem, spatiumque doloris."

Which interval is the more convenient, as it gives time to rejoice with you on your new honors *. This is only a beginning; I reckon next week we shall hear you are a Free-Mason, or a Gormogon at least.---Heigh ho! I feel (as you to be sure have done long since) that I have very little to say, at least in prose. Somebody will be the better for it; I do not mean you, but your Cat, feuë Mademoiselle Selime, whom I am about to

* Mr. Walpole was about this time elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

immortalize for one week or fortnight, as follows† ***. There's a Poem for you, it is rather too long for an Epitaph.

LETTER VII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Stoke, June 5, 1748.

YOUR friendship has interested itself in my affairs so naturally, that I cannot help troubling you a little with a detail of them ‡. ********* And now, my dear Wharton, why must I tell you a thing so contrary to my own wishes and yours? I believe it is impossible for me to see you in the North, or to enjoy any of those agreeable hours I had flattered myself with. This business will oblige me to be in town several times during the summer, particularly in August, when half the

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† The reader need hardly be told, that the 4th Ode in the Collection of his Poems was inserted in the place of these asterisks. This letter (as some other slight ones have been) is printed chiefly to mark the date of one of his compositions.

‡ The paragraph here omitted contained an account of Mr. Gray's loss of a house by fire in Cornhill, and the expense he should be at in rebuilding it. Though it was insured, he could at this time ill bear to lay out the additional sum necessary for the purpose.

money is to be paid; besides the good people here would think me the most careless and ruinous of mortals, if I should take such a journey at this time. The only satisfaction I can pretend to, is that of hearing from you, and particularly at this time when I was bid to expect the good news of an increase of your family. Your opinion of Diodorus is doubtless right; but there are things in him very curious, got out of better authorities now lost. Do you remember the Egyptian history, and particularly the account of the gold mines? My own readings have been cruelly interrupted: What I have been highly pleased with, is the new Comedy from Paris by Gresset, called le Mechant; if you have it not, buy his works all together in two little volumes: they are collected by the Dutch booksellers, and consequently contain some trash; but then there are the Ververt, the Epistle to P. Bougeant, the Chartreuse, that to his sister, an Ode on his Country, and another on Mediocrity, and the Sidnei, another Comedy, all which have great beauties. There is also a Poem lately published by Thompson, called the Castle of Indolence, with some good stanzas in it. Mr. Mason is my acquaintance; I liked that Ode * much, but have found

* Ode to a Water Nymph, published about this time in Dodsley's Miscellany. On reading what follows, many readers, I suspect, will think me as simple as ever, in forbearing to expunge the paragraph: But as I publish Mr. Gray's sentiments of authors, as well

no one else that did. He has much fancy, little judgment, and a good deal of modesty; I take him for a good and well-meaning creature; but then he is really in simplicity a child, and loves every body he meets with: He reads little or nothing; writes abundance, and that with a design to make his fortune by it. My best compliments to Mrs. Wharton and your family: Does that name include any body I am not yet acquainted with?

LETTER VIII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Stoke, August 19, 1748.

I Am glad you have had any pleasure in Gresset; he seems to me a truly elegant and charming writer; the

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living as dead, without reserve, I should do them injustice, if I was more scrupulous with respect to myself. My friends, I am sure, will be much amused with this and another passage hereafter of a like sort. My enemies, if they please, may sneer at it; and say (which they will very truly) that twenty-five years have made a very considerable abatement in my general philanthropy. Men of the world will not blame me for writing from so prudent a motive, as that of making my fortune by it; and yet the truth, I believe, at the time was, that I was perfectly well satisfied, if my publications furnished me with a few guineas to see a Play or an Opera.

Mechant is the best comedy I ever read; his Edward I could scarce get through; it is puerile; though there are good lines, such as this for example:

" Le jour d'un nouveau regne est le jour des ingrats."

But good lines will make any thing rather than a good play: However you are to consider this as a collection made up by the Dutch booksellers; many things unfinished, or written in his youth, or designed not for the world, but to make his friends laugh, as the Lutrin vivant, &c. There are two noble lines, which, as they are in the middle of an Ode to the King, may perhaps have escaped you:

" Le cri d'un peuple heureux est la seule eloquence,
" Qui sçait parler des Rois."

Which is very true, and should have been a hint to himself not to write Odes to the King at all.

As I have nothing more to say at present, I fill my paper with the beginning of an Essay; what name to give it I know not; but the subject is the Alliance of Education and Government: I mean to shew that they must both concur to produce great and useful men. I desire your judgment upon it before I proceed any further.

The first fifty-seven verses of an Ethical Essay accompanied this letter, which I shall here insert, with

about fifty lines more, all of them finished in his highest manner. Had this noble design been compleated, I may, with great boldness, assert that it would have been one of the most capital Poems of the kind that ever appeared either in our own, or any language. I am not able to inform the reader how many Essays he meant to write upon the subject; nor do I believe that he had ever so far settled his plan as to determine that point: But since his theme was as extensive as human nature, (an observation he himself makes in a subsequent letter on the "Esprit des Loix") it is plain the whole work would have been considerable in point of size. He was busily employed in it at the time when M. de Montesquieu's book was first published: On reading it, he said the Baron had forestalled some of his best thoughts; and yet the reader will find, from the small fragment he has left, that the two writers differ a little in one very material point, viz. the influence of soil and climate on national manners *. Some time after he had thoughts of resuming his plan, and of dedicating it, by an introductory Ode, to M. de Montesquieu; but that great man's death, which happened in 1755, made him drop his design finally.

* See L'Esprit des Loix, Liv. 14. chap. 2, &c.

On carefully reviewing the scattered papers in prose, which he writ, as hints for his own use in the prosecution of this work, I think it best to form part of them into a kind of commentary at the bottom of the pages; they will serve greatly to elucidate (as far as they go) the method of his reasoning.

ESSAY I.

——— Πόταγ' ὦ γαθέ; τὰν γὰρ ἀοιδὰν
Οὔτι πω εἰς Αἴδαν γε τὸν ἐκλελάθοντα φυλαξεῖς.

THEOCRITUS.

As sickly Plants betray a niggard earth,
Whose barren bosom starves her gen'rous birth,
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains
Their roots to feed, and fill their verdant veins:

COMMENTARY.

The Author's subject being (as we have seen) THE NECESSARY ALLIANCE BETWEEN A GOOD FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND A GOOD MODE OF EDUCATION, IN ORDER TO PRODUCE THE HAPPINESS OF MANKIND, the Poem opens with two similies; an uncommon kind of exordium: but which, I suppose, the Poet intentionally chose, to intimate the analogical method he meant to pursue in his subsequent reasonings. 1st, He asserts that men without education are like sickly plants in a cold or barren soil, (line 1 to 5, and

NOTES.

[*As sickly Plants, &c.* l. 1.] If any copies of this Essay would have authorised me to have made an alteration in the disposition of the lines, I would, for the sake of perspicuity, have printed the

And as in climes, where Winter holds his reign, 5
The soil, tho' fertile, will not teem in vain,
Forbids her gems to swell, her shades to rise,
Nor trusts her blossoms to the churlish skies:
So draw Mankind in vain the vital airs,
Unform'd, unfriended, by those kindly cares, 10
That health and vigour to the soul impart,
Spread the young thought, and warm the opening heart:
So fond Instruction on the growing powers
Of nature idly lavishes her stores,

COMMENTARY.

8 to 12); and, 2dly, he compares them, when unblest with a just and well-regulated government, to plants that will not blossom or bear fruit in an unkindly and inclement air (l. 5 to 9, and l. 13 to

NOTES,

first twelve in the following manner; because I think the poetry would not have been in the least hurt by such a transposition, and the Poet's meaning would have been much more readily perceived. I put them down here for that purpose.

As sickly Plants betray a niggard earth,
Whose barren bosom starves her gen'rous birth,
Nor genial warmth, nor genial juice retains
Their roots to feed, and fill their verdant veins:
So draw Mankind in vain the vital airs,
Unform'd, unfriended by those kindly cares,
That health and vigour to the soul impart,
Spread the young thought, and warm the opening heart,
And as in climes, where Winter holds his reign,
The soil, tho' fertile, will not teem in vain,
Forbids her gems to swell, her shades to rise,
Nor trusts her blossoms to the churlish skies;
So fond Instruction, &c.

If equal Justice with unclouded face 15
Smile not indulgent on the rising race,
And scatter with a free, tho' frugal hand
Light golden showers of plenty o'er the land:
But Tyranny has fix'd her empire there,
To check their tender hopes with chilling fear, 20
And blast the blooming promise of the year.
This spacious animated scene survey,
From where the rolling Orb, that gives the day,
His sable sons with nearer course surrounds
To either pole, and life's remotest bounds. 25
How rude soe'er th' exteriour form we find,
Howe'er opinion tinge the varied mind,
Alike, to all the kind, impartial Heav'n
The sparks of truth and happiness has giv'n:
With sense to feel, with memory to retain, 30
They follow pleasure, and they fly from pain;
Their judgment mends the plan their fancy draws,
Th' event presages, and explores the cause;
The soft returns of gratitude they know,
By fraud elude, by force repell the foe; 35

COMMENTARY.

22.) Having thus laid down the two propositions he means to prove, he begins by examining into the characteristics which (taking a general view of mankind) all men have in common one with another (l. 22 to 39); they covet pleasure and avoid pain (l. 31); they feel gratitude for benefits (l. 34;) they desire to avenge wrongs, which they effect either by force or cunning (l. 35); they

While mutual wishes, mutual woes endear
The social smile and sympathetic tear.
Say, then, thro' ages by what fate confin'd
To different climes seem different souls assign'd?
Here measur'd laws and philosophic ease 40
Fix, and improve the polish'd arts of peace.
There industry and gain their vigils keep,
Command the winds, and tame th' unwilling deep.
Here force and hardy deeds of blood prevail;
There languid pleasure sighs in every gale. 45
Oft o'er the trembling nations from afar
Has Scythia breath'd the living cloud of war;

COMMENTARY.

are linked to each other by their common feelings, and participate in sorrow and in joy (l. 36, 37). If then all the human species agree in so many moral particulars, whence arises the diversity of national characters? This question the Poet puts at line 38, and dilates upon to l. 64. Why, says he, have some nations shewn a propensity to commerce and industry; others to war and rapine; others to ease and pleasure? (l. 42 to 46). Why have the Northern people overspread, in all ages, and prevailed over the Southern? l. 46

NOTES.

[*Has Scythia breath'd, &c.* l. 47.] The most celebrated of the early irruptions of the Scythians into the neighbouring countries is that under the conduct of Madyes, about the year of the creation 3350, when they broke into Asia, during the reign of Cyaxares, king of the Medes, and conqueror of the Assyrians, plundered it at discretion, and kept possession of it during twenty-eight years. Many successive incursions, attended with every kind of desolation, are enumerated by historians; particularly those, in A. D. 252, during the reign of Gallus and Volusianus, and in 261, under

And, where the deluge burst, with sweepy sway
Their arms, their kings, their gods were roll'd away.
As oft have issued, host impelling host, 50
The blue-eyed myriads from the Baltic coast.
The prostrate South to the Destroyer yields
Her boasted titles, and her golden fields:

COMMENTARY.

to 53) Why has Asia been, time out of mind, the seat of des-

NOTES.

that of Gallienus. Under the Greek Emperors also, to mention only the years 1053 and 1191, it appears that the Scythians still continued their accustomed ravages. In later times, the like spirit of sudden and destructive invasion has constantly prevailed; and these same Scythians, under their modern name of Tartars, have, at different periods, over-run Asia, and even some parts of Europe: it is sufficient, on this point, to recall to the reader's memory the names of Gingis-Chan, Octaï, and Tamerlane.

[*The blue-eyed myriads, &c.* l. 51]. The different nations of Germans, who inhabited or bordered on this coast, have been always distinguished by their various emigrations in search of a better soil and climate, and of a more commodious settlement. The reader will readily recollect the expedition of the Teutones, who joined the Cimbri, when they invaded the Roman territories to the united amount, it is said, of 300,000 fighting men; the many inroads of the Germans into Gaul, under the conduct of Ariovistus; and the numerous irruptions, into the Roman empire, of the Suevi, the Goths, the Vandals, and lastly of the Lombards; most of which nations came originally from the coasts here mentioned. The epithet " blue-eyed" exhibits a distinguishing feature of the ancient Germans: and is particularly remarked by Tacitus and Juvenal. " Truces et cærulei oculi," observes the former, " de Popul. Ger- " man. cap. 4." and the latter, " Cærula quis stupuit Germani lu- " mina?" " Sat. 13. ver. 164."

With grim delight the Brood of winter view
A brighter day, and Heav'ns of azure hue, 55
Scent the new fragrance of the breathing rose,
And quaff the pendent vintage as it grows.
Proud of the yoke, and pliant to the rod,
Why yet does Asia dread a monarch's nod,
While European freedom still withstands 60
Th' encroaching tide, that drowns her lessening lands;
And sees far off with an indignant groan
Her native plains, and Empires once her own.
Can opener skies and suns of fiercer flame
O'erpower the fire, that animates our frame; 65

COMMENTARY.

potism, and Europe that of freedom? (l. 54 to 64.) Are we from these instances to imagine men necessarily enslaved to the inconveniencies of the climate where they were born? (l. 64 to 72) Or

NOTES.

[*With grim delight, &c.* l. 54.] It may not be improper here, after admiring the noble vein of poetical expression and imagery which adorns this description, to relate an incident in itself curious, which shews the propriety of it. The Normans, who came originally from Norway and Scandinavia, having, after a century of ravages, settled themselves in Neustria (since called Normandy) in 912, were invited into the southern parts of Italy, in the year 1013, by Gaimar prince of Salerno. The Ambassadors, by his particular direction, carried with them a quantity of Citrons, and of other rare fruits, as the most alluring proof of the mildness of the climate. He thought (and the event showed he was right in thinking so) that this " Brood of winter," delighted with the taste and fragrance of these delicacies, would the more readily consent to his

As lamps, that shed at eve a chearful ray,
Fade and expire beneath the eye of day?
Need we the influence of the Northern star
To string our nerves and steel our hearts to war?
And, where the face of nature laughs around, 70
Must sick'ning virtue fly the tainted ground?
Unmanly thought! what seasons can controul,
What fancied zone can circumscribe the soul,
Who, conscious of the source from whence she springs,
By reason's light, on resolution's wings, 75
Spite of her frail companion, dauntless goes
O'er Lybia's deserts and thro' Zembla's snows?
She bids each slumb'ring energy awake,
Another touch, another temper take,
Suspends th' inferior laws, that rule our clay: 80
The stubborn elements confess her sway;
Their little wants, their low desires, refine,
And raise the mortal to a height divine.

COMMENTARY.

are we not rather to suppose there is a natural strength in the human mind,that is able to vanquish and break through them? (l. 72 to 84) It is confest, however, that men receive an early tincture

NOTES.

proposal. [See Leo Ostiensis in his "Chron: Cassin:" and Peta-"vius, Rationarium Temp: pars: prim: lib: viii."] Mr. Gray's judgment, in what remains to us of this essay, is very remarkable. He borrows from poetry his imagery, his similes, and his expressions; but his thoughts are taken, as the nature of the Poem requires, from history and observation.

Not but the human fabric from the birth
Imbibes a flavour of its parent earth. 85
As various tracts enforce a various toil,
The manners speak the idiom of their soil.
An iron-race the mountain-cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain:
For where unwearied sinews must be found 90
With side-long plough to quell the flinty ground,
To turn the torrent's swift-descending flood,
To brave the savage rushing from the wood,
What wonder, if to patient valour train'd
They guard with spirit, what by strength they gain'd?
And while their rocky ramparts round they see, 96
The rough abode of want and liberty,
(As lawless force from confidence will grow)
Insult the plenty of the vales below?

COMMENTARY.

from the situation they are placed in, and the climate which produces them (l. 84 to 88.) Thus the inhabitants of the mountains, inured to labour and patience, are naturally trained to war (l. 88 to 96); while those of the plain are more open to any attack, and softened by ease and plenty (l. 96 to 99). Again, the Ægyptians, from the nature of their situation, might be the inventors of home-navigation, from a necessity of keeping up an intercourse between their towns during the inundation of the Nile (l. 99 to ******). Those persons would naturally have the first turn to commerce, who inhabited a barren coast like the Tyrians, and were persecuted by some neighbouring tyrant; or were drove to take refuge on some shoals, like the Venetian and Hollander; their discovery of some rich island, in the infancy of the world, described. The Tar-

What wonder, in the sultry climes, that spread, 100
Where Nile redundant o'er his summer-bed

COMMENTARY.

tar, hardened to war by his rigorous climate and pastoral life, and by his disputes for water and herbage in a country without landmarks, as also by skirmishes between his rival clans, was consequently fitted to conquer his rich Southern neighbours, whom ease and luxury had enervated: Yet this is no proof that liberty and valour may not exist in Southern climes, since the Syrians and Carthaginians gave noble instances of both; and the Arabians carried their conquests as far as the Tartars. Rome also (for many centuries) repulsed those very nations, which, when she grew weak, at length demolished * her extensive Empire. * * * *

* The Reader will perceive that the Commentary goes further than the Text. The reason for which is, that the Editor found it so on the paper from which he formed that comment; and as the thoughts seemed to be those which Mr. Gray would have next graced with the harmony of his numbers, he held it best to give them in continuation. There are other maxims on different papers, all apparently relating to the same subject, which are too excellent to be lost; these therefore (as the place in which he meant to employ them cannot be ascertained) I shall subjoin to this note, under the title of detached Sentiments.

" Man is a creature not capable of cultivating his mind but in society, and in that only where he is not a slave to the necessities of life.

Want is the mother of the inferior arts, but Ease that of the finer; as eloquence, policy, morality, poetry, sculpture, painting, architecture, which are the improvements of the former.

The climate inclines some nations to contemplation and pleasure; others to hardship, action, and war; but not so as to incapacitate the former for courage and discipline, or the latter for civility, politeness, and works of genius.

It is the proper work of education and government united to redress the faults that arise from the soil and air.

From his broad bosom life and verdure flings,
And broods o'er Ægypt with his wat'ry wings,

NOTES.

[*And broods o'er Ægypt, &c.* l. 103.] The image seems to be taken from the figure of Jupiter Pluvius, as represented on the Antonine Pillar. But the whole passage rises to a height beyond the powers either of sculpture or painting to ascend. The critic would, with difficulty, find any description in antiquity, which exceeds this in point of true sublimity.

The principal drift of education should be to make men *think* in the Northern climates, and *act* in the Southern.

The different steps and degrees of education may be compared to the artificer's operations upon marble; it is one thing to dig it out of the quarry, and another to square it; to give it gloss and lustre, call forth every beautiful spot and vein, shape it into a column, or animate it into a statue.

To a native of free and happy governments his country is always dear:

" He loves his old hereditary trees." COWLEY.

While the subject of a tyrant has no country; he is therefore selfish and base-minded; he has no family, no posterity, no desire of fame; or, if he has, of one that turns not on its proper object.

Any nation that wants public spirit, neglects education, ridicules the desire of fame, and even of virtue and reason, must be ill governed.

Commerce changes entirely the fate and genius of nations, by communicating arts and opinions, circulating money, and introducing the materials of luxury; she first opens and polishes the mind, then corrupts and enervates both that and the body.

Those invasions of effeminate Southern nations by the warlike Northern people, seem (in spite of all the terror, mischief, and ignorance which they brought with them) to be necessary evils; in order to revive the spirit of mankind, softened and broken by the arts of commerce, to restore them to their native liberty and equality, and to give them again the power of supporting danger and

If with advent'rous oar and ready sail
The dusky people drive before the gale; 105
Or on frail floats to neighb'ring cities ride,
That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide.

* * * * * * *

NOTES.

[*That rise and glitter o'er the ambient tide*, l. 107.] The foregoing account of the river Nile, while it is embellished with all the graces of description, is given at the same time in exact conformity to truth and reality; as the reader will observe from the following citation: "Le Nil portoit par tout la fécondité avec ses eaux salu-" taires, unissoit les villes entre elles, & la grande mer avec la mer " rouge, entretenoit le commerce au dedans & au dehors du Roy-" aume, & le fortifioit contre l'ennemi: de sorte qu'il étoit tout en-" semble et le nourricier, & le defenseur de l'Egypte. On lui aban-" donnoit la campagne: mais les villes, rehaussées avec des tra-" vaux immenses, & s'élevant comme des Iles au milieu des eaux, " regardoient avec joye de cette hauteur toute la plaine inondée & " tout ensemble fertilisée par le Nil." *Bossuet, Disc: sur l' Hist: trois: part:*

hardship; so a comet, with all the horrors that attend it as it passes through our system, brings a supply of warmth and light to the sun, and of moisture to the air.

The doctrine of Epicurus is ever ruinous to society: It had its rise when Greece was declining, and perhaps hastened its dissolution, as also that of Rome; it is now propagated in France and in England, and seems likely to produce the same effect in both.

One principal characteristic of vice in the present age is the contempt of fame.

Many are the uses of good fame to a generous mind: it extends our existence and example into future ages; continues and propagates virtue, which otherwise would be as short-lived as our frame; and prevents the prevalence of vice in a generation more corrupt even than our own. It is impossible to conquer that natural desire

LETTER IX.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, March 9, 1748-9.

YOU ask for some account of books. The principal I can tell you of is a work of the President Montesquieu, the labour of twenty years; it is called L'Esprit des Loix, 2 vol. 4to. printed at Geneva. He lays down the principles on which are founded the three sorts of government, Despotism, the limited Monarchy, and the Republican; and shews how from these are deduced

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we have of being remembered; even criminal ambition and avarice, the most selfish of all passions, would wish to leave a name behind them."

I find also among these papers a single couplet much too beautiful to be lost, though the place where he meant to introduce it cannot be ascertained; it must, however, have made a part of some description of the effect which the reformation had on our national manners:

When Love could teach a monarch to be wise,
And Gospel-light first dawn'd from BULLEN's Eyes.

Thus, with all the attention that a connoisseur in painting employs in collecting every slight outline as well as finished drawing which led to the completion of some capital picture, I have endeavoured to preserve every fragment of this great poetical design. It surely deserved this care, as it was one of the noblest which Mr. Gray ever attempted; and also, as far as he carried it into execution, the most exquisitely finished. That he carried it no further is, and must ever be, a most sensible loss to the republic of letters.

the laws and customs by which they are guided and maintained; the education proper to each form; the influence of climate, situation, religion, &c. on the minds of particular nations and on their policy. The subject, you see, is as extensive as mankind; the thoughts perfectly new, generally admirable as they are just, sometimes a little too refined. In short, there are faults, but such as an ordinary man could never have committed. The style very lively and concise (consequently sometimes obscure); it is the gravity of Tacitus, whom he admires, tempered with the gaiety and fire of a Frenchman. The time of night will not suffer me to go on; but I will write again in a week.

LETTER X.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, April 25, 1749.

I Perceive that second parts are as bad to write as they can be to read; for this, which you ought to have had a week after the first, has been a full month in coming forth. The spirit of laziness (the spirit of the place) begins to possess even me, who have so long declaimed against it; yet has it not so prevailed, but that I feel that discontent with myself, that ennui, that

ever accompanies it in its beginnings. Time will settle my conscience; time will reconcile me to this languid companion: We shall smoke, we shall tipple, we shall doze together: We shall have our little jokes like other people, and our old stories: Brandy will finish what Port began; and a month after the time you will see in some corner of a London Evening-Post, "Yester-"day died the Reverend Mr. John Gray, Senior Fel-"low of Clare-Hall, a facetious companion, and well "respected by all that knew him. His death is sup-"posed to have been occasioned by a fit of an apo-"plexy, being found fallen out of bed with his head in "the chamber-pot."

In the meanwhile, to go on with my account of new books. Montesquieu's work, which I mentioned before, is now publishing anew in 2 vols. 8vo. Have you seen old Crebillion's Catalina, a Tragedy, which has had a prodigious run at Paris? Historical truth is too much perverted in it, which is ridiculous in a story so generally known; but if you can get over this, the sentiments and versification are fine, and most of the characters (particularly the principal one) painted with great spirit.

Mr. Birch, the indefatigable, has just put out a thick octavo of original papers of Queen Elizabeth's time;

there are many curious things in it, particularly letters from Sir Robert Cecil (Salisbury) about his negociations with Henry IV. of France, the Earl of Monmouth's odd account of Queen Elizabeth's death, several peculiarities of James I. and Prince Henry, &c. and above all, an excellent account of the state of France, with characters of the king, his court, and ministry, by Sir George Carew, ambassador there. This, I think, is all new worth mentioning, that I have seen or heard of; except a Natural History of Peru, in Spanish, printed at London, by Don ------- something, a man of learning, sent thither by that court on purpose.

You ask after my chronology. It was begun, as I told you, almost two years ago, when I was in the midst of Diogenes Laertius and his Philosophers, as a proœmium to their works. My intention in forming this table was not so much for public events, though these too have a column assigned them, but rather in a literary way to compare the time of all great men, their writings and their transactions. I have brought it from the 30th Olympiad, where it begins, to the 113th; that is, 332 years *. My only modern assistants were Marsham, Dodwell, and Bentley.

* This laborious work was formed much in the manner of the President Henault's "Histoire de France." Every page consisted of nine columns; one for the Olympiad, the next for the Archons,

I have since that read Pausanias and Athenæus all through, and Æschylus again. I am now in Pindar and Lysias; for I take verse and prose together like bread and cheese.

LETTER XI.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, August 8, 1749.

I Promised Dr. Keene long since to give you an account of our magnificences here †; but the news papers and he himself in person, have got the start of my indolence, so that by this time you are well acquainted with all the events that adorned that week of wonders. Thus much I may venture to tell you, because it is probable nobody else has done it, that our friend * *'s zeal and eloquence surpassed all power of description. Vesuvio in an eruption was not more violent than his utterance, nor (since I am at my mountains) Pelion, with all its pine-trees in a storm of wind, more impetuous than his action; and yet the senate-House

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the third for the public affairs of Greece, the three next for the Philosophers, and the three last for Poets, Historians, and Orators. I do not find it carried further than the date above-mentioned.

† The Duke of Newcastle's Installation as Chancellor of the University.

still stands, and (I thank God) we are all safe and well at your service. I was ready to sink for him, and scarce dared to look about me, when I was sure it was all over; but soon found I might have spared my confusion; all people joined to applaud him. Every thing was quite right; and I dare swear not three people here but think him a model of oratory; for all the Duke's little court came with a resolution to be pleased; and when the tone was once given, the university, who ever wait for the judgment of their betters, struck into it with an admirable harmony: for the rest of the performances, they were just what they usually are. Every one, while it lasted, was very gay and very busy in the morning, and very owlish and very tipsy at night: I make no exceptions from the Chancellor to Blue-coat. Mason's Ode was the only entertainment that had any tolerable elegance; and, for my own part, I think it (with some little abatements) uncommonly well on such an occasion. Pray let me know your sentiments; for doubtless you have seen it. The author of it grows apace into my good graces, as I know him more; he is very ingenious, with great good-nature and simplicity; a little vain, but in so harmless and so comical a way, that it does not offend one at all; a little ambitious, but with all so ignorant in the world and its ways, that this does not hurt him in one's opinion; so sincere and so undisguised, that no mind, with a spark of ge-

nerosity, would ever think of hurting him, he lies so open to injury; but so indolent, that if he cannot overcome this habit, all his good qualities will signify nothing at all. After all, I like him so well, I could wish you knew him.

LETTER XII.

MR. GRAY TO HIS MOTHER.

Cambridge, Nov. 7. 1749.

THE unhappy news I have just received from you equally surprises and afflicts me *. I have lost a person I loved very much, and have been used to from my infancy; but am much more concerned for your loss, the circumstances of which I forbear to dwell upon, as you must be too sensible of them yourself; and will, I fear, more and more need a consolation that no one can give, except He who has preserved her to you so many years, and at last, when it was his pleasure, has taken her from us to himself: and perhaps, if we reflect

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* The death of his aunt, Mrs. Mary Antrobus, who died the 5th of November, and was buried in a vault in Stoke churchyard near the chancel door, in which also his mother and himself (according to the direction in his will) were afterwards buried.

upon what she felt in this life, we may look upon this as an instance of his goodness both to her, and to those that loved her. She might have languished many years before our eyes in a continual increase of pain, and totally helpless; she might have long wished to end her misery without being able to attain it; or perhaps even lost all sense, and yet continued to breathe; a sad spectacle to such as must have felt more for her than she could have done for herself. However you may deplore your own loss, yet think that she is at last easy and happy; and has now more occasion to pity us than we her. I hope, and beg, you will support yourself with that resignation we owe to him, who gave us our being for our good, and who deprives us of it for the same reason. I would have come to you directly, but you do not say whether you desire I should or not; if you do, I beg I may know it, for there is nothing to hinder me, and I am in very good health.

LETTER XIII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Stoke, August 9, 1756.

ARISTOTLE says (one may write Greek to you without scandal) that Οἱ τοποι οὐ διαλύουσι την Φιλίαν ἁπλῶς, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν· ἐὰν δὲ χρόνιος ἡ ἀπουσία γίνηται καὶ τῆς Φιλίας δοκεῖ λήθην ποιεῖν. ὅθεν ἔιρηται

Πολλὰς δὴ Φιλίας ἀπροσηγορία διέλυσεν.

But Aristotle may say whatever he pleases, I do not find myself at all the worse for it. I could indeed wish to refresh my Ἐνέργεια a little at Durham by the sight of you, but when is there a probability of my being so happy? It concerned me greatly when I heard the other day that your asthma continued at times to afflict you, and that you were often obliged to go into the country to breathe; you cannot oblige me more than by giving me an account both of the state of your body and mind: I hope the latter is able to keep you chearful and easy in spite of the frailties of its companion. As to my own, it can neither do one nor the other; and I have the mortification to find my spiritual part the most infirm thing about me. You have doubtless heard of the loss I have had in Dr. Middleton, whose house was the only easy place one could find to converse in

at Cambridge: For my part I find a friend so uncommon a thing, that I cannot help regretting even an old acquaintance, which is an indifferent likeness of it; and though I do not approve the spirit of his books, methinks 'tis pity the world should lose so rare a thing as a good writer *.

My studies cannot furnish a recommendation of many new books to you. There is a defence "de l'Esprit des Loix," by Montesquieu himself; it has some lively things in it, but is very short, and his adversary appears to be so mean a bigot that he deserved no answer. There are 3 vols. in 4to. of "Histoire du Cabinet du Roy, by Messrs. Buffons and d'Aubenton;" the first is a man of character, but I am told has hurt it by this work. It is all a sort of introduction to natural history; the weak part of it is a love of system which runs through it; the most contrary thing in the world to a science entirely grounded upon experiments, and which has nothing to do with † vivacity of imagination. However I cannot help commending the general view which he gives of the face of the earth, fol-

* Mr. Gray used to say, that good writing not only required great parts, but the very best of those parts.

† One cannot therefore help lamenting, that Mr. Gray let his imagination lie dormant so frequently, in order to apply himself to this very science.

lowed by a particular one of all the known nations, their peculiar figure and manners, which is the best epitome of geography I ever met with, and written with sense and elegance; in short, these books are well worth turning over. The Memoirs of the Abbé de Mongon, in 5 vols. are highly commended, but I have not seen them. He was engaged in several embassies to Germany, England, &c. during the course of the late war. The President Henault's "Abregè Chronologique de l'Histoire de France," I believe I have before mentioned to you as a very good book of its kind.

About this time Mr. Gray had put his last hand to his celebrated Elegy in the Country Church-yard, and had communicated it to his friend Mr. Walpole, whose good taste was too much charmed with it to suffer him to withhold the sight of it from his acquaintance; accordingly it was shewn about for some time in manuscript, (as Mr. Gray intimates in the subsequent letter to Dr. Wharton) and received with all the applause it so justly merited. Amongst the rest of the fashionable world, for to these only it was at present communicated, Lady Cobham, who now lived at the mansion-house at Stoke-Pogis, had read and admired it. She wished to be acquainted with the author; accordingly

her relation Miss Speed and Lady Schaub, then at her house, undertook to bring this about by making him the first visit. He happened to be from home, when the Ladies arrived at his Aunt's solitary mansion; and, when he returned, was surprised to find, written on one of his papers in the parlour where he usually read, the following note: "Lady Schaub's compliments to "Mr. Gray; she is sorry not to have found him at "home, to tell him that Lady Brown is very well." This necessarily obliged him to return the visit, and soon after induced him to compose a ludicrous account of this little adventure, for the amusement of the Ladies in question. He wrote it in ballad measure, and intitled it a Long Story: when it was handed about in manuscript, nothing could be more various than the opinions concerning it; by some it was thought a master-piece of original humour, by others a wild and fantastic farrago; and when it was published, the sentiments of good judges were equally divided about it. How it came to be printed I shall mention hereafter; and also inform the reader why Mr. Gray rejected it in the collection which he himself made of his Poems: In the meanwhile, as I think it ought to have a place in these Memoirs, for reasons too obvious to insist upon, I shall beg leave to preface it with my own idea of the author's peculiar vein of humour; which, with my notes on the piece itself, may

perhaps account in some sort for the variety of opinions which people of acknowledged taste have formed concerning it.

Mr. Gray had not (in my opinion) either in his conversation or writing much of what is called *pure* humour; it was always so much blended either with wit, fancy, or his own peculiar character, that it became equivocal, and hence not adapted to please generally: It had more of the manner of Congreve than Addison; and we know where one person relishes my Lady Wishfort, there are thousands that admire Sir Roger de Coverley: It will not however from hence follow, that Lady Wishfort is ill drawn; for my own part I think it one of the most entertaining characters that ever was written. I know, however, that it is commonly thought extravagant and unnatural; and I believe it is true, that no woman ever existed who had so much folly and affectation, and at the same time so much wit and fancy; yet every one sees that were this fancy and wit taken away, her character would become insipid, in proportion as it became more natural; so that, in this and other instances, *if Congreve's fools were fools indeed,* they would, by being *true* characters, cease to be *entertaining* ones. It may be further observed on the subject of humour, that it may and ought to be divided into several species: there is one sort, that of

Terence's, which simply pleases without forcing a smile; another, like Mr. Addison's, which not only pleases, but makes us smile into the bargain. Shakespeare's, Swift's, Congreve's, and Prior's usually goes further, and makes us laugh: I infer not from hence that this latter sort is the best: I only assert, that howsoever it may be mixt with other ingredients, it ought also to be called Humour. The critic, however, who judges by rule, and who will not be pleased unless legitimately, will be apt to condemn this species of mixt humour; and the common reader will not always have either wit or imagination enough to comprehend or taste it. But I have said Mr. Gray not only mixed wit and fancy with his humour, but also his own particular character; and being naturally delicate, and at times even fastidious, his humour generally took the same cast; and would therefore be only relished by such of his friends, as, conscious of his superior excellencies, thought this defect not only pardonable but entertaining, which a character of this sort (being humorous in itself) always is, when it is not carried to any offensive extreme. Yet, as this observation relates only to his conversation and familiar letters, (for to these only it can be applied) I have no occasion to insist on it further; and shall only add, that whatever the generality of readers may think of Mr. Gray's talent in this way, there will always be some, and those

far from the lowest class, to whom it will appear excellent: for humour may be true, when it ceases to be pure or unmixt, if the ingredients which go to its composition be true also. False wit and a wild fancy would debase the best humour in the world, as they frequently do in Rabelais and Sterne (without taking more exceptionable matters into consideration); but when genuine, they serve to heighten and embellish it.

A LONG STORY.

IN Britain's isle, no matter where,
* An ancient pile of building stands:
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employ'd the pow'r of Fairy hands
  To raise the ceiling's fretted height,
Each pannel in achievements cloathing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages, that lead to nothing.

---

* The mansion-house at Stoke-Pogis, then in the possession of Viscountess Cobham. The style of building, which we now call Queen Elizabeth's, is here admirably described, both with regard to its beauties and defects; and the third and fourth stanzas delineate the fantastic manners of her time with equal truth and humour. The house formerly belonged to the Earls of Huntingdon and the family of Hatton.

Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
* My grave Lord-Keeper led the brawls;
The seal and maces danc'd before him.
His bushy beard, and shoe-strings green,
His high-crown'd hat, and satin doublet,
Mov'd the stout heart of England's Queen,
Though Pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.
What, in the very first beginning!
Shame of the versifying tribe!
Your hist'ry whither are you spinning!
Can you do nothing but describe?
A house there is (and that's enough)
From whence one fatal morning issues
† A brace of warriors, not in buff,
But rustling in their silks and tissues.
The first came cap-a-pee from France,
Her conqu'ring destiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye askance,
And vainly ape her art of killing.

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* Sir Christopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful person and fine dancing. G.—Brawls were a sort of figure-dance, then in vogue, and probably deemed as elegant as our modern Cotillions, or still more modern Quadrilles.

† The reader is already apprized who these Ladies were; the two descriptions are prettily contrasted; and nothing can be more happily turned than the compliment to Lady Cobham in the eighth stanza.

The other Amazon kind heav'n
Had arm'd with spirit, wit, and satire:
But Cobham had the polish giv'n,
And tip'd her arrows with good-nature.
To celebrate her eyes, her air------
Coarse panegyrics would but teaze her.
Melissa is her *Nom de Guerre.*
Alas, who would not wish to please her!
With bonnet blue and capuchine,
And aprons long they hid their armour,
And veil'd their weapons bright and keen
In pity to the country farmer.
Fame in the shape of * Mr. P---t
(By this time all the parish know it)
Had told, that thereabouts there lurk'd
A wicked Imp they call a Poet:
Who prowl'd the country far and near,
Bewitch'd the children of the peasants,
Dried up the cows, and lam'd the deer,
And suck'd the eggs, and kill'd the pheasants.
My Lady heard their joint petition,
Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd issue out her high commission
To rid the manor of such vermin.

* I have been told that this Gentleman, a neighbour and acquaintance of Mr. Gray's in the country, was much displeased at the liberty here taken with his name; yet, surely, without any great reason.

The Heroines undertook the task,
Thro' lanes unknown, o'er stiles they ventur'd,
Rap'd at the door, nor stay'd to ask,
But bounce into the parlour enter'd.
The trembling family they daunt,
They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they tattle,
Rummage his Mother, pinch his Aunt,
And up stairs in a whirlwind rattle.
Each hole and cupboard they explore,
Each creek and cranny of his chamber,
Run hurry-skurry round the floor,
And o'er the bed and tester clamber;
Into the drawers and china pry,
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio!
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
Or creased, like dogs-ears, in a folio.
On the first marching of the troops,
The Muses, hopeless of his pardon,
Convey'd him underneath their hoops,
To a small closet in the garden.
So Rumor says: (Who will, believe.)
But that they left the door a-jar,
Where, safe and laughing in his sleeve,
He heard the distant din of war.
Short was his joy. He little knew
The pow'r of Magic was no fable;

Out of the window, whisk, they flew,
* But left a spell upon the table.
The words too eager to unriddle,
The Poet felt a strange disorder:
Transparent bird-lime form'd the middle,
And chains invisible the border.
So cunning was the Apparatus,
The powerful pot-hooks did so move him,
That, will he, nill he, to the Great-house
He went, as if the Devil drove him.

---

* Fancy is here so much blended with the humour, that I believe the two stanzas which succeed this line, are among those which are the least relished by the generality. The description of the spell, I know, has appeared to many persons absolutely unintelligible; yet if the reader adverts to that peculiar idea which runs through the whole, I imagine the obscurity complained of will be removed. An incident, we see, so slight as the simple matter of fact, required something like machinery to enliven it: Accordingly the author chose, with propriety enough, to employ for that purpose those notions of witchcraft, ghosts, and enchantment, which prevailed at the time when the mansion-house was built. He describes himself as a dæmon of the lowest class, *a wicked imp who lamed the deer*, &c. against whose malevolent power Lady Cobham (the Gloriana of the piece) employs two superior enchantresses. Congruity of imagery, therefore, required the card they left upon the table to be converted into a spell. Now all the old writers, on these subjects, are very minute in describing the materials of such talismans. Hence, therefore, his grotesque idea of a composition of transparent bird-lime, edged with invisible chains, in order to catch and draw him to the tribunal. Without going further for examples of this kind of imagery than the Poet's own works, let

* Yet on his way (no sign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phœbus he prefer'd his case,
And beg'd his aid that dreadful day.
The Godhead wou'd have back'd his quarrel;
Bnt with a blush on recollection;
Own'd, that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.
The court was sate, the Culprit there,
Forth from their gloomy mansions creeping
† The Lady Janes and Joans repair,
And from the gallery stand peeping:

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me instance two passages of the serious kind, similar to this ludicrous one. In his Ode, intitled the Bard,

"Above, below, the rose of snow," &c.

And, again, in the Fatal Sisters,

"See the griesly texture grow."

It must, however, be allowed, that no person can fully relish this burlesque, who is not much conversant with the old romance-writers, and with the Poets who formed themselves on their model.

* The humour of this and the following stanza is more pure, and consequently more obvious. It might have been written by Prior, and the wit at the end is much in his best manner.

† Here Fancy is again uppermost, and soars as high on her comic, as on another occasion she does on her lyric wing: For now a Chorus of ghostly old women of quality come to give sentence on the culprit Poet, just as the spirits of Cadwallo, Urien, and Hoel join the Bard in dreadful symphony to denounce vengeance on Edward I. The route of Fancy, we see, is the same both on the humorous and sublime occasion. No wonder, therefore, if either of them should fail of being generally tasted.

Such as in silence of the night
Come (sweep) along some winding entry,
* (Styack has often seen the sight)
Or at the chapel-door stand centry:
† In peaked hoods and mantles tarnish'd,
Sour visages, enough to scare ye,
High dames of honour once, that garnish'd
The drawing-room of fierce Queen Mary.
The Peeress comes. The audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission:
She curtsies, as she takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.
The Bard, with many an artful fib,
Had in imagination fenc'd him,
Disprov'd the arguments of ‡ Squib,
And all that § Groom could urge against him.
But soon his rhetorick forsook him,
When he the solemn hall had seen;
A sudden fit of ague shook him,
He stood as mute as poor ‖ Macleane.

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* The House-Keeper. G.

† The description is here excellent, and I should think would please universally.

‡ Groom of the Chamber. G.

§ The Steward. G.

‖ A famous highwayman hanged the week before. G.—This stanza is of the sort where wit rather than fancy prevails, consequently much in Prior's manner.

Yet something he was heard to mutter,
" How in the Park beneath an old tree
" (Without design to hurt the butter,
" Or any malice to the poultry,)
" He once or twice had pen'd a sonnet;
" Yet hop'd, that he might save his bacon:
" Numbers would give their oaths upon it,
" He ne'er was for a conj'rer taken."
The ghostly prudes with * hagged face
Already had condemn'd the sinner.
My Lady rose, and with a grace——
† She smil'd, and bid him come to dinner.
" Jesu-Maria! Madam Bridget,
" Why, what can the Viscountess mean?
(Cried the square-hoods in woeful fidget)
" The times are alter'd quite and clean!

---

* Hagged, *i. e.* the face of a witch or Hag; the epithet Hagârd has been sometimes mistaken, as conveying the same idea; but it means a very different thing, viz. wild and farouche, and is taken from an unreclaimed hawk, called an Hagard; in which its proper sense the Poet uses it finely on a sublime occasion:

Cloath'd in the sable garb of woe,
With hagard eyes the Poet stood.

Vide Ode 6th.

† Here the story finishes; the exclamation of the Ghosts which follows is characteristic of the Spanish manners of the age, when they are supposed to have lived; and the 500 stanzas, said to be lost, may be imagined to contain the remainder of their long-winded expostulation.

" Decorum's turn'd to mere civility;
" Her air and all her manners shew it.
" Commend me to her affability!
" Speak to a Commoner and Poet!"
[*Here 500 Stanzas are lost.*]
And so God save our noble King,
And guard us from long-winded Lubbers,
That to eternity would sing,
And keep my Lady from her Rubbers.

LETTER XIV.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Dec. 17, 1750.

OF my house I cannot say much †, I wish I could; but for my heart it is no less yours than it has long been; and the last thing in the world that will throw it into tumults is a fine Lady. The verses, you so kindly try to keep in countenance, were written merely to divert Lady Cobham and her family, and succeeded accordingly; but being shewed about in town are not liked there at all. Mrs. *, a very fashionable per-

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† The house he was rebuilding in Cornhill. See Letter VII. of this Section.

sonage, told Mr. Walpole that she had seen a thing by a friend of his which she did not know what to make of, for it aimed at every thing, and meant nothing; to which he replied, that he had always taken her for a woman of sense, and was very sorry to be undeceived. On the other hand, the stanzas * which I now inclose to you have had the misfortune, by Mr. Walpole's fault, to be made still more public, for which they certainly were never meant; but it is too late to complain. They have been so applauded, it is quite a shame to repeat it: I mean not to be modest; but it is a shame for those who have said such superlative things about them, that I cannot repeat them. I should have been glad that you and two or three more people had liked them, which would have satisfied my ambition on this head amply. I have been this month in town, not at Newcastle-House; but diverting myself among my gay acquaintance, and return to my cell with so much the more pleasure. I dare not speak of my future excursion to Durham for fear of a disappointment, but at present it is my full intention.

* Elegy in a Country Church-Yard.

LETTER XV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

Cambridge, Feb. 11, 1751.

As you have brought me into a little sort of distress, you must assist me, I believe, to get out of it as well as I can. Yesterday I had the misfortune of receiving a letter from certain gentlemen (as their bookseller expresses it), who have taken the Magazine of Magazines into their hands: They tell me that an *ingenious* Poem, called reflections in a Country Church-Yard, has been communicated to them, which they are printing forthwith; that they are informed that the *excellent* author of it is I by name, and that they beg not only his *indulgence,* but the *honour* of his correspondence, &c. As I am not at all disposed to be either so indulgent, or so correspondent, as they desire, I have but one bad way left to escape the honour they would inflict upon me; and therefore am obliged to desire you would make Dodsley print it immediately (which may be done in less than a week's time) from your copy, but without my name, in what form is most convenient for him, but on his best paper and character; he must correct the press himself, and print it without

any interval between the stanzas, because the sense is in some places continued beyond them; and the title must be,---Elegy, written in a Country Church-Yard. If he would add a line or two to say it came into his hands by accident, I should like it better. If you behold the Magazine of Magazines in the light that I do, you will not refuse to give yourself this trouble on my account, which you have taken of your own accord before now. If Dodsley do not do this immediately, he may as well let it alone.

LETTER XVI.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Dec. 19, 1752.

HAVE you read Madame de Maintenon's letters? They are undoubtedly genuine; they begin very early in her life, before she married Scarron, and continue after the king's death to within a little while of her own: they bear all the marks of a noble spirit (in her adversity particularly) of virtue and unaffected devotion; insomuch, that I am almost persuaded she was actually married to Lewis the XIV. and never his

Mistress: and this not out of any policy or ambition, but conscience: for she was what we should call a bigot, yet with great good sense: In short, she was too good for a court. Misfortunes in the beginning of her life had formed her mind (naturally lively and impatient) to reflection and a habit of piety. She was always miserable while she had the care of Madame de Montespan's children; timid and very cautious of making use of that unlimited power she rose to afterwards, for fear of trespassing on the king's friendship for her; and after his death not at all afraid of meeting her own.

I do not know what to say to you with regard to Racine; it sounds to me as if any body should fall upon Shakespeare, who indeed lies infinitely more open to criticism of all kinds; but I should not care to be the person that undertook it. If you do not like Athaliah or Britannicus, there is no more to be said. I have done.

Bishop Hall's satires, called Virgidemiæ, are lately republished. They are full of spirit and poetry; as much of the first as Dr. Donne, and far more of the latter: they were written at the university when he was about twenty-three years old, and in Queen Elizabeth's time.

You do not say whether you have read the Crito *. I only recommend the dramatic part of the Phædo to you, not the argumentative. The subject of the Erastæ is good: it treats of that peculiar character and turn of mind which belongs to a true philosopher, but it is shorter than one would wish. The Euthyphro I would not read at all.

LETTER XVII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. WALPOLE.

Stoke, Jan. 1753.

I Am at present at Stoke, to which place I came at half an hour's warning upon the news I received of my mother's illness, and did not expect to have found her alive, but when I arrived she was much better, and continues so. I shall therefore be very glad to make you a visit at Strawberry-Hill, whenever you give me notice of a convenient time. I am surprised at the print †, which far surpasses my idea of London

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* Of Plato.

† A proof print of the Cul de Lampe, which Mr. Bentley designed for the Elegy in a country church-yard, and which represents a village-funeral; this occasioned the pleasant mistake of his

graving: The drawing itself was so finished, that I suppose it did not require all the art I had imagined to copy it tolerably. My aunts seeing me open your letter, took it to be a burying-ticket, and asked whether any body had left me a ring; and so they still conceive it to be, even with all their spectacles on. Heaven forbid they should suspect it to belong to any verses of mine, they would burn me for a poet. On my own part I am satisfied, if this design of yours succeed so well as you intend it; and yet I know it will be accompanied with something not at all agreeable to me. ---While I write this, I receive your second letter.--- Sure, you are not out of your wits! This I know, if you suffer my head to be printed, you will infallibly put me out of mine. I conjure you immediately to put a stop to any such design. Who is at the expense of engraving it, I know not; but if it be Dodsley, I will make up the loss to him. The thing as it was, I know, will make me ridiculous enough; but to appear in proper person, at the head of my works, con-

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two aunts. The remainder of the letter relates entirely to the projected publication of Mr. Bentley's designs, which were printed after by Dodsley this same year. The latter part of it, where he so vehemently declares against having his head prefixt to that work, will appear highly characteristical to those readers, who were personally acquainted with Mr. Gray. The print, which was taken from an original picture, painted by Echart, in Mr. Walpole's possession, was actually more than half engraved; but afterwards on this account suppressed.

sisting of half a dozen ballads in thirty pages, would be worse than the pillory. I do assure you, if I had received such a book, with such a frontispiece, without any warning, I believe it would have given me a palsy: Therefore I rejoice to have received this notice, and shall not be easy till you tell me all thoughts of it are laid aside. I am extremely in earnest, and cannot bear even the idea.

I had written to Dodsley if I had not received yours, to tell him how little I liked the title which he meant to prefix; but your letter has put all that out of my head. If you think it necessary to print these explanations * for the use of people that have no eyes, I should be glad they were a little altered. I am, to my shame, in your debt for a long letter; but I cannot think of any thing else till you have set me at ease on this matter.

While Mr. Bentley was employed in making the Designs mentioned in the preceding letter, Mr. Gray, who greatly admired not only the elegance of his fancy, but also the neatness as well as facility of his execution,

* See the above-mentioned Designs, where the explanations here alluded to are inserted.

began a complimentary poem to him, which I shall now insert. Many readers will perhaps think the panegyric carried too far; as I own I did when he first shewed it me: Yet it is but justice to declare, that the original drawings, now in Mr. Walpole's possession, which I have since seen, are so infinitely superior to the published engravings of them, that a person, who has only seen the latter, can by no means judge of the excellencies of the former: Besides, there is so much of grotesque fancy in the Designs themselves, that it can be no great matter of wonder (even if the engravers had done justice to them) that they failed to please universally. What I have said in defence of the Long Story might easily be applied to these productions of the sister art: But not to detain the reader from the perusal of a fragment, many stanzas of which are equal in poetical merit to the best in his most finished poems, I shall here only add, that it was for the sake of the Design which Mr. Bentley made for the Long Story, that Mr. Gray permitted it to be printed; yet not without clearly foreseeing that he risked somewhat by the publication of it, as he intimates in the preceding letter: and indeed the event shewed his judgment to be true in this particular, as it proved the least popular of all his productions.

STANZAS TO MR. BENTLEY.

IN silent gaze the tuneful choir among,
Half pleas'd, half blushing let the muse admire,
While Bentley leads her sister-art along,
And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.
See, in their course, each transitory thought
Fix'd by his touch a lasting essence take;
Each dream, in fancy's airy colouring wrought,
To local symmetry and life awake!
The tardy rhymes that us'd to linger on,
To censure cold, and negligent of fame,
In swifter measures animated run,
And catch a lustre from his genuine flame.
Ah! could they catch his strength, his easy grace,
His quick creation, his unerring line;
The energy of Pope they might efface,
And Dryden's harmony submit to mine.
But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration giv'n,
That burns in Shakespeare's or in Milton's page,
The pomp and prodigality of heav'n.

As when conspiring in the diamond's blaze,
  The meaner gems, that singly charm the sight,
Together dart their intermingled rays,
  And dazzle with a luxury of light.
* Enough for me, if to some feeling breast
  My lines a secret sympathy *impart;*
And as their pleasing influence *flows confest,*
  A sigh of soft reflection *heave the heart.*

* * * *

In the March following Mr. Gray lost that Mother for whom, on all occasions, we have seen he shewed so tender a regard. She was buried in the same vault where her sister's remains had been deposited more than three years before. As the inscription on the tomb-stone (at least the latter part of it) is undoubtedly of Mr. Gray's writing, it here would claim a place, even if it had not a peculiar pathos to recommend it, and, at the same time, a true inscriptive simplicity.

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* A corner of the only manuscript copy, which Mr. Gray left of this fragment, is unfortunately torn; and though I have endeavoured to supply the chasm, I am not quite satisfied with the words which I have inserted in the third line. I print my additions in italics, and shall be much pleased if any reader finds a better supplement to this imperfect stanza.

IN THE VAULT BENEATH ARE DEPOSITED,
IN HOPE OF A JOYFUL RESURRECTION,
THE REMAINS OF
MARY ANTROBUS.
SHE DIED, UNMARRIED, NOV. V. MDCCXLIX.
AGED LXVI.
IN THE SAME PIOUS CONFIDENCE,
BESIDE HER FRIEND AND SISTER,
HERE SLEEP THE REMAINS OF
DOROTHY GRAY,
WIDOW, THE CAREFUL TENDER MOTHER
OF MANY CHILDREN, ONE OF WHOM ALONE
HAD THE MISFORTUNE TO SURVIVE HER.
SHE DIED MARCH XI. MDCCLIII.
AGED LXVII.

LETTER XVIII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Durham, Dec. 26, 1753.

A Little while before I received your melancholy letter, I had been informed by Mr. Charles Avison of one of the sad events you mention *. I know what it is to lose persons that one's eyes and heart have long

* The death of my Father, and of Dr. Marmaduke Pricket, a young Physician of my own age, with whom I was brought up from infancy, who died of the same infectious fever.

been used to; and I never desire to part with the remembrance of that loss, nor would wish you should. It is something that you had a little time to acquaint yourself with the idea before-hand; and that your Father suffered but little pain, the only thing that makes death terrible. After I have said this, I cannot help expressing my surprise at the disposition he has made of his affairs. I must (if you will suffer me to say so) call it great weakness; and yet perhaps your affliction for him is heightened by that very weakness; for I know it is possible to feel an additional sorrow for the faults of those we have loved, even where that fault has been greatly injurious to ourselves.—Let me desire you not to expose yourself to any further danger in the midst of that scene of sickness and death; but withdraw as soon as possible to some place at a little distance in the country; for I do not, in the least, like the situation you are in. I do not attempt to console you on the situation your fortune is left in; if it were far worse, the good opinion I have of you tells me, you will never the sooner do any thing mean or unworthy of yourself; and consequently I cannot pity you on this account, but I sincerely do on the new loss you have had of a good and friendly man, whose memory I honour. I have seen the scene you describe, and know how dreadful it is: I know too I am the better for it. We are all idle and thoughtless

things, and have no sense, no use in the world any longer than that sad impression lasts; the deeper it is engraved the better.

LETTER XIX.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Stoke, Sept. 18, 1754.

I Am glad you enter into the spirit of Strawberry-Castle; it has a purity and propriety of Gothicism in it (with very few exceptions) that I have not seen elsewhere. My Lord Radnor's vagaries I see did not keep you from doing justice to his situation, which far surpasses every thing near it; and I do not know a more laughing scene than that about Twickenham and Richmond. Dr. Akenside, I perceive, is no conjurer in architecture; especially when he talks of the ruins of Persepolis, which are no more Gothic than they are Chinese. The Egyptian style (see Dr. Pococke, not his discourses, but his prints) was apparently the mother of the Greek; and there is such a similitude between the Egyptian and those Persian ruins, as gave Diodorus room to affirm, that the old buildings of Persia were certainly performed by Egyptian artists: As

to the other part of your friend's opinion, that the Gothic manner is the Saracen or Moorish, he has a great authority to support him, that of Sir ChristopherWren; and yet I cannot help thinking it undoubtedly wrong. The palaces in Spain I never saw but in description, which gives us little or no idea of things; but the Doge's palace at Venice I have seen, which is in the Arabesque manner: And the houses of Barbary you may see in Dr. Shaw's book, not to mention abundance of other Eastern buildings in Turkey, Persia, &c. that we have views of; and they seem plainly to be corruptions of the Greek architecture, broke into little parts indeed, and covered with little ornaments, but in a taste very distinguishable from that which we call Gothic. There is one thing that runs through the Moorish buildings that an imitator would certainly have been first struck with, and would have tried to copy; and that is the cupolas which cover every thing, baths, apartments, and even kitchens; yet who ever saw a Gothic cupola? It is a thing plainly of Greek original. I do not see any thing but the slender spires that serve for steeples, which may perhaps be borrowed from the Saracen minarets on their mosques.

I take it ill you should say any thing against the Mole, it is a reflexion I see cast at the Thames. Do you think that rivers, which have lived in London and

its neighbourhood all their days, will run roaring and tumbling about like your tramontane torrents in the North? No, they only glide and whisper.

LETTER XX.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, March 9, 1755.

I Do not pretend to humble any one's pride; I love my own too well to attempt it. As to mortifying their vanity, it is too easy and too mean a task for me to delight in. You are very good in shewing so much sensibility on my account; but be assured my taste for praise is not like that of children for fruit; if there were nothing but medlars and black-berries in the world, I could be very well content to go without any at all. I dare say that Mason, though some years younger than I, was as little elevated with the approbation of Lord * and Lord *, as I am mortified by their silence.

With regard to publishing, I am not so much against the thing itself, as of publishing this Ode alone *. I

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* His Ode on the Progress of Poetry.

have two or three ideas more in my head; what is to come of them? Must they too come out in the shape of little sixpenny flams, dropping one after another till Mr. Dodsley thinks fit to collect them with Mr. This's Song, and Mr. Tother's Epigram, into a pretty volume? I am sure Mason must be sensible of this, and therefore cannot mean what he says; neither am I quite of your opinion with regard to strophe and antistrophe *; setting aside the difficulty of execution, methinks it has little or no effect on the ear, which scarce perceives the regular return of metres at so great a distance from one another: to make it succeed, I am persuaded the stanzas must not consist of above

* He often made the same remark to me in conversation, which led me to form the last Ode of Caractacus in shorter stanzas: But we must not imagine that he thought the regular Pindaric method without its use; though, as he justly says, when formed in long stanzas, it does not fully succeed in point of effect on the ear: For there was nothing which he more disliked than that chain of irregular stanzas which Cowley introduced, and falsely called Pindaric; and which, from the extreme facility of execution, produced a number of miserable imitators. Had the regular return of Strophe, Antistrophe, and Epode no other merit than that of extreme difficulty, it ought, on this very account, to be valued; because we well know that "Easy writing is no easy reading." It is also to be remarked, that Mr. Congreve, who (though without any lyrical powers) first introduced the regular Pindaric form into the English language, made use of the short stanzas which Mr. Gray here recommends.-----See his Ode to the Queen: Works, vol. III. p. 438, Ed. Birm.

nine lines each at the most. Pindar has several such Odes.

Mr. Gray intimates, in the foregoing letter, that he had two or three more lyrical ideas in his head: One of these was the BARD, the exordium of which was at this time finished; I say finished, because his conceptions, as well as his manner of disposing them, were so singularly exact, that he had seldom occasion to make many, except verbal emendations, after he had first committed his lines to paper. It was never his method to sketch his general design in careless verse*; he

* I have many of his critical letters by me on my own compositions: Letters which, though they would not much amuse the public in general, contain excellent lessons for young poets; from one of these I extract the following passage, which seems to explain this matter more fully: "Extreme conciseness of expression, yet "pure, perspicuous, and musical, is one of the grand beauties of "lyric poetry: This I have always aimed at, and never could at-"tain. The necessity of rhyming is one great obstacle to it: An-"other, and perhaps a stronger, is that way you have chosen, of "casting down your first thoughts carelessly and at large, and then "clipping them here and there at leisure. This method, after all "possible pains, will leave behind it a laxity, a diffuseness. The "frame of a thought, (otherwise well-invented, well-turned, and "well-placed) is often weakened by it. Do I talk nonsense? Or "do you understand me? I am persuaded what I say is true in "my head, whatever it may be in prose; for I do not pretend to "write prose." Nothing can be more just than this remark: Yet, as I say above, it is a mode of writing which is only calculated for

always finished as he proceeded; this, though it made his execution slow, made his compositions more perfect. I think, however, that this method was only calculated to produce such short works as generally employed his poetical pen; and that from pursuing it, he grew tired of his larger designs before he had completed them. The fact seems to justify my opinion. But my principal reason for mentioning this at present, is to explain the cause why I have not been scrupulous in publishing so many of his fragments in the course

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smaller compositions: But Mr. Gray, though he applied it here to an Ode, was apt to think it a general rule. Now if an epic or dramatic poet were to resolve to finish every part of his work as highly as we have seen Mr. Gray laboured his first scene of Agrippina, I am apt to think he would tire of it as soon as our Author did; for in the course of so multifarious a work, he would find himself obliged to expunge some of the best written parts, in order to preserve the unity of the whole. I know only one way to prevent this, and that was the method which Racine followed; who (as his son tells us, in that amusing life, though much zested with bigotry, which he has given us of his father) when he began a drama, disposed every part of it accurately in prose; and when he had connected all the scenes together, used to say, " Ma Tragedie " est faite." (See La Vie de Jean Racine, p. 117. See also his son's other works, tom. 2d, for a specimen in the first act of the Iphigenia in Tauris.) M. Racine, it seems, was an easy versifier in a language in which, they say, it is more difficult than in ours to versify. It certainly is so with regard to dramatic compositions. I am on this account persuaded, that if the great Poet had written in English, he would have drawn out his first sketches, not in prose, but in careless blank verse; yet this I give as mere matter of opinion.

of these Memoirs. It would have been unpardonable in me to have taken this liberty with a deceased friend, had I not found his lines, as far as they went, nearly as high finished as they would have been, when completed: if I am mistaken in this, I hope the reader will rather impute it to a defect in my own Judgment, than a want of respect to Mr. Gray's Memory.

This consideration, however, emboldens me to print the following fragment of an Ode in this place, which was unquestionably another of the ideas alluded to in the preceding letter: Since I find in his memorandum-book, of the preceding year 1754, a sketch of his design as follows: " Contrast between the winter past " and coming spring.---Joy owing to that vicissitude.--- " Many who never feel that delight.---Sloth.---Envy. " ---Ambition. How much happier the rustic who " feels it, though he knows not how." I print this careless note, in order that the reader may conceive the intended argument of the whole; who, I doubt not, will, on perusing the following beautiful stanzas, lament with me that he left it incomplete; nor will it console him for the loss, if I tell him that I have had the boldness to attempt to finish it myself, making use of some other lines and broken stanzas which he had written: But as my aim in undertaking this difficult task was merely to elucidate the Poet's general meaning, I did

not think that my additions were worthy to be inserted in this place; they have found a more fit situation by being thrown amongst those notes which I have put at the end of his Poems.

O D E.

NOW the golden Morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing,
With vermil cheek, and whisper soft
She wooes the tardy Spring:
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground;
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest, tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
Frisking ply their feeble feet;
Forgetful of their wintry trance
The birds his presence greet:
But chief, the Sky-Lark warbles high
His trembling thrilling extacy;
And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;

Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by:
Their raptures now that wildly flow,
No yesterday, nor morrow know;
'Tis man alone that joy descries
With forward, and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past Misfortune's brow,
Soft Reflection's hand can trace;
And o'er the cheek of Sorrow throw
A melancholy grace:
While hope prolongs our happier hour;
Or deepest shades, that dimly lower
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still, where rosy Pleasure leads,
See a kindred Grief pursue;
Behind the steps that Misery treads
Approaching Comfort view:
The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
Chastis'd by sabler tints of woe;
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the Wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of pain,

At length repair his vigour lost,
And breathe, and walk again:
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To Him are opening Paradise.

* * * * * * *

A third of these ideas I find in his common-place book, on the same page with his argument for the BARD*. I do not believe that he ever even began to compose the Ode itself; but the thought is as follows:

"All that men of power can do for men of genius is "to leave them at their liberty, compared to birds that, "when confined to a cage, do but regret the loss of "their freedom in melancholy strains, and lose the "luscious wildness and happy luxuriance of their notes, "which used to make the woods resound."

Those, who are conversant in the arrangement of a lyrical composition, will easily perceive, from this short argument, that the Ode would have opened with the simile; which, when adorned with those *thoughts that breathe and words that burn,* that Mr. Gray's muse could so richly supply, would have been at once a fine

* I have inserted this, with some remarks upon it, in my additional notes to his Poems.

exordium, and at the same time a natural introduction to the truth he meant to impress. This, however, could hardly have been done without some little aid borrowed from satire: For however true his proposition may be, that " all that men of power can do for men of genius is to leave them at liberty;" or, as I should put it, " that their best patronage signifies nothing if it abridges them of that liberty;" yet the fact is, that neither of the parties are convinced of this truth till they have tried the experiment, and find some reason or other (no matter whether good or bad) to think they had better never have tried it. Mons. d'Alembert, who has written an excellent essay on this subject, which Mr. Gray greatly admired, and which perhaps gave him the first idea of this intended Ode, puts one of the more common of these reasons in so lively a manner, that it may not be amiss here to insert it.

" Parmi les grands Seigneurs les plus affables il en
" est peu qui se depouillent avec des Gens de lettres de
" leur grandeur, vraie ou pretendue, jusqu' au point de
" l'oublier tout-a-fait. C'est ce qu'on apperçoit sur
" tout dans les conversations, où l'on n'est pas de leur
" avis. Il semble qu'a mesure que l'Homme d'Esprit
" s'eclipse, l'Homme de Qualité se montre; et paroisse
" exiger la deference dont l'Homme d'Esprit avoit
" commencè par dispenser. Aussi le commerce intime

" des Grands avec les Gens de lettres ne finit que trop
" souvent par quelque rupture eclatante; rupture qui
" vient presque toujours de l'oubli des regards recipro-
" ques auxquelles on a manquè de part ou d'autre, peut
" etre même des deux côtés *." However, I think a man of letters ought to have other reasons besides this for breaking such a connection after it has been once formed.

I have now given the reader the best account in my power of what our Author's unfinished lyrical ideas consisted: I believe they are all that he in any sort committed to paper, and probably those which he immediately alluded to in the preceding letter.

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* Essai sur la Societé des Grands, avec les Gens de Lettres; " Melanges de Litterature & Philosophie," tom. 2d, p. 134.

LETTER XXI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. STONHEWER.*

August 21, 1755.

I Thank you for your intelligence about Herculaneum, which was the first news I received of it. I have since turned over Monsignor Baiardi's book †, where I have learned how many grains of modern wheat the Roman Congius, in the Capitol, holds, and how many thousandth parts of an inch the Greek foot consisted of more (or less, for I forgot which) than our own. He proves also by many affecting examples, that an Antiquary may be mistaken: That, for any thing any body knows, this place under ground might be some other place, and not Herculaneum; but nevertheless, that he can shew for certain, that it was this place and no other place; that it is hard to say which of the several Hercules's was the founder;

* Now Auditor of Excise. His friendship with Mr. Gray commenced at College, and continued till the death of the latter.

† I believe the book here ridiculed was published by the Authority of the King of Naples. But afterwards, on finding how ill qualified the Author was to execute the task, the business of describing the Antiquities found at Herculaneum was put into other hands; who have certainly, as far as they have gone, performed it much better.

therefore (in the third volume) he promises to give us the memoirs of them all; and after that, if we do not know what to think of the matter, he will tell us. There is a great deal of wit too, and satire and verses, in the book, which is intended chiefly for the information of the French King, who will be greatly edified without doubt.

I am much obliged to you also for Voltaire's performance; it is very unequal, as he is apt to be in all but his dramas, and looks like the work of a man that will admire his retreat and his Leman-Lake no longer than till he finds an opportunity to leave it *: However, though there be many parts which I do not like, yet it is in several places excellent, and every where above mediocrity. As you have the politeness to pretend impatience, and desire I would communicate, and all that, I annex a piece of the Prophecy †; which must be true at least, as it was wrote so many hundred years after the events.

* I do not recollect the title of this Poem, but it was a small one which M. de Voltaire wrote when he first settled at Ferney. By the long residence he has since made there, it appears either that our Author was mistaken in his conjecture, or that an opportunity of leaving it had not yet happened.

† The second Antistrophe and Epode, with a few lines of the third Strophe of his Ode, entitled the Bard, were here inserted.

LETTER XXII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Pembroke-Hall, March 25, 1756.

THOUGH I had no reasonable excuse for myself before I received your last Letter, yet since that time I have had a pretty good one; having been taken up in quarrelling with Peter-house *, and in removing myself from thence to Pembroke. This may be looked upon as a sort of æra in a life so barren of events as mine; yet I shall treat it in Voltaire's manner, and only tell you that I left my Lodgings because the rooms were noisy, and the people of the house uncivil. This is all I would chuse to have said about it; but if you in private should be curious enough to enter into a par-

* The reason of Mr. Gray's changing his College, which is here only glanced at, was in few words this: Two or three young Men of Fortune, who lived in the same staircase, had for some time intentionally disturbed him with their riots, and carried their ill behaviour so far as frequently to awaken him at midnight. After having borne with their insults longer than might reasonably have been expected even from a man of less warmth of temper, Mr. Gray complained to the Governing part of the Society; and not thinking that his remonstrance was sufficiently attended to, quitted the College. The slight manner in which he mentions this affair, when writing to one of his most intimate friends, certainly does honour to the placability of his disposition.

ticular detail of facts and minute circumstances, the Bearer, who was witness to them, will probably satisfy you. All I shall say more is, that I am for the present extremely well lodged here, and as quiet as in the Grand Chartreuse; and that every body (even Dr. Long himself) are as civil as they could be to * Mary of Valens in person.

With regard to any advice I can give you about your being Physician to the Hospital, I frankly own it ought to give way to a much better judge, especially so disinterested a one as Dr. Heberden. I love refusals no more than you do. But as to your fears of Effluvia, I maintain that one sick rich patient has more of pestilence and putrefaction about him than a whole ward of sick poor.

The similitude between the Italian Republics and those of Antient Greece has often struck me, as it does you. I do not wonder that Sully's Memoirs have highly entertained you; but cannot agree with you in thinking Him or his Master two of the best men in the world. The King was indeed one of the best-natured men that ever lived; but it is owing only to chance that his intended marriage with Madame d'Estreés, or with

* Foundress of the College.

the Marquise de Verneuil, did not involve him and the kingdom in the most inextricable confusion; and his design upon the Princess of Condé (in his old age) was worse still. As to the Minister, his base application to Concini, after the murder of Henry, has quite ruined him in my esteem, and destroyed all the merit of that honest surly pride for which I honoured him before; yet I own that, as Kings and Ministers go, they were both extraordinary men. Pray look at the end of Birch's State Papers of Sir J. Edmonds, for the character of the French Court at that time; it is written by Sir George Carew.

You should have received Mason's Present * last Saturday. I desire you to tell me your critical opinion of the New Odes, and also whether you have found out two lines which he has inserted in his third to a friend, which are superlative †. We do not expect the

* The four Odes which I had just published separately.

† I should leave the Reader to guess (if he thought it worth his while) what this Couplet was, which is here commended so much beyond its merit, did not the Ode conclude with a Compliment to Mr. Gray, in which part he might probably look for it, as those lines were written with the greater care. To secure, therefore, my Friend from any imputation of Vanity, whatever becomes of myself, I shall here insert the passage.

While thro' the west, where sinks the crimson Day,
Meek Twilight slowly sails, and waves her banners gray.

world, which is just going to be invaded, will bestow much attention on them; if you hear any thing, you will tell us.

LETTER XXIII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

June 14, 1756.

THOUGH I allow abundance for your kindness and partiality to me, I am yet much pleased with the good opinion you seem to have of the Bard: I have not, however, done a word more than the little you have seen, having been in a very listless, unpleasant, and *inutile* state of mind for this long time, for which I shall beg you to prescribe me somewhat strengthening and agglutinant, lest it turn to a confirmed Phthisis.

I recommend two little French books to you, one called Memoirs de M. de la Porte; it has all the air of simplicity and truth, and contains some few very extraordinary facts relating to Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarine. The other is in two small volumes, "Memoires de Madame Staal." The facts are no great matter, but the manner and vivacity make them interesting. She was a sort of Confidante to the late

Duchess of Maine, and imprisoned a long time on her account during the regency.

I ought before now to have thanked you for your kind offer, which I mean soon to accept, for a reason which to be sure can be none to you and Mrs. Wharton; and therefore I think it my duty to give you notice of it. I have told you already of my mental ailments; and it is a very possible thing also that I may be bodily ill again in town, which I would not chuse to be in a dirty inconvenient lodging, where, perhaps, my nurse might stifle me with a pillow; and therefore it is no wonder if I prefer your house: but I tell you of this in time, that if either of you are frightened at the thoughts of a sick body, you may make a handsome excuse and save yourselves this trouble. You are not however to imagine my illness is *in esse;* no, it is only *in posse;* otherwise I should be scrupulous of bringing it home to you. I think I shall be with you in about a fortnight.

LETTER XXIV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Stoke, July 25, 1756.

I Feel a contrition for my long silence; and yet perhaps it is the last thing you trouble your head about. Nevertheless I will be as sorry as if you took it ill. I am sorry too to see you so punctilious as to stand upon answers, and never to come near me till I have regularly left my name at your door, like a Mercer's Wife, that imitates people who go a visiting. I would forgive you this, if you could possibly suspect I were doing any thing that I liked better; for then your formality might look like being piqued at my negligence, which has somewhat in it like kindness: But you know I am at Stoke, hearing, seeing, doing absolutely nothing. Not such a nothing as you do at Tunbridge, chequered and diversified with a succession of fleeting colours; but heavy, lifeless, without form and void; sometimes almost as black as the moral of Voltaire's Lisbon *, which angers you so. I have had no more muscular inflations, and am only troubled with this de-

* His Poem "sur la Destruction de Lisbon," published about that time.

pression of mind. You will not expect therefore I should give you any account of my *Verve,* which is at best (you know) of so delicate a constitution, and has such weak nerves, as not to stir out of its chamber above three days in a year. But I shall inquire after yours, and why it is off again? It has certainly worse nerves than mine, if your Reviewers have frighted it. Sure I (not to mention a score of your other Critics) am something a better Judge than all the Man-Midwives and Presbyterian Parsons * that ever were born. Pray give me leave to ask you, do you find yourself tickled with the commendations of such people? (for you have your share of these too) I dare say not; your Vanity has certainly a better taste. And can then the censure of such critics move you? I own it is an impertinence in these gentry to talk of one at all either in good or in bad; but this we must all swallow: I mean not only we that write, but all the *we's* that ever did any thing to be talked of.

While I am writing I receive yours, and rejoice to find that the genial influences of this fine season, which produce nothing in me, have hatched high and unimaginable fantasies in you †. I see, methinks, as I sit on

* The Reviewers, at the time, were supposed to be of these professions.

† I had sent him my first idea of Caractacus, drawn out in a short argument.

Snowdon, some glimpse of Mona and her haunted shades, and hope we shall be very good neighbours. Any Druidical anecdotes that I can meet with, I will be sure to send you when I return to Cambridge; but I cannot pretend to be learned without books, or to know the Druids from modern Bishops at this distance. I can only tell you not to go and take Mona for the Isle of Man: it is Anglesey, a tract of plain country, very fertile, but picturesque only from the view it has of Caernarvonshire, from which it is separated by the Menaï, a narrow arm of the sea. Forgive me for supposing in you such a want of erudition.

I congratulate you on our glorious successes in the Mediterranean. Shall we go in time, and hire a house together in Switzerland? It is a fine poetical country to look at, and no body there will understand a word we say or write.

LETTER XXV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Cambridge, May, 1757.

YOU are so forgetful of me that I should not forgive it, but that I suppose Caractacus may be the better for it. Yet I hear nothing from him neither, in spite of his promises: there is no faith in man, no not in a Welchman; and yet Mr. Parry * has been here, and scratched out such ravishing blind harmony, such tunes of a thousand years old, with names enough to choak you, as have set all this learned body a dancing, and inspired them with due reverence for my old Bard his countryman, whenever he shall appear. Mr. Parry, you must know, has put my Ode in motion again, and has brought it at last to a conclusion. 'Tis to him, therefore, that you owe the treat which I send you inclosed; namely, the breast and merry-thought, and rump too of the chicken which I have been chewing so long, that I would give the world for neck-beef or cow-heel.

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* A capital performer on the Welch Harp, and who was either born blind, or had been so from his infancy.

You will observe, in the beginning of this thing, some alterations of a few words, partly for improvement, and partly to avoid repetitions of like words and rhymes; yet I have not got rid of them all; the six last lines of the fifth stanza are new, tell me whether they will do. I am well aware of many weakly things towards the conclusion, but I hope the end itself will do; give me your full and true opinion, and that not upon deliberation, but forthwith. Mr. Hurd himself allows that *Lyon port* is not too bold for Queen Elizabeth.

I have got the old Scotch Ballad on which Douglas * was founded; it is divine, and as long as from hence to Aston. Have you never seen it? Aristotle's best rules are observed in it, in a manner that shews the Author had never read Aristotle. It begins in the fifth act of the play: you may read it two thirds thro' without guessing what it is about; and yet, when you come

* He had a high opinion of this first Drama of Mr. Home. In a letter to another friend, dated August 10, this year, he says, " I am " greatly struck with the Tragedy of Douglas, though it has infi- " nite faults: The Author seems to me to have retrieved the true " Language of the stage, which had been lost for these hundred " years; and there is one scene (between Matilda and the old Pea- " sant) so masterly, that it strikes me blind to all the defects in the " world." The Ballad, which he here applauds, is to be found in Mr. Percy's Reliques of ancient Poetry, vol. III. p. 89, a work published after the date of this letter.

to the end, it is impossible not to understand the whole story. I send you the two first stanzas.

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LETTER XXVI.

*MR. GRAY TO *MR. HURD.*

Stoke, August 25, 1757.

I Do not know why you should thank me for what you had a right and title to †; but attribute it to the excess of your politeness; and the more so, because almost no one else has made me the same compliment. As your acquaintance in the University (you say) do me the honour to *admire,* it would be ungenerous in me not to give them notice, that they are doing a very unfashionable thing; for all People of Condition are agreed not to admire, nor even to understand. One very great Man, writing to an acquaintance of his and mine, says that he had read them seven or eight times; and that now, when he next sees him, he shall not have above *thirty questions* to ask. Another (a Peer) believes that

* Now Bishop of Litchfield and Coventry.

† A present of his two Pindaric Odes just then published.

the last Stanza of the second Ode relates to King Charles the First and Oliver Cromwell. Even my friends tell me they do not *succeed*, and write me moving topics of consolation on that head. In short, I have heard of no body but an Actor and a Doctor of Divinity that profess their esteem for them *. Oh yes, a Lady of quality, (a friend of Mason's) who is a great reader. She knew there was a compliment to Dryden, but never suspected there was any thing said about Shakespeare or Milton, till it was explained to her; and wishes that there had been titles prefixed to tell what they were about.

From this mention of Mason's name you may think, perhaps, we are great correspondents. No such thing;

* This was written August 25, 1757. An extract from a letter of Mr. Gray to Dr. Wharton, dated October 7, 1757, mentions another admirer, whom he knew how to value. "Dr. Warburton is come to town, and I am told likes them extremely; he "says the world never passed so just an opinion upon any thing "as upon them; for that in other things they have affected to "like or dislike: whereas here they own they do not understand, "which he looks upon to be very true; but yet thinks they understand them as well as Milton or Shakespeare, whom they "are obliged, by fashion, to admire. Mr. Garrick's complimentary verses to me you have seen; I am told they were "printed in the Chronicle of last Saturday. The Critical Review is in raptures; but mistakes the Æolian Lyre for the Harp "of Æolus, and on this pleasant error founds both a compliment and a criticism. This is all I heard that signifies any "thing."

I have not heard from him these two months. I will be sure to scold in my own name, as well as in yours. I rejoice to hear you are so ripe for the press, and so voluminous; not for my own sake only, whom you flatter with the hopes of seeing your labours both public and private, but for yours too; for to be employed is to be happy. This principle of mine (and I am convinced of its truth) has, as usual, no influence on my practice. I am alone, and *ennuyé* to the last degree, yet do nothing. Indeed I have one excuse; my health (which you have so kindly inquired after) is not extraordinary, ever since I came hither. It is no great malady, but several little ones, that seem brewing no good to me. It will be a particular pleasure to me to hear whether Content dwells in Leicestershire, and how she entertains herself there. Only do not be too happy, nor forget entirely the quiet ugliness of Cambridge.

LETTER XXVII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Stoke, Sept. 28, 1757.

I Have (as I desired Mr. Stonhewer to tell you) read over Caractacus twice, not with pleasure only, but with emotion. You may say what you will; but the contrivance, the manners, the interests, the passions, and the expression, go beyond the dramatic part * of your Elfrida, many many leagues. I even say (though you will think me a bad judge of this) that the *World* will like it better. I am struck with the Chorus, who are not there merely to sing and dance, but bear through-

* In the manuscript now before him, Mr. Gray had only the first Ode, the others were not then written; and although the dramatic part was brought to a conclusion, yet it was afterwards in many places altered. He was mistaken with regard to the opinion the world would have about it. That world, which usually loves to be led in such matters, rather than form an opinion for itself, was taught a different sentiment; and one of its leaders went so far as to declare, that he never knew a second work fall so much below a first from the same hand. To oppose Mr. Gray's judgment to his, I must own gives me some satisfaction; and to enjoy it I am willing to risk that imputation of vanity, which may probably fall to my share for having published this Letter. I must add, however, that some of my friends advised it for the sake of the more *general* criticisms which they thought too valuable to be suppressed.

out a principal part in the action; and have (beside the *Costume,* which is excellent) as much a character of their own, as any other person. I am charmed with their priestly pride and obstinacy, when, after all is lost, they resolve to confront the Roman General, and spit in his face. But now I am going to tell you what touches me most from the beginning. The first opening is greatly improved: the curiosity of Didius is now a very natural reason for dwelling on each particular of the scene before him; nor is the description at all too long. I am glad to find the two young men are Cartismandua's sons. They interest me far more. I love people of condition. They were men before that no body knew: one could not make them a bow if one had met them at a public place.

I always admired that interruption of the Druids to Evelina, *Peace, virgin, peace,* &c. and chiefly the *abstract idea personified* (to use the words of a Critic) at the end of it. That of Caractacus, *Would save my Queen,* &c. and still more that, *I know it, revcrend Fathers, 'tis Heav'n's high will,* &c. to *I've done, begin the rites!* This latter is exemplary for the expression (always the great point with me); I do not mean by expression the mere choice of words, but the whole dress, fashion, and arrangement of a thought. Here, in particular, it is the brokenness, the ungrammatical

position, the total subversion of the period that charms me. All that ushers in the incantation from *Try we yet, what holiness can do,* I am delighted with in quite another way; for this is pure poetry, as it ought to be, forming the proper transition, and leading on the mind to that still purer poetry that follows it.

In the beginning of the succeeding act I admire the Chorus again, *Is it not now the hour, the holy hour,* &c. and their evasion of a lie, *Say'st thou, proud Boy,* &c. and *sleep with the unsun'd silver,* which is an example of a dramatic simile. The sudden appearance of Caractacus, the pretended respect and admiration of Vellinus, and the probability of his story, the distrust of the Druids, and their reasoning with Caractacus, and particularly that *'Tis meet thou should'st, thou art a King,* &c. and *Mark me, Prince, the time will come, when Destiny,* &c. are well, and happily imagined. A-propos, of the last striking passage I have mentioned, I am going to make a digression.

When we treat a subject, where the manners are almost lost in antiquity, our stock of ideas must needs be small; and nothing betrays our poverty more, than the returning to, and harping frequently on, one image. It was therefore I thought you should omit some lines before, though good in themselves, about

the *scythed car*, that the passage now before us might appear with greater lustre when it came; and in this I see you have complied with me. But there are other ideas here and there still, that occur too often, particularly about *the Oaks*, some of which I would discard to make way for the rest.

But the subjects I speak of to compensate (and more than compensate) that unavoidable poverty, have one great advantage when they fall into good hands. They leave an unbounded liberty to pure imagination and fiction, (our favourite provinces) where no Critic can molest, or Antiquary gainsay us; and yet (to please me) these fictions must have some affinity, some seeming *connexion*, with that little we really know of the character and customs of the people. For example, I never heard in my days that Midnight and the Moon were Sisters; that they carried rods of ebony and gold, or met to whisper on the top of a mountain: but now I could lay my life it is all true; and do not doubt it will be found so in some Pantheon of the Druids, that is to be discovered in the Library at Herculaneum. The *Car of Destiny and Death* is a very noble invention of the same class, and, as far as that goes, is so fine, that it makes me more delicate, than perhaps I should be, about the close of it. *Andraste sailing on*

the wings of Fame, that snatches the wreaths from oblivion to hang them on her loftiest Amaranth, though a clear and beautiful piece of *unknown* Mythology, has too *Greek* an air to give me perfect satisfaction.

Now I proceed. The preparation to the Chorus, though so much akin to that in the former act, is excellent. The remarks of Evelina and her suspicions of the Brothers, mixed with a secret inclination to the younger of them, (though, I think, her part throughout wants retouching) yet please me much, and the contrivance of the following scene much more. *Masters of Wisdom, no,* &c. I always admired; as I do the rocking stone, and the distress of Elidurus. Evelina's examination of him is a well-invented scene, and will be, with a little pains, a very touching one; but the introduction of Arviragus is superlative. I am not sure whether those few lines of his short narrative, *My strength repair'd, it boots not, that I tell,* &c. do not please me as much as any thing in the whole Drama. The sullen bravery of Elidurus, the menaces of the Chorus, that *Think not, Religion,* &c. the Trumpet of the Druids, that *I'll follow him, tho' in my chains,* &c. *Hast thou a Brother, no,* &c. the placability of the Chorus, when they see the motives of Elidurus's obstinacy, give me great contentment: so do the reflections

of the Druid on the necessity of lustration, and the reasons for Vellinus's easy escape; but I would not have him *seize on a spear*, nor *issue hasty through the cavern's mouth*. Why should he not steal away, unasked and unmissed, till the hurry of passions in those, that should have guarded him, was a little abated? But I chiefly admire the two speeches of Elidurus; *Ah, Vellinus, is this then*, &c. and, *Ye do gaze on me, Fathers*, &c. the manner in which the Chorus reply to him is very fine; but the image at the end wants a little mending. The next scene is highly moving! it is so very good, that I must have it made yet better.

Now for the last act. I do not know what you would have, but to me the design and contrivance of it is at least equal to any part of the whole. The short-lived triumph of the Britons, the address of Caractacus to the Roman Victims, Evelina's discovery of the ambush, the mistake of the Roman fires for the rising sun, the death of Arviragus, the interview between Didius and Caractacus, his mourning over his dead Son, his parting speech, (in which you have made all the use of Tacitus that your plan would admit) every thing, in short, but that little dispute between Didius and him; *'Tis well; and therefore to increase that reverence*, &c. down to, *Give me a moment* (which must be omitted, or put in the mouth of the Druids) I approve in the highest

degree. If I should find any fault with the last act, it could only be with trifles and little expressions. If you make any alterations, I fear it will never improve it; I mean as to the plan. I send you back the two last sheets, because you bid me. I reserve my nibblings and minutiæ for another day.

LETTER XXVIII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Cambridge, Dec. 19, 1757.

A Life spent out of the world has its hours of despondence, its inconveniencies, its sufferings, as numerous and as real, though not quite of the same sort, as a life spent in the midst of it. The power we have, when we will exert it over our own minds, joined to a little strength and consolation, nay, a little pride we catch from those that seem to love us, is our only support in either of these conditions. I am sensible I cannot return you more of this assistance than I have received from you; and can only tell you, that one who has far more reason than you, I hope, ever will have to look on life with something worse than indifference, is yet no enemy to it; but can look backward on many bitter moments, partly with satisfaction, and partly

with patience; and forward too, on a scene not very promising, with some hope, and some expectations of a better day. The cause, however, which occasioned your reflection, (though I can judge but very imperfectly of it) does not seem, at present, to be weighty enough to make you take any such resolution as you meditate. Use it in its season, as a relief from what is tiresome to you, but not as if it was in consequence of any thing you take ill; on the contrary, if such a thing had happened at the time of your transmigration, I would defer it merely to avoid that appearance.

As to myself, I cannot boast, at present, either of my spirits, my situation, my employments, or fertility. The days and the nights pass, and I am never the nearer to any thing, but that one to which we are all tending; yet I love people that leave some traces of their journey behind them, and have strength enough to advise you to do so while you can. I expect to see Caractacus compleated, and therefore I send you the books you wanted. I do not know whether they will furnish you with any new matter; but they are well enough written, and easily read. I told you before that (in a time of dearth) I would borrow from the Edda, without entering too minutely on particulars: but, if I did so, I would make each image so clear,

that it might be fully understood by itself; for in this obscure mythology we must not hint at things, as we do with the Greek fables, that every body is supposed to know at school. However, on second thoughts, I think it would be still better to graft any wild picturesque fable, absolutely of one's own invention, on the Druid-stock; I mean on those half dozen of old fancies that are known to be a part of their system. This will give you more freedom and latitude, and will leave no hold for the Critics to fasten on.

I send you back the Elegy * as you desired me to do. My advices are always at your service to take or to refuse, therefore you should not call them severe. You know I do not love, much less pique myself on Criticism; and think even a bad verse as good a thing or better than the best observation that ever was made upon it. I like greatly the spirit and sentiment of it (much of which you perhaps owe to your present train of thinking); the disposition of the whole too is natural and elegiac; as to the expression, I would venture to say (did not you forbid me) that it is sometimes too easy. The last line I protest against (this, you will say, is worse than blotting out rhymes); the descriptive part is excellent.

* Elegy in the Garden of a Friend.

Pray, when did I pretend to finish, or even insert passages into other people's works, as if it were equally easy to pick holes and to mend them? All I can say is, that your Elegy must not end with the worst line in it *. It is flat; it is prose; whereas that, above all, ought to sparkle, or at least to shine. If the sentiment must stand, twirl it a little into an apothegm; stick a flower in it; gild it with a costly expression; let it strike the fancy, the ear, or the heart, and I am satisfied.

The other particular expressions which I object to, I mark on the manuscript. Now, I desire you would neither think me severe, nor at all regard what I say further than as it coincides with your own judgment; for the child deserves your partiality; it is a healthy well-made boy with an ingenuous countenance, and promises to live long. I would only wash its face, dress it a little, make it walk upright and strong, and keep it from learning *paw* words.

I hope you couched my refusal † to Lord John Cavendish in as respectful terms as possible, and with all

* An attempt was accordingly made to improve it; how it stood when this criticism upon it was written, I cannot now recollect.

† Of being Poet Laureat on the death of Cibber, which place the late Duke of Devonshire (then Lord Chamberlain) desired his

due acknowledgment to the Duke. If you hear who it is to be given to, pray let me know; for I interest myself a little in the history of it, and rather wish somebody may accept it that will retrieve the credit of the thing, if it be retrievable, or ever had any credit. Rowe was, I think, the last man of character that had it; Eusden was a person of great hopes in his youth, tho' at last he turned out a drunken parson; Dryden was as disgraceful to the office, from his character, as the poorest scribbler could have been from his verses.

LETTER XXIX.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

February 21, 1758.

WOULD you know what I am doing? I doubt you have been told already, and hold my employments cheap enough; but every one must judge of his own *capability*, and *cut* his amusements according to his disposition. The drift of my present studies is to know, wherever I am, what lies within reach that may be worth seeing, whether it be building, ruin, park, gar-

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brother to offer to Mr. Gray; and his Lordship had commissioned me (then in town) to write to him concerning it.

den, prospect, picture, or monument; to whom it does or has belonged, and what has been the characteristic and taste of different ages. You will say this is the object of all Antiquaries; but pray what Antiquary ever saw these objects in the same light, or desired to know them for a like reason? In short, say what you please, I am persuaded whenever my list * is finished you will approve it, and think it of no small use. My spirits are very near the freezing point; and for some hours of the day this exercise, by its warmth and gentle motion, serves to raise them a few degrees higher.

I hope the misfortune that has befallen Mrs. Cibber's canary bird will not be the ruin of Agis: it is probable you will have curiosity enough to see it, as it is by the Author of Douglas.

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* He wrote it, under its several divisions, on the blank pages of a pocket Atlas. I printed lately a few copies of this catalogue for the use of some friends curious in such matters; and, when I am sufficiently furnished with their observations and improvements upon it, shall perhaps reprint it and give it to the public, as a shorter and more useful Pocket Companion to the English Traveller than has hitherto appeared.

LETTER XXX.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, March 8, 1758.

IT is indeed for want of spirits, as you suspect, that my studies lie among the Cathedrals, and the Tombs, and the Ruins. To think, though to little purpose, has been the chief amusement of my days; and when I would not, or cannot think, I dream. At present I feel myself able to write a Catalogue, or to read the Peerage book, or Miller's Gardening Dictionary, and am thankful that there are such employments and such authors in the world. Some people, who hold me cheap for this, are doing perhaps what is not half so well worth while. As to posterity, I may ask, (with some body whom I have forgot) what has it ever done to oblige me?

To make a transition from myself to as poor a subject, the Tragedy of Agis; I cry to think that it should be by the Author of Douglas: Why, it is all modern Greek; the story is an antique statue painted white and red, frized, and dressed in a negligée made by a Yorkshire mantua-maker. Then here is the Miscellany (Mr. Dodsley has sent me the whole set gilt and let-

tered, I thank him). Why, the two last volumes are worse than the four first; particularly Dr. Akenside is in a deplorable way*. What signifies Learning and the Ancients, (Mason will say triumphantly) why should people read Greek to lose their imagination, their ear, and their mother tongue? But then there is Mr. Shenstone, who trusts to nature and simple sentiment, why does he do no better? he goes hopping along his own gravel-walks, and never deviates from the beaten paths for fear of being lost.

I have read Dr. Swift, and am disappointed †. There is nothing of the negotiations that I have not seen better in M. de Torcy before. The manner is careless, and has little to distinguish it from common writers. I

* I have been told that this Writer, unquestionably a man of great learning and genius, entertained, some years before his death, a notion that *Poetry was only true eloquence in metre;* and, according to this idea, wrote his Ode to the Country Gentlemen of England, and afterwards made considerable alterations in that collection of Odes which he had published in the earlier part of his life. We have seen in the second letter of this section, that Mr. Gray thought highly of his descriptive talents at that time. We are not therefore to impute what he here says to any prejudice in the Critic, but to that change of taste in the Poet, which (if the above anecdote be true) would unavoidably flatten his descriptions, and divest them of all picturesque imagery; nay, would sometimes convert his verse into mere prose; or, what is still worse, hard inflated prose.

† His history of the four last years of Queen Anne.

meet with nothing to please me but the spiteful characters of the opposite party and its leaders. I expected much more secret history.

LETTER XXXI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. STONHEWER.

Cambridge, August 18, 1758.

I Am as sorry as you seem to be, that our acquaintance harped so much on the subject of materialism, when I saw him with you in town, because it was plain to which side of the long-debated question he inclined. That we are indeed mechanical and dependent beings, I need no other proof than my own feelings; and from the same feelings I learn, with equal conviction, that we are not *merely* such: that there is a power within that struggles against the force and bias of that mechanism, commands its motion, and, by frequent practice, reduces it to that ready obedience which we call *Habit;* and all this in conformity to a preconceived opinion (no matter whether right or wrong) to that least material of all agents, a Thought. I have known many in his case who, while they thought they were conquering an old prejudice, did not perceive they were under the influence of one far more dangerous;

one that furnishes us with a ready apology for all our worst actions, and opens to us a full licence for doing whatever we please; and yet these very people were not at all the more indulgent to other men (as they naturally should have been); their indignation to such as offended them, their desire of revenge on any body that hurt them was nothing mitigated: In short, the truth is, they wished to be persuaded of that opinion for the sake of its convenience, but were not so in their heart; and they would have been glad (as they ought in common prudence) that nobody else should think the same, for fear of the mischief that might ensue to themselves. His French Author I never saw, but have read fifty in the same strain, and shall read no more. I can be wretched enough without them. They put me in mind of the Greek Sophist that got immortal honour by discoursing so feelingly on the miseries of our condition, that fifty of his audience went home and hanged themselves; yet he lived himself (I suppose) many years after in very good plight.

You say you cannot conceive how Lord Shaftesbury came to be a Philosopher in vogue; I will tell you: First, he was a Lord; 2dly, he was as vain as any of his readers; 3dly, men are very prone to believe what they do not understand; 4thly, they will believe any thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to

believe it; 5thly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads no where; 6thly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and seemed always to mean more than he said. Would you have any more reasons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well destroyed the charm. A dead Lord ranks but with Commoners: Vanity is no longer interested in the matter, for the new road is become an old one. The mode of free-thinking is like that of Ruffs and Farthingales, and has given place to the mode of not thinking at all; once it was reckoned graceful, half to discover and half conceal the mind, but now we have been long accustomed to see it quite naked: primness and affectation of style, like the good breeding of Queen Anne's Court, has turned to hoydening and rude familiarity.

It will, I think, be no improper supplement to the foregoing letter to insert a paper of Mr. Gray's, which contains some very pertinent strictures on the writings of a later Lord, who was pleased to attack the moral attributes of the Deity; or, what amounted to the same thing, endeavoured to prove, " that we have no adequate ideas of his goodness and justice, as we have of his natural ones, his wisdom and power." This position the excellent author of the View of Lord Boling-

broke's Philosophy, calls the MAIN PILLAR of his system; and adds, in another place, that the FATE OF ALL RELIGION is included in this question. On this important point, therefore, that able Writer has dwelt largely, and confuted his Lordship effectually. Some sort of readers, however, who probably would slight that confutation, may regard the arguments of a Layman, and even a Poet, more than those which are drawn up by the pen of a Divine and a Bishop: It is for the use of these that the paper is published; who, if they learn nothing else from it, will find that Mr. Gray was not of their party, nor so great a wit as to disbelieve the existence of a Deity *.

"I will allow Lord Bolingbroke, that the moral, as well as physical, attributes of God must be known to

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* In one of his pocket-books I find a slight sketch in verse of his own character, which may, on account of one line in it, come into a note here with sufficient propriety. It was written in 1761.

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune;
He had not the method of making a fortune:
Could love, and could hate, so was thought somewhat odd;
NO VERY GREAT WIT, HE BELIEV'D IN A GOD.
A Post or a Pension he did not desire,
But left Church and State to Charles Townshend and Squire.

This last line needs no comment for readers of the present time, and it surely is not worth while to write one on this occasion for posterity.

us only à posteriori, and that this is the only real knowledge we can have either of the one or the other; I will allow too that perhaps it may be an idle distinction which we make between them: His moral attributes being as much in his nature and essence as those we call his physical; but the occasion of our making some distinction is plainly this: His eternity, infinity, omniscience, and almighty power, are not what connect him, if I may so speak, with us his creatures. We adore him, not because he always did in every place, and always will, exist; but because he gave and still preserves to us our own existence by an exertion of his goodness. We adore him, not because he knows and can do all things, but because he made us capable of knowing and of doing what may conduct us to happiness: It is therefore his benevolence which we adore, not his greatness or power; and if we are made only to bear our part in a system, without any regard to our own particular happiness, we can no longer worship him as our all-bounteous parent: There is no meaning in the term. The idea of his malevolence (an impiety I tremble to write) must succeed. We have nothing left but our fears, and those too vain; for whither can they lead but to despair and the sad desire of annihilation? "If then, justice and goodness be not the "same in God as in our ideas, we mean nothing when "we say that God is necessarily just and good; and

" for the same reason it may as well be said that we " know not what we mean when, according to Dr. " Clarke, (Evid. 26th) we affirm that he is necessarily " a wise and intelligent Being." What then can Lord Bolingbroke mean, when he says every thing shews the wisdom of God; and yet adds, every thing does not shew in like manner the goodness of God conformably to our ideas of this attribute in either? By wisdom he must only mean, that God knows and employs the fittest means to a certain end, no matter what that end may be: This indeed is a proof of knowledge and intelligence; but these alone do not constitute wisdom; the word implies the application of these fittest means to the best and kindest end: Or, who will call it true wisdom? Even amongst ourselves, it is not held as such. All the attributes then that he seems to think apparent in the constitution of things, are his unity, infinity, eternity, and intelligence; from no one of which, I boldly affirm, can result any duty of gratitude or adoration incumbent on mankind, more than if He and all things round him were produced, as some have dared to think, by the necessary working of eternal matter in an infinite vacuum: For what does it avail to add intelligence to those other physical attributes, unless that intelligence be directed, not only to the good of the whole, but also to the good of every individual of which that whole is composed.

It is therefore no impiety, but the direct contrary, to say that human justice and the other virtues, which are indeed only various applications of human benevolence, bear some resemblance to the moral attributes of the supreme Being: It is only by means of that resemblance, we conceive them in him, or their effects in his works: It is by the same means only, that we comprehend those physical attributes which his Lordship allows to be demonstrable: How can we form any notion of his unity, but from that unity of which we ourselves are conscious? How of his existence, but from our own consciousness of existing? How of his power, but of that power which we experience in ourselves? yet neither Lord Bolingbroke nor any other man, that thought on these subjects, ever believed that these our ideas were real and full representations of these attributes in the Divinity. They say he knows; they do not mean that he compares ideas which he acquired from sensation, and draws conclusions from them. They say he acts; they do not mean by impulse, nor as the soul acts on an organized body. They say he is omnipotent and eternal; yet on what are their ideas founded, but on our own narrow conceptions of space and duration, prolonged beyond the bounds of place and time? Either therefore there is a resemblance and analogy (however imperfect and distant) between the attributes of the Divinity and our conceptions of them,

or we cannot have any conceptions of them at all: He allows we ought to reason from earth, that we do know, to heaven which we do not know; how can we do so but by that affinity which appears between one and the other?

In vain then does my Lord attempt to ridicule the warm but melancholy imagination of Mr. Wollaston in that fine soliloquy: " Must I then bid my last farewel " to these walks when I close these lids, and yonder " blue regions and all this scene darken upon me and " go out? Must I then only serve to furnish dust to " be mingled with the ashes of these herds and plants, " or with this dirt under my feet? Have I been set so " far above them in life, only to be levelled with them " in death *?" No thinking head, no heart, that has the least sensibility, but must have made the same reflection; or at least must feel, not the beauty alone, but the truth of it when he hears it from the mouth of another. Now what reply will Lord Bolingbroke make to these questions which are put to him, not only by Wollaston, but by all mankind? He will tell you, that we, that is, the animals, vegetables, stones, and *other clods of earth*, are all connected in one immense design, that we are all Dramatis Personæ, in different charac-

* Religion of Nature delineated, sect. 9, p. 209, quarto.

ters, and that we were not made for ourselves, but for the action: that it is foolish, presumptuous, impious, and profane to murmur against the Almighty Author of this drama, when we feel ourselves unavoidably unhappy. On the contrary, we ought to rest our head on the soft pillow of resignation, on the immoveable rock of tranquillity; secure, that, if our pains and afflictions grow violent indeed, an immediate end will be put to our miserable being, and we shall be mingled with the dirt under our feet, a thing common to all the animal kind; and of which he who complains does not seem to have been set by his reason so far above them in life, as to deserve not to be mingled with them in death. Such is the consolation his philosophy gives us, and such the hope on which his tranquillity was founded." *

* The reader, who would choose to see the argument, as Lord Bolingbroke puts it, will find it in the 4th volume of his Philosophical Works, sect. 40, 41. His ridicule on Wollaston is in the 50th section of the same volume.

LETTER XXXII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Sunday, April 9, 1758.

I Am equally sensible of your affliction *, and of your kindness, that made you think of me at such a moment; would to God I could lessen the one, or requite the other with that consolation which I have often received from you when I most wanted it! but your grief is too just, and the cause of it too fresh, to admit of any such endeavour: What, indeed, is all human consolation? Can it efface every little amiable word or action of an object we loved, from our memory? Can it convince us, that all the hopes we had entertained, the plans of future satisfaction we had formed, were ill-grounded and vain, only because we have lost them? The only comfort (I am afraid) that belongs to our condition, is to reflect (when time has given us leisure for reflection) that others have suffered worse; or that we ourselves might have suffered the same misfortune at times and in circumstances that would probably have aggravated our sorrow. You might have seen

* Occasioned by the death of his eldest (and at the time his only) son.

this poor child arrived at an age to fulfil all your hopes, to attach you more strongly to him by long habit, by esteem, as well as natural affection, and that towards the decline of your life, when we most stand in need of support, and when he might chance to have been your *only* support; and then by some unforeseen and deplorable accident, or some painful lingering distemper, you might have lost him. Such has been the fate of many an unhappy father! I know there is a sort of tenderness which infancy and innocence alone produce; but I think you must own the other to be a stronger and a more overwhelming sorrow. Let me then beseech you to try, by every method of avocation and amusement, whether you cannot, by degrees, get the better of that dejection of spirits, which inclines you to see every thing in the worst light possible, and throws a sort of voluntary gloom, not only over your present, but future days; as if even your situation now were not preferable to that of thousands round you; and as if your prospect hereafter might not open as much of happiness to you as to any person you know: the condition of our life perpetually instructs us to be rather slow to hope, as well as to despair; and (I know you will forgive me, if I tell you) you are often a little too hasty in both, perhaps from constitution; it is sure we have great power over our own minds, when we

choose to exert it; and though it be difficult to resist the mechanic impulse and bias of our own temper, it is yet possible, and still more so to delay those resolutions it inclines us to take, which we almost always have cause to repent.

You tell me nothing of Mrs. Wharton's or your own state of health: I will not talk to you more upon this subject till I hear you are both well; for that is the grand point, and without it we may as well not think at all. You flatter me in thinking that any thing I can do *, could at all alleviate the just concern your loss has given you; but I cannot flatter myself so far, and know how little qualified I am at prssent to give any satisfaction to myself on this head, and in this way, much less to you. I by no means pretend to inspiration; but yet I affirm, that the faculty, in question, is by no means voluntary; it is the result (I suppose) of a certain disposition of mind, which does not depend on one's self, and which I have not felt this long time. You that are a witness how seldom this spirit has moved me in my life, may easily give credit to what I say.

* His friend had requested him to write an Epitaph on the child.

LETTER XXXIII.

*MR. GRAY TO MR. PALGRAVE.**

Stoke, Sept. 6, 1758.

I Do not know how to make you amends, having neither rock, ruin, nor precipice near me to send you; they do not grow in the south: but only say the word, if you would have a compact neat box of red brick with sash windows, or a grotto made of flints and shell-work, or a walnut-tree with three mole-hills under it, stuck with honey-suckles round a bason of gold-fishes, and you shall be satisfied; they shall come by the Edinburgh coach.

In the mean time I congratulate you on your new acquaintance with the *savage*, the *rude*, and the *tremendous*. Pray, tell me, is it any thing like what you had read in your book, or seen in two-shilling prints? Do not you think a man may be the wiser (I had almost said the better) for going a hundred or two of miles; and that the mind has more room in it than most people seem to think, if you will but furnish the apart-

* Rector of Palgrave and Thrandeston in Suffolk. He was making a tour in Scotland when this letter was written to him.

ments? I almost envy your last month, being in a very insipid situation myself; and desire you would not fail to send me some furniture for my Gothic apartment, which is very cold at present. It will be the easier task, as you have nothing to do but transcribe your little red books, if they are not rubbed out; for I conclude you have not trusted every thing to memory, which is ten times worse than a lead-pencil: Half a word fixed upon or near the spot, is worth a cart-load of recollection. When we trust to the picture that objects draw of themselves on our mind, we deceive ourselves; without accurate and particular observation, it is but ill-drawn at first, the outlines are soon blurred, the colours every day grow fainter; and at last, when we would produce it to any body, we are forced to supply its defects with a few strokes of our own imagination *. God forgive me, I suppose I have done so myself before now, and misled many a good body that put their trust in me. Pray, tell me, (but with permission, and without any breach of hospitality) is it so much warmer on the other side of the Swale (as some people of honour say) than it is here? Has the singing of birds, the bleating of sheep, the lowing of herds, deafen-

* Had this letter nothing else to recommend it, the advice here given to the curious traveller of making all his memoranda *on the spot*, and the reasons for it are so well expressed, and withal so important, that they certainly deserve our notice.

ed you at Rainton? Did the vast old oaks and thick groves in Northumberland keep off the sun too much from you? I am too civil to extend my inquiries beyond Berwick. Every thing, doubtless, must improve upon you as you advanced northward. You must tell me, tho', about Melross, Rosslin Chapel, and Arbroath. In short, your Port-feuille must be so full, that I only desire a loose chapter or two, and will wait for the rest till it comes out.

LETTER XXXIV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Stoke, Nov. 9, 1758.

I Should have told you that Caradoc came safe to hand *; but my critical faculties have been so taken up in dividing *nothing* with an old woman †, that they are not yet composed enough for a better and more tranquil employment: shortly, however, I will make them obey me. But am I to send this copy to Mr. Hurd, or return it to you? Methinks I do not love this tra-

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* A second manuscript of Caractacus with the Odes inserted.

† Mrs. Rogers died about this time, and left Mr. Gray and Mrs. Olliffe, another of his aunts, her joint executors.

velling to and again of manuscripts by the post. While I am writing, your second packet is just arrived. I can only tell you in gross, that there seem to me certain passages altered which might as well have been let alone; and that I shall not be easily reconciled to Mador's own song *. I must not have my fancy raised to that agreeable pitch of heathenism and wild magical enthusiasm, and then have you let me drop into moral philosophy and cold good sense. I remember you insulted me when I saw you last, and affected to call that which delighted my imagination, *nonsense:* Now I insist that sense is nothing in poetry, but according to the dress she wears, and the scene she appears in. If you should lead me into a superb Gothic building with a thousand clustered pillars, each of them half a mile high, the walls all covered with fretwork, and the windows full of red and blue saints that had neither head nor tail; and I should find the Venus of Medici in person perked up in a long niche over the high altar, do you think it would raise or damp my devotions? I say that Mador must be entirely a Briton; and that his pre-eminence among his companions must be shewn by superior wildness, more barbaric fancy, and a more striking and deeper harmony both of words and numbers: if British antiquity be too narrow, this is the

* He means here the second Ode, which was afterwards greatly altered.

place for invention; and if it be pure invention, so much the clearer must the expression be, and so much the stronger and richer the imagery. There's for you now!

LETTER XXXV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. PALGRAVE.

London, July 24, 1759.

I Am now settled in my new territories commanding Bedford gardens, and all the fields as far as Highgate and Hampstead, with such a concourse of moving pictures as would astonish you; so *rus-in-urbe-ish,* that I believe I shall stay here, except little excursions and vagaries, for a year to come. What though I am separated from the fashionable world by broad St. Giles's, and many a dirty court and alley, yet here is air, and sunshine, and quiet, however, to comfort you: I shall confess that I am basking with heat all the summer, and I suppose shall be blown down all the winter, besides being robbed every night; I trust, however, that the Musæum, with all its manuscripts and rarities by the cart-load, will make ample amends for all the aforesaid inconveniencies.

I this day past through the jaws of a great leviathan into the den of Dr. Templeman, superintendant of the reading-room, who congratulated himself on the sight of so much good company. We were, first, a man that writes for Lord Royston; 2dly, a man that writes for Dr. Burton, of York; 3dly, a man that writes for the Emperor of Germany, or Dr. Pocock, for he speaks the worst English I ever heard; 4thly, Dr. Stukely, who writes for himself, the very worst person he could write for; and, lastly, I, who only read to know if there be any thing worth writing, and that not without some difficulty. I find that they printed 1000 copies of the Harleian Catalogue, and have sold only fourscore; that they have 900l. a year income, and spend 1300, and are building apartments for the under-keepers; so I expect in winter to see the collection advertised and set to auction.

Have you read Lord Clarendon's Continuation of his History? Do you remember Mr. * *'s account of it before it came out? How well he recollected all the faults, and how utterly he forgot all the beauties: Surely the grossest taste is better than such a sort of delicacy.

LETTER XXXVI.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

London, June 22, 1760.

I Am not sorry to hear you are exceeding busy, except as it has deprived me of the pleasure I should have in hearing often from you; and as it has been occasioned by a little vexation and disappointment. To find one's self business, I am persuaded, is the great art of life; I am never so angry, as when I hear my acquaintance wishing they had been bred to some poking profession, or employed in some office of drudgery, as if it were pleasanter to be at the command of other people than at one's own; and as if they could not go unless they were wound up: yet I know and feel what they mean by this complaint; it proves that some spirit, something of genius (more than common) is required to teach a man how to employ himself: I say a man; for women, commonly speaking, never feel this distemper, they have always something to do; time hangs not on their hands (unless they be fine Ladies); a variety of small inventions and occupations fill up the void, and their eyes are never open in vain.

As to myself, I have again found rest for the sole of my gouty foot in your old dining-room *, and hope that you will find at least an equal satisfaction at Old-Park; if your bog prove as comfortable as my oven, I shall see no occasion to pity you, and only wish you may brew no worse than I bake.

You totally mistake my talents, when you impute to me any magical skill in planting roses: I know I am no conjurer in these things; when they are done I can find fault, and that is all. Now this is the very reverse of genius, and I feel my own littleness. Reasonable people know themselves better than is commonly imagined; and therefore (though I never saw any instance of it) I believe Mason when he tells me that he understands these things. The prophetic eye of taste (as Mr. Pitt calls it) sees all the beauties, that a place is susceptible of, long before they are born; and when it plants a seedling, already sits under the shadow of it, and enjoys the effect it will have from every point of view that lies in prospect. You must therefore invoke Caractacus, and he will send his spirits from the top of Snowdon to Cross-fell or Warden-law.

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* The house in Southampton-Row, where Mr. Gray lodged, had been tenanted by Dr. Wharton; who, on account of his ill health, left London the year before, and was removed to his paternal estate at Old-Park, near Durham.

I am much obliged to you for your antique news. Froissard is a favourite book of mine (though I have not attentively read him, but only dipped here and there); and it is strange to me that people, who would give thousands for a dozen portraits (originals of that time) to furnish a gallery, should never cast an eye on so many moving pictures of the life, actions, manners, and thoughts of their ancestors, done on the spot, and in strong, though simple colours. In the succeeding century Froissard, I find, was read with great satisfaction by every body that could read; and on the same footing with King Arthur, Sir Tristram, and Archbishop Turpin: not because they thought him a fabulous writer, but because they took them all for true and authentic historians; to so little purpose was it in that age for a man to be at the pains of writing truth. Pray, are you come to the four Irish Kings that went to school to King Richard the Second's Master of the Ceremonies, and the man who informed Froissard of all he had seen in St. Patrick's Purgatory?

The town are reading the King of Prussia's Poetry (*Le Philosophe sans Souci*), and I have done like the town; they do not seem so sick of it as I am: It is all the scum of Voltaire and Lord Bolingbroke, the Crambe-recocta of our worst Freethinkers, tossed up in German-French rhyme. Tristram Shandy is still a

greater object of admiration, the man as well as the book; one is invited to dinner, where he dines, a fortnight before: As to the volumes yet published, there is much good fun in them, and humour sometimes hit and sometimes missed. Have you read his sermons, with his own comic figure, from a painting by Reynolds, at the head of them? They are in the style I think most proper for the pulpit *, and shew a strong imagination and a sensible heart; but you see him often tottering on the verge of laughter, and ready to throw his periwig in the face of the audience.

* Our author was of opinion, that it was the business of the Preacher rather to persuade by the power of eloquence to the practice of known duties, than to reason with the art of logic on points of controverted doctrine: Hence, therefore, he thought that sometimes imagination might not be out of its place in a sermon. But let him speak for himself in an extract from one of his letters to me in the following year: "Your quotation from Jeremy Taylor "is a fine one. I have long thought of reading him; for I am per-"suaded that chopping logic in the pulpit, as our divines have "done ever since the revolution, is not the thing; but that ima-"gination and warmth of expression, are in their place there, as "much as on the stage; moderated, however, and chastised a little "by the purity and severity of religion."

LETTER XXXVII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. STONHEWER.

London, June 29, 1760.

THOUGH you have had but a melancholy employment, it is worthy of envy, and I hope will have all the success it deserves *. It was the best and most natural method of cure, and such as could not have been administered by any but your gentle hand. I thank you for communicating to me what must give you so much satisfaction.

I too was reading M. D'Alembert †, and (like you) am totally disappointed in his Elements. I could only taste a little of the first course: it was dry as a stick, hard as a stone, and cold as a cucumber. But then the letter to Rousseau is like himself; and the Discourses on Elocution, and on the Liberty of Music, are divine. He has added to his translations from Taci-

* Mr. Stonhewer was now at Houghton-le-Spring, in the Bishoprick of Durham, attending on his sick father, rector of that parish.

† Two subsequent volumes of his "Melanges de Literature & "Philosophie."

tus; and (what is remarkable) though that Author's manner more nearly resembles the best French Writers of the present age, than any thing, he totally fails in the attempt. Is it his fault, or that of the language?

I have received another Scotch packet *, with a third specimen, inferior in kind, (because it is merely description) but yet full of nature and noble wild imagination. Five Bards pass the night at the Castle of a

* Of the fragments of Erse Poetry, many of which Mr. Gray saw in manuscript before they were published. In a letter to Dr. Wharton, written in the following month, he thus expresses himself on the same subject: " If you have seen Mr. Stonhewer, he " has probably told you of my old Scotch, (or rather Irish) Poetry, " I am gone mad about them; they are said to be translations (li- " teral and in prose) from the Erse tongue, done by one Macpher- " son, a young clergyman in the Highlands: He means to publish " a collection he has of these specimens of antiquity, if it be anti- " quity; but what perplexes me is, I cannot come at any certainty " on that head. I was so struck with their beauty, that I writ into " Scotland to make a thousand inquiries; the letters I have in re- " turn, are ill wrote, ill reasoned, unsatisfactory, calculated (one " would imagine) to deceive, and yet not cunning enough to do it " cleverly. In short, the whole external evidence would make one " believe these fragments counterfeit; but the internal is so strong " on the other side, that I am resolved to believe them genuine, " spite of the Devil and the Kirk: it is impossible to conceive that " they were written by the same man that writes me these letters; " on the other hand, it is almost as hard to suppose (if they are " original) that he should be able to translate them so admirably. " In short, this man is the very dæmon of poetry, or he has lighted " on a treasure hid for ages. The Welch Poets are also coming to

Chief (himself a principal Bard); each goes out in his turn to observe the face of things, and returns with an extempore picture of the changes he has seen (it is an October night, the harvest-month of the Highlands). This is the whole plan; yet there is a contrivance, and a preparation of ideas, that you would not expect. The oddest thing is, that every one of them sees Ghosts (more or less). The idea, that struck and surprised me most, is the following. One of them (descrbing a storm of wind and rain) says

> Ghosts ride on the tempest to-night:
> Sweet is their voice between the gusts of wind;
> *Their songs are of other worlds!*

Did you never observe *(while rocking winds are piping loud)* that pause, as the gust is recollecting itself, and rising upon the ear in a shrill and plaintive note, like the swell of an Æolian harp? I do assure you there is nothing in the world so like the voice of a spirit. Thomson had an ear sometimes: he was not deaf to this; and has described it gloriously, but given it another different turn, and of more horrour. I cannot

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" light; I have seen a discourse in manuscript about them, by one " Mr. Evans, a clergyman, with specimens of their writing, this is " in Latin; and though it does not approach the other, there are " fine scraps among it."

repeat the lines: it is in his Winter. There is another very fine picture in one of them. It describes the breaking of the clouds after the storm, before it is settled into a calm, and when the moon is seen by short intervals.

The waves are tumbling on the lake,
And lash the rocky sides.
The boat is brim-full in the cove,
The oars on the rocking tide.
Sad sits a maid beneath a cliff,
And eyes the rolling stream:
Her lover promised to come,
She saw his boat (when it was evening) on the lake;
Are these his groans in the gale?
Is this his broken boat on the shore? *

* The whole of this descriptive piece has been since published in a note to a Poem, intitled CROMA, (see Ossian's Poems, vol. 1st, p. 350, 8vo.) It is somewhat remarkable that the manuscript, in the translator's own hand, which I have in my possession, varies considerably from the printed copy. Some images are omitted, and others added. I will mention one which is not in the manuscript, *the spirit of the mountain shrieks.* In the tragedy of Douglas, published at least three years before, I always admired this fine line, *the angry spirit of the water shriek'd.*—Quere, Did Mr. Home take this sublime image from Ossian, or has the translator of Ossian since borrowed it from Mr. Home?

LETTER XXXVIII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. CLARKE *.

Pembroke-Hall, August 12, 1760.

NOT knowing whether you are yet returned from your sea-water, I write at random to you. For me, I am come to my resting-place, and find it very necessary, after living for a month in a house with three women that laughed from morning to night, and would allow nothing to the sulkiness of my disposition. Company and cards at home, parties by land and water abroad, and (what they call) *doing something*, that is, racketting about from morning to night, are occupations, I find, that wear out my spirits, especially in a situation where one might sit still, and be alone with pleasure; for the place was a hill † like Clifden, opening to a very extensive and diversified landscape, with the Thames, which is navigable, running at its foot.

I would wish to continue here (in a very different scene, it must be confessed) till Michaelmas; but I fear

* Physician at Epsom. With this gentleman Mr. Gray commenced an early acquaintance at College.

† Near Henley.

I must come to town much sooner. Cambridge is a delight of a place, now there is no body in it. I do believe you would like it, if you knew what it was without Inhabitants. It is they, I assure you, that get it an ill name and spoil all. Our friend Dr. * * † (one of its nuisances) is not expected here again in a hurry. He is gone to his grave with five fine mackarel (large and full of roe) in his belly. He eat them all at one dinner; but his fate was a Turbot on Trinity Sunday, of which he left little for the company besides bones. He had not been hearty all the week; but after this sixth fish he never held up his head more, and a violent looseness carried him off.—They say he made a very good end.

Have you seen the Erse Fragments since they were printed? I am more puzzled than ever about their antiquity, though I still incline (against every body's opinion) to believe them old. Those you have already seen are the best; though there are some others that are excellent too.

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† Vide Letter XI. of this Section.

LETTER XXXIX.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

Cambridge, August 20, 1760.

I Have sent Musæus * back as you desired me, scratched here and there. And with it also a bloody Satire †, written against no less persons than *you and I* by name. I concluded at first it was Mr. * * *, because he is your friend and my humble servant; but then I thought he knew the world too well to call us the favourite Minions of Taste and of Fashion, especially as to Odes. For to them his ridicule is confined; so it is not he, but Mr. Colman, nephew to Lady Bath, author of the Connoisseur, a member of one of the inns of court, and a particular acquaintance of Mr. Garrick. What have you done to him? for I never heard his name before; he makes very tolerable fun with me where I understand him (which is not every where);

* I had desired Mr. Gray to revise my Monody on Mr. Pope's Death, in order that I might correct it for the edition I was then preparing of my Poems.

† The Parodies in question, intitled Odes to Obscurity and Oblivion, were written by Mess. Lloyd and Colman, and have been reprinted since in Mr. Lloyd's Poems.

but seems more angry with you. Lest people should not understand the humour of the thing (which indeed to do they must have our Lyricisms at their finger ends) letters come out in Lloyd's Evening-Post to tell them who and what it was that he meant, and says it is like to produce a great combustion in the Literary World. So if you have any mind to *combustle* about it well and good; for me, I am neither so literary nor so combustible *. The Monthly Review, I see, just now has much stuff about us on this occasion. It says one of us at least has always borne his faculties meekly. I leave you to guess which of us that is; I think I know. You simpleton you! you must be meek, must you? and see what you get by it.

I do not like your improvements at Aston, it looks so like settling; if I come I will set fire to it. I will never believe the B * * s and the C * * s are dead, tho' I smelt them; that sort of people always live to a good old age. I dare swear they are only gone to Ireland, and we shall soon hear they are Bishops.

* Had Mr. Pope disregarded the sarcasms of the many writers that endeavoured to eclipse his poetical fame, as much as Mr. Gray here appears to have done, the world would not have been possessed of a Dunciad; but it would have been impressed with a more amiable idea of its Author's temper. It is for the sake of shewing how Mr. Gray felt on such occasions, that I publish this letter.

The Erse Fragments have been published five weeks ago in Scotland, though I had them not (by a mistake) till the other day. As you tell me new things do not reach you soon at Aston, I inclose what I can; the rest shall follow, when you tell me whether you have not got the pamphlet already. I send the two to Mr. Wood which I had before, because he has not *the affectation of not admiring* *. I have another from Mr. Macpherson, which he has not printed; it is mere description, but excellent too in its kind. If you are good and will learn to admire, I will transcribe and send it.

As to their authenticity, I have made many inquiries, and have lately procured a letter from Mr. David Hume, (the historian) which is more satisfactory than any thing I have yet met with on that subject. He says,

" Certain it is that these poems are in every body's " mouth in the Highlands, have been handed down " from Father to Son, and are of an age beyond all

* It was rather a want of credulity than admiration that Mr. Gray should have laid to my charge. I suspected that, whether the Fragments were genuine or not, they were by no means literally translated. I suspect so still; and a former note gives a sufficient cause for that suspicion. See p. 165.

" memory and tradition. Adam Smith, the celebrated
" Professor in Glasgow, told me, that the Piper of the
" Argyleshire Militia repeated to him all those which
" Mr. Macpherson had translated, and many more of
" equal beauty. Major Mackay (Lord Rae's brother)
" told me that he remembers them perfectly well; as
" likewise did the Laird of Macfarline, (the greatest
" Antiquarian we have in this country) and who insists
" strongly on the historical truth, as well as the poeti-
" cal beauty of these productions. I could add the
" Laird and Lady Macleod, with many more, that live
" in different parts of the Highlands, very remote from
" each other, and could only be acquainted with what
" had become (in a manner) national works *. There
" is a country Surgeon in Lochaber, who has by heart

* All this external evidence and much more has since been collected and published by Dr. Blair (see his Appendix to his Critical Dissertation on the Works of Ossian); and yet notwithstanding a later Irish writer has been hardy enough to assert, that the Poems in question abound with the strangest anachronisms: for instance, that Cucullin lived in the first, and Fingal in the third century; two princes who are said to have made war with the Danes, a nation never heard of in Europe till the ninth; which war could not possibly have happened till 500 years after the death of the supposed Poet who sings it. (See O'Halloran's Introduction to the Study of the History and Antiquities of Ireland, quarto, 1772). To whatever side of the question truth may lean, it is of little moment to me; my doubts arising (as I have said in the former note) from internal evidence only, and a want of proof of the fidelity of the translation.

" the entire Epic Poem mentioned by Mr. Macpherson
" in his preface; and, as he is old, is perhaps the only
" person living that knows it all, and has never com-
" mitted it to writing, we are in the more haste to re-
" cover a monument, which will certainly be regarded
" as a curiosity in the Republic of Letters: we have
" therefore set about a subscription of a guinea or two
" guineas apiece, in order to enable Mr. Macpherson
" to undertake a mission into the Highlands to recover
" this poem, and other fragments of antiquity." He adds too, that the names of Fingal, Ossian, Oscar, &c. are still given in the Highlands to large Mastiffs, as we give to ours the names of Cæsar, Pompey, Hector, &c.

LETTER XL.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

London, 1761.

I Rejoice to find that you not only grow reconciled to your northern scene, but discover beauties round you that once were deformities: I am persuaded the whole matter is to have always something going forward. Happy they that can create a rose-tree, or erect a honey-suckle; that can watch the brood of a hen, or

see a fleet of their own ducklings launch into the water: It is with a sentiment of envy I speak it, who never shall have even a thatched roof of my own, nor gather a strawberry but in Covent-Garden. I will not, however, believe in the *vocality* of Old-Park till next summer, when perhaps I may trust to my own ears.

The Nouvelle Heloise cruelly disappointed me, but it has its partisans, amongst which are Mason and Mr. Hurd; for me, I admire nothing but Fingal* (I conclude you have seen it, if not, Stonhewer can lend it you); yet I remain still in doubt about the authenticity of these poems, though inclining rather to believe them genuine in spite of the world; whether they are the inventions of antiquity, or of a modern Scotchman, either case is to me alike unaccountable; *je m'y perd.*

I send you a Swedish and English Calendar†; the

* In a letter to another friend, informing him that he had sent Fingal down to him, he says, "For my part I will stick to my cre-"dulity, and if I am cheated, think it is worse for him (the trans-"lator) than for me, The Epic Poem is foolishly so called, yet "there is a sort of plan and unity in it very strange for a bar-"barous age; yet what I more admire are some of the detached "pieces——the rest I leave to the discussion of antiquarians and "historians; yet my curiosity is much interested in their deci-"sion." No man surely ever took more pains with himself to believe any thing than Mr. Gray seems to have done on this occasion.

† See Stillingfleet's Tracts, p. 261.

first column is by Berger, a disciple of Linnæus; the second by Mr. Stillingfleet; the third (very imperfect indeed) by me. You are to observe, as you tend your plantations and take your walks, how the spring advances in the north, and whether Old-Park most resembles Upsal or Stratton. The latter has on one side a barren black heath, on the other a light sandy loam, all the country about it is a dead flat; you see it is necessary you should know the situation (I do not mean any reflection upon any body's place); and this is the description Mr. Stillingfleet gives of his friend Mr. Marsham's seat, to which he retires in the summer and botanizes. I have lately made an acquaintance with this Philosopher, who lives in a garret here in the winter, that he may support some near relations who depend upon him; he is always employed, consequently (according to my old maxim) always happy, always chearful, and seems to me a very worthy honest man: his present scheme is to send some persons properly qualified to reside a year or two in Attica, to make themselves acquainted with the climate, productions, and natural history of the country, that we may understand Aristotle, Theophrastus, &c. who have been Heathen Greek to us for so many ages; and this he has got proposed to Lord Bute, no unlikely person to put it into execution, as he is himself a botanist.

LETTER XLI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

London, Jan. 22, 1761.

I Cannot pity you; *au contraire,* I wish I had been at Aston, when I was foolish enough to go through the six volumes of the *Nouvelle Héloïse.* All I can say for myself is, that I was confined for three weeks at home by a severe cold, and had nothing better to do: There is no one event in it that might not happen any day of the week (separately taken) in any private family; yet these events are so put together, that the series of them is more absurd and more improbable than Amadis de Gaul. The dramatis personæ (as the author says) are all of them good characters; I am sorry to hear it: for had they been all hanged at the end of the third volume, no body (I believe) would have cared. In short, I went on and on, in hopes of finding some wonderful *denouement* that would set all right, and bring something like nature and interest out of absurdity and insipidity: no such thing, it grows worse and worse; and (if it be Rousseau's, which is not doubted) is the strongest instance I ever saw, that a very extraordinary man may entirely mistake his own talents. By

the motto and preface, it appears to be his own story, or something similar to it *.

The Opera-House is crowded this year like any ordinary Theatre. Elisi is finer than any thing that has been here in your memory: yet, as I suspect, has been finer than he is: he appears to be near forty, a little pot-bellied and thick shouldered, otherwise no bad figure; his action proper, and not ungraceful. We have heard nothing, since I remember Operas, but eternal passages, divisions, and flights of execution: of these he has absolutely none; whether merely from judgment, or a little from age, I will not affirm; his point is expression, and to that all the graces and ornaments he inserts (which are few and short) are evidently directed: He goes higher (they say) than Farinelli; but then this celestial note you do not hear above once in a whole Opera; and he falls from this altitude at once to the mellowest, softest, strongest tones (about the middle of his compass) that can be heard. The Mattei, I assure you, is much improved by his example, and by

* If it be considered that Mr. Gray always preferred expression and sentiment to the arrangement of a story, it may seem somewhat extraordinary that the many striking beauties of these kinds, with which this singular work abounds, were not excepted from so general a censure: for my own part (to use a phrase of his own) "they strike me blind" to all the defects which he has here enumerated.

her great success this winter; but then the burlettas, and the Paganina, I have not been so pleased with any thing these many years: She too is fat, and above forty, yet handsome withal, and has a face that speaks the language of all nations: She has not the invention, the fire, and the variety of action that the Spiletta had; yet she is light, agile, ever in motion, and above all graceful; but then her voice, her ear, her taste in singing: Good God-----as Mr. Richardson the painter says. Pray, ask Lord *; for I think I have seen him there once or twice, as much pleased as I was.

LETTER XLII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

August, 1761.

BE assured your York Canon never will die; so the better the thing is in value, the worse for you *. The true way to immortality is to get you nominated one's successor: Age and Diseases vanish at your name; Fevers turn to radical heat, and Fistulas to issues: it is a

* This was written at a time, when, by the favour of Dr. Fountayne, Dean of York, I expected to be made a Residentiary in his Cathedral.

judgment that waits on your insatiable avarice. You could not let the poor old man die at his ease, when he was about it; and all his family (I suppose) are cursing you for it.

I wrote to Lord **** on his recovery; and he answers me very chearfully, as if his illness had been but slight, and the pleurisy were no more than a hole in one's stocking. He got it (he says) not by scampering, racketing, and riding post, as I had supposed; but by going with Ladies to Vauxhall. He is the picture (and pray so tell him, if you see him) of an old Alderman that I knew, who, after living forty years on the fat of the land, (not milk and honey, but arrack punch and venison) and losing his great toe with a mortification, said to the last, that he owed it to two grapes, which he eat one day after dinner. He felt them lie cold at his stomach the minute they were down.

Mr. Montagu (as I guess, at your instigation) has earnestly desired me to write some lines to be put on a monument, which he means to erect at Bellisle *. It is a task I do not love, knowing Sir William Williams so slightly as I did: but he is so friendly a person, and his affliction seemed to me so real, that I could not re-

* See p. 57 of the Poems.

fuse him. I have sent him the following verses, which I neither like myself, nor will he, I doubt: however, I have shewed him that I wished to oblige him. Tell me your real opinion.

LETTER XLIII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, Dec. 4, 1762.

I Feel very ungrateful every day that I continue silent; and yet now that I take my pen in hand I have only time to tell you, that of all the places which I saw in my return from you, Hardwicke pleased me the most *. One would think that Mary, Queen of Scots, was but just walked down into the park with her guard for half an hour; her gallery, her room of audience, her anti-chamber, with the very canopies, chair of state, footstool, *lit de repos*, oratory, carpets, and hangings, just as she left them: a little tattered indeed, but the more venerable; and all preserved with religious care, and papered up in winter.

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* A seat of the Duke of Devonshire, in Derbyshire.

When I arrived in London I found Professor Turner* had been dead above a fortnight; and being cockered and spirited up by some friends (though it was rather the latest) I got my name suggested to Lord Bute. You may easily imagine who undertook it, and indeed he did it with zeal†. I received my answer very soon, which was what you may easily imagine, but joined with great professions of his desire to serve me on future occasions, and many more fine words that I pass over, not out of modesty, but for another reason: so you see I have made my fortune like Sir Francis Wronghead. This nothing is a profound secret, and no one here suspects it even now. To-day I hear Mr. E. Delaval‡ has got it, but we are not yet certain; next to myself I wished for him.

You see we have made a peace. I shall be silent about it, because if I say any thing anti-ministerial, you will tell me you know the reason; and if I approve it, you will think I have my expectations still. All I

* Professor of Modern Languages in the University of Cambridge.

† This person was the late Sir Henry Erskine. As this was the only application Mr. Gray ever made to ministry, I thought it necessary to insert his own account of it. The place in question was given to the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

‡ Fellow of Pembroke-Hall, and of the Royal Society.

know is, that the Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hardwick both say it is an excellent peace, and only Mr. Pitt calls it inglorious and insidious.

LETTER XLIV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

February 8, 1763.

DOCTISSIME Domine, anne tibi arrident *complimenta* *? If so, I hope your vanity is tickled with the *verghe d'oro* of Count Algarotti, and the intended trans-

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* William Taylor Howe, Esq; of Stondon Place, near Chipping-Ongar, in Essex, an honorary Fellow of Pembroke-Hall, was now on his travels in Italy, where he had made an acquaintance with the celebrated Count Algarotti, and had recommended to him Mr. Gray's Poems and my Dramas. After the perusal he received a Letter from the Count, written in that style of superlative panegyric peculiar to Italians. A copy of this letter Mr. Howe had just now sent to our common friend Mr. Brown, then President of the College; and also another of the Count's, addressed to Sigr. Paradisi, a Tuscan Poet; in which, after explaining the arguments of my two Dramatic Poems, he advises him to translate them; but principally Caractacus.—This anecdote not only explains the above paragraph, but the subsequent Letter. The Latin, at the beginning of the letter, alludes to a similar expression which a Fellow of a College had made use of to a foreigner who dined in the College Hall. Having occasion to ask him if he would eat any cabbage to his boiled beef, he said "anne tibi arrident Herbæ?"

lation of Sig^{r}. Agostino Paradisi: for my part, I am ravished (for I too have my share). Are you upon the road to see all these wonders, and snuff up the incense of Pisa; or has Mr. Brown abated your ardour by sending you the originals? I am waiting with impatience for your coming.

I am obliged to you for your Drawing and very *learned* dissertation annexed *. You have made out your point with a great degree of probability, (for tho' the *nimis adhæsit* might startle one, yet the sale of the tithes and chapel to Webster seems to set all right again) and I do believe the building in question was the chapel of St. Sepulchre. But then, that the ruin now standing was the individual chapel as erected by Archbishop Roger, I can by no means think: I found myself merely on the style and taste of architecture. The vaults under the choir are still in being, and were undoubtedly built by this very Archbishop: they are truly

* This relates to the ruin of a small Gothic chapel near the north-west end of the cathedral at York, not noticed by Drake in his Eboracum. When Mr. Gray made me a visit at that place the summer before, he was much struck with the beautiful proportion of the windows in it, which induced me to get Mr. Paul Sandby to make a drawing of it; and also to endeavour, in a Letter to Mr. Gray, to explain to what foundation it belonged. As his answer contains some excellent general remarks on Gothic building, I thought proper to publish it, though the particular matter which occasioned them was not of any great consequence.

Saxon; only that the arches are pointed, though very obtusely. It is the south transept (not the north) that is the oldest part of the minster now above ground: it is said to have been begun by Geffery Plantagenet, who died about thirty years after Roger, and left it unfinished. His successor, Walter Grey, compleated it; so we do not exactly know to which of these two prelates we are to ascribe any certain part of it. Grey lived a long time, and was Archbishop from 1216 to 1255 (39 Henry III.); and in this reign it was, that the beauty of the Gothic architecture began to appear. The chapter-house is in all probability his work, and (I should suppose) built in his latter days; whereas what he did of the south transept might be performed soon after his accession. It is in the second order of this building, that the round arches appear including a row of pointed ones, (which you mention, and which I also observed) similar to those in St. Sepulchre's chapel, though far inferior in the proportions and neatness of workmanship. The same thing is repeated in the north transept; but this is only an imitation of the other, done for the sake of regularity; for this part of the building is no older than Archbishop Romaine, who came to the see in 1285, and died 1295.

All the buildings of Henry the Second's time (under whom Roger lived and died, 1185) are of a clumsy and

heavy proportion, with a few rude and awkward ornaments; and this style continues to the beginning of Henry the Third's reign, though with a little improvement, as in the nave of Fountain's abbey, &c. then all at once come in the tall picked arches, the light clustered columns, the capitals of curling foliage, the fretted tabernacles and vaultings, and a profusion of statues, &c. that constitute the good Gothic style; together with decreasing and flying buttresses, and pinnacles, on the outside. Nor must you conclude any thing from Roger's own tomb, which has (I remember) a wide surbased arch with scalloped ornaments, &c. for this can be no older than the nave itself, which was built by Archbishop Melton after the year 1315, one hundred and thirty years after Roger's death.

I have compared Helvetius and Elfrida, as you desired me *, and find thirteen parallel passages; five of

* As the plagiarism, to which Mr. Gray here alludes, is but little known, and, I think, for its singularity, is somewhat curious, I shall beg the reader's patience while I dilate upon it; though I am aware it will stretch this note to an unconscionable length. M. Helvetius, in the third chapter of his third Essay de l'Esprit, which treats of the Extent of Memory, means to prove that this faculty, in the extreme, is not necessary to constitute a great Genius. For this purpose he examines whether the greatness of the very different talents of Locke and of Milton ought to be considered as the effect of their possessing this talent in an extraordinary degree. He then proceeds as follows: "As the last example of the small extent

which, at least, are so direct and close as to leave no shadow of a doubt, and therefore confirm all the rest.

" of memory necessary to a fine imagination, I shall give in a note " *the translation of a piece of English poetry;* which, with the pre- " ceding, will, I believe, prove to those who would decompose the " works of illustrious men, that a great genius does not neces- " sarily suppose a great memory." I now set down that note with references to Elfrida underneath it, and I choose to give it in the English translation printed in 1759, that the parallel passages may be the more obvious at first sight. " A young Virgin, awaked and " guided by Love, goes before the appearance of Aurora to a val- " ley, where she waits for the coming of her Lover, who, at the " rising of the sun, is to offer a sacrifice to the Gods. Her soul, in " the soft situation in which she is placed by the hopes of ap- " proaching happiness, indulges, while waiting for him, the plea- " sure of contemplating the beauties of Nature, and the rising of " that luminary that was to bring the object of her tenderness." She expresses herself thus:

" *Already the Sun gilds the tops of those antique Oaks, and the* " *waves of those falling torrents that roar among the rocks shine with* " *his beams; already I perceive the summit of those shaggy mountains* " *whence arise the vaults which, half-concealed in the air, offer a for-* " *midable retreat to the Solitary who there retires*[a]. Night folds up " her veil. *Ye wanton fires, that mislead the wandering traveller, re-* " *tire*[b] *to the* quagmires and marshy fens; and *thou sun, lord of the* " *heavens, who fillest the air with reviving heat, who sowest with dewy*

[a] How nobly does this venerable wood,
Gilt with the glories of the orient sun,
Embosom yon fair mansion!
----- On the shaggy mound,
Where tumbling torrents roar around;
Where pendent mountains o'er your head
Stretch a formidable shade——
Where lull'd in pious Peace the Hermit lies.

[b] Away, ye goblins all,
Wont the bewilder'd traveller to daunt——

It is a phænomenon that you will be in the right to inform yourself about, and which I long to understand.

" *pearls the flowers of these meadows, and givest colours to the varied* " *beauties of nature, receive my first homage* [c], and hasten thy course. " Thy appearance proclaims that of my lover. *Freed from the pious* " *cares that detain him still at the foot of the altars, love will soon* " *bring him to mine* [d]. Let all around me partake of my joy. Let " all bless the rising luminary by which we are enlightened. Ye " flowers that inclose in your bosoms the odours that cool night " condenses there, open your buds, and exhale in the air your " balmy vapours. I know not whether the delightful intoxication " that possesses my soul, does not embellish whatever I behold; " but the rivulet, that in pleasing meanders winds along this val- " ley, enchants me with his murmurs. *Zephyrus caresses me with* " *his breath; the fragrant plants, pressed under my feet, waft to my* " *senses their perfume. Oh! if Felicity sometimes condescends to visit* " *the abode of mortals, to these places, doubtless, she retires* [e]. But " with what secret trouble am I agitated? Already Impatience " mingles its poison with the sweetness of my expectation. This " valley has already lost all its beauties. Is Joy then so fleeting?

[c] Hail to thy living light
Ambrosial Morn——
That bids each dewy-spangled flow'ret rise,
And dart around its vermil dies——
Unfolds the scene of glory to our eye,
Where, thron'd in artless majesty,
The cherub Beauty sits on Nature's rustic shrine.—

[d] 'Twill not be long, ere his unbending mind
Shall lose in sweet oblivion every care
Among th' embowering shades that veil Elfrida.

[e] The soft air
Salutes me with most cool and temperate breath,
And, as I tread, the flow'r-besprinkled lawn
Sends up a gale of fragrance. I should guess,
If e'er Content deign'd visit mortal clime,
This was her place of dearest residence.

Another phænomenon is, that I read it without finding it out: all I remember is, that I thought it not at

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" *It is as easy to snatch it from us, as for the light down of these plants* " *to be blown away by the breath of the Zephyrs* [f]. In vain have I re- " course to flattering Hope. Each moment increases my distur- " bance. He will come no more. Who keeps him at a distance " from me? What duty more sacred than that of calming the in- " quietudes of Love! But what do I say? *Fly jealous suspicions,* " *injurious to his fidelity* [g], and formed to extinguish my tenderness. " *If jealousy grows by the side of Love, it will stifle it, if not pulled up* " *by the roots; it is the Ivy which, by a verdant chain, embraces, but* " *dries up the trunk which serves for its support* [h]. I know my " Lover too well to doubt of his tenderness. He, like me, has, far " from the pomp of courts, sought the tranquil asylum of the fields. " Touched by the simplicity of my heart, and by my beauty, my " sensual rivals call him in vain to their arms. Shall he be se- " duced by the advances of coquetry, *which, on the cheek of the* " *young maid, tarnishes the snow of innocence and the carnation of mo* " *desty, and daubs it with the whiteness of art and the paint of effron-* " *tery* [i]? What do I say? his contempt for her is perhaps only a

[f] For Safety now sits wav'ring on your love,
Like the light down upon the thistle's beard,
Which ev'ry breeze may part.

[g] Avaunt! ye vain delusive fears.

[h] See, Elfrida;
Ah see! how round yon branching Elm the *Ivy*
Clasps its *green chain*, and poisons what supports it.
Not less injurious to the shoots of Love
Is sickly Jealousy.

[i] —To guard
Your beauties from the blast of courtly gales.
The crimson blush of virgin Modesty,
The delicate soft tints of Innocence,
There all fly off, and leave no boast behind
But well-rang'd, faded features.

all *English*, and did not much like it; and the reason is plain, for the lyric flights and choral flowers suited not

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" snare for me. Can I be ignorant of the partiality of men, and " the arts they employ to seduce us? Nourished in a contempt " for our Sex, it is not Us, it is their pleasures that they love. " Cruel as they are, they have placed in the rank of the virtues the " barbarous fury of revenge, and the mad love of their country; " but never have they reckoned fidelity among the virtues. With- " out remorse they abuse innocence, and often their vanity con- " templates our griefs with delight. But no; fly far from me, ye " odious thoughts, my Lover will come! A thousand times have " I experienced it: *As soon as I perceive him my agitated mind is calm,* " *and I often forget the too just cause I have for complaint; for near* " *him I can only know happiness* [k]. Yet if he is treacherous to me; " if, in the very moment when my love excuses him, he consum- " mates the crime of infidelity in another bosom, may all nature " take up arms in revenge! may he perish! What do I say? *Ye* " *Elements, be deaf to my cries! Thou Earth, open not thy profound* " *abyss! let the Monster walk the time prescribed him on thy splendid* " *surface, let him still commit new crimes, and still cause the tears of* " *the too credulous maids to flow; and if heaven avenges them and* " *punishes him, may it at least be at the prayer of some other unfortu-* " *nate woman* [l]."

[k] —My truant heart
Forgets each lesson that Resentment taught,
And in thy sight knows only to be happy.

In the French it is more literal, " Pres de lui je ne scâis qu' etre " heureuse."

[l] Till then, ye Elements, rest; and thou, firm Earth,
Ope not thy yawning jaws; but let this Monster
Stalk his due time on thine affrighted surface:
Yes, let him still go on, still execute
His savage purposes, and daily make
More widows weep, as I do.

in the least with the circumstances or character of the speaker, as he had contrived it.

LETTER XLV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BROWN.*

February 17, 1763.

YOU will make my best acknowledgments to Mr. Howe; who, not content to rank me in the number of his friends, is so polite as to make excuses for having done me that honour.

Here ends this odd instance of plagiarism. When M. Helvetius was in England, a year or two after I had made the discovery of it, I took my measures (as Mr. Gray advised me) to learn how he came by it; and accordingly requested two Noblemen, to whom he was introduced, to ask him some questions concerning it; but I could gain no satisfactory answer. I do not, however, by any means, suppose that the person who cooked up the disjointed parts of my Drama into this strange Fricasee, was M. Helvetius himself; I rather imagine (as I did from the first) that he was imposed upon by some young English traveller, who contrived this expedient in order to pass with him for a Poet. The great Philosopher, it is true, has in this note been proved to be *the receiver of Stolen Goods;* but out of respect to his numerous fashionable disciples, both abroad and at home, whose credit might suffer with that of their Master, I acquit him of what would only be held criminal at the Old Bailey, that he received these goods *knowing them to be stolen.*

* Now master of Pembroke-Hall.

I was not born so far from the sun, as to be ignorant of Count Algarotti's name and reputation; nor am I so far advanced in years, or in philosophy, as not to feel the warmth of his approbation. The Odes in question, as their motto shews, were meant to be *vocal to the intelligent alone.* How few they were in my own country, Mr. Howe can testify; and yet my ambition was terminated by that small circle. I have good reason to be proud, if my voice has reached the ear and apprehension of a stranger, distinguished as one of the best judges in Europe.

I am equally pleased with the just applause he bestows on Mr. Mason; and particularly on his Caractacus, which is the work of a Man: whereas Elfrida is only that of a Boy, a promising boy indeed, and of no common genius: yet this is the popular performance, and the other little known in comparison.

Neither Count Algarotti nor Mr. Howe (I believe) have heard of Ossian, the Son of Fingal. If Mr. Howe were not upon the wing, and on his way homewards, I would send it to him in Italy. He would there see that Imagination dwelt many hundred years ago, in all her pomp, on the cold and barren mountains of Scotland. The truth (I believe) is, that, without any respect of climates, she reigns in all nascent societies of

men, where the necessities of life force every one to think and act much for himself *.

LETTER XLVI.

COUNT ALGAROTTI TO MR. GRAY.

Pisa, 24 Aprile, 1763.

SONO stato lungo tempo in dubbio se un dilettante quale io sono, dovea mandare alcune sue coserelle a un Professore quale è V. S. Illus^{mo}, a un arbitro di ogni poetica eleganza. Nè ci volea meno che l'autorità del valorissimo Sig^{r}. How per persuadermi a ciò fare. V. S. Illmo accolga queste mie coserelle con quella medesima bontà con cui ha voluto accogliere quella lettera che dice pur poco delle tante cose, che fanno sen-

* One is led to think from this paragraph that the scepticism, which Mr. Gray had expressed before, concerning these works of Ossian, was now entirely removed (p. 163). I know no way of accounting for this (as he had certainly received no stronger evidence of their authenticity) but from the turn of his studies at the time. He had of late much busied himself in Antiquities, and consequently had imbibed too much of the spirit of a profest Antiquarian; now we know, from a thousand instances, that no set of men are more willingly duped than these, especially by any thing that comes to them under the fascinating form of a new discovery.

tire alle anime armoniche di ammirabili suoi versi. Io saro per quanto io porrô, *Præco laudum tuarum,* e quella mia lettera si stamperà in un nuovo Giornale, che si fa in Venezia, intitolato *la Minerva,* perche sappia la Italia che la Inghilterra, ricca di un * Omero, di uno † Archimede, di un ‡ Demostene, non manca del suo Pindaro. Al Sig^r. How le non saprei dire quanti obblighi io abbia, ma si maggiore è certamente quello di avermi presentato alla sua Musa, e di avermi procurato la occasione di poterla assicurare della perfetta ed altissima stima, con cui io ho l'honore di sottescrivermi,

De V. S. Illus^mo

Devotis. &c.

ALGAROTTI.

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* Milton. † Newton. ‡ Mr. Pitt.

LETTER XLVII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Pembroke-Hall, Aug. 5, 1763.

YOU may well wonder at my long taciturnity. I wonder too, and know not what cause to assign; for it is certain I think of you daily. I believe it is owing to the nothingness of my history; for except six weeks that I passed in Town towards the end of the spring, and a little jaunt to Epsom and Box-hill, I have been here time out of mind, in a place where no events grow, tho' we preserve those of former days, by way of *Hortus siccus* in our libraries.

I doubt you have not yet read Rousseau's Emile. Every body that has children should read it more than once: for tho' it abounds with his usual glorious absurdity, tho' his general scheme of education be an impracticable chimera, yet there are a thousand lights struck out, a thousand important truths better expressed than ever they were before, that may be of service to the wisest men. Particularly I think he has observed children with more attention, and knows their

meaning and the working of their little passions better than any other writer. As to his religious discussions, which have alarmed the world, and engaged their thoughts more than any other part of his book, I set them all at nought, and wish they had been omitted *.

* That I may put together the rest of Mr. Gray's sentiments concerning this singular writer, I insert here an extract from a Letter of later date, written to myself. "I have not read the Philo-" sophic Dictionary. I can now stay with great patience for any " thing that comes from Voltaire. They tell me it is frippery, and " blasphemy, and wit. I could have forgiven myself if I had not " read Rousseau's Lettres de la Montagne. Always excepting the " Contract social, it is the dullest performance he ever published. " It is a weak attempt to separate the miracles from the morality " of the gospel. The latter (he would have you think) he believes " was sent from God; and the former he very explicitly takes for " an imposture: this is in order to prove the cruelty and injustice " of the State of Geneva in burning his Emile. The latter part of " his book is to shew the abuses that have crept into the constitu-" tion of his country, which point (if you are concerned about it) " he makes out very well; and his intention in this is plainly to " raise a tumult in the city, and to be revenged on the *Petit Con-" seil*, who condemned his writings to the flames."

LETTER XLVIII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. PALGRAVE *.

March, 1765.

MY instructions, of which you are so desirous, are two-fold: the first part relates to what is past, and that will be rather diffuse: the second, to what is to come; and that we shall treat more succinctly, and with all due brevity.

First, when you come to Paris you will not fail to visit the cloister of the Chartreuse, where Le Sueur (in the history of St. Bruno) has almost equalled Raphael. Then your Gothic inclinations will naturally lead you to the Sainte Chapelle built by St. Louis: in the treasury is preserved one of the noblest gems of the Augustan age. When you take a trip into the country, there is a fine old chapel at Vincennes with admirable painted windows; and at Fontainbleau, the remains of Francis the First's magnificence might give you some pleasure. In your way to Lyons you will take notice of the view over the Saone, from about Tournus and

* Mr. Gray's correspondent was now making the tour of France and Italy.

Macon. Fail not to walk a few miles along the banks of the Rhone, down the river. I would certainly make a little journey to the Grande Chartreuse, up the mountains: at your return out of Italy this will have little effect. At Turin you will visit the Capuchins' convent just without the city, and the Superga at no great distance, for the sake of the views. At Genoa observe the Terreno of the Palace Brignoli, as a model of an apartment elegantly disposed in a hot climate. At Parma you will adore the great Madonna and St. Jerom, once at St. Antonio Abbate, but now (I am told) in the Ducal Palace. In the Madonna della Steccata observe the Moses breaking the tables, a chiaroscuro figure of the Parmeggiano at too great a height, and ill lighted, but immense. At the Capuchins, the great Pietá of Annib. Caracci; in the Villa Ducale, the room painted by Carlo Cignani; and the last works of Agostino Caracci at Modena *. I know not what remains

* When our Author was himself in Italy, he studied with much attention the different manners of the old masters. I find a paper written at the time in which he has set down several subjects proper for painting, which he had never seen executed, and has affixed the names of different masters to each piece, to shew which of their pencils he thought would have been most proper to treat it. As I doubt not but this paper will be an acceptable present to the Reynolds's and West's of the age, I shall here insert it.

" An Altar-Piece.——Guido.

The top, a Heaven; in the middle, at a distance, the Padre-Eterno indistinctly seen, and lost, as it were, in glory. On either hand, Angels of all degrees in attitudes of adoration and wonder.

now, the flower of the collection is gone to Dresden. Bologna is too vast a subject for me to treat: the palaces and churches are open; you have nothing to do but to see them all. In coming down the Apennine

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A little lower, and next the eye, supported on the wings of Seraphs, Christ (the principal figure) with an air of calm and serene majesty, his hand extended, as commanding the elements to their several places: near him an Angel of superior rank bearing the golden compasses (that Milton describes); beneath the Chaos, like a dark and turbulent ocean, only illumined by the Spirit, who is brooding over it.

A small Picture.——Correggio.

Eve newly created, admiring her own shadow in the lake.

The famous Venus of this master, now in the possession of Sir William Hamilton, proves how jndiciously Mr. Gray fixed upon his pencil for the execution of this charming subject. M.

Another.——Domenichino.

Medea in a pensive posture, with revenge and maternal affection striving in her visage; her two children at play, sporting with one another before her. On one side a bust of Jason, to which they bear some resemblance.

A Statue.——Michael Angelo.

Agave in the moment she returns to her senses; the head of her Son, fallen on the ground from her hand.

Vide Ovid. Met. lib. iii. l. 701, *&c.* M.

A Picture.——Salvator Rosa.

Æneas and the Sybil sacrificing to Pluto by torch-light in the wood, the assistants in a fright. The Day beginning to break, so as dimly to show the mouth of the cavern.

Sigismonda with the heart of Guiscardo before her. I have seen a small print on this subject, where the expression is admirable, said to be graved from a picture of Correggio.

Afterwards, when he had seen the original in the possession of the late Sir Luke Schaub, he always expressed the highest admiration of it; tho' we see. by his here giving it to Salvator Rosa, he thought the subject too

you will see (if the sun shines) all Tuscany before you. And so I have brought you to Florence, where to be sure there is nothing worth seeing. Secondly,

1. Vide, quodcunque videndum est.

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horrid to be treated by Correggio; and indeed I believe it is agreed that the capital picture in question is not of his hand. M.

Another.——Albano, or the Parmeggiano.

Iphigenia asleep by the fountain-side, her maids about her; Cymon gazing and laughing.

This subject has been often treated; once indeed very curiously by Sir Peter Lely, in the way of portrait, when his sacred Majesty Charles the Second represented Cymon, and the Duchess of Cleveland and Mrs. Eleanor Gwin (in as indecent attitudes as his royal taste could prescribe) were Iphigenia and her attendants. M.

Another.——Domenichino, or the Caracci.

Electra with the urn, in which she imagined were her Brother's ashes, lamenting over them; Orestes smothering his concern.

Another.——Correggio.

Ithuriel and Zephon entering the bower of Adam and Eve; they sleeping. The light to proceed from the Angels.

Another.——Nicholas Poussin.

Alcestis dying; her children weeping, and hanging upon her robe; the youngest of them, a little boy, crying too, but appearing rather to do so, because the other are afflicted, than from any sense of the reason of their sorrow: her right arm should be round this, her left extended towards the rest, as recommending them to her Lord's care; he fainting, and supported by the attendants.

Salvator Rosa.

Hannibal passing the Alps; the mountaineers rolling down rocks upon his army; elephants tumbling down the precipices.

Another.——Domenichino.

Arria giving Claudius's order to Pætus, and stabbing herself at the same time.

N. Poussin, or Le Sueur.

Virginius murdering his daughter; Appius at a distance, start-

2. Quodcunque ego non vidi, id tu vide.
3. Quodcunque videris, scribe & describe; memoriæ ne fide.
4. Scribendo nil admirare; & cum pictor non sis, verbis omnia depinge.
5. Tritam viatorum compitam calca, & cum poteris, desere.
6. Eme, quodcunque emendum est; I do not mean pictures, medals, gems, drawings, &c. only; but clothes, stockings, shoes, handkerchiefs, little moveables; every thing you may want all your life long: but have a care of the custom-house.

Pray present my most respectful compliments to Mr. Weddell *. I conclude when the winter is over, and you have seen Rome and Naples, you will strike out of the beaten path of English travellers, and see a little of the country, throw yourselves into the bosom of the Apennine, survey the horrid lake of Amsanctus (look in Cluver's Italy), catch the breezes on the coast of Taranto and Salerno, expatiate to the very toe of the continent, perhaps strike over the Faro of Messina, and having measured the gigantic columns of Girgenti,

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ing up from his tribunal; the people amazed, but few of them seeing the action itself."

* William Weddell, Esq; of Newby in Yorkshire.

and the tremendous caverns of Syracusa, refresh yourselves amidst the fragrant vale of Enna. Oh! che bel riposo! Addio.

LETTER XLIX.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.*

Glames-Castle, Sept. 8, 1765.

A Little journey I have been making to Arbroath, has been the cause that I did not answer your very obliging letter so soon as I ought to have done. A man of merit, that honours me with his esteem, and has the frankness to tell me so, doubtless can need no excuses: his apology is made, and we are already acquainted, however distant from each other.

I fear I cannot (as I would wish) do myself the pleasure of waiting on you at Aberdeen, being under an engagement to go to-morrow to Taymouth, and, if the weather will allow it, to the Blair of Athol: this will take up four or five days, and at my return the approach of winter will scarce permit me to think of any farther

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* Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic in the Marischal College, Aberdeen.

expeditions northwards. My stay here will, however, be a fortnight or three weeks longer; and if in that time any business or invitation should call you this way, Lord Strathmore gives me commission to say, he shall be extremely glad to see you at Glames; and doubt not it will be a particular satisfaction to me to receive and thank you in person for the favourable sentiments you have entertained of me, and the civilities with which you have honoured me.

LETTER L.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Glames-Castle, Sept. 14, 1765.

I Deferred writing to you till I had seen a little more of this country than you yourself had seen; and now being just returned from an excursion, which I and Major Lyon have been making into the Highlands, I sit down to give you an account of it. But first I must return to my journey hither, on which I shall be very short; partly because you know the way as far as Edinburgh, and partly that there was not a great deal worth remarking. The first night we passed at Tweedmouth (77 miles); the next at Edinburgh (53 miles); where

Lord Strathmore left the Major and me, to go to Lenox-Love, (Lord Blantyre's) where his Aunt lives: so that afternoon and all next day I had leisure to visit the Castle, Holyrood-House, Heriot's Hospital, Arthur's seat, &c. and am not sorry to have seen that most picturesque (at a distance), and nastiest (when near) of all capital cities. I supped with Dr. Robertson and other literati, and the next morning Lord Strathmore came for us. We crossed at the Queen's Ferry in a four-oared yawl without a sail, and were tossed about rather more than I should wish to hazard again; lay at Perth, a large Scotch town with much wood about it, on the banks of the Tay, a very noble river. Next morning ferried over it, and came by dinner-time to Glames; being (from Edinburgh) 67 miles, which makes in all (from Hetton) 197 miles. The castle * stands in Strathmore (i. e. the Great Valley) which winds about from Stonehaven on the east coast of Kincardineshire, obliquely, as far as Stirling, near 100 miles in length, and from seven to ten miles in breadth, cultivated every where to the foot of the hills, on either hand, with oats or bere, a species of barley, except where the soil is mere peat-earth, (black as a coal) or barren sand covered only with broom and heath, or a short grass fit for sheep. Here and there appear, just above ground, the

* This is said to be the very Castle in which Duncan was murdered by Macbeth.

huts of the inhabitants, which they call Towns, built of, and covered with, turf; and among them, at great distances, the gentlemen's houses, with inclosures and a few trees round them.

Amidst these the Castle of Glames distinguishes itself, the middle part of it rising proudly out of what seems a great and thick wood of tall trees, with a cluster of hanging towers on the top. You descend to it gradually from the south, through a double and triple avenue of Scotch firs 60 or 70 feet high, under three gateways. This approach is a full mile long; and when you have passed the second gate, the firs change to limes, and another oblique avenue goes off on either hand towards the offices. These, as well as all the inclosures that surround the house, are bordered with three or four ranks of sycamores, ashes, and white poplars of the noblest height, and from 70 to 100 years old. Other alleys there are, that go off at right angles with the long one; small groves, and walled gardens, of Earl Patrick's planting, full of broad-leaved elms, oaks, birch, black cherry-trees, laburnums, &c. all of great stature and size, which have not till this week begun to shew the least sense of morning frosts. The third gate delivers you into a court with a broad pavement, and grass-plats adorned with statues of the four Stuart Kings, bordered with old silver firs and yew-

trees, alternately, and opening with an iron palisade on either side to two square old-fashioned parterres surrounded by stone fruit-walls. The house, from the height of it, the greatness of its mass, the many towers atop, and the spread of its wings, has really a very singular and striking appearance, like nothing I ever saw. You will comprehend something of its shape from the plan of the second floor, which I inclose. The wings are about 50 feet high; the body (which is the old castle, with walls 10 feet thick) is near 100. From the leads I see to the south of me (just at the end of the avenue) the little town of Glames, the houses built of stone, and slated, with a neat kirk and small square tower (a rarity in this region). Just beyond it rises a beautiful round hill, and another ridge of a longer form adjacent to it, both covered with woods of tall fir. Beyond them, peep over the black hills of Sid-law, over which winds the road to Dundee. To the north, within about seven miles of me, begin to rise the Grampians, hill above hill, on whose tops three weeks ago I could plainly see some traces of the snow that fell in May last. To the east, winds a way to the Strath, such as I have before described it, among the hills, which sink lower and lower as they approach the sea. To the west, the same valley (not plain, but broken, unequal ground) runs on for above 20 miles in view: there I see the crags above Dunkeld; there Beni-Gloe and Beni-

More rise above the clouds; and there is that Shekhallian, that spires into a cone above them all, and lies at least 45 miles (in a direct line) from this place.

Lorth Strathmore, who is the greatest farmer in this neighbourhood, is from break of day to dark night among his husbandmen and labourers: he has near 2000 acres of land in his own hands, and is at present employed in building a low wall of four miles long, and in widening the bed of the little river Deane, which runs to south and south-east of the house, from about twenty to fifty feet wide, both to prevent inundations, and to drain the lake of Forfar. This work will be two years more in compleating, and must be three miles in length. All the Highlanders that can be got are employed in it; many of them know no English, and I hear them singing Erse songs all day long. The price of labour is eight-pence a day; but to such as will join together, and engage to perform a certain portion in a limited time, two shillings.

I must say that all his labours seem to prosper; and my Lord has casually found in digging such quantities of shell-marl, as not only fertilize his own grounds, but are disposed of at a good price to all his neighbours. In his nurseries are thousands of oaks, beech, larches, horse-chesnuts, spruce-firs, &c. thick as they can stand,

and whose only fault is, that they are grown tall and vigorous before he has determined where to plant them out; the most advantageous spot we have for beauty lies west of the house, where (when the stone-walls of the meadows are taken away) the grounds, naturally unequal, will have a very park-like appearance: they are already full of trees, which need only thinning here and there to break the regularity of their trout-stream which joins the river Deane hard by. Pursuing the course of this brook upwards, you come to a narrow sequestered valley sheltered from all winds, thro' which it runs murmuring among great stones; on one hand the ground gently rises into a hill, on the other are the rocky banks of the rivulet almost perpendicular, yet covered with sycamore, ash, and fir, that (though it seems to have no place or soil to grow in) yet has risen to a good height, and forms a thick shade: you may continue along this gill, and passing by one end of the village and its church for half a mile, it leads to an opening between the two hills covered with fir-woods, that I mentioned above, through which the stream makes its way, and forms a cascade of ten or twelve feet over broken rocks. A very little art is necessary to make all this a beautiful scene. The weather, till the last week, has been in general very fine and warm; we have had no fires till now, and often have sat with the windows open an hour after sun-set: now and then

a shower has come, and sometimes sudden gusts of wind descend from the mountains, that finish as suddenly as they arose; but to-day it blows a hurricane. Upon the whole, I have been exceeding lucky in my weather, and particularly in my Highland expedition of five days.

We set out then the 11th of September, and continuing along the Strath to the west, passed through *Megill*, (where is the tomb of *Queen Wanders, that was riven to dethe by staned horses for nae gude that she did;* so the women there told me, I assure you) thro' Cowper of Angus: over the river Ila; then over a wide and dismal heath, fit for an assembly of witches, till we came to a string of four small lakes in a valley, whose deep blue waters and green margin, with a gentleman's house or two seated on them in little groves, contrasted with the black desert in which they were inchased. The ground now grew unequal; the hills, more rocky, seemed to close in upon us, till the road came to the brow of a steep descent, and (the sun then setting) between two woods of oak we saw far below us the river Tay come sweeping along at the bottom of a precipice, at least 150 feet deep, clear as glass, full to the brim, and very rapid in its course; it seemed to issue out of woods thick and tall, that rose on either hand, and were over-hung by broken rocky crags of vast height; above

them, to the west, the tops of higher mountains appeared, on which the evening clouds reposed. Down by the side of the river, under the thickest shades, is seated the town of Dunkeld; in the midst of it stands a ruined cathedral, the towers and shell of the building still entire: a little beyond it, a large house of the Duke of Athol, with its offices and gardens, extends a mile beyond the town; and as his grounds were interrupted by the streets and roads, he has flung arches of communication across them, that add to the scenery of the place, which of itself is built of good white stone, and handsomely slated; so that no one would take it for a Scotch town till they come into it. Here we passed the night; if I told you how, you would bless yourself.

Next day we set forward to Taymouth, 27 miles farther west; the road winding through beautiful woods, with the Tay almost always in full view to the right, being here from 3 to 400 feet over. The Strath-Tay, from a mile to three miles or more wide, covered with corn, and spotted with groups of people, then in the midst of their harvest; on either hand a vast chain of rocky mountains that changed their face and opened something new every hundred yards, as the way turned, or the clouds passed: in short, altogether it was one of the most pleasing days I have passed these many years, and at every step I wished for you. At the close of

day we came to *Balloch* *, so the place was called; but now *Taymouth*, improperly enough; for here it is that the river issues out of Loch-Tay, a glorious lake 15 miles long and one mile and a half broad, surrounded with prodigious mountains; there on its north-eastern brink, impending over it, is the vast hill of Lawers; to the east is that enormous creature, *She-khallian* (i e. the maiden's pap) spiring above the clouds: directly west, beyond the end of the lake, *Beni-More*, the great mountain rises to a most awful height, and looks down on the tomb of Fingal. Lord Breadalbane's *policy* (so they call here all such ground as is laid out for pleasure) takes in about 2000 acres, of which his house, offices, and a deer-park, about three miles round, occupy the plain or bottom, which is little above a mile in breadth; thro' it winds the Tay, which, by means of a bridge, I found here to be 156 feet over: his plantations and woods rise with the ground, on either side the vale, to the very summit of the enormous crags that overhang it: along them, on the mountain's side, runs a terrass a mile and a half long, that overlooks the course of the river. From several seats and temples perched on particular rocky eminences, you command the lake for many miles in length, which turns like

* Mr. Pennant, in his tour in Scotland, explains this word " the " Mouth of the Loch."

some huge river, and loses itself among the mountains that surround it; at its eastern extremity, where the river issues out of it, on a peninsula my Lord has built a neat little town and church with a high square tower; and just before it lies a small round island in the lake, covered with trees, amongst which are the ruins of some little religious house.

Trees, by the way, grow here to great size and beauty. I saw four old chesnuts in the road, as you enter the park, of vast bulk and height; one beech tree I measured that was 16 feet 7 inches in the girth, and, I guess, near 80 feet in height. The gardener presented us with peaches, nectarines, and plumbs from the stone-walls of the kitchen-garden (for there are no brick nor hot walls); the peaches were good, the rest well tasted, but scarce ripe; we had also golden pippins from an espalier, not ripe, and a melon very well flavoured and fit to cut: of the house I have little to say; it is a very good nobleman's house, handsomely furnished and well kept, very comfortable to inhabit, but not worth going far to see. Of the Earl's taste I have not much more to say; it is one of those noble situations that Man cannot spoil: it is however certain, that he has built an inn and a town just where his principal walks should have been, and in the most wonderful spot of ground that perhaps belongs to him.

In this inn however we lay; and next day returning down the river four miles, we passed it over a fine bridge, built at the expense of the government, and continued our way to *Logie-Rait*, just below which, in a most charming scene, the *Tummel*, which is here the larger river of the two, falls into the Tay. We ferried over the Tummel in order to get into Marshal Wade's road, which leads from Dunkeld to Inverness, and continued our way along it toward the north: the road is excellent, but dangerous enough in conscience; the river often running directly under us at the bottom of a precipice 200 feet deep, sometimes masked indeed by wood that finds means to grow where I could not stand, but very often quite naked and without any defence; in such places we walked for miles together, partly for fear, and partly to admire the beauty of the country, which the beauty of the weather set off to the greatest advantage: as evening came on, we approached the pass of Gillikrankie, where, in the year 1745, the Hessians, with their prince at their head, stopped short, and refused to march a foot farther.

Vestibulum ante ipsum, primisque in faucibus Orci stands the solitary mansion of Mr. Robertson, of Fascley; close by it rises a hill covered with oak, with grotesque masses of rock staring from among their

trunks, like the sullen countenances of Fingal and all his family, frowning on the little mortals of modern days: from between this hill and the adjacent mountains, pent in a narrow channel, comes roaring out the river Tummel, and falls headlong down involved in white foam which rises into a mist all round it: but my paper is deficient, and I must say nothing of the pass itself, the black river Garry, the Blair of Athol, Mount Beni-Gloe, my return by another road to Dunkeld, the Hermitage, the *Stra-Bram*, and the Rumbling Brig: in short, since I saw the Alps, I have seen nothing sublime till now. In about a week I shall set forward, by the Stirling road, on my return all alone. Pray for me till I see you, for I dread Edinburgh and the itch, and expect to find very little in my way worth the perils I am to endure.

LETTER LI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Glames-Castle, Oct. 2, 1765.

I Must beg you would present my most grateful acknowledgments to your society for the public mark of their esteem, which you say they are disposed to confer on me *. I embrace, with so deep and just a sense of their goodness, the substance of that honour they do me, that I hope it may plead my pardon with them if I do not accept the form. I have been, Sir, for several years a member of the University of Cambridge, and formerly (when I had some thoughts of the profession) took a Bachelor of Laws' degree there; since that time, though long qualified by my standing, I have always neglected to finish my course, and claim my Doctor's degree: Judge, therefore, whether it will not look like a slight, and some sort of contempt, if I receive the same degree from a Sister University. I certainly would avoid giving any offence to a set of men, among whom I have passed so many easy, and I

* The Marischal College of Aberdeen had desired to know whether it would be agreeable to Mr. Gray to receive from them the degree of Doctor of Laws. Mr. Beattie wrote to him on the subject, and this is the answer.

may say, happy hours of my life; yet shall ever retain in my memory the obligations you have laid me under, and be proud of my connection with the University of Aberdeen.

It is a pleasure to me to find that you are not offended with the liberties I took when you were at Glames; you took me too literally, if you thought I meant in the least to discourage you in your pursuit of poetry: all I intended to say was, that if either vanity (that is, a general and undistinguishing desire of applause,) or interest, or ambition has any place in the breast of a poet, he stands a great chance in these our days of being severely disappointed; and yet, after all these passions are suppressed, there may remain in the mind of one, "ingenti perculsus amore," (and such I take you to be) incitements of a better sort, strong enough to make him write verse all his life, both for his own pleasure and that of all posterity.

I am sorry for the trouble you have had to gratify my curiosity and love of superstition*; yet I heartily

* Mr. Gray, when in Scotland, had been very inquisitive after the popular superstitions of the country; his correspondent sent him two books on this subject, foolish ones indeed, as might be expected, but the best that could be had; a History of Second-sight, and a History of Witches.

thank you. On Monday, Sir, I set forward on my way to England; where if I can be of any little use to you, or should ever have the good fortune to see you, it will be a particular satisfaction to me. Lord Strathmore and the family here desire me to make their compliments to you.

P. S. Remember Dryden, and be blind to all his faults *.

LETTER LII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Pembroke-Hall, March 5, 1766.

I Am amazed at myself when I think I have never wrote to you; to be sure it is the sin of witchcraft, or something worse. Had I been married, like Mason, some excuse might be made for it; who (for the first

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* Mr. Beattie, it seems, in their late interview, had expressed himself with less admiration of Dryden than Mr. Gray thought his due. He told him in reply, "that if there was any excellence in his own numbers, he had learned it wholly from that great Poet; and pressed him with great earnestness to study him, as his choice of words and versification were singularly happy and harmonious."

time since that great event) has just thought fit to tell me that he never passed so happy a winter as the last, and this in spite of his anxieties, which he says might even make a part of his happiness; for his wife is by no means in health, she has a constant cough: yet he is assured her lungs are not affected, and that it is nothing of the consumptive kind. As to me, I have been neither happy nor miserable; but in a gentle stupefaction of mind, and very tolerable health of body hitherto. If they last, I shall not much complain. The accounts one has lately had from all parts, make me suppose you buried in the snow like the old Queen of Denmark. As soon as you are dug out, I shall rejoice to hear your voice from the battlements of Old Park.

Every thing is politics. There are no literary productions worth your notice, at least of our country. The French have finished their great Encyclopedia in 17 volumes; but there are many flimsy articles very hastily treated, and great incorrectness of the press. There are now 13 volumes of Buffon's Natural History; and he is not come to the monkies yet, who are a numerous people. The Life of Petrarch has entertained me; it is not well written, but very curious, and laid together from his own letters, and the original writings of the fourteenth century; so that he takes in

much of the history of those obscure times, and the characters of many remarkable persons. There are two volumes quarto; and another, unpublished yet, will compleat it.

Mr. Walpole writes me now and then a long and lively letter from Paris; to which place he went last year with the gout upon him, sometimes in his limbs, often in his stomach and head. He has got somehow well, (not by means of the climate, one would think) goes to all public places, sees all the best company, and is very much in fashion. He says he sunk like Queen Eleanor at Charing-Cross, and has risen again at Paris. He returns in April. I saw the Lady you inquire after, when I was last in London, and a prodigious fine one she is. She had a strong suspicion of rouge on her cheeks, a cage of foreign birds and a piping bullfinch at her elbow; two little dogs on a cushion in her lap, and a cockatoo on her shoulder: they were all exceeding glad to see me, and I them.

LETTER LIII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Pembroke-Hall, Aug. 26, 1766.

WHatever my pen may do, I am sure my thoughts expatiate no where oftener, or with more pleasure, than to Old Park. I hope you have made my peace with the angry little Lady. It is certain, whether her name were in my letter or not, she was as present to my memory as the rest of the whole family; and I desire you would present her with two kisses in my name, and one a-piece to all the others; for I shall take the liberty to kiss them all, (great and small) as you are to be my proxy *.

In spite of the rain, which I think continued, with very short intervals, till the beginning of this month, and quite effaced the summer from the year, I made a shift to pass May and June not disagreeably in Kent. I was surprized at the beauty of the road to Canterbury, which (I know not why) had not struck me be-

* Some readers will think this paragraph very trifling; yet many, I hope, will take it, as I give it, for a pleasing example of the amiableness of his domestic character.

fore. The whole country is a rich and well-cultivated garden; orchards, cherry-grounds, hop-gardens, intermixed with corn and frequent villages; gentle risings covered with wood, and every where the Thames and Medway breaking in upon the landscape with all their navigation. It was indeed owing to the bad weather that the whole scene was dressed in that tender emerald green, which one usually sees only for a fortnight in the opening of the spring; and this continued till I left the country. My residence was eight miles east of Canterbury, in a little quiet valley on the skirts of Barham-Down *. In these parts the whole soil is chalk, and whenever it holds up, in half an hour it is dry enough to walk out. I took the opportunity of three or four days fine weather to go into the Isle of Thanet; saw Margate, (which is Bartholomew fair by the seaside) Ramsgate, and other places there; and so came by Sandwich, Deal, Dover, Folkstone, and Hithe, back again. The coast is not like Hartlepool; there are no rocks, but only chalky cliffs of no great height till you come to Dover; there indeed they are noble and picturesque, and the opposite coasts of France begin to bound your view, which was left before to range unlimited by any thing but the horizon; yet it is by no

* At Denton, where his friend the Rev. William Robinson, brother to Matthew Robinson, Esq; late member for Canterbury, then resided.

means a *shipless* sea, but every where peopled with white sails, and vessels of all sizes in motion: and take notice, (except in the Isle, which is all corn-fields, and has very little inclosure) there are in all places hedge-rows, and tall trees even within a few yards of the beach. Particularly, Hithe stands on an eminence covered with wood. I shall confess we had fires at night (ay, and at day too) several times in June; but do not go and take advantage in the north at this, for it was the most untoward year that ever I remember.

Have you read the New Bath Guide? It is the only thing in fashion, and is a new and original kind of humour. Miss Prue's conversion, I doubt, you will paste down, as a certain Yorkshire Baronet did before he carried it to his daughters: yet I remember you all read Crazy Tales without pasting. Buffon's first collection of Monkies is come out, (it makes the 14th volume) something, but not much to my edification; for he is pretty well acquainted with their persons, but not with their manners.

My compliments to Mrs. Wharton and all your family; I will not name them, lest I should affront any body.

LETTER LIV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. MASON.

March 28, 1767.

I Break in upon you at a moment, when we least of all are permitted to disturb our friends, only to say, that you are daily and hourly present to my thoughts. If the worst * be not yet past, you will neglect and pardon me: but if the last struggle be over; if the poor object of your long anxieties be no longer sensible to your kindness, or to her own sufferings, allow me (at least in idea, for what could I do, were I present, more than this?) to sit by you in silence, and pity from my heart not her, who is at rest, but you, who lose her. May He, who made us, the Master of our pleasures and of our pains, preserve and support you! Adieu.

I have long understood how little you had to hope.

* As this little Billet (which I received at the Hot-Wells at Bristol) then breathed, and still seems to breathe, the very voice of Friendship in its tenderest and most pathetic note, I cannot refrain from publishing it in this place. I opened it almost at the precise moment when it would necessarily be the most affecting.

LETTER LV.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Old Park, near Darlington, Durham,
August 12, 1767.

I Received from Mr. Williamson, that very obliging mark you were pleased to give me of your remembrance: Had I not entertained some slight hopes of revisiting Scotland this summer, and consequently of seeing you at Aberdeen, I had sooner acknowledged, by letter, the favour you have done me. Those hopes are now at an end; but I do not therefore despair of seeing again a country that has given me so much pleasure; nor of telling you, in person, how much I esteem you and (as you choose to call them) your amusements: the specimen of them, which you were so good as to send me, I think excellent; the sentiments are such as a melancholy imagination naturally suggests in solitude and silence, and that (though light and business may suspend or banish them at times) return with but so much the greater force upon a feeling heart: the diction is elegant and unconstrained; not loaded with epithets and figures, nor flagging into prose; the ver-

sification is easy and harmonious. My only objection is **** †

You see, Sir, I take the liberty you indulged me in, when I first saw you; and therefore I make no excuses for it, but desire you would take your revenge on me in kind.

I have read over (but too hastily) Mr. Ferguson's book. There are uncommon strains of eloquence in it: and I was surprized to find not one single idiom of his country (I think) in the whole work. He has not the fault you mention *: his application to the heart is frequent, and often successful. His love of Montes-

† A paragragh is here omitted, as it contained merely a few particular criticisms; a liberty of the same kind I have before taken in some of the preceding letters. The Poem in question contained many touching reflections on mortality: it is to be hoped Dr. Beattie will one day give it to the public.

* To explain this, I must take the liberty to transcribe a paragraph from Mr. Beattie's letter dated March 30, to which the above is an answer: " A Professor at Edinburgh has published an Essay " on the History of Civil Society, but I have not seen it. It is a " fault common to almost all our Scotch authors, that they are too " metaphysical: I wish they would learn to speak more to the " heart, and less to the understanding; but alas! this is a talent " which heaven only can bestow: Whereas the philosophic spirit " (as we call it) is merely artificial and level to the capacity of every " man, who has much patience, a little learning, and no taste." He has since dilated on this just sentiment in his admirable Essay on the Immutability of Truth.

quieu and Tacitus has led him into a manner of writing too short-winded and sententious; which those great men, had they lived in better times and under a better government, would have avoided.

I know no pretence that I have to the honour Lord Gray is pleased to do me *: but if his Lordship chooses to own me, it certainly is not my business to deny it. I say not this merely on account of his quality, but because he is a very worthy and accomplished person. I am truly sorry for the great loss he has had since I left Scotland. If you should chance to see him, I will beg you to present my respectful humble service to his Lordship.

I gave Mr. Williamson all the information I was able in the short time he staid with me. He seemed to answer well the character you gave me of him: but what I chiefly envied in him, was his ability of walking all the way from Aberdeen to Cambridge, and back again; which if I possessed, you would soon see your obliged, &c.

* Lord Gray had said that our Author was related to his family.

LETTER LVI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Pembroke-Hall, Dec. 24, 1767.

SINCE I had the pleasure of receiving your last letter, which did not reach me till I had left the North, and was come to London, I have been confined to my room with a fit of the gout: now I am recovered and in quiet at Cambridge, I take up my pen to thank you for your very friendly offers, which have so much the air of frankness and real good meaning, that were my body as tractable and easy of conveyance as my mind, you would see me to-morrow in the chamber you have so hospitably laid out for me at Aberdeen. But, alas! I am a summer-bird, and can only sit drooping till the sun returns: even then too my wings may chance to be clipped, and little in plight for so distant an excursion.

The proposal you make me, about printing at Glasgow what little I have ever written, does me honour. I leave my reputation in that part of the kingdom to your care; and only desire you would not let your partiality to me and mine mislead you. If you persist in your design, Mr. Foulis certainly ought to be ac-

quainted with what I am now going to tell you. When I was in London the last spring, Dodsley, the bookseller, asked my leave to reprint, in a smaller form, all I ever published; to which I consented: and added, that I would send him a few explanatory notes; and if he would omit entirely the *Long Story*, (which was never meant for the public, and only suffered to appear in that pompous edition because of Mr. Bentley's designs, which were not intelligible without it) I promised to send him something else to print instead of it, lest the bulk of so small a volume should be reduced to nothing at all. Now it is very certain that I had rather see them printed at Glasgow (especially as you will condescend to revise the press) than at London; but I know not how to retract my promise to Dodsley. By the way, you perhaps may imagine that I have some kind of interest in this publication; but the truth is, I have none whatever. The expense is his, and so is the profit, if there be any. I therefore told him the other day, in general terms, that I heard there would be an edition put out in Scotland by a friend of mine, whom I could not refuse; and that, if so, I would send thither a copy of the same notes and additions that I had promised to send to him. This did not seem at all to cool his courage; Mr. Foulis must therefore judge for himself, whether he thinks it worth while to print what is going to be printed also at London. If he

does, I will send him (in a packet to you) the same things I shall send to Dodsley. They are imitations of two pieces of old Norwegian poetry, in which there was a wild spirit that struck me: but for my paraphrases I cannot say much; you will judge. The rest are nothing but a few parallel passages, and small notes just to explain what people said at the time was wrapped in total darkness. You will please to tell me, as soon as you can conveniently, what Mr. Foulis says on this head; that (if he drops the design) I may save myself and you the trouble of this packet. I ask your pardon for talking so long about it; a little more, and my letter would be as big as all my works.

I have read, with much pleasure, an Ode of yours (in which you have done me the honour to adopt a measure that I have used) on Lord Hay's birth-day. Though I do not love panegyric, I cannot but applaud this, for there is nothing mean in it. The diction is easy and noble, the texture of the thoughts lyric, and the versification harmonious. The few expressions I object to are * * * * †. These, indeed, are minutiæ; but they weigh for something, as half a grain makes a difference in the value of a diamond.

† Another paragraph of particular criticism is here omitted.

LETTER LVII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Pembroke-Hall, Feb. 1, 1768.

I Am almost sorry to have raised any degree of impatience in you, because I can by no means satisfy it. The sole reason I have to publish these few additions now, is to make up (in both) for the omission of that *Long Story;* and as to the notes, I do it out of spite, because the public did not understand the two Odes (which I have called Pindaric); tho' the first was not very dark, and the second alluded to a few common facts to be found in any sixpenny history of England, by way of question and answer, for the use of children. The parallel passages I insert out of justice to those writers from whom I happened to take the hint of any line, as far as I can recollect.

I rejoice to be in the hands of Mr. Foulis, who has the laudable ambition of surpassing his predecessors, the *Etiennes* and the *Elzevirs,* as well in literature, as in the proper art of his profession: He surprises me in mentioning a Lady, after whom I have been inquiring these fourteen years in vain. When the two Odes

were first published, I sent them to her; but as I was forced to direct them very much at random, probably they never came to her hands. When the present edition comes out, I beg of Mr. Foulis to offer her a copy, in my name, with my respects and grateful remembrances; he will send another to you, Sir, and a third to Lord Gray, if he will do me the honour of accepting it. These are all the presents I pretend to make (for I would have it considered only as a new edition of an old book); after this if he pleases to send me one or two, I shall think myself obliged to him. I cannot advise him to print a great number; especially as Dodsley has it in his power to print as many as he pleases, though I desire him not to do so.

You are very good to me in taking this trouble upon you: All I can say is, that I shall be happy to return it in kind, whenever you will give me the opportunity.

LETTER LVIII.*

MR. GRAY TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

MY LORD, Cambridge, July, 1768.

YOUR Grace has dealt nobly with me; and the same delicacy of mind that induced you to confer this favour on me, unsolicited and unexpected, may perhaps make you averse to receive my sincerest thanks and grateful acknowledgments. Yet your Grace must excuse me, they will have their way: they are indeed but words; yet I know and feel they come from my heart, and therefore are not wholly unworthy of your Grace's acceptance. I even flatter myself (such is my pride) that you have some little satisfaction in your own work. If I did not deceive myself in this, it would compleat the happiness of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's

Most obliged and devoted servant.

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* The two following Letters explain the occasion of this address, in a way so honourable to his Grace, and are withal so authentic a testimony of Mr. Gray's gratitude, that they leave me nothing to add on the subject.

LETTER LIX.

MR. GRAY TO MR. NICHOLLS. *

Jermyn-Street, Aug. 3, 1768.

THAT Mr. Brockett has broken his neck, by a fall from his horse, you will have seen in the Newspapers; and also that I, your humble servant, have kissed the King's hand for his succession: they are both true, but the manner how you know not; only I can assure you that I had no hand at all in his fall, and almost as little in the second event. He died on the Sunday; on Wednesday following his Grace the Duke of Grafton wrote me a very polite letter to say, that his Majesty had commanded him to offer me the vacant Professorship, not only as a reward of, &c. but as a credit to, &c. with much more too high for me to transcribe: So on Thursday the King signed the warrant, and next day, at his levee, I kissed his hand; he made me several gracious speeches, which I shall not repeat, because every body, that goes to court, does so: besides,

* Rector of Lounde and Bradwell, in Suffolk. His acquaintance with Mr. Gray commenced a few years before the date of this, when he was a student of Trinity-Hall, Cambridge.

the day was so hot, and the ceremony so embarrassing to me, that I hardly knew what he said.

Adieu. I am to perish here with heat this fortnight yet, and then to Cambridge; to be sure my dignity is a little the worse for wear, but mended and washed, it will do for me.

LETTER LX.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Pembroke-Hall, Oct. 31, 1768.

IT is some time since I received from Mr. Foulis two copies of my poems, one by the hands of Mr. T. Pitt, the other by Mr. Merrill, a bookseller of this town: it is indeed a most beautiful edition, and must certainly do credit both to him and to me: but I fear it will be of no other advantage to him, as Dodsley has contrived to glut the town already with two editions beforehand, one of 1500, and the other of 750, both indeed far inferior to that of Glasgow, but sold at half the price. I must repeat my thanks, Sir, for the trouble you have been pleased to give yourself on my account; and thro'

you I must desire leave to convey my acknowledgments to Mr. Foulis, for the pains and expense he has been at in this publication.

We live at so great a distance, that, perhaps, you may not yet have learned, what, I flatter myself, you will not be displeased to hear: the middle of last summer his Majesty was pleased to appoint me Regius Professor of Modern History in this University; it is the best thing the Crown has to bestow (on a layman) here; the salary is 400l. per ann. but what enhances the value of it to me is, that it was bestowed without being asked. The person, who held it before me, died on the Sunday; and on Wednesday following the Duke of Grafton wrote me a letter to say, that the King offered me this office, with many additional expressions of kindness on his Grace's part, to whom I am but little known, and whom I have not seen either before or since he did me this favour. Instances of a benefit so nobly conferred, I believe, are rare; and therefore I tell you of it as a thing that does honour, not only to me, but to the Minister.

As I lived here before from choice, I shall now continue to do so from obligation: if business or curiosity

should call you southwards, you will find few friends that will see you with more cordial satisfaction, than, dear Sir, &c.

END OF THE FOURTH SECTION.

SECTION V.

THE Reader will have gathered, from the preceding series of letters, that the greatest part of Mr. Gray's life was spent in that kind of learned leisure, which has only self-improvement and self-gratification for its object: He will probably be surprised that, with so very strait an income, he should never have read with a view of making his researches lucrative to himself, or useful to the public. The truth was, Mr. Gray had ever expunged the word *lucrative* from his own vocabulary. He may be said to have been one of those very few personages in the annals of literature, especially in the poetical class, who are devoid of self-interest, and at the same time attentive to economy; and also, among mankind in general, one of those very few economists who possess that talent, untinctured with the slightest stain of avarice. Were it my purpose in this place to expatiate on his moral excellencies, I should here add, that when his circumstances were at the lowest, he gave

away such sums in private charity as would have done credit to an ampler purse: But it is rather my less-pleasing province at present to acknowledge one of his foibles; and that was a certain degree of pride, which led him, of all other things, to despise the idea of being thought an author professed. I have been told indeed, that early in life he had an intention of publishing an edition of Strabo; and I find amongst his papers a great number of geographical disquisitions, particularly with respect to that part of Asia which comprehends Persia and India; concerning the ancient and modern names and divisions of which extensive countries, his notes are very copious. The indefatigable pains which he also took with the writings of Plato, and the quantity of critical, as well as explanatory observations, which he has left upon almost every part of his works, plainly indicate, that no man in Europe was better prepared to republish and illustrate that Philosopher than Mr. Gray. Another work, on which he bestowed uncommon labour, was the 'Anthologia.' Amongst the books, which his friendship bequeathed to me, is Henry Stevens's edition of that collection of Greek Epigrams, interleaved; in which he has transcribed several additional ones that he selected in his extensive reading, has inserted a great number of critical notes and emendations, and subjoined a copious

Index, in which every Epigram is arranged under the name of its respective author *. This manuscript, though written in that exact manner, as if intended for the press, I do not know that it was ever Mr. Gray's design to make public. The only work, which he meditated upon with this direct view from the beginning, was a History of English Poetry. He has mentioned this himself in an advertisement prefixed to those three fine imitations of Norse and Welch Poetry, which he gave the world in the last edition of his Poems. But the slight manner, in which he there speaks of that design, may admit here of some additional explanation. Several years ago I was indebted to the friendship of

* It should seem that Mr. Gray's pains were, on this occasion, very ill employed; for the late Lord Chesterfield, writing to his son, says, " I hope you are got out of the worst company in the " world, the Greek Epigrams. Martial has wit, and is worth look- " ing into sometimes; but I recommend the Greek Epigrams to " your supreme contempt." See Lord Chesterfield's Letters, Let. 73. However, if what Mr. Gray says be true, p. 142, supra, that " a dead Lord ranks only with Commoners," there may come a time when Lord Chesterfield's dictum, in matters of taste, may not be held more infallible than that of his own and other dead Lords, in points of religion and morality: Nay, when his own plan of *gentlemanly* education may be thought less capable of furnishing his country with useful members of society, than the plain old-fashioned one which he wrote to explode. If this day does not quickly come, one may, without pretending to a gift of prophecy, pronounce that England will neither be, nor deserve to be, any thing better than a Province of France.

the present learned Bishop of Gloucester for * a curious manuscript paper of Mr. Pope, which contains the first sketch of a plan for a work of this kind, and which I have still in my possession. Mr. Gray was greatly struck with the method which Mr. Pope had traced out in this little sketch; and on my proposal of engaging with him in compiling such a history, he examined the plan more accurately, enlarged it considerably, and formed an idea for an introduction to it. In this was to be ascertained the origin of Rhyme; and specimens not only of the Provençal Poetry, (to which alone Mr. Pope seemed to have adverted) but of the Scaldic, British, and Saxon, were to have been given; as, from all these different sources united, English Poetry had its original: though it could hardly be called by that name till the time of Chaucer, with whose school (i. e. the Poets who wrote in his manner) the history itself was intended to commence. The materials which I collected for this purpose are too inconsiderable to be mentioned: but Mr. Gray, besides versifying those Odes that he published, made many elaborate disquisitions into the origin of Rhyme, and that variety of Metre, to be found in the writings of our ancient Poets. He also transcribed many parts of the

* A transcript of this paper is to be found printed in the Life of Mr. Pope, written by Mr. Ruffhead.

voluminous Lidgate, from Manuscripts which he found in the University Library and those of private Colleges; remarking, as he went along, the several beauties and defects of this immediate scholar of Chaucer. He however soon found that a work of this kind, pursued on so very extensive a plan, would become almost endless: and hearing at the same time that Mr. Thomas Warton, Fellow of Trinity-College, Oxford, (of whose abilities, from his observations on Spenser, we had each of us conceived the highest opinion) was engaged in a work of the same kind, we by mutual consent relinquished our undertaking; and soon after, on that Gentleman's desiring a sight of the plan, Mr. Gray readily sent him a copy of it *.

At a time when I am enumerating the more considerable of Mr. Gray's antiquarian pursuits, I must not omit to mention his great knowledge of Gothic Architecture. He had seen, and accurately studied in his youth, while abroad, the Roman proportions on the spot, both in ancient ruins and in the works of Palladio. In his later years he applied himself to consider

* This Gentleman has just now politely acknowledged the favour in his preface to his first volume on this subject. A work, which, as he proceeds in it thro' more enlightened periods, will undoubtedly give the world as high an idea of his critical taste, as the present specimen does of his indefatigable researches into antiquity.

those stupendous structures of more modern date, that adorn our own country; which, if they have not the same grace, have undoubtedly equal dignity. He endeavoured to trace this mode of building, from the time it commenced, through its various changes, till it arrived at its perfection in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and ended in that of Elizabeth. For this purpose he did not so much depend upon written accounts, as that internal evidence which the buildings themselves give of their respective antiquity; since they constantly furnish to the well-informed eye, arms, ornaments, and other indubitable marks, by which their several ages may be ascertained. On this account he applied himself to the study of Heraldry as a preparatory science, and has left behind him a number of genealogical papers, more than sufficient to prove him a complete master of it. By these means he arrived at so very extraordinary a pitch of sagacity, as to be enabled to pronounce, at first sight, on the precise time when every particular part of any of our cathedrals was erected. He invented also several terms of art, the better to explain his meaning on this subject. I frequently pressed him to digest these in a regular order; and offered, under his direction, to adapt a set of drawings to them, which might describe every ornament peculiarly in use in every different æra. But though he did not disapprove this hint, he neglected it; and

has left no papers that would lead to its prosecution. I therefore mention it in this place, only to induce certain of his friends, to whom I know he communicated more of his thoughts upon this subject than to me, to pursue the design, if they think it would be attended with utility to the public.

There is an Eloge on M. l'Abbé Le Beuf, published in the " Histoire de l'Acad. des Inscriptions & Belles " Lettres, vol. 29th," by which it appears that Gentleman had precisely the same idea with Mr. Gray on this subject; and, by pursuing it, had arrived at the same degree of skill. " Les Voyages & les Lectures de M. " l'Abbé Le Beuf l'avoient tellement familiarisé avec " les monumens, qu'il apercevoit les differences les plus " delicates de l'ancienne Architecture: Il demêloit du " premier coup-d'œil, les caracteres de chaque siecle; " à l'inspection d'un bâtiment il pouvoit dire, quelque- " fois à vingt années prés, dans quel temps il avoit été " construit: les ceintres, les chapiteaux, les moulures " portoient à ses yeux la date de leur bâtisse: beaucoup " de grands edifices ont été l'ouvrage de plusieurs si- " ecles; plus encore ont été reparés en des siecles diffe- " rens; il décomposoit un meme bâtiment avec une fa- " cilitè singulière, il fixoit l'age des diverses parties, & " ses decisions etoient toujours fondées sur des preuves " indubitables; on en trouve une foule d'exemples dans

" son Histoire du Diocese de Paris." His Panegyrist also informs us, that he was solicited by his friend, M. Joly de Fleury, to reduce into a body of science the discoveries which he had made, that his ill health prevented him; but that the work is now in the hands of a person very capable of perfecting his idea. Yet I question whether a work of this kind, from a French writer, will be of any great importance, since I am informed by a very competent judge, that the resemblance between Gothic Architecture in England and in France is surprisingly slight, except in the cathedral at Amiens, and a few other churches, supposed to be built by the English while in possession of French provinces. The public has much more to hope from Mr. T. Warton's late promise to it, as he, of all other living writers, is best qualified to give complete satisfaction to the curious on this subject: in the meanwhile, it may not be amiss to inform the reader, that Mr. Bentham's Remarks on Saxon Churches, which make a part of an elaborate Introduction to his History of Ely Cathedral, lately published, will convey to him many sentiments of Mr. Gray; as, amongst other Antiquaries, he contributed his assistance to that Gentleman; who, in his preface, has accordingly mentioned the obligation.

But the favourite study of Mr. Gray, for the last ten years of his life, was Natural History, which he then

rather resumed than began; as, by the instructions of his uncle Antrobus, he was a considerable botanist at fifteen. He followed it closely, and often said that he thought it a singular felicity to have engaged in it; as, besides the constant amusement it gave him in his chamber, it led him more frequently out into the fields; and, by making his life less sedentary, improved the general course of his health and spirits.

Habituated, as he had long been, to apply only to first-rate Authors, as to the fountain-head of that knowledge, which he was at the time solicitous to acquire, it is obvious that, when he resolved to make himself master of Natural History, he would immediately become the disciple of the great Linnæus. His first business was to understand accurately his "termini "artis," which he called justly the learning a new original language. He then went regularly through the vegetable, animal, and fossile kingdoms. The marginal notes which he has left, not only on Linnæus, but the many other authors which he read on these subjects, are very numerous: but the most considerable are on Hudson's Flora Anglica, and the tenth edition of the Systema Naturæ; which latter he interleaved, and filled almost entirely. While employed on Zoology, he also read Aristotle's treatise on that subject with great care, and explained many difficult passages

of that obscure Ancient, from the lights he had acquired from modern Naturalists.

Having now given a general account of that variety of literary pursuits, which, in their turns, principally engaged his attention, and which were either not mentioned, or only glanced at in the preceding letters, let me be permitted to say a word or two of his amusements. The chief, and almost the only one of these, (if we except the frequent experiments he made on Flowers, in order to mark the mode and progress of their vegetation) was Music. His taste in this art was equal to his skill in any more important science. It was founded on the best models, those great masters in Italy, who flourished about the same time with his favourite Pergolesi. Of His and of Leo's, Bononcini's, Vinci's, and Hasse's works, he made a valuable collection while abroad, chiefly of such of their vocal compositions as he had himself heard and admired; observing in his choice of these, the same judicious rule which he followed in making his collection of Prints; which was not so much to get together compleat sets of the works of any master, as to select those (the best in their kind) which would recall to his memory the capital Pictures, Statues, and Buildings which he had seen and studied. By this means, as he acquired in Painting great facility and accuracy in the knowledge

of hands, so in Music he gained supreme skill in the more refined powers of expression; especially when we consider that art as an adjunct to poetry: for vocal music, and that only, (excepting perhaps the lessons of the younger Scarlatti) was what he chiefly regarded. His instrument was the Harpsichord; on which, though he had little execution, yet, when he sung to it, he so modulated the small powers of his voice *, as to be able to convey to the intelligent hearer no common degree of satisfaction. This, however, he could seldom be prevailed upon to do, even by his most intimate acquaintance.

To conclude this slight sketch of his literary Character, I believe I may with great truth assert, that excepting pure Mathematics, and the studies dependent on that science, there was hardly any part of human Learning, in which he had not acquired a competent skill: in most of them a consummate mastery.

I proceed now, as I did in the former sections, to select, for the reader's perusal, the last series of his

* He was much admired for his singing in his youth; yet he was so shy in exercising this talent, that Mr. Walpole tells me he never could but once prevail on him to give a proof of it; and then it was with so much pain to himself, that it gave him no manner of pleasure.

Letters. They are few in number; yet contain all the incidents that occurred in that very short space of time, during which Providence was pleased further to continue him a blessing to his friends, and an ornament to his country.

LETTER I.

MR. GRAY TO MR. NICHOLLS.

I Was absent from College, and did not receive your melancholy letter till my return hither yesterday; so you must not attribute this delay to me but to accident: to sympathize with you in such a loss* is an easy task for me, but to comfort you not so easy; can I wish to see you unaffected with the sad scene now before your eyes, or with the loss of a person that, thro' a great part of your life, has proved himself so kind a friend to you? He who best knows our nature (for he made us what we are) by such afflictions recalls us from our wandering thoughts and idle merriment; from the insolence of youth and prosperity, to serious reflection, to our duty, and to himself; nor need we hasten

* The death of his uncle Governor Floyer.

to get rid of these impressions; time (by appointment of the same Power) will cure the smart, and in some hearts soon blot out all the traces of sorrow: but such as preserve them longest (for it is partly left in our own power) do perhaps best acquiesce in the will of the chastiser.

For the consequences of this sudden loss, I see them well, and I think, in a like situation, could fortify my mind, so as to support them with chearfulness and good hopes, though not naturally inclined to see things in their best aspect. When you have time to turn yourself round, you must think seriously of your profession; you know I would have wished to see you wear the livery of it long ago: But I will not dwell on this subject at present. To be obliged to those we love and esteem is a pleasure; but to serve and oblige them is a still greater; and this, with independance, (no vulgar blessing) are what a profession at your age may reasonably promise: without it they are hardly attainable. Remember I speak from experience.

In the mean time while your present situation lasts, which I hope will not be long, continue your kindness and confidence in me, by trusting me with the whole of it; and surely you hazard nothing by so doing: That situation does not appear so new to me as it does to

you. You well know the tenour of my conversation (urged at times perhaps a little farther than you liked) has been intended to prepare you for this event, and to familiarize your mind with this spectre, which you call by its worst name: but remember that "Honesta "res est læta paupertas." I see it with respect, and so will every one, whose poverty is not seated in their mind *. There is but one real evil in it (take my word who know it well) and that is, that you have less the power of assisting others, who have not the same resources to support them. You have youth: you have many kind well-intentioned people belonging to you; many acquaintance of your own, or families that will wish to serve you. Consider how many have had the same, or greater cause for dejection, with none of these resources before their eyes. Adieu. I sincerely wish you happiness.

P. S. I have just heard that a friend of mine is struck with a paralytic disorder, in which state it is likely he may live incapable of assisting himself, in the hands of servants or relations that only gape after his spoils, perhaps for years to come: think how many things may befal a man far worse than poverty or death †.

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* An excellent thought finely expressed.

† This Letter was written a year or two before the time when this series of letters should commence; but as it was not commu-

LETTER II.

MR. GRAY TO MR. NICHOLLS.

Pembroke College, June 24, 1769.

AND so you have a garden of your own *, and you plant and transplant, and are dirty and amused! Are not you ashamed of yourself? Why, I have no such thing, you monster, nor ever shall be either dirty or amused as long as I live. My gardens are in the windows like those of a lodger up three pair of stairs in Petticoat-Lane, or Camomile-Street, and they go to bed regularly under the same roof that I do. Dear, how charming it must be to walk out in one's own *garding*, and sit on a bench in the open air, with a fountain and leaden statue, and a rolling stone, and an

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nicated to me before the last section was printed off, and has a connection with that which follows it, I chose to begin this section with it; the date not appearing to be very material, and the pathetic and friendly turn of it strongly pleading for its insertion.

* Mr. Nicholls, by having pursued the advice of his correspondent, we find was now possessed of that competency which he wished him. Happy, not only in having so sage an adviser, but in his own good sense which prompted him to follow such advice. The gaiety, whim, and humour of this letter contrast prettily with the gravity and serious reflection of the former.

arbour: have a care of sore throats though, and the *agoe.*

However, be it known to you, though I have no garden, I have sold my estate and got a thousand guineas *, and fourscore pounds a year for my old Aunt, and a twenty pound prize in the lottery, and Lord knows what arrears in the treasury, and am a rich fellow enough, go to; and a fellow that hath had losses, and one that hath two gowns, and every thing handsome about him, and in a few days shall have new window curtains: Are you advised of that? Ay, and a new mattress to lie upon.

My Ode has been rehearsed again and again †, and the scholars have got scraps by heart: I expect to see it torn piece-meal in the North-Briton before it is born. If you will come you shall see it, and sing in it amidst a chorus from Salisbury and Gloucester music meeting, great names there, and all well versed in Ju-

* Consisting of houses on the west side of Hand-Alley, London: Mrs. Olliffe was the Aunt here mentioned, who had a share in this estate, and for whom he procured this annuity. She died in 1771, a few months before her Nephew.

† Ode for Music on the Duke of Grafton's Installation. See Poems, (Vol. I.) p. 33. His reason for writing it is given in the next letter.

das Maccabæus. I wish it were once over; for then I immediately go for a few days to London, and so with Mr. Brown to Aston, though I fear it will rain the whole summer, and Skiddaw will be invisible and inaccessible to mortals.

I have got De la Landes' Voyage through Italy, in eight volumes; he is a member of the academy of sciences, and pretty good to read. I have read too an octavo volume of Shenstone's Letters: Poor man! he was always wishing for money, for fame, and other distinctions; and his whole philosophy consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned; but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it: his correspondence is about nothing else but this place and his own writings, with two or three neighbouring Clergymen who wrote verses too.

I have just found the beginning of a letter, which somebody had dropped: I should rather call it first-thoughts for the beginning of a letter; for there are many scratches and corrections. As I cannot use it myself, (having got a beginning already of my own) I send it for your use on some great occasion.

Dear Sir,

"After so long silence, the hopes of pardon, and "prospect of forgiveness might seem entirely extinct, "or at least very remote, was I not truly sensible of "your goodness and candour, which is the only asylum "that my negligence can fly to, since every apology "would prove insufficient to counterbalance it, or alle-"viate my fault: How then shall my deficiency pre-"sume to make so bold an attempt, or be able to suffer "the hardships of so rough a campaign?" &c. &c. &c.

LETTER III.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Cambridge, July 16, 1769.

THE late ceremony of the Duke of Grafton's installation has hindered me from acknowledging sooner the satisfaction your friendly compliment gave me: I thought myself bound in gratitude to his Grace, unasked, to take upon me the task of writing those verses which are usually set to music on this occasion*. I

* In a short note which he wrote to Mr. Stonhewer, June 12, when, at his request, he sent him the Ode in manuscript for his Grace's perusal, he expresses this motive more fully. "I did not

do not think them worth sending you, because they are by nature doomed to live but a single day; or, if their existence is prolonged beyond that date, it is only by means of newspaper parodies, and witless criticisms. This sort of abuse I had reason to expect, but did not think it worth while to avoid.

Mr. Foulis is magnificent in his gratitude *: I cannot figure to myself how it can be worth his while to offer me such a present. You can judge better of it than I; and if he does not hurt himself by it, I would accept his Homer with many thanks. I have not got or even seen it.

I could wish to subscribe to his new edition of Milton, and desire to be set down for two copies of the

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" intend the Duke should have heard me till he could not help it. " You are desired to make the best excuses you can to his Grace " for the liberty I have taken of praising him to his face; but as " somebody was necessarily to do this, I did not see why Grati- " tude should sit silent and leave it to Expectation to sing, who " certainly would have sung, and that *à gorge deployée* upon such " an occasion."

* When the Glasgow Edition of Mr. Gray's Poems was sold off (which it was in a short time) Mr. Foulis finding himself a considerable gainer, mentioned to Mr. Beattie, that he wished to make Mr. Gray a present either of his Homer in 4 vols. folio, or the Greek Historians, printed likewise at his press, in 29 vols. duodecimo.

large paper; but you must inform me where and when I may pay the money.

You have taught me to long for a second letter, and particularly for what you say will make the contents of it *. I have nothing to requite it with but plain and friendly truth, and that you shall have, joined to a zeal for your fame, and a pleasure in your success.

I am now setting forward on a journey towards the North of England; but it will not reach so far as I could wish. I must return hither before Michaelmas, and shall barely have time to visit a few places, and a few friends.

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* His correspondent had intimated to him his intention of sending him his first book of the Minstrel. See the seventh letter of this series.

LETTER IV.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

Aston, Oct. 18, 1769.

I Hope you got safe and well home after that troublesome night *. I long to hear you say so. For me I have continued well, been so favoured by the weather, that my walks have never once been hindered till yesterday (that is a fortnight and three or four days, and

* Dr. Wharton, who had intended to accompany Mr. Gray to Keswick, was seized at Brough with a violent fit of his asthma, which obliged him to return home. This was the reason that Mr. Gray undertook to write the following journal of his tour for his friend's amusement. He sent it under different covers. I give it here in continuation. It may not be amiss, however, to hint to the reader, that if he expects to find elaborate and nicely-turned periods in this narration, he will be greatly disappointed. When Mr. Gray described places, he aimed only to be exact, clear, and intelligible; to convey peculiar, not general ideas, and to paint by the eye, not the fancy. There have been many accounts of the Westmoreland and Cumberland lakes, both before and since this was written, and all of them better calculated to please readers, who are fond of what they call *fine writing:* Yet those, who can content themselves with an elegant simplicity of narrative, will, I flatter myself, find this to their taste; they will perceive it was written with a view, rather to inform than surprise; and, if they make it their companion when they take the same tour, it will inhance their opinion of its intrinsic excellence; in this way I tried it myself before I resolved to print it.

a journey of more than 300 miles). I am now at Aston for two days. To-morrow I go to Cambridge. Mason is not here, but Mr. Alderson receives me. According to my promise I send you the first sheet of my journal, to be continued without end.

Sept. 30. A mile and a half from Brough, where we parted, on a hill lay a great army * encamped: To the left opened a fine valley with green meadows and hedge-rows, a gentleman's house peeping forth from a grove of old trees. On a nearer approach appeared myriads of cattle and horses in the road itself, and in all the fields round me; a brisk stream hurrying cross the way, thousands of clean healthy people in their best party-coloured apparel: Farmers and their families, Esquires and their daughters hastening up from the dales and down the fells from every quarter, glittering in the sun, and pressing forward to join the throng. While the dark hills, on whose tops the mists were yet hanging, served as a contrast to this gay and moving scene, which continued for near two miles more along the road, and the croud (coming towards it) reached on as far as Appleby. On the ascent of the hill above Appleby the thick hanging wood, and the long reaches

* There is a great fair for cattle kept on the hill near Brough on this day and the preceding.

of the Eden, clear, rapid, and full as ever, winding below, with views of the castle and town, gave much employment to the mirror *: but now the sun was wanting, and the sky overcast. Oats and barley cut every where, but not carried in. Passed Kirbythore, Sir William Dalston's house at Acorn-Bank, Whinfield Park, Harthorn Oaks, Countess-Pillar, Brougham-Castle, Mr. Brown's large new house; crossed the Eden and the Eimot (pronounce Eeman) with its green vale, and dined at three o'clock with Mrs. Buchanan at Penrith, on trout and partridge. In the afternoon walked up Beacon-hill, a mile to the top, and could see Ulswater through an opening in the bosom of that cluster of broken Mountains, which the Doctor well remembers, Whinfield and Lowther Parks, &c. and the craggy tops of an hundred nameless hills: These lie to west and south. To the north a great extent of black and dreary plains. To the east, Cross-fell, just visible through mists and vapours hovering round it.

Oct. 1. A grey autumnal day, the air perfectly calm and mild, went to see Ulswater, five miles distant; soon

* Mr. Gray carried usually with him on these tours a Plano-convex Mirror of about four inches diameter on a black foil, and bound up like a pocket-book. A glass of this sort is perhaps the best and most convenient substitute for a Camera Obscura, of any thing that has hitherto been invented, and may be had of any optician.

left the Keswick-road, and turned to the left through shady lanes along the vale of Eeman, which runs rapidly on near the way, ripling over the stones; to the right is Delmaine, a large fabric of pale red stone, with nine windows in front and seven on the side, built by Mr. Hassle, behind it a fine lawn surrounded by woods, and a long rocky eminence rising over them: a clear and brisk rivulet runs by the house to join the Eeman, whose course is in sight and at a small distance. Farther on appears Hatton St. John, a castle-like old mansion of Mr. Huddleston. Approached Dunmallert, a fine pointed hill covered with wood, planted by old Mr. Hassle before-mentioned, who lives always at home, and delights in planting. Walked over a spungy meadow or two, and began to mount the hill through a broad straight green alley among the trees, and with some toil gained the summit. From hence saw the lake opening directly at my feet, majestic in its calmness, clear and smooth as a blue mirror, with winding shores and low points of land covered with green inclosures, white farm-houses looking out among the trees, and cattle feeding. The water is almost every where bordered with cultivated lands, gently sloping upwards from a mile to a quarter of a mile in breadth, till they reach the feet of the mountains, which rise very rude and awful with their broken tops on either hand. Directly in front, at better than three miles distance,

Place-Fell, one of the bravest among them, pushes its bold broad breast into the midst of the lake, and forces it to alter its course, forming first a large bay to the left, and then bending to the right. I descended Dunmallert again by a side avenue, that was only not perpendicular, and came to Barton-bridge over the Eeman; then walking through a path in the wood round the bottom of the hill, came forth where the Eeman issues out of the lake, and continued my way along its western shore close to the water, and generally on a level with it. Saw a cormorant flying over it and fishing. The figure of the lake nothing resembles that laid down in our maps: It is nine miles long; and at widest under a mile in breadth. After extending itself three miles and a half in a line to the south-west, it turns at the foot of Place-Fell almost due west, and is here not twice the breadth of the Thames at London. It is soon again interrupted by the root of Hevellyn, a lofty and very rugged mountain, and spreading again turns off to south-east, and is lost among the deep recesses of the hills. To this second turning I pursued my way about four miles along its borders beyond a village scattered among trees, and called Water-Mallock, in a pleasant grave day, perfectly calm and warm, but without a gleam of sunshine; then the sky seeming to thicken, and the valley to grow more desolate, and

evening drawing on, I returned by the way I came to Penrith.

Oct. 2. I set out at ten for Keswick, by the road we went in 1767; saw Greystock town and castle to the right, which lie about three miles from Ulswater over the fells; passed through Penradoch and Threlcot at the foot of Saddleback, whose furrowed sides were gilt by the noon-day sun, whilst its brow appeared of a sad purple from the shadow of the clouds as they sailed slowly by it. The broad and green valley of Gardies and Lowside, with a swift stream glittering among the cottages and meadows, lay to the left, and the much finer but narrower valley of St. John's opening into it: Hill-top, the large though low mansion of the Gaskarths, now a farm-house, seated on an eminence among woods, under a steep fell, was what appeared the most conspicuous, and beside it a great rock, like some ancient tower nodding to its fall. Passed by the side of Skiddaw and its cub called Latter-rig; and saw from an eminence, at two miles distance, the vale of Elysium in all its verdure; the sun then playing on the bosom of the lake, and lighting up all the mountains with its lustre. Dined by two o'clock at the Queen's Head, and then straggled out alone to the Parsonage, where I say the sun set in all its glory.

Oct. 3. A heavenly day; rose at seven and walked out under the conduct of my landlord to Borrowdale; the grass was covered with a hoar-frost, which soon melted and exhaled in a thin bluish smoke; crossed the meadows, obliquely catching a diversity of views among the hills over the lake and islands, and changing prospect at every ten paces. Left Cockshut (which we formerly mounted) and Castle-hill, a loftier and more rugged hill behind me, and drew near the foot of Walla-crag, whose bare and rocky brow cut perpendicularly down above 400 feet (as I guess, tho' the people call it much more) awfully overlooks the way. Our path here tends to the left, and the ground gently rising and covered with a glade of scattering trees and bushes on the very margin of the water, opens both ways the most delicious view that my eyes ever beheld; opposite are the thick woods of Lord Egremont and Newland-valley, with green and smiling fields embosomed in the dark cliffs; to the left the jaws of Borrowdale, with that turbulent chaos of mountain behind mountain, rolled in confusion; beneath you and stretching far away to the right, the shining purity of the lake reflecting rocks, woods, fields, and inverted tops of hills, just ruffled by the breeze, enough to shew it is alive, with the white buildings of Keswick, Crosthwaite church, and Skiddaw for a back ground at a distance. Behind you the magnificent heights of Walla-crag:

here the glass played its part divinely, the place is called Carf-close-reeds; and I chose to set down these barbarous names, that any body may inquire on the place, and easily find the particular station that I mean. This scene continues to Barrow-gate; and a little farther, passing a brook called Barrow-beck, we entered Borrowdale: the crags named Lawdoor-banks begin now to impend terribly over your way, and more terribly when you hear that three years since an immense mass of rock tumbled at once from the brow, and barred all access to the dale (for this is the only road) till they could work their way through it. Luckily no one was passing at the time of this fall; but down the side of the mountain, and far into the lake, lie dispersed the huge fragments of this ruin in all shapes and in all directions: something farther we turned aside into a coppice, ascending a little in front of Lawdoor water-fall; the height appeared to be about 200 feet, the quantity of water not great, though (these three days excepted) it had rained daily in the hills for near two months before: but then the stream was nobly broken, leaping from rock to rock, and foaming with fury. On one side a towering crag that spired up to equal, if not overtop, the neighbouring cliffs (this lay all in shade and darkness): on the other hand a rounder broader projecting hill shagged with wood, and illuminated by the sun, which glanced sideways on the upper part of the

cararact. The force of the water wearing a deep channel in the ground, hurries away to join the lake. We descended again and passed the stream over a rude bridge. Soon after we came under Gowdar-crag, a hill more formidable to the eye, and to the apprehension, than that of Lawdoor; the rocks at top deep-cloven perpendicularly, by the rains, hanging loose and nodding forwards, seem just starting from their base in shivers. The whole way down, and the road on both sides is strewed with piles of the fragments strangely thrown across each other, and of a dreadful bulk; the place reminds me of those passes in the Alps, where the guides tell you to move on with speed, and say nothing, lest the agitation of the air should loosen the snows above, and bring down a mass that would overwhelm a caravan. I took their counsel here and hastened on in silence.

Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda, e passa!

The hills here are cloathed all up their steep sides with oak, ash, birch, holly, &c. some of it has been cut forty years ago, some within these eight years; yet all is sprung again, green, flourishing, and tall, for its age, in a place where no soil appears but the staring rock, and where a man could scarce stand upright: here we met a civil young farmer overseeing his reapers (for it

is now oat-harvest) who conducted us to a neat white house in the village of Grange, which is built on a rising ground in the midst of a valley; round it the mountains form an awful amphitheatre, and through it obliquely runs the Derwent clear as glass, and shewing under its bridge every trout that passes. Beside the village rises a round eminence of rock covered intirely with old trees, and over that more proudly towers Castle-crag, invested also with wood on its sides, and bearing on its naked top some traces of a fort said to be Roman. By the side of this hill, which almost blocks up the way, the valley turns to the left, and contracts its dimensions till there is hardly any road but the rocky bed of the river. The wood of the mountains increases, and their summits grow loftier to the eye, and of more fantastic forms; among them appear Eagle's-cliff, Dove's-nest, Whitedale-pike, &c. celebrated names in the annals of Keswick. The dale opens about four miles higher till you come to Seawhaite (where lies the way mounting the hills to the right that leads to the Wadd-mines); all farther access is here barred to prying mortals, only there is a little path winding over the fells, and for some weeks in the year passable to the dalesmen; but the mountains know well that these innocent people will not reveal the mysteries of their ancient kingdom, "the reign of Chaos "and Old Night:" only I learned that this dreadful

road, dividing again, leads one branch to Ravenglas, and the other to Hawkshead.

For me I went no farther than the farmer's (better than four miles from Keswick) at Grange; his mother and he brought us butter that Siserah would have jumped at, though not in a lordly dish, bowls of milk, thin oaten-cakes, and ale; and we had carried a cold tongue thither with us. Our farmer was himself the man, that last year plundered the eagle's eyrie; all the dale are up in arms on such an occasion, for they lose abundance of lambs yearly, not to mention hares, partridges, grouse, &c. He was let down from the cliff in ropes to the shelf of the rock on which the nest was built, the people above shouting and hollowing to fright the old birds, which flew screaming round, but did not dare to attack him. He brought off the eaglet (for there is rarely more than one) and an addle egg. The nest was roundish, and more than a yard over, made of twigs twisted together. Seldom a year passes but they take the brood or eggs, and sometimes they shoot one, sometimes the other, parent; but the survivor has always found a mate (probably in Ireland) and they breed near the old place. By his description I learn, that this species is the *Erne* the Vulture *Albicilla* of Linnæus, in his last edition, (but in yours *Falco Albicilla*) so consult him and Pennant about it.

We returned leisurely home the way we came; but saw a new landscape; the features indeed were the same in part, but many new ones were disclosed by the mid-day sun, and the tints were intirely changed: take notice this was the best, or perhaps the only day for going up Skiddaw, but I thought it better employed; it was perfectly serene, and hot as midsummer.

In the evening I walked alone down to the lake by the side of Crow-park after sunset, and saw the solemn colouring of night draw on, the last gleam of sunshine fading away on the hill-tops, the deep serene of the waters, and the long shadows of the mountains thrown across them, till they nearly touched the hithermost shore. At a distance were heard the murmurs of many water-falls, not audible in the day-time; I wished for the moon, but she was *dark to me and silent,*

Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.

Oct. 4. I walked to Crow-park, now a rough pasture, once a glade of ancient oaks, whose large roots still remain on the ground, but nothing has sprung from them. If one single tree had remained, this would have been an unparalleled spot; and Smith judged right, when he took his print of the lake from hence, for it is a gentle eminence, not too high, on the very

margin of the water, and commanding it from end to end, looking full into the gorge of Borrowdale. I prefer it even to Cockshut-hill which lies beside it, and to which I walked in the afternoon; it is covered with young trees both sown and planted, oak, spruce, Scotch-fir, &c. all which thrive wonderfully. There is an easy ascent to the top, and the view far preferable to that on Castle-hill (which you remember) because this is lower and nearer to the lake: for I find all points, that are much elevated, spoil the beauty of the valley, and make its parts, which are not large, look poor and diminutive *. While I was here a little shower fell, red clouds came marching up the hills from the east, and part of a bright rainbow seemed to rise along the side of Castle-hill.

From hence I got to the Parsonage a little before sunset, and saw in my glass a picture, that if I could transmit to you, and fix it in all the softness of its liv-

* The *Picturesque Point* is always thus low in all prospects; a truth, which though the Landscape Painter knows, he cannot always observe; since the Patron who employs him to take a view of his place, usually carries him to some elevation for that purpose, in order, I suppose, that he may have more of him for his money. Yet when I say this, I would not be thought to mean that a drawing should be made from the lowest point possible; as for instance, in this very view, from the lake itself, for then a foreground would be wanting. On this account, when I sailed on Derwentwater, I did not receive so much pleasure from the superb

ing colours, would fairly sell for a thousand pounds. This is the sweetest scene I can yet discover in point of pastoral beauty; the rest are in a sublimer style.

Oct. 5. I walked through the meadows and corn-fields to the Derwent, and crossing it went up How-hill; it looks along Bassingthwait-water, and sees at the same time the course of the river, and a part of the upper-lake, with a full view of Skiddaw; then I took my way through Portingskall village to the Park, a hill so called, covered intirely with wood; it is all a mass of crumbling slate. Passed round its foot between the trees and the edge of the water, and came to a peninsula that juts out into the lake, and looks along it both ways; in front rises Walla-crag and Castle-hill, the town, the road to Penrith, Skiddaw, and Saddleback. Returning, met a brisk and cold north-eastern blast that ruffled all the surface of the lake, and made it rise in little waves that broke at the foot of the wood. After dinner walked up the Penrith road two miles, or more, and turning into a corn-field to the right, called Castle-rig, saw a Druid-circle of large stones, 108 feet in diameter, the biggest not eight feet high, but most of them still erect; they are fifty in num-

amphitheatre of mountains around me, as when, like Mr. Gray, I traversed its margin; and I therefore think he did not lose much by not taking boat.

ber *. The valley of St. John's appeared in sight, and the summits of Catchidecam (called by Camden, Casticand) and Helvellyn, said to be as high as Skiddaw, and to rise from a much higher base.

Oct. 6. Went in a chaise eight miles along the east-side of Bassingthwaite water to Ousebridge (pronounced Ews-bridge); the road in some part made and very good, the rest slippery and dangerous cart-road, or narrow rugged lanes, but no precipices; it runs directly along the foot of Skiddaw: opposite to Widhopebrows, cloathed to the top with wood, a very beautiful view opens down to the lake, which is narrower and longer than that of Keswick, less broken into bays, and without islands †. At the foot of it, a few paces from the brink, gently sloping upwards, stands Armathwaite in a thick grove of Scotch firs, commanding a noble view directly up the lake: at a small distance behind the house is a large extent of wood, and still behind this a ridge of cultivated hills, on which, according to the Keswick proverb, *the sun always shines.* The

* See this piece of antiquity more fully described, with a plate annexed, by Mr. Pennant, in his Second Tour to Scotland in 1772, p. 38.

† It is somewhat extraordinary that Mr. Gray omitted to mention the islands on Derwentwater; one of which, I think they call it Vicars' Island, makes a principal object in the scene. See Smith's View of Derwentwater.

inhabitants here, on the contrary, call the vale of Derwent-water, *the Devil's Chamber-pot*, and pronounce the name of *Skiddaw-fell*, which terminates here, with a sort of terror and aversion. Armathwaite house is a modern fabric, not large, and built of dark-red stone, belonging to Mr. Spedding, whose grandfather was steward to old Sir James Lowther, and bought this estate of the Himers. The sky was overcast and the wind cool; so, after dining at a public-house, which stands here near the bridge, (that crosses the Derwent just where it issues from the lake) and sauntering a little by the water-side, I came home again. The turnpike is finished from Cockermouth hither, five miles, and is carrying on to Penrith: several little showers today. A man came in, who said there was snow on Cross-fell this morning.

Oct. 7. I walked in the morning to Crow-park, and in the evening up Penrith road. The clouds came rolling up the mountains all round very dark, yet the moon shone at intervals. It was too damp to go towards the lake. To-morrow I mean to bid farewel to Keswick.

Botany might be studied here to great advantage at another season, because of the great variety of soils and elevations, all lying within a small compass. I observed nothing but several curious lichens, and plenty

of gale or Dutch myrtle perfuming the borders of the lake. This year the Wadd-mine had been opened, which is done once in five years; it is taken out in lumps sometimes as big as a man's fist, and will undergo no preparation by fire, not being fusible; when it is pure, soft, black, and close-grained, it is worth sometimes thirty shillings a pound. There are no char ever taken in these lakes, but plenty in Butter-mere-water, which lies a little way north of Borrowdale, about Martinmas, which are potted here. They sow chiefly oats and bigg here, which are now cutting and still on the ground; the rains have done much hurt: yet observe, the soil is so thin and light, that no day has passed in which I could not walk out with ease, and you know I am no lover of dirt. Fell mutton is now in season for about six weeks; it grows fat on the mountains, and nearly resembles venison. Excellent pike and perch, here called Bass; trout is out of season; partridge in great plenty.

Oct. 8. I left Keswick and took the Ambleside road in a gloomy morning; and about two miles from the town mounted an eminence called Castle-rigg, and the sun breaking out, discovered the most enchanting view I have yet seen of the whole valley behind me, the two lakes, the river, the mountains, all in their glory; so that I had almost a mind to have gone back again.

The road in some few parts is not compleated, yet good country road, through sound but narrow and stony lanes, very safe in broad day-light. This is the case about Causeway-foot, and among Naddle-fells to Lancwaite. The vale you go in has little breadth; the mountains are vast and rocky, the fields little and poor, and the inhabitants are now making hay, and see not the sun by two hours in a day so long as at Keswick. Came to the foot of Helvellyn, along which runs an excellent road, looking down from a little height on Lee's water, (called also Thirl-méer, or Wiborn-water) and soon descending on its margin. The lake looks black from its depth, and from the gloom of the vast crags that scowl over it, though really clear as glass; it is narrow, and about three miles long, resembling a river in its course; little shining torrents hurry down the rocks to join it, but not a bush to over-shadow them, or cover their march; all is rock and loose stones up to the very brow, which lies so near your way, that not above half the height of Helvellyn can be seen.

Next I passed by the little chapel of Wiborn, out of which the Sunday congregation were then issuing; soon after a beck near Dunmeil-raise, when I entered Westmoreland a second time; and now began to see Holm-crag, distinguished from its rugged neighbours, not so much by its height as by the strange broken out-

lines of its top, like some gigantic building demolished, and the stones that composed it flung across each other in wild confusion. Just beyond it opens one of the sweetest landscapes that art ever attempted to imitate. The bosom of the mountains spreading here into a broad bason discovers in the midst Grasmere-water; its margin is hollowed into small bays, with bold eminences; some of rock, some of soft turf, that half-conceal, and vary the figure of the little lake they command: from the shore, a low promontory pushes itself far into the water, and on it stands a white village with the parish church rising in the midst of it: hanging inclosures, corn-fields, and meadows green as an emerald, with their trees and hedges, and cattle, fill up the whole space from the edge of the water: and just opposite to you is a large farm-house at the bottom of a steep smooth lawn, embosomed in old woods, which climb half-way up the mountain's side, and discover above them a broken line of crags that crown the scene. Not a single red tile, no flaring gentleman's house, or garden-walls, break in upon the repose of this little unsuspected paradise; but all is peace, rusticity, and happy poverty in its neatest most becoming attire.

The road winds here over Grasmere-hill, whose rocks soon conceal the water from your sight; yet it is continued along behind them, and, contracting itself to a

river, communicates with Ridale-water, another small lake, but of inferior size and beauty; it seems shallow too, for large patches of reeds appear pretty far within it. Into this vale the road descends. On the opposite banks large and ancient woods mount up the hills; and just to the left of our way stands Ridale-hall, the family-seat of Sir Michael Fleming, a large old-fashioned fabric, surrounded with wood. Sir Michael is now on his travels, and all this timber, far and wide, belongs to him. Near the house rises a huge crag, called Ridale-head, which is said to command a full view of Wynander-mere, and I doubt it not; for within a mile that great lake is visible, even from the road; as to going up the crag, one might as well go up Skiddaw.

I now reached Ambleside, eighteen miles from Keswick, meaning to lie there; but, on looking into the best bed-chamber, dark and damp as a cellar, grew delicate, gave up Wynander-mere in despair, and resolved I would go on to Kendal directly, fourteen miles farther *. The road in general fine turnpike, but some

* By not staying a little at Ambleside, Mr. Gray lost the sight of two most magnificent cascades; the one not above half a mile behind the inn, the other down Ridale-crag, where Sir Michael Fleming is now making a path-way to the top of it. These, when I saw them, were in full torrent, whereas Lawdoor water-fall, which I visited in the evening of the very same day, was almost without a stream. Hence I conclude that this distinguished fea-

parts (about three miles in all) not made, yet without danger.

For this determination I was unexpectedly well rewarded: for the afternoon was fine, and the road, for the space of full five miles, ran along the side of Wynander-mere, with delicious views across it, and almost from one end to the other. It is ten miles in length, and at most a mile over, resembling the course of some vast and magnificent river; but no flat marshy grounds, no osier-beds, or patches of scrubby plantations on its banks: at the head two vallies open among the mountains; one, that by which we came down, the other Langsledale, in which Wry-nose and Hard-knot, two great mountains, rise above the rest: from thence the fells visibly sink, and soften along its sides; sometimes

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ture in the vale of Keswick, is, like most northern rivers, only in high beauty during bad weather. But his greatest loss was in not seeing a small water-fall visible only through the window of a ruined summer-house in Sir Michael's orchard. Here Nature has performed every thing in little that she usually executes on her largest scale; and on that account, like the miniature painter, seems to have finished every part of it in a studied manner; not a little fragment of rock thrown into the bason, not a single stem of brushwood that starts from its craggy sides but has its picturesque meaning; and the little central stream dashing down a cleft of the darkest-coloured stone, produces an effect of light and shadow beautiful beyond description. This little theatrical scene might be painted as large as the original, on a canvass not bigger than those which are usually dropped in the Opera-house.

they run into it (but with a gentle declivity) in their own dark and natural complexion: oftener they are green and cultivated, with farms interspersed, and round eminences, on the border covered with trees: towards the south it seemed to break into larger bays, with several islands and a wider extent of cultivation. The way rises continually, till at a place called Orrest-head it turns south-east, losing sight of the water.

Passed by Ing's-Chapel and Staveley; but I can say no farther, for the dusk of evening coming on, I entered Kendal almost in the dark, and could distinguish only a shadow of the castle on a hill, and tenter-grounds spread far and wide round the town, which I mistook for houses. My inn promised sadly, having two wooden galleries, like Scotland, in front of it: it was indeed an old ill-contrived house, but kept by civil sensible people; so I stayed two nights with them, and fared and slept very comfortably.

Oct. 9. The air mild as summer, all corn off the ground, and the sky-larks singing aloud (by the way, I saw not one at Keswick, perhaps because the place abounds in birds of prey). I went up the castle-hill; the town consists chiefly of three nearly parallel streets, almost a mile long; except these, all the other houses seem as if they had been dancing a country-dance, and

were out: there they stand back to back, corner to corner, some up hill, some down, without intent or meaning. Along by their side runs a fine brisk stream, over which are three stone bridges; the buildings (a few comfortable houses excepted) are mean, of stone, and covered with a bad rough cast. Near the end of the town stands a handsome house of Col. Wilson's, and adjoining to it the church, a very large gothic fabric, with a square tower; it has no particular ornaments but double isles, and at the east-end four chapels or choirs; one of the Parrs, another of the Stricklands; the third is the proper choir of the church, and the fourth of the Bellinghams, a family now extinct. There is an altar-tomb of one of them dated 1577, with a flat brass, arms and quarterings; and in the window their arms alone, arg. a hunting-horn, sab. strung gules. In the Stricklands' chapel several modern monuments, and another old altar-tomb, not belonging to the family: on the side of it a fess dancetty between ten billets, Deincourt. In the Parrs' chapel is a third altar-tomb in the corner, no figure or inscription, but on the side, cut in stone, an escutcheon of Ross of Kendal, (three water-budgets) quartering Parr (two bars in a bordure engrailed); 2dly, an escutcheon, vaire, a fess for Marmion; 3dly, an escutcheon, three chevronels braced, and a chief (which I take for Fitzhugh): at the foot is an escutcheon, surrounded with the garter,

bearing Roos and Parr quarterly, quartering the other two before-mentioned. I have no books to look in, therefore cannot say whether this is the Lord Parr of Kendal, Queen Catharine's father, or her brother the Marquis of Northampton: perhaps it is a cenotaph for the latter who was buried at Warwick in 1571. The remains of the castle are seated on a fine hill on the side of the river opposite the town; almost the whole inclosure of the walls remains, with four towers, two square and two round, but their upper part and embattlements are demolished: it is of rough stone and cement, without any ornament or arms, round, inclosing a court of like form, and surrounded by a moat; nor ever could it have been larger than it is, for there are no traces of outworks. There is a good view of the town and river, with a fertile open valley through which it winds.

After dinner I went along the Milthrop turnpike, four miles, to see the falls, or force, of the river Kent; came to Sizergh, (pronounced Siser) and turned down a lane to the left. This seat of the Stricklands, an old Catholic family, is an ancient hall-house, with a very large tower embattled; the rest of the buildings added to it are of later date, but all is white, and seen to advantage on a back ground of old trees; there is a small park also well wooded. Opposite to this, turning to

the left, I soon came to the river; it works its way in a narrow and deep rocky channel overhung with trees. The calmness and brightness of the evening, the roar of the waters, and the thumping of huge hammers at an iron-forge not far distant, made it a singular walk; but as to the falls (for there are two) they are not four feet high. I went on, down to the forge, and saw the demons at work by the light of their own fires: the iron is brought in pigs to Milthrop by sea from Scotland, &c. and is here beat into bars and plates. Two miles further, at Levens, is the seat of Lord Suffolk, where he sometimes passes the summer: it was a favourite place of his late Countess; but this I did not see.

Oct. 10. I proceeded by Burton to Lancaster, twenty-two miles; very good country, well inclosed and wooded, with some common interspersed. Passed at the foot of Farlton-knot, a high fell four miles north of Lancaster; on a rising ground called Boulton (pronounced Bouton) we had a full view of Cartmell-sands, with here and there a passenger riding over them (it being low water); the points of Furness shooting far into the sea, and lofty mountains, partly covered with clouds, extending north of them. Lancaster also appeared very conspicuous and fine; for its most distinguished features, the castle and church, mounted on a green eminence, were all that could be seen. Woe is

me! when I got thither, it was the second day of their fair; the inn, in the principal street, was a great old gloomy house full of people; but I found tolerable quarters, and even slept two nights in peace.

In a fine afternoon I ascended the castle-hill; it takes up the higher top of the eminence on which it stands, and is irregularly round, encompassed with a deep moat: in front, towards the town, is a magnificent gothic gateway, lofty and huge; the overhanging battlements are supported by a triple range of corbels, the intervals pierced through, and shewing the day from above. On its top rise light watch-towers of small height. It opens below with a grand pointed arch: over this is a wrought tabernacle, doubtless once containing its founder's figure; on one side a shield of France semi-quartered with England; on the other the same, with a label, ermine, for John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. This opens to a court within, which I did not much care to enter, being the county-gaol, and full of prisoners, both criminals and debtors. From this gateway the walls continue and join it to a vast square tower of great height, the lower part at least of remote antiquity; for it has small round-headed lights with plain short pillars on each side of them: there is a third tower, also square and of less dimensions. This is all the castle. Near it, and but little lower, stands the

church, a large and plain gothic fabric; the high square tower at the west-end has been rebuilt of late years, but nearly in the same style: there are no ornaments of arms, &c. any where to be seen; within, it is lightsome and spacious, but not one monument of antiquity, or piece of painted glass, is left. From the church-yard there is an extensive sea-view, (for now the tide had almost covered the sands, and filled the river) and besides the greatest part of Furness, I could distinguish Peel-castle on the isle of Fowdrey, which lies off its southern extremity. The town is built on the slope, and at the foot of the castle-hill, more than twice the bigness of Aukland, with many neat buildings of white stone, but a little disorderly in their position, and, "ad libitum," like Kendal: many also extend below on the keys by the river-side, where a number of ships were moored, some of them three-masted vessels decked out with their colours in honour of the fair. Here is a good bridge of four arches over the Lune, that runs, when the tide is out, in two streams divided by a bed of gravel, which is not covered but in spring-tides; below the town it widens to near the breadth of the Thames at London, and meets the sea at five or six miles distance to south-west.

Oct. 11. I crossed the river and walked over a peninsula, three miles, to the village of Pooton, which

stands on the beach. An old fisherman mending his nets (while I inquired about the danger of passing those sands) told me, in his dialect, a moving story; how a brother of the trade, a Cockler, as he styled him, driving a little cart with two daughters (women grown) in it, and his wife on horseback following, set out one day to pass the seven-mile sands, as they had frequently been used to do, (for no body in the village knew them better than the old man did); when they were about half-way over, a thick fog rose, and as they advanced they found the water much deeper than they expected: the old man was puzzled; he stopped, and said he would go a little way to find some mark he was acquainted with; they staid a while for him; but in vain; they called aloud, but no reply: at last the young women pressed their mother to think where they were, and go on; she would not leave the place; she wandered about forlorn and amazed; she would not quit her horse and get into the cart with them: they determined, after much time wasted, to turn back, and give themselves up to the guidance of their horses. The old woman was soon washed off, and perished; the poor girls clung close to their cart, and the horse, sometimes wading and sometimes swimming, brought them back to land alive, but senseless with terror and distress, and unable for many days to give any account of themselves. The bodies of their parents were found next ebb; that of the

father a very few paces distant from the spot where he had left them.

In the afternoon I wandered about the town, and by the key, till it grew dark.

Oct. 12. I set out for Settle by a fine turnpike-road, twenty-nine miles, through a rich and beautiful inclosed country, diversified with frequent villages and churches, very unequal ground; and on the left the river Lune winding in a deep valley, its hanging banks cloathed with fine woods, thro' which you catch long reaches of the water, as the road winds about at a considerable height above it. In the most picturesque part of the way, I passed the park belonging to the Hon. Mr. Clifford, a Catholic. The grounds between him and the river are indeed charming *; the house is ordinary, and the park nothing but a rocky fell scatter-

* This scene opens just three miles from Lancaster, on what is called the Queen's Road. To see the view in perfection, you must go into a field on the left. Here Ingleborough, behind a variety of lesser mountains, makes the back-ground of the prospect: on each hand of the middle distance, rise two sloping hills; the left cloathed with thick woods, the right with variegated rock and herbage: between them, in the most fertile of vallies, the Lune serpentizes for many a mile, and comes forth ample and clear, thro' a well-wooded and richly-pastured fore-ground. Every feature, which constitutes a perfect landscape of the extensive sort, is here not only boldly marked, but also in its best position.

ed over with ancient hawthorns. Next I came to Hornby, a little town on the river Wanning, over which a handsome bridge is now building; the castle, in a lordly situation, attracted me, so I walked up the hill to it: first presents itself a large white ordinary sashed Gentleman's house, and behind it rises the ancient Keep, built by Edward Stanley, Lord Monteagle. He died about 1529, in King Henry the Eighth's time. It is now only a shell, the rafters are laid within it as for flooring. I went up a winding stone-stair-case in one corner to the leads, and at the angle is a single hexagon watch-tower, rising some feet higher, fitted up in the taste of a modern summer-house, with sash-windows in gilt frames, a stucco cupola, and on the top a vast gilt eagle, built by Mr. Charteris, the present possessor. He is the second son of the Earl of Wemys, brother to the Lord Elcho, and grandson to Col. Charteris, whose name he bears.

From the leads of the tower there is a fine view of the country round, and much wood near the castle. Ingleborough, which I had seen before distinctly at Lancaster to north-east, was now completely wrapped in clouds, all but its summit; which might have been easily mistaken for a long black cloud too, fraught with an approaching storm. Now our road began gradually to mount towards the Apennine, the trees growing less

and thinner of leaves, till we came to Ingleton, eighteen miles; it is a pretty village, situated very high, and yet in a valley at the foot of that huge monster of nature, Ingleborough: two torrents cross it, with great stones rolled along their beds instead of water; and over them are flung two handsome arches. The nipping air, tho' the afternoon was growing very bright, now taught us we were in Craven, the road was all up and down, tho' no where very steep; to the left were mountain-tops, to the right a wide valley, all inclosed ground, and beyond it high hills again. In approaching Settle, the crags on the left drew nearer to our way, till we descended Brunton-brow into a chearful valley (though thin of trees) to Giggleswick, a village with a small piece of water by its side, covered over with coots; near it a church, which belongs also to Settle; and half a mile farther, having passed the Ribble over a bridge, I arrived there; it is a small market-town standing directly under a rocky fell; there are not in it above a dozen good-looking houses, the rest are old and low, with little wooden porticos in front. My inn pleased me much, (though small) for the neatness and civility of the good woman that kept it; so I lay there two nights, and went,

Oct. 13. To visit Gordale-scar, which lay six miles from Settle; but that way was directly over a fell, and

as the weather was not to be depended on, I went round in a chaise, the only way one could get near it in a carriage, which made it full thirteen miles, half of it such a road! but I got safe over it, so there's an end, and came to Malham (pronounced Maum) a village in the bosom of the mountains, seated in a wild and dreary valley. From thence I was to walk a mile over very rough ground, a torrent rattling along on the left hand; on the cliffs above hung a few goats; one of them danced and scratched an ear with its hind foot in a place where I would not have stood stock-still .

For all beneath the moon.

As I advanced, the crags seemed to close in, but discovered a narrow entrance turning to the left between them: I followed my guide a few paces, and the hills opened again into no large space; and then all farther way is barred by a stream that, at the height of about fifty feet, gushes from a hole in the rock, and spreading in large sheets over its broken front, dashes from steep to steep, and then rattles away in a torrent down the valley: the rock on the left rises perpendicular, with stubbed yew-trees and shrubs staring from its side, to the height of at least 300 feet; but these are not the thing: it is the rock to the right, under which you stand to see the fall, that forms the principal horror of the place. From its very base it begins to slope for-

wards over you in one block or solid mass without any crevice in its surface, and overshadows half the area below with its dreadful canopy; when I stood at (I believe) four yards distance from its foot, the drops, which perpetually distil from its brow, fell on my head; and in one part of its top, more exposed to the weather, there are loose stones that hang in air, and threaten visibly some idle spectator with instant destruction; it is safer to shelter yourself close to its bottom, and trust to the mercy of that enormous mass which nothing but an earthquake can stir. The gloomy uncomfortable day well suited the savage aspect of the place, and made it still more formidable: I stayed there, not without shuddering, a quarter of an hour, and thought my trouble richly paid; for the impression will last for life. At the ale-house where I dined in Malham, Vivares, the landscape-painter, had lodged for a week or more; Smith and Bellers had also been there, and two prints of Gordale have been engraved by them.

Oct. 14. Leaving my comfortable inn, to which I had returned from Gordale, I set out for Skipton, sixteen miles. From several parts of the road, and in many places about Settle, I saw at once the three famous hills of this country, Ingleborough, Penigent, and Pendle;

the first is esteemed the highest, and their features not to be described, but by the pencil *.

* Without the pencil nothing indeed is to be described with precision; and even then that pencil ought to be in the very hand of the writer, ready to supply with outlines every thing that his pen cannot express by words. As far as language can describe, Mr. Gray has, I think, pushed its powers: For rejecting, as I before hinted, every general unmeaning and hyperbolical phrase, he has selected (both in this journal, and on other similar occasions) the plainest, simplest, and most direct terms: yet notwithstanding his judicious care, in the use of these, I must own I feel them defective. They present me, it is true, with a picture of the same species, but not with the identical picture: my imagination receives clear and distinct, but not true and exact images. It may be asked then, why am I entertained by well-written descriptions? I answer, because they amuse when they do not inform me; and because, after I have seen the places described, they serve to recal to my memory the original scene, almost as well as the truest drawing or picture. In the meanwhile, my mind is flattered by thinking it has acquired some conception of the place, and rests contented in an innocent error, which nothing but ocular proof can detect, and which, when detected, does not diminish the pleasure I had before received, but augments it by super-adding the charms of comparison and verification; and herein I would place the real and only merit of verbal prose description. To speak of poetical, would lead me beyond the limits as well as the purpose of this note. I cannot, however, help adding, that I have seen one piece of verbal description which completely satisfies me, because it is throughout assisted by masterly delineation. It is composed by the Rev. Mr. Gilpin, of Cheam in Surry; and contains, amongst other places, an account of the very scenes which, in this tour, our author visited. This Gentleman, possessing the conjoined talent of a writer and a designer, has employed them in this manuscript to every purpose of picturesque beauty, in the description of which, a correct eye, a practised pencil, and an eloquent pen could assist

Craven, after all, is an unpleasing country when seen from a height; its valleys are chiefly wide, and either marshy or inclosed pasture, with a few trees. Numbers of black cattle are fatted here, both of the Scotch breed, and a larger sort of oxen with great horns. There is little cultivated ground, except a few oats.

Skipton, to which I went through Long-Preston and Gargrave, is a pretty large market-town, in a valley, with one very broad street gently sloping downwards from the castle, which stands at the head of it. This is one of our good Countess's buildings *, but on old foundations; it is not very large, but of a handsome antique appearance, with round towers, a grand gateway, bridge, and moat, surrounded by many old trees. It is in good repair, and kept up as a habitation of the Earl of Thanet, though he rarely comes thither: what with the sleet, and a foolish dispute about chaises, that delayed me, I did not see the inside of it, but went on, fifteen miles, to Otley; first up Shode-bank, the steepest hill I ever saw a road carried over in England, for

him. He has, consequently, produced a work *unique* in its kind. But I have said it is in manuscript, and, I am afraid, likely to continue so; for would his modesty permit him to print it, the great expense of plates would make its publication almost impracticable.

* Anne Countess of Pembroke and Montgomery.

it mounts in a strait line (without any other repose for the horses than by placing stones every now and then behind the wheels) for a full mile; then the road goes on a level along the brow of this high hill over Rumbald-moor, till it gently descends into Wharldale, so they call the vale of the Wharf, and a beautiful vale it is, well-wooded, well-cultivated, well-inhabited, but with high crags at a distance, that border the green country on either hand; through the midst of it, deep, clear, full to the brink, and of no inconsiderable breadth, runs in long windings the river. How it comes to pass that it should be so fine and copious a stream here, and at Tadcaster (so much lower) should have nothing but a wide stony channel without water, I cannot tell you. I passed thro' Long-Addingham, Ilkeley, (pronounced Eecly) distinguished by a lofty brow of loose rocks to the right; Burley, a neat and pretty village, among trees; on the opposite side of the river lay Middleton-Lodge, belonging to a catholic gentleman of that name; Weston, a venerable stone fabric, with large offices, of Mr. Vavasour, the meadows in front gently descending to the water, and behind a great and shady wood; Farnley (Mr. Fawkes's) a place like the last, but larger, and rising higher on the side of the hill. Otley is a large airy town, with clean but low rustic buildings, and a bridge over the Wharf; I went into its spacious Gothic church, which has been new-roofed, with a flat

stucco-ceiling; in a corner of it is the monument of Thomas Lord Fairfax, and Helen Aske, his Lady, descended from the Cliffords and Latimers, as her epitaph says; the figures, not ill-cut (particularly his in armour, but bare-headed) lie on the tomb. I take them to be the parents of the famous Sir Thomas Fairfax.

LETTER V.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

April 18, 1770.

I Have utterly forgot where my Journal left off, but I think it was after the account of Gordale near Settle; if so, there was little more worth your notice: the principal things were Wharldale, in the way from Skipton to Otley, and Kirkstall abbey, three miles from Leeds * * * * †. Kirkstall is a noble ruin in the Semi-saxon style of building, as old as King Stephen, towards the end of his reign, 1152. The whole church is still standing, the roof excepted, seated in a delicious quiet valley, on the banks of the river Aire, and preserved with

† Here a paragraph, describing Wharldale in the foregoing Journal, was repeated.

religious reverence by the Duke of Montagu. Adjoining to the church, between that and the river, are variety of chapels and remnants of the abbey, shattered by the encroachments of the ivy, and surrounded by many a sturdy tree, whose twisted roots break through the fret of the vaulting, and hang streaming from the roofs. The gloom of these ancient cells, the shade and verdure of the landscape, the glittering and murmur of the stream, the lofty towers and long perspectives of the church, in the midst of a clear bright day, detained me for many hours; and were the truest objects for my glass I have yet met with any where. As I lay at that smoky, ugly, busy town of Leeds, I dropped all further thoughts of my Journal; and after passing two days at Mason's (tho' he was absent) pursued my way by Nottingham, Leicester, Harborough, Kettering, Thrapston, and Huntingdon to Cambridge, where I arrived on the 22d of October, having met with no rain to signify till this last day of my journey. There's luck for you!

I do think of seeing Wales this summer, having never found my spirits lower than at present, and feeling that motion and change of the scene is absolutely necessary to me; I will make Aston in my way to Chester, and shall rejoice to meet you there the last week in

May. Mason writes me word that he wishes it; and though his old house is down, and his new one not up, proposes to receive us like Princes in grain.

LETTER VI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. NICHOLLS. *

I Received your letter at Southampton; and as I would wish to treat every body, according to their own rule and measure of good breeding, have, against my inclination, waited till now before I answered it, purely out of fear and respect, and an ingenuous diffidence of my own abilities. If you will not take this as an excuse, accept it at least as a well-turned period, which is always my principal concern.

So I proceed to tell you that my health is much improved by the sea, not that I drank it, or bathed in it, as the common people do: no! I only walked by it and looked upon it. The climate is remarkably mild, even in October and November; no snow has

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* This letter was written the 19th of November, 1764; but as it delineates another abbey, in a different manner, it seems to make no improper companion to that which precedes it.

been seen to lie there for these thirty years past; the myrtles grow in the ground against the houses, and Guernsey lilies bloom in every window: the town, clean and well-built, surrounded by its old stone-walls, with their towers and gateways, stands at the point of a peninsula, and opens full south to an arm of the sea, which, having formed two beautiful bays on each hand of it, stretches away in direct view, till it joins the British Channel; it is skirted on either side with gently-rising grounds, cloathed with thick wood, and directly cross its mouth rise the high lands of the Isle of Wight at distance, but distinctly seen. In the bosom of the woods (concealed from prophane eyes) lie hid the ruins of Nettely abbey; there may be richer and greater houses of religion, but the Abbot is content with his situation. See there, at the top of that hanging meadow, under the shade of those old trees that bend into a half circle about it, he is walking slowly (good man!) and bidding his beads for the souls of his benefactors, interred in that venerable pile that lies beneath him. Beyond it (the meadow still descending) nods a thicket of oaks that mask the building, and have excluded a view too garish and luxuriant for a holy eye; only on either hand they leave an opening to the blue glittering sea. Did you not observe how, as that white sail shot by and was lost, he turned and crossed himself to drive the tempter from him that had thrown that distraction

in his way? I should tell you that the ferryman who rowed me, a lusty young fellow, told me that he would not for all the world pass a night at the abbey (there were such things seen near it) though there was a power of money hid there. From thence I went to Salisbury, Wilton, and Stonehenge: But of these things I say no more, they will be published at the University press.

P. S. I must not close my letter without giving you one principal event of my history; which was, that (in the course of my late tour) I set out one morning before five o'clock, the moon shining through a dark and misty autumnal air, and got to the sea-coast time enough to be at the Sun's Levee. I saw the clouds and dark vapours open gradually to right and left, rolling over one another in great smoky wreathes, and the tide (as it flowed gently in upon the sands) first whitening, then slightly tinged with gold and blue; and all at once a little line of insufferable brightness that (before I can write these five words) was grown to half an orb, and now to a whole one, too glorious to be distinctly seen *. It is very odd it makes no figure on

* This puts me in mind of a similar description written by Dr. Jeremy Taylor, which I shall here beg leave to present to the reader, who will find by it that the old Divine had occasionally as much power of description as even our modern Poet. " As when

paper; yet I shall remember it as long as the sun, or at least as long as I endure. I wonder whether any body ever saw it before? I hardly believe it.

LETTER VII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. BEATTIE.

Pembroke-Hall, July 2, 1770.

I Rejoice to hear that you are restored to better state of health, to your books, and to your muse once again. That forced dissipation and exercise we are obliged to fly to as a remedy, when this frail machine goes wrong, is often almost as bad as the distemper we would cure; yet I too have been constrained of late to pursue a like regimen, on account of certain pains in the head, (a sensation unknown to me before) and of great dejection of spirits. This, Sir, is the only excuse I have to make you for my long silence, and not (as perhaps you

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"the sun approaches towards the gates of the morning, he first "opens a little eye of heaven, and sends away the spirits of dark-"ness; gives light to the cock, and calls up the lark to mattins; "and by and by gilds the fringes of a cloud, and peeps over the "eastern hills, thrusting out his golden horns * * *; and still (while "a man tells the story) the sun gets up higher till he shews a fair "face and a full light." J. Taylor's Holy Dying, p. 17.

may have figured to yourself) any secret reluctance I had to tell you my mind concerning the specimen you so kindly sent me of your new Poem *: On the contrary, if I had seen any thing of importance to disapprove, I should have hastened to inform you, and never doubted of being forgiven. The truth is, I greatly like all I have seen, and wish to see more. The design is simple, and pregnant with poetical ideas of various kinds, yet seems somehow imperfect at the end. Why may not young Edwin, when necessity has driven him to take up the harp, and assume the profession of a Minstrel, do some great and singular service to his country? (what service I must leave to your invention) such as no General, no Statesman, no Moralist could do without the aid of music, inspiration, and poetry. This will not appear an improbability in those early times, and in a character then held sacred, and respected by all nations: Besides, it will be a full answer to all the Hermit has said, when he dissuaded him from cultivating these pleasing arts; it will shew their use, and make the best panegyric of our favourite and celestial science. And lastly, (what weighs most with me) it will throw more of action, pathos, and interest into your design, which already abounds in reflection

* This letter was written in answer to one that inclosed only a part of the first book of the Minstrel in manuscript, and I believe a sketch of Mr. Beattie's plan for the whole.

and sentiment. As to description, I have always thought that it made the most graceful ornament of poetry, but never ought to make the subject. Your ideas are new, and borrowed from a mountainous country, the only one that can furnish truly picturesque scenery. Some trifles in the language or versification you will permit me to remark. * * *

I will not enter at present into the merits of your *Essay on Truth*, because I have not yet given it all the attention it deserves, though I have read it through with pleasure; besides, I am partial; for I have always thought David Hume a pernicious writer, and believe he has done as much mischief here as he has in his own country. A turbid and shallow stream often appears to our apprehensions very deep. A professed sceptic can be guided by nothing but his present passions (if he has any) and interests; and to be masters of his philosophy we need not his books or advice, for every child is capable of the same thing, without any study at all. Is not that *naiveté* and good humour, which his admirers celebrate in him, owing to this, that he has continued all his days an infant, but one that unhappily has been taught to read and write? That childish nation, the French, have given him vogue

* * * A few paragraphs of particular criticism are here omitted.

and fashion, and we, as usual, have learned from them to admire him at second hand. *

* On a similar subject Mr. Gray expresses himself thus in a letter to Mr. Walpole, dated March 17, 1771: "He must have a "very good stomach that can digest the *Crambe recocta* of Voltaire. "Atheism is a vile dish, though all the cooks of France combine "to make new sauces to it. As to the Soul, perhaps they may "have none on the Continent; but I do think we have such "things in England. Shakespeare, for example, I believe had "several to his own share. As to the Jews (though they do not "eat pork) I like them because they are better Christians than Vol-"taire." This was written only three months before his death; and I insert it to shew how constant and uniform he was in his contempt of infidel writers. Dr. Beattie received only one letter more from his correspondent, dated March 8, 1771. It related to the first book of the Minstrel, now sent to him in print, and contained criticisms on particular passages, and commendations of particular stanzas. Those criticisms the author attended to in a future edition, because his good taste found that they deserved his attention; the passages therefore being altered, the strictures die of course. As to the notes of commendation, the Poem itself abounds with so many striking beauties, that they need not even the hand of Mr. Gray to point them out to a reader of any feeling: all therefore that I shall print of that letter, is the concluding paragraph relating to his Essay on the Immutability of Truth. "I am "happy to hear of your success in another way, because I think "you are serving the cause of human nature, and the true in-"terests of mankind; your book is read here too, and with just "applause."

LETTER VIII.

MR. GRAY TO MR. HOW *.

Cambridge, Sept. 10, 1768.

I Ought long since to have made you my acknowledgments for the obliging testimonies of your esteem that you have conferred upon me; but Count Algarotti's books † did not come to my hands till the end of July, and since that time I have been prevented by illness from doing any of my duties. I have read them more than once, with increasing satisfaction; and should wish mankind had eyes to descry the genuine sources of their own pleasures, and judgment to know the extent that nature has prescribed to them: If this were the case, it would be their interest to appoint Count Algarotti their "Arbiter Elegantiarum." He is highly civil to our nation; but there is one point in which he does not do us justice; I am the more solicitous about

* This letter and the following, if received earlier, would have found their place, according to their dates, in the fourth Section; but I choose rather to print them here, out of place, than to reserve them for another edition, that the purchasers of this may not have hereafter cause to complain that the book was incomplete.

† Three small treatises on Painting, the Opera, and the French Academy for Painters in Italy; they have been since collected in the Leghorn edition of his works.

it, because it relates to the only taste we can call our own; the only proof of our original talent in matter of pleasure, I mean our skill in gardening, or rather laying out grounds; and this is no small honour to us, since neither Italy nor France have ever had the least notion of it, nor yet do at all comprehend it when they see it. That the Chinese have this beautiful art in high perfection, seems very probable from the Jesuits' Letters, and more from Chambers's little discourse, published some years ago *; but it is very certain we copied nothing from them, nor had any thing but nature for our model. It is not forty years since the art was born among us †; and it is sure that there was nothing in Europe like it; and as sure, we then had no information on this head from China at all ‡.

* The author has since enlarged, and published it under the title of a Dissertation on Oriental Gardening; in which he has put it out of all doubt, that the Chinese and English tastes are totally dissimilar.

† See Mr. Walpole's history of this art at the end of the last volume of his Anecdotes of Painters, when he favours the world with its publication.

‡ I question whether this be not saying too much. Sir William Temple's account of the Chinese gardens was published some years before this period; and it is probable that might have promoted our endeavours, not indeed of imitating them, but of imitating (what he said was their archetype) Nature.

I shall rejoice to see you in England, and talk over these and many other matters with you at leisure. Do not despair of your health, because you have not found all the effects you had promised yourself from a finer climate. I have known people who have experienced the same thing, and yet, at their return, have lost all their complaints as by miracle.

P. S. I have answered Count Algarotti's letter, and his to Mr. Mason I conveyed to him; but whether he has received his books, I have not yet heard.

Mr. How, on receiving the foregoing letter, communicated the objection which it contained to the Count; who, admitting the justness of it, altered the passage, as appears from the following extract of the answer which he sent to that Gentleman.

" Mi spiace solamente che quella critica concernente
" i Giardini Inglesi non la abbia fatta á me medesimo;
" quasi egli dovesse credermi piu amico della mia opi-
" nione che della veritá. Ecco, come ho cangiato
" qual luogo. Dopo le parole *nel tesser la favola di un*
" *poema*. " Simili ai Giardini della Cina sono quelli che

" piantano gl' Inglesi dietro al medesimo modello della
" Natura." Quanto ella ha di vago, é di vario, bos-
" chetti, collinette, acque vive, praterie con dei tem-
" pietti, degli obelischi, ed anche di belle rovine che
" spuntano quá e lá, si trova quivi reunito dal gusto
" dei Kent, e dei Chambers *, che hanno di tanto sor-
" passato il le Nautre, tenuto giá il maestro dell' Archi-
" tettura, diro cosi, dé Giardini. Dalle Ville d'Inghil-
" terra é sbandita la simmetria Francese, i più bei siti
" pajono naturali, il culto é misto col negletto, é il dis-
" ordine che vi regna é l'effetto dell' arte la meglio or-
" dinata."

It is seldom that an author of a reputation so established (as Mr. How truly remarked, when he sent this extract to Mr. Gray) so easily, readily, and explicitly gives up his own opinion to that of another, or even to conviction itself; nor perhaps would Count Algarotti have done so, had he not been thoroughly apprized to whose correction he submitted.

* As he had written on the subject, this mistake was natural enough in Count Algarotti.

LETTER IX.

MR. GRAY TO MR. HOW.

Pembroke-Hall, Jan. 12, 1768.

I Was willing to go through the eight volumes of Count Algarotti's works, which you lately presented to the library of this College, before I returned you an answer: this must be my excuse to you for my silence. First I condole with you, that so neat an edition should swarm in almost every page with errors of the press, not only in notes and citations from Greek, English, and French authors, but in the Italian text itself, greatly to the disreputation of the Leghorn publishers. This is the only reason, I think, that could make an edition in England necessary; but, I doubt, you would not find the matter much mended here; our presses, as they improve in beauty, declining daily in accuracy; besides, you would find the expense very considerable, and the sale in no proportion to it, as, in reality, it is but few people in England that read currently and with pleasure the Italian tongue, and the fine old editions of their capital writers are sold at London for a lower price than they bear in Italy. An English translation I can by no means advise; the just-

ness of thought and good sense might remain, but the graces of elocution (which make a great part of Algarotti's merit) would be entirely lost, and that merely from the very different genius and complexion of the two languages.

Doubtless there can be no impropriety in your making the same present to the University that you have done to your own College. You need not at all to fear for the reputation of your friend; he has merit enough to recommend him in any country. A tincture of various sorts of knowledge, an acquaintance with all the beautiful arts, an easy command, a precision, warmth, and richness of expression, and a judgment that is rarely mistaken on any subject to which he applies it. I had read the *Congresso di Citéra* before, and was excessively pleased with it, in spite of prejudice; for I am naturally no friend to allegory, nor to poetical prose. The *Giudicio d' Amore* is an addition rather inferior to it. What gives me the least pleasure of any of his writings is the *Newtonianism;* it is so direct an imitation of Fontenelle, a writer not easy to imitate, and least of all in the Italian tongue, whose character and graces are of a higher style, and never adapt themselves easily to the elegant *badinage* and *legereté* of conversation that sit so well on the French. The essays

and letters (many of them entirely new to me) *on the Arts,* are curious and entertaining: Those on other subjects, (even where the thoughts are not new, but borrowed from his various reading and conversation) often better put, and better expressed than in the originals. I rejoice when I see Machiavel defended or illustrated, who to me appears one of the wisest men that any nation in any age has produced. Most of the other discourses, military or political, are well worth reading, though that on Kouli-Khan was a mere jeu d'esprit, a sort of historical exercise. The letters from Russia I had read before with pleasure, particularly the narrative of Munick's and Lascy's campaigns. The detached thoughts are often new and just; but there should have been a revisal of them, as they are frequently to be found in his letters repeated in the very same words. Some too of the familiar letters might have been spared. The verses are not equal to the prose, but they are above mediocrity.

LETTER X*.

MR. GRAY TO MR. NICHOLLS.

IT is long since that I heard you were gone in haste into Yorkshire on account of your mother's illness, and the same letter informed me that she was recovered, otherwise I had then wrote to you only to beg you would take care of her, and to inform you that I had discovered a thing very little known, which is, that in one's whole life one can never have any more than a single mother. You may think this is obvious, and (what you call) a trite observation. You are a green gosling! I was at the same age (very near) as wise as you, and yet I never discovered this (with full evidence and conviction I mean) till it was too late. It is thirteen years ago, and seems but as yesterday, and every day I live it sinks deeper into my heart†. Many a

* This letter was written some years before, and would have been inserted after Letter LIII. of the fourth Section, if received in time.

† He seldom mentioned his Mother without a sigh. After his death her gowns and wearing apparel were found in a trunk in his apartments just as she had left them; it seemed as if he could never take the resolution to open it, in order to distribute them to his female relations, to whom, by his will, he bequeathed them.

corollary could I draw from this axiom for your use, (not for my own) but I will leave you the merit of doing it for yourself. Pray tell me how your health is: I conclude it perfect, as I hear you offered yourself as a guide to Mr. Palgrave into the Sierra-Morena of Yorkshire. For me, I passed the end of May and all June in Kent, not disagreeably. In the west part of it, from every eminence, the eye catches some long reach of the Thames or Medway, with all their shipping: in the east the sea breaks in upon you, and mixes its white transient sails and glittering blue expanse with the deeper and brighter greens of the woods and corn. This sentence is so fine I am quite ashamed; but no matter! You must translate it into prose. Palgrave, if he heard it, would cover his face with his pudding sleeve. I do not tell you of the great and small beasts, and creeping things innumerable, that I met with, because you do not suspect that this world is inhabited by any thing but men, and women, and clergy, and such two-legged cattle. Now I am here again very disconsolate, and all alone, for Mr. Brown is gone, and the cares of this world are coming thick upon me: you, I hope, are better off, riding and walking in the woods of Studley, &c. &c. I must not wish for you here; besides I am going to Town at Michaelmas, by no means for amusement.

LETTER XI.

MR. GRAY TO MR. NICHOLLS.

Pembroke-Hall, Jan. 26, 1771.

I Rejoice you have met with Froissart, he is the Herodotus of a barbarous age; had he but had the luck of writing in as good a language, he might have been immortal! His locomotive disposition, (for then there was no other way of learning things) his simple curiosity, his religious credulity were much like those of the old Grecian *. When you have *tant chevauché*, as to get to the end of him, there is Monstrelet waits to take you up, and will set you down at Philip de Comines; but previous to all these, you should have read Villehardouin and Joinville. I do not think myself bound to defend the character of even the best of Kings †: pray slash them all and spare not.

It would be strange too if I should blame your Greek studies, or find fault with you for reading Isocrates; I

* See more of his opinion of this author, Section iv. Let. xxxvi.

† I suppose his correspondent had made some strictures on the character of Henry IV. of France. See Section iv. Letter xxii.

did so myself twenty years ago, and in an edition at least as bad as yours. The Panegyric, the de Pace, Areopagitic, and Advice to Philip, are by far the noblest remains we have of this writer, and equal to most things extant in the Greek tongue; but it depends on your judgment to distinguish between his real and occasional opinion of things, as he directly contradicts in one place what he has advanced in another: for example, in the Panathenaic, and the de Pace, &c. on the naval power of Athens; the latter of the two is undoubtedly his own undisguised sentiment.

I would by all means wish you to comply with your friend's request, and write the letter he desires. I trust to the cause and to the warmth of your own kindness for inspiration. Write eloquently, that is from your heart, in such expressions as that will furnish *. Men sometimes catch that feeling from a stranger which should have originally sprung from their own heart.

* This short sentence contains a complete definition of natural eloquence; when it becomes an art it requires one more prolix, and our Author seems to have begun to sketch it on a detached paper. "Its province (says he) is to reign over minds of slow per-
"ception and little imagination, to set things in lights they never
"saw them in; to engage their attention by details and circum-
"stances gradually unfolded, to adorn and heighten them with
"images and colours unknown to them, and to raise and engage
"their rude passions to the point to which the speaker wishes to
"bring them." * * *

LETTER XII.

MR. GRAY TO DR. WHARTON.

May 24, 1771.

MY last summer's tour was through Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Herefordshire, and Shropshire, five of the most beautiful counties in the kingdom. The very principal light and capital feature of my journey was the river Wye, which I descended in a boat for near forty miles from Ross to Chepstow. Its banks are a succession of nameless beauties; one out of many you may see not ill described by Mr. Whately, in his Observations on Gardening, under the name of the New-Weir: he has also touched upon two others, Tinterne Abbey and Persfield, both of them famous scenes, and both on the Wye. Monmouth, a town I never heard mentioned, lies on the same river, in a vale that is the delight of my eyes, and the very seat of pleasure. The vale of Abergavenny, Ragland, and Chepstow castles; Ludlow, Malvern-hills, Hampton-court, near Lemster; the Leasows, Hagley, the three cities and their cathedrals; and lastly Oxford (where I passed two days on my return with great satisfaction) were the rest of my acquisitions, and no bad harvest in

my opinion; but I made no journal myself, else you should have had it: I have indeed a short one written by the companion of my travels *, that serves to recall and fix the fleeting images of these things.

I have had a cough upon me these three months, which is incurable. The approaching summer I have sometimes had thoughts of spending on the Continent; but I have now dropped that intention, and believe my expeditions will terminate in Old Park: but I make no promise, and can answer for nothing; my own employment so sticks in my stomach, and troubles my conscience: and yet travel I must, or cease to exist. Till this year I hardly knew what (mechanical) low spirits were, but now I even tremble at an east wind.

This is the last Letter which I have selected for this Section; and I insert it chiefly for the occasion which it affords me of commenting on the latter part of it, where he speaks of his own employment as Professor of Modern History; an office which he had now held nearly three years, and had not begun to execute the duties of it. His health, which was all the time gra-

* Mr. Nicholls.

dually on the decline, and his spirits only supported by the frequent summer excursions, during this period, might, to the candid reader, be a sufficient apology for this omission, or rather procrastination: but there is more to be said in his excuse; and I should ill execute the office I have undertaken of arranging these papers, with a view of doing honour to his memory, if I did not endeavour to remove every exception that might, with a show of reason, be taken to his conduct in this instance.

His business, as Professor, consisted of two parts; one, the teaching of modern languages; the other, the reading of lectures on Modern History. The patent, which created the office, authorized him to execute the former of these by deputies; the latter, the same patent prescribed to him, to commence by reading a public lecture in the schools, and to continue to do so once at least in every term. As this patent did not ascertain the language in which the lecture was to be read, he was at liberty to do it either in Latin or English; he chose the former, and I think rather injudiciously; because, though no man, in the earlier part of his life, was more ready in Latin composition, he had now lost the habit, and might therefore well have excused himself, by the nature of his subject, from any superadded difficulty of language. However, imme-

diately on his appointment, he sketched out an admirable plan for his inauguration speech; in which, after enumerating the preparatory and auxiliary studies requisite, such as Ancient History, Geography, Chronology, &c.* he descended to the authentic sources of the science, such as Public Treaties——State Records——Private Correspondence of Ambassadors, &c. He also wrote the Exordium of this Thesis; not indeed in a manner correct enough to be here given by way of Fragment: but so spirited, in point of sentiment, as leaves it much to be lamented, that he did not proceed to its completion. At the same time he drew up, and laid before the Duke of Grafton, just then chosen Chancellor of the University, three different schemes for regulating the method of choosing pupils privately to be instructed by him: one of these was so much approved as to be sent to Oxford, in order to be † deli-

* Amongst these auxiliaries, he has set down *Memoria Technica;* an art in which he had much exercised himself when young. I find many memorial verses among his scattered papers: and I suspect he found good account in the practice; for few men were more ready and accurate in their dates of events than our Author.

† This sentence is altered from the former Editions, on intelligence since received from Dr. Noel, the present Professor of Modern History at Oxford. The Editor had there said, that "he believed the Public Lectures were still omitted in *both* Universities." Whereas the truth is, that the Oxford Professor reads an annual course of fifty private Lectures and one solemn one in the public schools every term.

berated upon by the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of Colleges for a similar purpose: and the same plan, or something like it, I believe, regulates the private lectures which Mr. Gray's successor now reads at Cambridge; but the public ones are only given at Oxford: and yet I conceive, that on these (had Mr. Gray been appointed earlier in life to the office) he would have chosen chiefly to exert his uncommon abilities. Indeed, if we consider the nature of the study itself, Modern History, so far as it is a detail of facts, (and so far only, a boy just come from school can be supposed to be taught it) may be as completely learned from private reading as from the mouth of any lecturer whatever. What can his lecture consist of, if it aims to teach what it ought, but a chain of well-authenticated events, judiciously selected from the numerous writers on the subject? What can it then be more than an abridgment added to the innumerable ones with which our libraries are already crowded? I know of no difficult propositions which this study contains, to the proof of which the pupil must be led step after step by the slow hand of demonstration; or that require to be elucidated by the conviction of a mechanical experiment. On this subject carefully to read, is completely to understand; it is the exercise of memory, not of reason. But a public Lecturer, reading to an audience

well instructed in these facts, has a wider and nobler field. It is his province to trace every important event to its political spring; to develope the cause, and thence deduce the consequence. In the course of such disquisitions, the rational faculties of his auditors are employed in weighing the force of his arguments, and their judgments finally convinced by the decisive strength of them. What would be an idle display of either logic or rhetoric, where youths are only to be initiated into the knowledge of facts, becomes before this circle of mature hearers, a necessary exertion of erudition and genius. From such lectures, afterwards collected into a volume, not only the University but the nation itself, nay all other nations might reap their advantage; and receive from this, the benefit they have received from other similar institutions: For though Mr. Gray, in one of the plans lately mentioned, observes, that "Lectures read in public are generally "things of more ostentation than use; yet" (he adds) "if indeed they should gradually swell into a book, and "the Author should find reason to hope they might "deserve the attention of the public, it is possible they "might become of general service; of this we have "already some instances, as Judge Blackstone's Lec-"tures on the Common-Law, and the Bishop of Ox-"ford's on Hebrew Poetry."

But these reflections lead me beyond my purpose, which was only to remove from my deceased friend any imputation which, on this account, might rest on his memory. Certain it is, that notwithstanding his ill health, he constantly intended to read lectures; and I remember the last time he visited me at Aston, in the summer of the year 1770, he expressed much chagrin on this subject, and even declared it to be his stedfast resolution to resign his Professorship, if he found himself unable to do real service in it. What I said to dissuade him from this, though I urged, as may be supposed, every argument I could think of, had, I found, so little weight with him, that I am almost persuaded he would very soon have put this intention into execution. But death prevented the trial; the particulars of which it is now my melancholy office to relate.

The Gout, which he always believed hereditary in his constitution, (for both his parents died of that distemper) had for several years attacked him in a weakly and unfixed manner; and the great temperance which he observed, particularly in regard to his drinking, served, perhaps, to prevent any severe paroxism, but by no means eradicated the constitutional malady. In the latter end of May, 1771, just about the time he wrote the last letter, he removed to London, where he

became feverish, and his dejection of spirits increased: the weather being then very sultry, our common friend, Dr. Gisborne *, advised him, for an opener and freer air, to remove from his lodgings in Jermyn-street to Kensington, where he frequently attended him, and where Mr. Gray so far got the better of his disorder, as to be able to return to Cambridge; meaning from thence to set out very soon for Old Park, in hopes that travelling, from which he usually received so much benefit, would compleat his cure: but on the 24th of July, while at dinner in the College Hall, he felt a sudden nausea, which obliged him to rise from table and retire to his chamber. This continued to increase, and nothing staying on his stomach, he sent for his friend Dr. Glynn, who finding it to be the gout in that part, thought his case dangerous, and called in Dr. Plumptree, the Physical Professor: they prescribed to him the usual cordials given in that distemper, but without any good effect; for on the 29th he was seized with a strong convulsion fit, which, on the 30th, returned with increased violence, and on the next evening he expired. He was sensible at times almost to the last, and from the first aware of his extreme danger; but expressed no visible concern at the thoughts of his approaching dissolution.

* Physician to his Majesty's Household.

This account I draw up from the letters which Dr. Brown, then on the spot, wrote to me during his short illness; and as I felt strongly at the time what Tacitus has so well expressed on a similar occasion, I may, with propriety, use his words: "Mihi, præter acerbi-"tatem amici erepti, auget mœstitiam, quod adsidere "valetudini, fovere deficientem, satiari vultu, com-"plexu, non contigit *." I was then on the eastern side of Yorkshire, at a distance from the direct post, and therefore did not receive the melancholy intelligence soon enough to be able to reach Cambridge before his corpse had been carried to the place he had, by will, appointed for its interment. To see the last rites duly performed, therefore, fell to the lot of Dr. Brown; I had only to join him, on his return from the funeral, in executing the other trusts which his friendship had authorized us jointly to perform.

The method in which I have arranged the foregoing pages, has, I trust, one degree of merit, that it makes the reader so well acquainted with the man himself, as to render it totally unnecessary to conclude the whole with his character. If I am mistaken in this point, I have been a compiler to little purpose; and I chose to be this rather than a biographer, that I might do the

* Vita Agricolæ, cap. xlv.

more justice to the virtues and genius of my friend. I might have written his life in the common form, perhaps with more reputation to myself; but, surely, not with equal information to the reader; for whose sake I have never related a single circumstance of Mr. Gray's life in my own words, when I could employ *his* for the purpose. Fortunately I had more materials for this use, than commonly fall to the lot of an Editor; and I certainly have not been sparing in the use of them: whether I have been too lavish, must be left to the decision of the public.

With respect to the Latin Poems, which I have printed in the three first Sections of these Memoirs, I must beg leave to add one word here, though a little out of place. A learned and ingenious person, to whom I communicated them, after they were printed off, was of opinion, that they contain some few expressions not warranted by any good authority; and that there are one or two false quantities to be found in them. I once had an intention to cancel the pages, and correct the passages objected to, according to my friend's criticisms; but, on second thoughts, I deemed it best to let them stand exactly as I found them in the manuscripts. The accurate classical reader will perhaps be best pleased with finding out the faulty passages himself; and his candour will easily make

the proper allowances for any little mistakes in verses, which he will consider never had the author's last hand.

I might here lay down my pen, yet if any reader should still want his character, I will give him one which was published very soon after Mr. Gray's decease *. It appears to be well written; and, as it comes from an anonymous pen, I choose the rather to insert it, as it will, on that account, be less suspected of partiality.

" Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. " He was equally acquainted with the elegant and pro- " found parts of science, and that not superficially but " thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both " natural † and civil; had read all the original histo-

* It appeared in the London Magazine a month or two after his decease, and was prefaced with an Eulogy on his poetical merit, which I did not think necessary to reprint in a work where that merit so very fully speaks for itself.

† I have given, in the beginning of this Section, an account of the great pains which Mr. Gray bestowed on Natural History. I have since been favoured with a Letter from a Gentleman, well skilled in that science, who, after carefully perusing his interleaved Systema Naturæ of Linnæus, gives me this character of it: " In " the class of animals (the Mammalia) he has concentrated (if I " may use the expression) what the old writers and the diffuse " Buffon have said upon the subject; he has universally adapted

" rians of England, France, and Italy; and was a great
" antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, politics,
" made a principal part of his plan of study; voyages
" and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusement:
" and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architec-
" ture, and gardening *. With such a fund of know-
" ledge, his conversation must have been equally in-
" structing and entertaining; but he was also a good
" man, a well-bred man, a man of virtue and humanity.
" There is no character without some speck, some im-
" perfection; and I think the greatest defect in his was
an affectation in delicacy, or rather effeminacy †, and

" the concise language of Linnæus, and has given it an elegance
" which the Swede had no idea of; but there is little of his own in
" this class, and it served him only as a common-place; but it is
" such a common-place that few men but Mr. Gray could form. In
" the birds and fishes he has most accurately described all that he
" had an opportunity of examining: but the volume of insects is
" the most perfect; on the English insects there is certainly no-
" thing so perfect. In regard to the plants, there is little else than
" the English names and their native soils extracted from the
" Species Plantarum of Linnæus. I suppose no man was so com-
" plete a master of his system; he has selected the distinguishing
" marks of each animal, &c. with the greatest judgment, and,
" what no man else probably could have done, he has made the
" German Latin of Linnæus purely classical."

* He has disclaimed any skill in this art in the xxxvith Letter of the fourth Section, and usually held it in less estimation than I think it deserves, declaring himself to be only charmed with the bolder features of unadorned nature.

† This is rightly put; it was rather an affectation in delicacy and effeminacy than the things themselves; and he chose to put

" a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of
" his inferiors in science. He also had in some degree
" that weakness which disgusted Voltaire so much in
" Mr. Congreve *: though he seemed to value others,
" chiefly according to the progress they had made in
" knowledge †; yet he could not bear to be considered
" himself merely as a man of letters; and though with-
" out birth, or fortune, or station, his desire was to be
" looked upon as a private independent Gentleman,
" who read for his amusement. Perhaps it may be
" said, What signifies so much knowledge, when it

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on this appearance chiefly before persons whom he did not wish to please.

* I have often thought that Mr. Congreve might very well be vindicated on this head. It seldom happens that the vanity of authorship continues to the end of man's days, it usually soon leaves him where it found him; and if he has not something better to build his self-approbation upon than that of being a popular writer, he generally finds himself ill at ease, if respected only on that account. Mr. Congreve was much advanced in years when the young French Poet paid him this visit; and, though a man of the world, he might now feel that indifference to literary fame which Mr. Gray, who always led a more retired and philosophic life, certainly felt much earlier. Both of them therefore might reasonably, at times, express some digust, if their quiet was intruded upon by persons who thought they flattered them by such intrusion.

† It was not on account of their knowledge that he valued mankind. He contemned indeed all pretenders to literature, but he did not select his friends from the literary class, merely because they were literate. To be his friend it was always either necessary that a man should have something better than an improved understanding, or at least that Mr. Gray should believe he had.

" produced so little? Is it worth taking so much pains
" to leave no memorial, but a few poems? But let it
" be considered, that Mr. Gray was to others, at least
" innocently employed; to himself, certainly benefi-
" cially. His time passed agreeably; he was every day
" making some new acquisition in science; his mind was
" enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened;
" the world and mankind were shewn to him without a
" mask; and he was taught to consider every thing as
" trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wise
" man, except the pursuit of knowledge, and the prac-
" tice of virtue, in that state wherein God hath placed
" us."

THE END.

W. Wilson, Printer, St. John's Square.