LETTERS
Written TO and FOR
PARTICULAR FRIENDS,
On the most
IMPORTANT OCCASIONS,
Directing not only the Requisite
STYLE and FORMS
To be Observed in Writing
Familiar Letters;
But How to
THINK and ACT Justly and Prudently,
IN THE
COMMON CONCERNS OF
HUMAN LIFE.

CONTAINING
One Hundred and Seventy-three LETTERS;
None of which were ever before Published.

LONDON:
Printed for C. RIVINGTON, in St. Paul's Church-yard;
J. OSBORN, in Pater-noster Row; and J. LEAKE, at Bath,
M. DCC. XLI.
THE following Letters are published at the Solicitation of particular Friends, who are of Opinion, that they will answer several good Ends, as they may not only direct the Forms requisite to be observed on the most important Occasions; but, what is more to the Purpose, by the Rules and Instructions contained in them, contribute to mend the Heart, and improve the Understanding.

Nature, Propriety of Character, Plain Sense, and General Use, have been the chief Objects of the Author's Attention in the penning of these Letters; and as he every-where aimed to write to the Judgment, rather than to the Imagination, he would chuse, that they should generally be found more useful than
‘P R E F A C E.

than diverting: Tho', where the Subjects require Strokes of Humour, and innocent Raillery, it will be seen, perhaps, that the Method he has taken, was the Effect of Choice, and not merely of Necessity.

The Writer is no Friend to long Prefaces; but it may be necessary, however, to say, what he has aimed at in this Performance; and to leave his Merit in the Execution of it, to proper Judges.

He has endeavoured then, in general, throughout the great Variety of his Subjects, to inculcate the Principles of Virtue and Benevolence; to describe properly, and recommend strongly, the Social and Relative Duties; and to place them in such practical Lights, that the Letters may serve for Rules to Think and Act by, as well as Forms to Write after.

Particularly, he has endeavoured to point out the Duty of a Servant, not a Slave; the Duty of a Master, not a Tyrant; that of the Parent, not as a Person morose and sour, and hard to be pleased; but mild, indulgent, kind, and such an one as would rather govern by Persuasion than Force.

He
PREFACE.

He has endeavour'd to direct the young Man in the Choice of his Friends and Companions; to excite him to Diligence; to discourage Extravagance, Sottishness, and Vice of all Kinds.

He has aimed to set forth, in a Variety of Cases, to both Sexes, the Inconveniencies attending unsuitable Marriages; to expose the Folly of a litigious Spirit; to console the Unhappy; to comfort the Mourners: And many of these by Arguments, tho' easy and familiar, yet new and uncommon.

With regard to the Letters of Courtship, the Author has aimed to point out such Methods of Address, to a young Man, as may stand the Test of the Parent's Judgment, as well as the Daughter's Opinion; and, at the same time, that they should not want the proper Warmth of Expression, which Complaisance, and Passion for the beloved Object, inspire, (and is so much expected in Addresses of this Nature) they should have their Foundation laid in common Sense, and a manly Sincerity; and, in a Word, be such as a prudent Woman need not blush to receive, nor a discreet Man be ashamed to look back.
back upon, when the doubtful Courtship is changed into the matrimonial Certainty.

With this View he has also attempted to expose the empty Floures, and incoherent Rhapsodies, by which Shallow Heads, and designing Hearts, endeavour to exalt their Mistresses into Goddesses, in hopes of having it in their Power to sink them into the Characters of the most Credulous and Foolish of their Sex.

Orphans, and Ladies of independent Fortunes, he has particularly endeavour'd to guard against the insidious Arts of their flattering and selfish Dependents, and the clandestine Addressess of Fortune-hunters, those Beasts of Prey, as they may well be called, who spread their Snares for the innocent and thoughtless Heart.

These, among other no less material Objects, have been the Author's principal Aim: How well he has succeeded, must, as has been hinted, be left to the Judgment of the candid Reader.
THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTERS.

I. To a Father, against putting a Youth of but moderate Parts to a Profession that requires more extensive Abilities. Page 1
II. From an Uncle to a Nephew, on his keeping bad Company, bad Hours, &c. in his Apprenticeship. 5
III. From a Widow-Mother, in Answer to her Son's complaining of Hardships in his Apprenticeship. 9
IV. From an Uncle to the Youth, on the same Occasion. 12
V. From an Apprentice to an Uncle, about a Fraud committed by his Fellow-Apprentice. 12
VI. The Uncle's Answer. ibid.
VII. Advice from a Father to a young Beginner, what Company to chuse, and how to behave in it. 13
VIII. General Rules for agreeable Conversation in a young Man. From a Father to a Son. 16
IX. An elder to a younger Brother, who is in Love with a young Lady of great Gaiety, &c. 18

A 4

X. An
CONTENTS.

X. An elder to an extravagant younger Brother. Page 20
XI. To a young Man too soon keeping a Horse. 21
XII. Against a sudden Intimacy, or Friendship, with one of a short Acquaintance. 25
XIII. A young Man in Business, to a Father, desiring Leave to address his Daughter. 26
XIV. To the Daughter, (on the Father's Allowance) apprising her of his intended Visit. 27
XV. From a young Lady to her Father, acquainting him with a Proposal of Marriage made to her. 28
XVI. The Father's Answer, on a Supposition that he approves not of the young Man's Addressus. 29
XVII. The Father's Answer, on a Supposition that he does not disapprove of them. 30
XVIII. The young Gentleman to the Father, apprising him of his Affection for his Daughter. 31
XIX. From the Cousin to the Father and Mother in Commendation of the young Gentleman. 32
XX. From the Father, in Answer to the young Gentleman. 33
XXI. From the young Gentleman to his Mistress, on her Arrival at her Father's. 35
XXII. From a Brother to his Sister in the Country, upbraiding her for being negligent in Writing. 36
XXIII. In Answer to the preceding. 37
XXIV. From the Daughter to her Mother, in Excuse for her Neglect. 38
XXV. From a Son-in-law to his Wife's Father, acquainting him with his Wife's Illness. ibid.
XXVI. From a Country Chapman beginning Trade, to a City Dealer, offering his Correspondence. 39
XXVII. In Answer to the foregoing. 40
XXVIII. From a Maid-servant in Town, acquainting her Father and Mother in the Country, with a Proposal of Marriage, and asking their Consents. ibid.
XXIX. From the Parents, in Answer to the preceding. 41
XXX.
CONTENTS.

XXX. From the same, acquainting her Parents with her Marriage. Page 41
XXXI. Recommending a superior Man-servant. 42
XXXII. Recommending a Wet-nurse. 43
XXXIII. Recommending a Cook-maid. ibid.
XXXIV. Recommending a Chamber-maid. 44
XXXV. Recommending a Nursery-maid. ibid.
XXXVI. A Father to a Son, to dissuade him from the Vice of Drinking to Excess. 45
XXXVII. The same Subject pursued. 47
XXXVIII. From an Apprentice to his Master, begging Forgiveness for a great Misdemeanour. 49
XXXIX. The Master's Answer. 50
XL. From an Apprentice to his Friends, in Praise of his Master and Family. 51
XLI. Another from an Apprentice, where the Master is too remiss in his own Affairs. 52
XLII. To a Country Correspondent, modestly requesting a Balance of Accounts between them. 53
XLIII. In Answer to the preceding. ibid.
XLIV. A more pressing and angry Letter from a City Dealer on the same Account. 54
XLV. In Answer to the preceding. 55
XLVI. To a young Trader generally in a Hurry in Business, advising Method as well as Diligence. 56
XLVII. From a Son reduced by his own Extravagance, requesting his Father's Advice, on his Intention to turn Player. 59
XLVIII. The Father's Answer, setting forth the Inconveniences and Disgrace attending the Profession of a Player. 60
XLIX. To a Brother too captious to bear himself the Ridicule he practises upon others. 61
L. To a Friend, on his Recovery from a dangerous Illness. 63
LI. On the same Occasion. ibid.
LII. In Answer to the preceding. 64
LIII.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIII. To a young Lady, advising her not to change her Guardians, nor to encourage any clandestine Address.</td>
<td>Page 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIV. From a Mother to a Daughter, jealous of her Husband.</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LV. The Subject continued.</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVI. From a tender Father to an ungracious Son.</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVII. The Son's dutiful Answer.</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVIII. To a Friend, on Occasion of his not answering his Letters.</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIX. In Answer to the preceding.</td>
<td>ibid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LX. From a Father to a Son, on his Negligence in his Affairs.</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXI. The Son's grateful Answer.</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXII. A young Woman in Town to her Sister in the Country, recounting her narrow Escape from a Snare laid for her on her first Arrival, by a wicked Procurest.</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXIII. To a Daughter in a Country Town, who encourages the Address of a Subaltern [A Case too frequent in Country Towns.]</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXIV. Of Expostulations from a grave Friend to a young Man, on his flighting and irreverent Behaviour to his Father.</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXV. Against too great a Love of Singing and Music.</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXVI. From a Daughter to her Father, pleading for her Sister, who had married without his Consent.</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXVII. The Father's Answer.</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXVIII. To a Brother, against making his Wife and Child, en the constant Subject of Praise in Conversation.</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXIX. From a Father to a Daughter, in Dislike of her Intention to marry at too early an Age.</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXX. From a Father to a Daughter against a frothy, French Lover.</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXI. A modest Lover, desiring an Aunt's Favour to her Niece.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXII.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONTENTS.

LXXII. The Aunt's Answer, supposing the Gentleman deserves Encouragement. Page 101
LXXIII. The Answer, supposing the Gentleman is not approved. 102
LXXIV. From a respectful Lover to his Mistress. ibid.
LXXV. The Answer. 103
LXXVI. A humorous Epistle of neighbourly Occurrences and News, to a Bottle-Companion abroad. 104
LXXVII. From a Nephew to his Aunt, on his slow Progress in a Courtship Affair. 108
LXXVIII. The Aunt's Answer, encouraging him to persevere. 110
LXXIX. A Gentleman to a Lady, professing an Aversion to the tedious Forms of Courtship. 111
LXXX. The Lady's Answer, encouraging a farther Declaration. 112
LXXXI. The Gentleman's Reply, more explicitly avowing his Passion. 113
LXXXII. The Lady's Answer to his Reply, putting the Matter on a sudden Issue. 114
LXXXIII. A facetious young Lady to her Aunt, ridiculing her serious Lover. ibid.
LXXXIV. Her Aunt's Answer, reprehending her ludicrous Turn of Mind. 117
LXXXV. From a Gentleman to his Mistress, resenting her supposed Coquetry. 119
LXXXVI. The Lady's angry Answer. 120
LXXXVII. The Gentleman's Submissive Reply. 121
LXXXVIII. The Lady's forgiving Return. 122
LXXXIX. Ridiculing a romantick Rhapsody in Courtship. 123
XC. Against a young Lady's affecting manly Airs; and also censuring the modern Riding-habits. 124
XCI. A Father to a Daughter, relating to three Persons of different Characters proposed to him, each for her Husband; with his Recommendation of one in Years. 126

XCII.
XCII. Her Answer, dutifully expostulating on the Case. Page 129

XCIII. His Reply, urgently enforcing, but not compelling, her Compliance with his Desire. 130

XCIV. To a rich Widow Lady with Children, dissuading her from marrying a Widower of meaner Degree, who has Children also. 133

Instructions to young Orphan Ladies, as well as others, how to judge of Proposals of Marriage made to them without their Guardians or Friends Consent, by their Milaners, Mantua-makers, and other Go-betweens. 136

XCV. From the young Lady, to the clandestine Proposer of the Match. 141

XCVI. To a young Fellow who makes Love in a romantic manner. By the Hand of a Friend. 142

XCVII. Another left affronting on the same Occasion. 143

XCVIII. Another still less severe, but not encouraging. ibid.

XCIX. To rebuke an irregular Address, when it is not thought proper wholly to discourage it. 144

C. Another for a Lady referring to a Guardian, or chosen Friend. ibid.

Cl. Another to the same Purpose. 145

CII. From a Town-Tenant to his Landlord, excusing Delay of Payment. ibid.

CIII. From a Country Tenant to the same Purpose. 146

CIV. The Landlord’s Answer. ibid.

CV. A threatening Letter from a Steward on Delay of Payment. 147

CVI. The poor Tenant’s moving Answer. ibid.

CVII. The Steward’s Reply, giving more Time. 148

CVIII. The poor Man’s thankful Letter in Return. 149

CIX. An Offer of Assistance to a Friend, who has received great Losses by a Person’s Failure. 150

CX. The Friend’s Answer, accepting the kind Offer. ibid.

CXI. The Friend’s Answer, supposing he has no Occasion for the Offer. 151

CXII. Of Consolation to a Friend in Prison for Debt. ibid.

CXIII. In Answer to the preceding. 153

CXIV.
CONTENTS.

CXIV. To a Person of Note, in Acknowledgment of great Benefits received. Page 154

CXV. Another for Favours of not so high, yet a generous Nature. 155

CXVI. An Excuse to a Person who wants to borrow Money. ibid.

CXVII. On the same Subject. 156

CXVIII. Another on the same. ibid.

CXIX. To a Friend, in Compliance with his Request to borrow a Sum of Money. ibid.

CXX. Another on the same Occasion, limiting the Payment to a certain Time. 157

CXXI. To a Friend, on a Breach of Promise in not returning Money lent in his Exigence. ibid.

CXXII. To a Friend, who had promised to lend a Sum of Money, to answer a critical Exigence, and drove it off to the last. 158

CXXIII. The Answer, excusing the Pain he had given his Friend by his Remissness. 159

CXXIV. To one who, upon a very short Acquaintance, and without any visible Merit, but Assurance, wants to borrow a Sum of Money. 160

CXXV. A Gentleman to a Lady, who humbly requests his Mistress's Fondness of a Monkey, and Indifference to himself. 161

CXXVI. A Sailor to his betrothed Mistress. 162

CXXVII. Her Answer. 164

CXXVIII. A Sea-Officer to his Wife. 165

CXXIX. A Wife to her Husband at Sea. 166

CXXX. To a Father, on his Neglect of his Children's Education. 168

CXXXI. From a young Maiden, abandon'd by her Lover for the sake of a greater Fortune. 171

CXXXII. From a Gentleman to his Mistress, who seeing no Hopes of Success, respectfully withdraws his Suit. 173

CXXXIII. From a Lady to a Gentleman, who had obtained all her Friends Consent, urging him to decline his Suit to her. 174

CXXXIV.
CONTENTS.

CXXXIV. The Gentleman's Answer to the Lady's uncommon Request.  
Page 176

CXXXV. The Lady's Reply, in case of a Prepossession. 177

CXXXVI. The Lady's Reply in case of no Prepossession, 
or that she chuses not to avow it. 178

CXXXVII. A Lady to a Gentleman of superior Fortune, 
who, after a long Address in an honourable way, pro- 
poses to live with her as a Gallant. 179

CXXXVIII. A Father to a Daughter in Service, on 
hearing of her Master's attempting her Virtue. 181

CXXXIX. The Daughter's Answer. 182

CXL. To a Gentleman of Fortune, who has Children, 
alluading him from a Second Marriage with a Lady 
much younger than himself. ibid.

CXL. The same Subject pursued. 185

CXLII. Against a Second Marriage, where there are 
Children on both Sides. 188

CXLIII. Against a second Marriage, where there are 
Children on one Side, and a Likelihood of more. 193

CXLIV. Advising a Friend against going to Law. 197

CXLV. To a young Lady, cautioning her against keeping 
Company with a Gentleman of bad Character. 200

CXLVI. From a Mother to her high-spirited Daughter, 
who lives on uneasy Terms with her Husband. 201

CXLVII. A Lady to her Friend, a young Widow Lady, 
who, having bury'd a polite and excellent Husband, in- 
clines to marry a less deserving Gentleman, and of un- 
equal Fortune. 205

CXLVIII. From a Gentleman, strenuously expostulating 
with an old rich Widow, about to marry a very young 
gay Gentleman. 209

CXLIX. From a young Lady in Town to her Aunt in 
the Country. 1. Describing the Tower, Monument, 
St. Paul's, &c. 212

CL. 2. Describing other remarkable Places in and about 
London and Westminster, which are generally shown 
to Strangers. 214
CONTENTS.

CL. 3. Describing Chelsea Hospital, and Kensington Palace. Page 217
CLII. 4. Describing Greenwich Park, and the Passage to it by Water. 218
CLIII. 5. Describing Bethlehem Hospital. 220
CLIV. 6. Diversions of Vaux-hall described. 222
CLV. 7. An Account of Westminster-Abbey. 225
CLVI. 8. Account of Westminster-Abbey continued. 228
CLVII. 9. On a Concert or Musical Entertainment. 232
CLVIII. 10. On the Diversions of the Play-house. 234
CLIX. 11. The Play, and the low Scenes of Harlequinery after it, described and exposed. 236
CLX. From a Country Gentleman in Town, to his Brother in the Country, describing a publick Execution in London. 239
Five Letters which passed between an Aunt and her Niece, in relation to her Conduct in the Address she made her by two Gentlemen; one a gay fluttering military Coxcomb, the other a Man of Sense and Honour. 242
CLXI. 1. From the Aunt to the Niece, desiring her Niece's own Opinion of the two Lovers. ibid.
CLXII. 2. The Niece's Answer: Describing the Behaviour of the sensible Lover. 243
CLXIII. 3. Continuing the Description of the Behaviour of the same Gentleman; which occasions a Love-quarrel. 245
CLXIV. 4. From the same: Describing her fluttering Pretender. 248
CLXV. 5. From the Aunt, containing solid Advice and Cautions on this Occasion. 250
CLXVI. From a Lady to her false Lover, who after having brav'd all his Friends Expostulations, at last is persuad'd to abandon her for another of larger Fortune. 253
CLXVII. From a Gentleman to his Lady, whose Overniceness in her House, and uneasy Temper with her Servants, make their Lives uncomfortable. 255
CLXVIII. From a Gentleman who in a small Fortune experiences the Slight of his Friends; but being sud- denly
CONTENTS.

denly reputed to be rich, is oppressed with the fawning Caresses and Adulation of those who had before neg- Page 258
lected him:
CLXIX. From one Brother to another, on the rash Marriage of a beloved Daughter of one of them, to a 262
profligate young Fellow.
CLXX. The afflicted Father, in Answer to the preced- 264
ing.
CLXXI. To a Father on the Loss of his Son, who died 265
under Age.
CLXXII. To a Father, on the Loss of a hopeful Son, 267
who died at Man's Estate.
CLXXIII. To a Widow, on the Death of her Husband. 270

Familiar
Familiar LETTERS
On the most
IMPORTANT OCCASIONS
IN
COMMON LIFE.

LETTER I.
To a Father, against putting a Youth of but moderate Parts to a Profession that requires more extensive Abilities.

Dear Sir,

OU pay me a Compliment, tho' a very obliging one, when in the last Letter you favoured me with, you desire my Advice, with respect to the Disposition of your Son William, whom you are inclin'd to bring up to the Bar. If, in complying with your Request, I should say any thing you may not entirely approve, you will not have so much room to blame.
blame me, as your own wrong Choice of a Counsellor.

I need not now tell you, I have a good Opinion of Will; and think him a modest, grave, sober, Youth: But, for this very Reason, I hardly think him qualified for the Profession you would choose for him; for, I doubt, he has neither Talents for the Law, nor ever will have the Presence of Mind necessary to make a Figure at the Bar. In any smooth, easy Business, he will probably succeed, and be a useful Member of the Commonwealth. And as he is not your eldest Son, I should, were it to me, put him to a Merchant; or, as we live in an Island, and Trade and Navigation are both our Riches and our Glory, I should not even scruple to put a second Son to a creditable wholesale Dealer, rather than fail; if he himself is not averse to such a Calling. For I know not (you'll excuse me, I'm sure) whether Will's Genius is equal to that of an universal Merchant: For, the various Springs of Commerce, the Seasons for choosing proper Commodities, and numberless Incidents that make a necessary Return of Gain precarious, are full Employment for the strongest Judgment; as a Man, by one ill-chosen Venture, often loses more than he gains by several successful ones.

But this Opinion of Will, should you think it just, will be no Obstacle to his succeeding in the World in some creditable easy Business. Tho' I think him unequal to the Part you seem inclining to allot him; yet he is no Fool: And Experience teaches us, that, in some sorts of Business, ample Advantage, may be made by very moderate Talents, with much Reputation. These are principally such Employments as merely consist in Buying with Prudence, and in Selling at a Market-profit
profit: Hence we see several Wholesale Dealers gain large Fortunes with Ease and Credit, and without any other Secret than the plain Practice of Buying at the best Hand, paying for their Goods punctually, and vending them always for what they are. In Dealings of this Kind, the Fatigues are few, and clear well-kept Books are sufficient to shew, at any time, a Man’s Loss or Gain; for which, generally speaking, less than One Forenoon in a Week is sufficient: And yet, by a constant Attention, in this easy manner, as good a Character, and, very often, more Money is to be gained than in Professions that require an extraordinary Genius, a perpetual Attention, and a close and intense Study; which very seldom succeeds neither: For see you not of hundreds of Lawyers, how very few of them make a Figure, or get genteel Bread? And how many, for want of Courage to appear at the Bar (who yet have good Parts and Knowledge in the Laws) are forced to confine themselves to Chamber-practice, in which it is a long time before they grow noted enough to make a tolerable Livelihood.

As to what you hint, of placing him in the Physick Tribe; I like this no better than the other. Consider only this one Thing, how long it is before he will be capable of entering into Business, or Reputation, as a Physician, if he ever does it at all: For who chuses to trust his Health to a raw and unexperienced young Man? The Law requires a spirited Impudence, if I may so say, the Physick Line a solemn one, in the Person who would make a Figure in either. And do you think, tho’ Will is grave enough of Conscience, that he ever can come up to that important Deportment, that unblushing Parade, which is the very Essence of an English Physician? So he may, in either of the Pro-

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essions,
Familiar Letters on the

Sessions, live over all his Days, and be quite unknown; for, as Practice in both Faculties is the best Teacher, and Theory a most uncertain Guide, he may live to be Forty or Fifty Years of Age, and not come into any Business that shall improve himself, or benefit his Consulters.

Whereas in the Way I propose, no sooner is he come of Age, and fit to be trusted with the Management of any Affairs at all, but his Seven Years will be expired; and if he has not been wanting to himself in it (and if he be, he would have been much more so in an abstruser Business) he will be enabled, with the Fortune you can bestow upon him, to enter upon the Stage of the World with great Advantage, and become directly, a necessary and an useful Member of the Community. And, my good Friend, when you and I recollect, that most of the noble Families in the Kingdom, as well as the genteel ones, had the Foundations of their Grandeur laid in Trade, I expect not, in such a Country as ours especially, that any Objection to my Advice will be form'd, either by you or your good Lady, on this Score, if you have not more significant Reasons proceeding from the Boy's Turn of Mind and Inclination; which, I think, should always be consulted on these Occasions. For, tho' I hope it never will be so in your Case, yet nothing has been more common, than that of Two Sons, the Eldest brought up to the Estate, the other to Trade, in the Revolution of Twenty or Thirty Years, the latter, thro' the Extravagance of the former, has made himself Eldest, as I may say; for, by saving while the other has been spending, he has found Means to keep the Estate in the Family, tho' it has been transfer'd upon the youngest, and, as it has then proved, the worthiest Branch.

This,
most Important Occasions.

This, I think, deserves your Consideration; and by viewing Will in the same Light I do; that of a well-inclined Lad, of moderate Passions, great natural Modesty, and no soaring Genius; I believe you will think it best to dispose of him in such manner as may require no greater Talents than he is possessed of, and may, in due Time, make him appear in the Face of the World fully qualified for what he undertakes. I am, Sir,

Your very humble Servant.

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LETTER II.

From an Uncle to a Nephew, on his keeping bad Company, bad Hours, &c. in his Apprenticeship.

Dear Nephew,

I am very much concerned to hear that you are of late fallen into bad Company; that you keep bad Hours, and give great Unaccountability to your Master, and break the Rules of his Family: That when he expostulates with you on this Occasion, you return pert and bold Answers; and, instead of promising or endeavouring to amend, repeat the Offence; and have entered into Clubs and Societies of young Fellows, who set at naught all good Example, and make such Persons who would do their Duty, the Subject of their Ridicule, as Persons of narrow Minds, and who want the Courage to do as they do.

Let me, on this Occasion, expostulate with you, and set before you the Evil of the Way you are in.

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In
In the first Place: What can you mean by breaking the Rules of a Family you had bound yourself by Contract to observe? Do you think it is best, to break thro' Engagements into which you have so solemnly entered; and which are no less the Rules of the Corporation you are to be one Day free of, than those of a private Family? — Seven Years, several of which are elapsed, are not so long a Term, but that you may see it determined before you are over-fit to be trusted with your own Conduct: Twenty-one or Twenty-two Years of Age, is full early for a young Man to be his own Master, whatever you may think; and you may surely stay till then, at least, to chuse your own Hours, and your own Company; and, I fear, as you go on, if you do not mend your Ways, your Discretion will not then do Credit to your Choice. Remember, you have no Time you can call your own, during the Continuance of your Contract; and must you abuse your Master in a double sense; rob him of his Time, especially if any of it be Hours of Business; rob him of his Rest; break the Peace of his Family, and give a bad Example to others? And all for what? Why to riot in the Company of a Set of Persons, who contemn, as they teach you to do, all Order and Discipline; who, in all Likelihood, will lead you into into Gaming, Drinking, Swearing, and even more dangerous Vices, to the unhinging of your Mind from your Business, which must be your future Support.

Consider, I exhort you, in time, to what these Courses may lead you. Consider the Affliction you will give to all your Friends, by your Continuance in them. Lay together the Substance of the Conversation that passes in a whole Evening, with your frothy Companions, after you are come from
from them, and reflect what solid Truth, what useful Lesson, worthy of being inculcated in your future Life, that whole Evening has afforded you; and consider, whether it is worth breaking thro' all Rule and Order for?——Whether your present Conduct is such as you would allow in a Servant of your own? Whether you are so capable to pursue your Business with that Ardor and Delight next Morning, as if you had not drank, or kept bad Hours over Night? If not, whether your Master has not a double Loss and Damage from your mis-spent Evenings? Whether the taking of small Liberties, as you may think them, leads you not on to greater; for, let me tell you, you will not find it in your Power to stop when you will: And then, whether any Restraint at all will not in time be irksome to you?

I have gone thro' the like Servitude with Pleasure and Credit. I found myself my own Master full soon for my Discretion: What you think of yourself I know not; but I wish you may do as well for your own Interest, and Reputation too, as I have done for mine: And I'll assure you, I should not have thought it either creditable or honest to do as you do. I could have stood the Laugh of an Hundred such vain Companions as you chuse, for being too narrow-minded to break thro' all moral Obligations to my Master, in order to shew the Bravery of a bad Heart, and what an abandon'd Mind dared to perpetrated. A bad Beginning seldom makes a good Ending, and if you was assured that you could stop when you came for your self, which is very improbable, how will you answer it to Equity and good Conscience, that you will not do so for your Master? There is, let me tell you, more true Bravery of Mind in forbearing to do an Injury, than in giving Offence.

B 4 You
You are now at an Age, when you should study to improve not divert your Faculties. You should now lay in a Fund of Knowledge, that in time, when ripened by Experience, may make you a worthy Member of the Commonwealth. Do you think you have nothing to learn, either as to your Business, or as to the forming of your Mind? Would it not be much better to chuse the silent, the sober Conversation of Books, than of such Companions as never read or think? An Author never commits any but his best Thoughts to Paper; but what can you expect from the laughing noisy Company you keep, but frothy Prate, indigested Notions, and Thoughts so unworthy of being remember'd, that it is the greatest Kindness to forget them.

Let me intreat you then, my dear Kinsman, for your Family's sake, for your own sake, before it be too late, to reflect as you ought upon the Course you are enter'd into. By applying yourself to Books, instead of such vain Company, you will be qualified in time for the best of Company, and to be respected by all Ranks of Men. This will keep you out of unnecessary Expences, will employ all your leisure Time, will exclude a world of Temptations, and open and enlarge your Notions of Men and Things, and, finally, let you above that wretched Company which now you seem so much delighted with. And one Thing let me recommend to you, That you keep a Lift of the young Men of your Standing within the Compass of your Knowledge, and for the next Seven Years observe what Fate will attend them: See, if those who follow not the Course you are lately enter'd into, will not appear in a very different Light from those who do; and from the Industry and Prosperity of the one, and the Decay
Decay or Failure of the other, (if their vain Ways do not blast them before, or as soon as they begin the World) you'll find abundant Reason every Day to justify the Truth of the Observations I have thrown together. As nothing but my Affection for you could possibly influence me to these Expostulations, I hope for a proper Effect from them, if you would be thought well of by, or expect any Favour from,

Your loving Uncle.

Your Master will, at my Request, send me word of the Success of my Remonstrances.

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**LETTER III.**

*A Widow-Mother's Letter, in Answer to her Son's complaining of Hardships in his Apprenticeship.*

Dear Billy,

I am very sorry to hear of the Difference between your Master and you. I was always afraid you would expect the same Indulgences you had met with at home; and as you know, that in many Instances, I have endeavoured to make any seeming Hardship as easy to you as I could, if this causes you to be harder to be satisfied, it would be a great Trouble to me. Your Uncle tells me, I am afraid with too much Truth, that the Indulgences you have received from me, have made your present Station more disagreeable than it would otherwise have been. What I have always done for you was intended for your Good, and nothing could so deeply afflict me as to see my Tenderness have
have a contrary Effect: Therefore, dear Child, to
my constant Care for your Welfare, do not add
the Sorrow of seeing it the Cause of your behaving
worse than if it had not been bestowed upon you;
for as, before we put you to your Master, we had
an extraordinary Character of him, from all his
Neighbours, and those who dealt with him; and as
Mr. Joseph, who is now out of his Time, gives
him the best of Characters, and declares your
Mistress to be a Woman of great Prudence and
good Conduct; I know not how to think they
would use you ill in any respect. But con-
ider, my Dear, you must not, in any Woman
beside myself, expect to find a fond, and perhaps
partial Mother; for, the little Failings which
I could not see in you, will appear very plain to
other Persons. My Love for you would make me
wish you always with me; but as that is what
your future Welfare will no way permit; and as
you must certainly be a Gainer by the Situation
you are now in, let a Desire to promote my
Happiness, as well as your own, make every
seeming Difficulty light; which, I hope, will
appear much lighter for being what I intreat you
to dispense with; who am,

Your ever loving Mother.

I have desir’d your Uncle to interpose in this
Matter, and he writes to you on this Occa-
dition; and has promised to see Justice done
you, in case your Complaints be reason-
able.
LETTER IV.
An Uncle's Letter to the Youth, on the same Occasion.

Cousin William,

I am sorry you should have any Misunderstanding with your Master: I have a good Opinion of him, and am unwilling to entertain a bad one of you. It is so much a Master's Interest to use his Apprentices well, that I am inclined to think that when they are badly treated, it is oftener the Effect of Provocation than Choice. Wherefore, before I give myself the Trouble of interposing in your Behalf, I desire you will strictly inquire of yourself, whether you have not, by some Misconduct or other, provoked that Alteration in your Master's Behaviour of which you so much complain. If, after having diligently complied with this Request, you assure me that you are not sensible of having given Cause of Disgust on your Side, I will readily use my best Endeavours to reconcile you to your Master, or procure you another. But if you find yourself blamable, it will be better for you to remove, by your own Amendment, the Occasion of your Master's Displeasure, than to have me, or any other Friend, offer to plead your Excuse, where you know it would be unjust to defend you. If this should be your Case, all your Friends together could promise your better Behaviour, indeed; but as the Performance must even then be your own, it will add much more to your Character to pass thro' your whole Term without any Interposition between you. Weigh well what I have here said; and remember, that your future Welfare depends greatly on your present Behaviour. I am,

Your Loving Kinsman,

B 6

L E T.
LETTER V.
An Apprentice to an Uncle, about a Fraud committed by his Fellow-Apprentice to their Master.

Dear Uncle,

I am under greater Uneasiness than I am able to express: My Fellow-apprentice, for whom I had a great Regard, and from whom I have received many Civilities, has involved me in the deepest Affliction. I am unwilling to tell you, and yet I must not conceal it, that he has forfeited the Confidence reposed in him by a Breach of Trust, to which he ungenerously gain'd my Consent, by a Pretense I did not in the least suspect. What must I do? My Master is defrauded: If I discover the Injury, I am sure to ruin a young Man I would fain think possessed of some Merit; if I conceal the Injustice, I must at present share the Guilt, and hereafter be Partaker in the Punishment. I am in the greatest Agony of Mind, and beg your instant Advice, as you value the Peace of

Your dutiful, tho' unfortunate Nephew.

LETTER VI.
The Uncle's Answer.

Dear Nephew,

Your Letter, which I just now received, gives me great Uneasiness: And as any Delay in the Discovery may be attended with Consequences which will probably be dangerous to yourself, and disagreeable to all who belong to you; I charge
charge you, if you value your own Happiness, and my Peace, to acquaint your Master instantly with the Injustice that has been done him; which is the only Means of vindicating your own Innocence, and prevent your being looked upon as an Accomplice in a Fact, to which I wish you may not be found to have been too far consenting. As to the unhappy young Man who has been guilty of so fatal an Indiscretion, I wish, if the known Clemency and Good-nature of your Master may pardon this Offence, he may let his Forgiveness teach him the Ingratitude and Inhumanity of injuring a Man, who is not only the proper Guardian of his Youth, but whose Goodness deserves the best Behaviour, tho' he be generous enough to excuse the worst. Let not a Minute pass after you receive this, before you reveal the Matter to your Master: For, I am in Hopes that your Application to me, and your following my Advice, will greatly plead in your Behalf. I will very speedily call on your Master, and am, as far as an honest Regard for you can make me,

Your Loving Uncle.

LETTER VII.

Advice from a Father to a young Beginner, what Company to chuse, and how to behave in it.

Dear Robin,

As you are now entering into the World, and will probably have considerable Dealings in your Business, the frequent Occasions you will have for Advice from others, will make you de-
sious of singling out among your most intimate Acquaintance, one or two, whom you would view in the Light of Friends.

In the Choice of these, your utmost Care and Caution will be necessary: for, by a Mistake here, you can scarcely conceive the fatal Effects you may hereafter experience: Wherefore, it will be proper for you to make a Judgment of those who are fit to be your Advisers, by the Conduct they have observed in their own Affairs, and the Reputation they bear in the World. For he who has by his own Indiscretions undone himself, is much fitter to be set up as a Land-mark for a prudent Mariner to shun his Courses, than an Example to follow.

Old Age is generally slow and heavy, Youth headstrong and precipitate; but there are old Men who are full of Vivacity, and young Men reple-nifh’d with Discretion; which makes me rather point out the Conduct than the Age of the Persons with whom you should chuse to associate; tho’ after all, it is a never-failing good Sign to me of Prudence and Virtue in a young Man, when his Seniors chuse his Company, and he delights in theirs.

Let your Endeavour therefore be, at all Adventures, to conwort yourself with Men of Sobriety, good Sense and Virtue; for the Proverb is an unerring one, that says, A Man is known by the Company he keeps. If such Men you can jingle out, while you improve by their Conversation, you will benefit by their Advice; and be sure remember one thing, that tho’ you must be frank and unreserved in delivering your Sentiments, when Occasions offer, yet that you be much readyer to hear than speak; for to this Purpose it has been significantly observed, that Nature has given a Man two Ears, and
and but one Tongue. Lay in therefore by Observation, and a modest Silence, such a Store of Ideas, that you may at their Time of Life, make no worse Figure than they do; and endeavour to benefit yourself rather by other Peoples Ills than your own. How must those young Men expose themselves to the Contempt and Ridicule of their Seniors, who having seen little or nothing of the World, are continually shutting out by open Mouths and closed Ears, all Possibility of Instruction, and making vain the principal End of Conversation, which is Improvement. A silent young Man makes generally a wise old one, and never fails of being respected by the best and most prudent Men. When therefore you come among Strangers, hear every one speak before you deliver your own Sentiments; by this means you will judge of the Merit and Capacities of your Company, and avoid exposing yourself, as I have known many do, by shooting out hasty and inconsiderate Bolts, which they would have been glad to recall, when perhaps a silent Genius in Company has burst out upon them with such Observations, as have struck Consciences and Shame in the forward Speaker, if he has not been quite insensible of inward Reproach.

I have thrown together, as they occur'd, a few Thoughts, which may suffice for the present to shew my Care and Concern for your Welfare. I hope you will constantly from time to time, communicate to me whatever you shall think worthy of my Notice, or in which my Advice may be of Use to you. For I have no Pleasure in this Life equal to that which the Happiness of my Children gives me. And of this you may be assured; for I am, and ever must be,

Your affectionate Father.

L E T-
Letter VIII.

General Rules for agreeable Conversation in a young Man. From a Father to a Son.

Dear William,

As I had not an Opportunity of saying so much to you as I wished when you were last here; I send this to inform you of some things in your general Conversation, which I think would be proper for you to observe, and amend; particularly your excessive Itch for Talking, which discovers itself alike on all Occasions. I have always flatter'd myself that you do not want Sense, and am willing to hope I have not been deceived: But the dangerous Self-sufficiency of most young Men, seems violently to have seized you, which, I hope, a little Reflection will remove.

The Art of rendering yourself agreeable in Conversation is worth your serious Study: 'Tis an Advantage few can boast, tho' sought after by all; and nothing is so constant an Enemy to Success in those who would excel in this Art, as the harbouring an Opinion of their own Proficiency, before they have attained to any tolerable Degree of Knowledge in what they imagine themselves possessed of. Conversation, where it is rightly managed, must be so conducted, as to let each Member of the Company have a Share in the Pleasure and Applause it affords: If you are Six in Number, after you have told a Story, or made any Remark which gives a general Satisfaction; you must consider it the Right of another to call your Attention in his Turn; and, unless particularly requested, it betrays a great Weakness to follow yourself. No doubt but you love to be admired: And have not others
others the same Passion? You believe your Wit more brilliant than theirs? Are you sure that they are not of the same Opinion as to their own? If a Man speaks little, you must not from thence conclude him willing to give up every Claim to convertible Merit: Perhaps he cannot sing: But to be sure he is as desirous of having his peculiar Humour, or his dry Joke applauded, as you are to be intreated another Song. If he is no Mathematician, perhaps he is versed in religious Disputation; if he despises Plays, he may admire History; tho' he understands not Geography, he may yet know how to describe the Humours of Mankind: And tho' he pretends not to Politicks, he may have a Turn for some more useful Science. When these are considered, if his Modesty is great, you cannot oblige him more than by throwing an Opportunity in his way to display his Capacity on the Subject he believes himself most able to handle with Advantage: For, in order to support a thorough good Humour, a Man must be pleased with himself as well as with others. When this is properly taken Care of, Conversation seldom fails to prove entertaining: And to the Neglect of this, are owing many of the yawning Hours spent in Companies composed of Men not incapable of behaving agreeably.

The Manner of telling a Story, is also worth your Notice: You have known the Pleasure of hearing a long one well told: Mr. Trotter has an admirable Talent in this way: But then you must observe, that half the Pleasure he gives, arises from his happily avoiding any of the silly Digressions, which are the great Cause of a Story's seeming tedious: You never hear him mingle his Relation with, I remember very well it was the same Day that Squire Trumbul's Son came of Age.---I bought
my bay Nag the very Day before, at such a Fair, being a Friday that Year;--or, I can scarce think of it without Laughing;--But, however, as I was saying:--And a hundred more such Dead-weights to Attention. Nor does he ever praise a Story before he relates it; a fatal Rock to many a good Relation: For when any Story wants a preparatory Recommendation, it ought not to be told; and even when the Relation is possible, the Generality of Auditors are apt to persuade themselves,

The Mountain labours, and a Mouse is born.

These are loose and general Hints; but by a due Improvement of them, you will find yourself very sensibly grow more and more agreeable where-ever you converse. An Ease and becoming Freedom you already have, and by the Addition of Discretion in your Use of them, and Complaisance to others, you will probably succeed in the Desire so predominant in you, of being admired by Men of Sense and Judgment. Which will be no small Pleasure to

Your affectionate Father.

LETTER IX.

An elder to a younger Brother, who is in Love with a young Lady of great Gaiety, &c.

Dear Brother,

I AM more concerned for your Welfare than you imagine. You are younger than myself: My Duty, in some Degree, requires my Care for your Good, and particularly in a Point that may be
be so material to your whole Life, as is that of Love.

Beauty has as great a Force upon my Senses, as it can have upon yours. I am near Thirty Years of Age; you are not more than Twenty. Your Passions are strong; mine, Brother, are far from subsiding: I admire, I love, with as much Force of Nature as you can do. My Reason ought to be stronger, and 'tis well if my Passion is not so likewise. Miss Roeke is amiable on many Accounts; her Features are regular, her Wit sprightly, her Deportment genteel; and Voice,—I had almost said, ravishing. Her Dress is easy and unaffected; and her Manner of Conversation, has a Freedom that captivates more Hearts, than yours: Yet, I greatly fear, with all these Endowments, she will not make the Wife you ought to wish for. Her airy Flights, and gay Behaviour, are pleasing, as a Partner in Conversation, but will they be equally agreeable in a Partner for Life? What now charms you, charms also others: You are now content with thinking yourself one among many that admire her, and are admitted to share the Brilliance of her Conversation; but will a Share of her Wit and Humour, her Freedom and Gaiety, please hereafter as a Wife? And tho' she is delightful in Company, are you satisfied she will be as agreeable when alone with you; or when she has not an Opportunity of shewing-away in a Company that perhaps you may not approve? She now sees nobody but whom she chuses to see: If she should be a Wife, it is more than probable she may dislike Restraints: and can you approve of a diffuse Conversation in one you desire to yourself?

Think not, Brother, that I have any interested Motive for this Advice. I assure you I have not.

I am
Familiar Letters on the

I am not your Rival: I desire not the Lady you seem too fond of. All I mean (for I lay nothing at present, with regard to your own Youth, which ought not, however, to be wholly forgotten, as very few prudent Matches are made by young Gentlemen at your Age) is, to caution you against thinking of a Gentlewoman who may, and I am willing to believe will, be a suitable Companion to a Gentleman whose Station and Choice leads him into much Company, and gay Life; but to Men whose Circumstances, if not their Inclinations, require a more retired way of Life, it is obvious, a Woman, whose Talents lie principally in Conversation, can never, for that Reason only, justify a young Gentleman for chusing her for a Wife.

I hope this will come time enough to put you upon guarding against the Inconveniencies that threaten the Indulgence of your present Passion. Shut not your Ears to Reason; forget not yourself; and be sure to remember, that the Pleasure of an Hour or Two, and of Twenty, Thirty, or Forty Years, or a whole Life, must arise from very different Sources. I am,

Dear Brother,
Your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER X.
An elder to an extravagant younger Brother.

Dear John,

You may be certain that your Misfortunes are to me a most melancholy Subject: You are my only Brother: I own it: And your Misfortunes
fortunes affect me next to my own: But there is this Difference in what I feel for you, and for myself: I am sure, every Misfortune I have met with, has been occasioned by unavoidable Accidents. This Consideration has supported me under the many Afflictions I have myself endured: But for those I have shared with you, I cannot boast the same Alleviation. While our Father lived, he was your constant and unwearied Support, even after your Patrimony was squander'd away. While our Mother remained, she was every Week assisting your Necessities, but what might more properly be called your Levity and Extravagance. She is now, by the Divine Will, taken from us both; her Jointure, as well as the Estate my Father independently left, has devolved upon me. Of this both Nature and Providence require I should make the best Use: And to serve you, I readily confess, is my greatest Care. But, my dear Brother, how is this to be done? The generous and bountiful Assistance of our Parents, procured you no substantial Good. What then am I to do to screen you from Want and Misery?

That you are not already happy, is not owing to the Backwardness of your Friends to serve you; but, allow me to speak plainly, to your own Indiscretion. Your own Fortune maintained you not for three Years: Were I able to give you as much more, what Reason have you given me to suppose you will be a better Economist than you have been? My whole Estate, let me tell you, Brother, at your Rate of Expence, would scarcely maintain you for Seven Years: And, think you as you will, I must believe it my Duty to leave enough to support my Offspring, with prudent Conduct, to the End of Time. If I send you, as you desire, Fifty Guineas, What good will that