

THE CAMBRIDGE EDITION  
OF THE WORKS OF

JANE AUSTEN

LATER MANUSCRIPTS

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JANE AUSTEN

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Letter 1.

Lady Susan Vernon to Mr Vernon.

Langford Decr.

My dear Brother

I can no longer refuse myself the pleasure of profiting by your kind invitation when we last parted, of spending some weeks with you at Churchill, & therefore if quite convenient to you & Mr Vernon to receive me at present, I shall hope within a few days to be introduced to a sister, whom I have most affectionately urgent with me to prolong my stay, but then hospitable & cheerful disposition has them

Lady Susan<sup>1</sup>

LETTER I.

Lady Susan Vernon<sup>2</sup> to Mr Vernon.—

My dear Brother

Langford, Decr.—

I can no longer refuse myself the pleasure of profiting by your kind invitation when we last parted, of spending some weeks with you at Churchill,<sup>3</sup> & therefore if quite convenient to you and Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon to receive me at present, I shall hope within a few days to be introduced to a sister,<sup>4</sup> whom I have so long desired to be acquainted with.—My kind friends here are most affectionately urgent with me to prolong my stay, but their hospitable & cheerful dispositions lead them too much into society for my present situation & state of mind;<sup>5</sup> & I impatiently look forward to the hour when I shall be admitted into your delightful retirement.<sup>6</sup> I long to be made known to your dear little Children, in whose hearts I shall be very eager to secure an interest.—I shall soon have occasion for all my fortitude, as I am on the point of separation from my own daughter.—The long illness of her dear Father prevented my paying her that attention which Duty & affection equally dictated, & I have but too much reason to fear that the Governess to whose care I consigned her, was unequal to the charge.—I have therefore resolved on placing her at one of the best Private Schools in Town,<sup>7</sup> where I shall have an

<sup>1</sup> The first page of 'Lady Susan'.

opportunity of leaving her myself, in my way to you. I am determined you see, not to be denied admittance at Churchill.—It would indeed give me most painful sensations to know that it were not in your power to receive me.—Yr most obliged & affect: Sister

S. Vernon.<sup>8</sup>—

LETTER 2.<sup>d</sup>

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup> Johnson

Langford

You were mistaken my dear Alicia, in supposing me fixed at this place for the rest of the winter. It grieves me to say how greatly you were mistaken, for I have seldom spent three months more agreeably than those which have just flown away.—At present nothing goes smoothly.—The Females of the Family are united against me.—You foretold how it would be, when I first came to Langford; & Manwaring is so uncommonly pleasing that I was not without apprehensions myself. I remember saying to myself as I drove to the House, “I like this Man; pray Heaven no harm come of it!”—But I was determined to be discreet, to bear in mind my being only four months a widow, & to be as quiet as possible,—and I have been so;—my dear Creature, I have admitted no one’s attentions but Manwaring’s, I have avoided all general flirtation whatever, I have distinguished no Creature besides of all the Numbers resorting hither, except Sir James Martin, on whom I bestowed a little notice in order to detach him from Miss Manwaring. But if the World could know my motive there, they would honour me.—I have been called an unkind Mother, but it was the sacred impulse of maternal affection,

line 10: Alicia’ written over something else, now illegible.

it was the advantage of my Daughter that led me on; & if that Daughter were not the greatest simpleton on Earth, I might have been rewarded for my Exertions as I ought.—Sir James did make proposals to me for Frederica<sup>1</sup>—but Frederica, who was born to be the torment of my life, chose to set herself so violently against the match, that I thought it better to lay aside the scheme for the present.—I have more than once repented that I did not marry him myself, & were he but one degree less contemptibly weak I certainly should, but I must own myself rather romantic<sup>2</sup> in that respect, & that Riches only, will not satisfy me. The event of all this is very provoking.—Sir James is gone, Maria highly incensed, and M<sup>rs</sup> Manwaring insupportably jealous;—so jealous in short, & so enraged against me, that in the fury of her temper I should not be surprised at her appealing to her Guardian if she had the liberty of addressing him—but there your Husband stands my friend, & the kindest, most amiable action of his Life was his throwing her off<sup>3</sup> forever on her Marriage.—Keep up his resentment therefore I charge you.—We are now in a sad state; no house was ever more altered; the whole family are at war, & Manwaring scarcely dares speak to me. It is time for me to be gone; I have therefore determined on leaving them, and shall spend I hope a comfortable day with you in Town within this week.—If I am as little in favour with M<sup>r</sup> Johnson as ever, you must come to me at N<sup>o</sup>. 10 Wigmore St.<sup>4</sup>—but I hope this may not be the case, for as M<sup>r</sup> Johnson with all his faults is a Man to whom that great word “Respectable” is always given, & I am known to be so intimate with his wife, his slighting me has an awkward Look.—I take Town in my way to that insupportable spot, a Country Village,<sup>5</sup> for I am really going to Churchill.—Forgive me my dear friend, it is my last resource. Were



there another place in England open to me, I would prefer it.—Charles Vernon is my aversion, & I am afraid of his wife.—At Churchill however I must remain till I have something better in view. My young Lady accompanies me to Town, where I shall deposit her under the care of Miss Summers in Wigmore Street, till she becomes a little more reasonable. She will make good connections there, as the Girls are all of the best Families.—The price is immense, & much beyond what I can ever attempt to pay.<sup>6</sup>—Adieu. I will send you a line, as soon as I arrive in Town.—Yours Ever,

S. Vernon.

## LETTER 3.

M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Mother

I am very sorry to tell you that it will not be in our power to keep our promise of spending the Christmas with you,<sup>1</sup> & we are prevented that happiness by a circumstance which is not likely to make us any amends.—Lady Susan in a letter to her Brother, has declared her intention of visiting us almost immediately—& as such a visit is in all probability merely an affair of convenience, it is impossible to conjecture its length. I was by no means prepared for such an event, nor can I now account for her Ladyship's conduct.—Langford appeared so exactly the place for her in every respect, as well from the elegant & expensive stile of Living there, as from her particular attachment to M<sup>rs</sup> Manwaring, that I was very far from expecting so speedy a distinction, tho' I always imagined from her increasing friendship for us since her Husband's death, that we should at some future period be obliged to receive her.—M<sup>r</sup> Vernon I think was a great deal too kind to her, when he was in Staffordshire.<sup>2</sup> Her behaviour to him,

independant of her general Character, has been so inexcusably artful & ungenerous since our marriage was first in agitation, that no one less amiable & mild than himself could have overlooked it at all; & tho' as his Brother's widow & in narrow circumstances it was proper to render her pecuniary assistance, I cannot help thinking his pressing invitation to her to visit us at Churchill perfectly unnecessary.—Disposed however as he always is to think the best of every one, her display of Greif, & professions of regret, & general resolutions of prudence were sufficient to soften his heart, & make him really confide in her sincerity. But as for myself, I am still unconvinced; & plausibly as her Ladyship has now written, I cannot make up my mind, till I better understand her real meaning in coming to us.—You may guess therefore my dear Madam with what feelings I look forward to her arrival. She will have occasion for all those attractive Powers for which she is celebrated, to gain any share of my regard; & I shall certainly endeavour to guard myself against their influence, if not accompanied by something more substantial.—She expresses a most eager desire of being acquainted with me, & makes very gracious mention of my children, but I am not quite weak enough to suppose a woman who has behaved with inattention if not unkindness to her own child, should be attached to any of mine. Miss Vernon is to be placed at a school in Town before her Mother comes to us, which I am glad of, for her sake & my own. It must be to her advantage to be separated from her Mother; & a girl of sixteen who has received so wretched an education would not be a very desirable companion here.—Reginald has long wished I know to see this captivating Lady Susan, & we shall depend on his joining our party soon.—I am glad to hear that my Father continues so well, & am, with best Love &c, Cath Vernon.—

## LETTER 4.

Mr De Courcy to Mrs Vernon.

Parklands

My dear Sister

I congratulate you & Mr Vernon on being about to receive into your family, the most accomplished coquette<sup>1</sup> in England.—As a very distinguished Flirt, I have been always taught to consider her, but it has lately fallen in my way to hear some particulars of her conduct at Langford, which prove that she does not confine herself to that sort of honest flirtation which satisfies most people, but aspires to the more delicious gratification of making a whole family miserable.—By her behaviour to Mr Manwaring, she gave jealousy & wretchedness to his wife, & by her attentions to a young Man previously attached to Mr Manwaring's sister, deprived an amiable girl of her Lover.—I learnt all this from a Mr Smith now in this neighbourhood—(I have dined with him at Hurst and Wilford)—who is just come from Langford, where he was a fortnight in the house with her Ladyship, & who is therefore well qualified to make the communication.—What a Woman she must be!—I long to see her, & shall certainly accept your kind invitation, that I may form some idea of those bewitching powers which can do so much—engaging at the same time & in the same house the affections of two Men who were neither of them at liberty to bestow them—& all this, without the charm of youth.—I am glad to find that Miss Vernon does not come with her Mother to Churchill, as she has not even manners to recommend her, & according to Mr Smith's account, is equally dull & proud. Where Pride &

line 22: 'may' inserted before 'form' at beginning of MS line. // line 29: 'heavy' deleted; 'dull' inserted above line.

Stupidity unite, there can be no dissimulation worthy notice, & Miss Vernon shall be consigned to unrelenting contempt; but by all that I can gather, Lady Susan possesses a degree of captivating Deceit which it must be pleasing to witness & detect. I shall be with you very soon, & am your affec. Brother

R De Courcy.—

## LETTER 5.

Lady Susan to Mrs Johnson

Churchill

I received your note my dear Alicia, just before I left Town, & rejoice to be assured that Mr Johnson suspected nothing of your engagement the evening before; it is undoubtedly better to deceive him entirely;—since he will be stubborn, he must be tricked.—I arrived here in safety, & have no reason to complain of my reception from Mr Vernon; but I confess myself not equally satisfied with the behaviour of his Lady.—She is perfectly well bred indeed, & has the air of a woman of fashion, but her manners are not such as can persuade me of her being prepossessed in my favour.—I wanted her to be delighted at seeing me—I was as amiable as possible on the occasion—but all in vain—she does not like me.—To be sure, when we consider that I did take some pains to prevent my Brother-in-law's marrying her, this want of cordiality is not very surprising—& yet it shews an illiberal & vindictive spirit to resent a project which influenced me six years ago, & which never succeeded at last.—I am sometimes half disposed to repent that I did not let Charles buy Vernon Castle when we were obliged to sell it, but it was a trying circumstance, especially as the sale took place exactly

at the time of his marriage—& everybody ought to respect the delicacy of those feelings, which could not endure that my Husband's Dignity should be lessened by his younger brother's having possession of the Family Estate.<sup>1</sup>—Could Matters have been so arranged as to prevent the necessity of our leaving the Castle, could we have lived with Charles & kept him single, I should have been very far from persuading my husband to dispose of it elsewhere;—but Charles was then on the point of marrying Miss De Courcy, & the event has justified me. Here are Children in abundance, & what benefit could have accrued to me from his purchasing Vernon?—My having prevented it, may perhaps have given his wife an unfavourable impression—but where there is a disposition to dislike a motive will never be wanting; & as to money-matters, it has not with-held him from being very useful to me. I really have a regard for him, he is so easily imposed on!

The house is a good one, the Furniture fashionable, & everything announces plenty & elegance.—Charles is very rich I am sure; when a Man has once got his name in a Banking House he rolls in money.<sup>2</sup> But they do not know what to do with their fortune, keep very little company, & never go to Town but on business.—We shall be as stupid as possible.—I mean to win my Sister in law's heart through her Children; I know all their names already, & am going to attach myself with the greatest sensibility<sup>3</sup> to one in particular, a young Frederic, whom I take on my lap & sigh over for his dear Uncle's sake.—

Poor Manwaring!—I need not tell you how much I miss him—how perpetually he is in my Thoughts.—I found a dismal Letter from him on my arrival here, full of complaints of his wife & sister, & lamentations on the cruelty of his fate. I passed off the letter as his wife's, to the

Vernons, & when I write to him, it must be under cover to you.<sup>4</sup>—

Yours Ever, S V.—

## LETTER 6.

M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon to M<sup>r</sup> De Courcy

Churchill

Well my dear Reginald, I have seen this dangerous creature, & must give you some description of her, tho' I hope you will soon be able to form your own judgement. She is really excessively pretty.—However you may chuse to question the allurements of a Lady no longer young, I must for my own part declare that I have seldom seen so lovely a woman as Lady Susan.—She is delicately fair, with fine grey eyes & dark eyelashes; & from her appearance one would not suppose her more than five & twenty, tho' she must in fact be ten years older.—I was certainly not disposed to admire her, tho' always hearing she was beautiful; but I cannot help feeling that she possesses an uncommon union of Symmetry, Brilliancy & Grace.<sup>1</sup>—Her address<sup>2</sup> to me was so gentle, frank & even affectionate, that if I had not known how much she has always disliked me for marrying M<sup>r</sup> Vernon, and that we had never met before, I should have imagined her an attached friend.—One is apt I believe to connect assurance of manner with coquetry, & to expect that an impudent address will necessarily attend an impudent mind;—at least I was myself prepared for an improper degree of confidence in Lady Susan; but her countenance is absolutely sweet, & her voice & manner winningly mild.—I am sorry it is so, for what is this but Deceit?—Unfortunately one knows her too well.—She is clever & agreeable, has all that knowledge of the world which makes conversation easy, & talks very well, with a happy command of Language, which is too often used I believe to make

Black appear White.—She has already almost persuaded me of her being warmly attached to her daughter, tho' I have so long been convinced of the contrary. She speaks of her with so much tenderness & anxiety, lamenting so bitterly the neglect of her education, which she represents however as wholly unavoidable, that I am forced to recollect how many successive Springs her Ladyship spent in Town,<sup>3</sup> while her daughter was left in Staffordshire to the care of servants or a Governess very little better,<sup>4</sup> to prevent my believing whatever she says.

If her manners have so great an influence on my resentful heart, you may guess how much more strongly they operate on Mr Vernon's generous temper.—I wish I could be as well satisfied as he is, that it was really her choice to leave Langford for Churchill; & if she had not straid three months there before she discovered that her friends' manner of Living did not suit her situation or feelings, I might have believed that concern for the loss of such a Husband as Mr Vernon, to whom her own behaviour was far from unexceptionable, might for a time make her wish for retirement. But I cannot forget the length of her visit to the Manwaring's, & when I reflect on the different mode of Life which she led with them, from that to which she must now submit, I can only suppose that the wish of establishing her reputation by following, tho' late, the path of propriety, occasioned her removal from a family where she must in reality have been particularly happy. Your friend Mr Smith's story however cannot be quite true, as she corresponds regularly with Mr's Manwaring; at any rate it must be exaggerated;—it is scarcely possible that two men should be so grossly deceived by her at once.—Yrs &c Cath Vernon.

line 19: 'not deleted'; 'far from' inserted above line. // line 30: 'ath' inserted after 'C' in 'Cath Vernon'.

## LETTER 7.

Lady Susan to Mr's Johnson

Churchill

My dear Alicia

You are very good in taking notice of Frederica, & I am grateful for it as a mark of your friendship; but as I cannot have a doubt of the warmth of that friendship, I am far from exacting so heavy a sacrifice. She is a stupid girl, & has nothing to recommend her.—I would not therefore on any account have you encumber one moment of your precious time by sending for her to Edward St,<sup>1</sup> especially as every visit is so many hours deducted from the grand affair of Education, which I really wish to be attended to, while she remains with Miss Summers.—I want her to play & sing with some portion of Taste, & a good deal of assurance, as she has my hand & arm, & a tolerable voice. I was so much indulged in my infant years that I was never obliged to attend to anything, & consequently am without those accomplishments which are now necessary to finish a pretty Woman. Not that I am an advocate for the prevailing fashion of acquiring a perfect knowledge in all the Languages Arts & Sciences;<sup>2</sup>—it is throwing time away;—to be Mistress of French, Italian, German, Music, Singing, Drawing &c will gain a Woman some applause, but will not add one Lover to her list. Grace & Manner after all are of the greatest importance. I do not mean therefore that Frederica's acquisitions should be more than superficial, & I flatter myself that she will not remain long enough at school to understand anything thoroughly.<sup>3</sup>—I hope to see her the wife of Sir James within a twelvemonth.—You know on what I ground my hope, & it is certainly a good foundation, for

line 15: short illegible word deleted between 'my' and 'hand'; 'my' possibly written over other letters.

School must be very humiliating to a girl of Frederica's age;<sup>4</sup> & by the bye, you had better not invite her any more on that account, as I wish her to find her situation as unpleasant as possible.—I am sure of Sir James at any time, & could make him renew his application by a Line.—I shall trouble you meanwhile to prevent his forming any other attachment when he comes to Town;—ask him to your House occasionally, & talk to him about Frederica that he may not forget her.—

Upon the whole I commend my own conduct in this affair extremely, and regard it as a very happy mixture of circumspection & tenderness. Some Mothers would have insisted on their daughter's accepting so great an offer on the first overture, but I could not answer it to myself to force Frederica into a marriage from which her heart revolted; & instead of adopting so harsh a measure, merely propose to make it her own choice by rendering her thoroughly uncomfortable till she does accept him.<sup>1</sup> But enough of this tiresome girl.—

You may well wonder how I contrive to pass my time here—& for the first week, it was most insufferably dull.—Now however, we begin to mend;—our party is enlarged by Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon's brother, a handsome young Man, who promises me some amusement. There is something about him that rather interests me, a sort of sauciness, of familiarity which I shall teach him to correct. He is lively & seems clever, & when I have inspired him with greater respect for me than his sister's kind offices have implanted, he may be an agreeable Flirt.—There is exquisite pleasure in subduing an insolent spirit, in making a person pre-determined to dislike, acknowledge one's superiority.—I have disconcerted him already by my calm reserve; & it shall be my endeavour to humble the Pride

line 15: 'a' inserted above line.

of these self-important De Courcys still lower, to convince Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon that her sisterly cautions have been bestowed in vain, & to persuade Reginald that she has scandalously belied<sup>2</sup> me. This project will serve at least to amuse me, & prevent my feeling so acutely this dreadful separation from You & all whom I love. Adeiu.

Yours Ever

S. Vernon.

#### LETTER 8.

Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Mother

You must not expect Reginald back again for some time. He desires me to tell you that the present open weather<sup>1</sup> induces him to accept Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon's invitation to prolong his stay in Sussex<sup>2</sup> that they may have some hunting together.<sup>3</sup>—He means to send for his Horses immediately,<sup>4</sup> & it is impossible to say when you may see him in Kent.<sup>5</sup> I will not disguise my sentiments on this change from you my dear Madam, tho' I think you had better not communicate them to my Father, whose excessive anxiety about Reginald would subject him to an alarm which might seriously affect his health & spirits. Lady Susan has certainly contrived in the space of a fortnight to make my Brother like her.—In short, I am persuaded that his continuing here beyond the time originally fixed for his return, is occasioned as much by a degree of fascination towards her, as by the wish of hunting with Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon, & of course I cannot receive that pleasure from the length of his visit which my Brother's company would otherwise give me.—I am indeed provoked at the artifice of this

line 26: 'this' deleted; 'a' inserted above line.

unprincipled Woman. What stronger proof of her dangerous abilities can be given, than this perversion of Reginald's judgement, which when he entered the house was so decidedly against her?—In his last letter he actually gave me some particulars of her behaviour at Langford, such as he received from a Gentleman who knew her perfectly well, which if true must raise abhorrence against her, & which Reginald himself was entirely disposed to credit.—His opinion of her I am sure, was as low as of any Woman in England, & when he first came it was evident that he considered her as one entitled neither to Delicacy<sup>6</sup> nor respect, & that he felt she would be delighted with the attentions of any Man inclined to flirt with her.

Her behaviour I confess has been calculated to do away such an idea, I have not detected the smallest impropriety in it,—nothing of vanity, of pretension, of Levity—& she is altogether so attractive, that I should not wonder at his being delighted with her, had he known nothing of her previous to this personal acquaintance;—but against reason, against conviction, to be so well pleased with her as I am sure he is, does really astonish me.—His admiration was at first very strong, but no more than was natural; & I did not wonder at his being struck by the gentleness & delicacy of her Manners;—but when he has mentioned her of late, it has been in terms of more extraordinary praise, & yesterday he actually said, that he could not be surprised at any effect produced on the heart of Man by such Loveliness & such Abilities; & when I lamented in reply the badness of her disposition, he observed that whatever might have been her errors, they were to be imputed to her neglected Education & early Marriage, & that she was altogether a wonderful Woman.—

line 9: 'as' inserted above line after 'low'. // line 17: 'pleasing' deleted; 'attractive' inserted above line.

This tendency to excuse her conduct, or to forget it in the warmth of admiration vexes me; & if I did not know that Reginald is too much at home at Churchill to need an invitation for lengthening his visit, I should regret Mr. Vernon's giving him any.—

Lady Susan's intentions are of course those of absolute coquetry, or a desire of universal admiration. I cannot for a moment imagine that she has anything more serious in view, but it mortifies me to see a young Man of Reginald's sense duped by her at all.—I am &c.

Cath Vernon.—

#### LETTER 9.

Mrs. Johnson to Lady Susan

My dearest Friend

Edward St.—

I congratulate you on Mr. De Courcy's arrival, & advise you by all means to marry him; his Father's Estate is we know considerable, & I believe certainly entailed.<sup>1</sup>—Sir Reginald is very infirm, & not likely to stand in your way long.—I hear the young Man well spoken of, & tho' no one can really deserve you my dearest Susan, Mr. De Courcy may be worth having.—Manwaring will storm of course, but you may easily pacify him. Besides, the most scrupulous point of honour could not require you to wait for his emancipation.—I have seen Sir James,—he came to Town for a few days last week, & called several times in Edward Street. I talked to him about you & your daughter, & he is so far from having forgotten you, that I am sure he would marry either of you with pleasure.—I gave him hopes of Frederica's relenting, & told him a great deal of her improvements.—I scolded him for making Love to Maria Manwaring; he protested that he had been only in joke, & we both laughed heartily at her

disappointment, & in short were very agreeable.—He is as silly as ever.—Yours faithfully

Alicia.—

LETTER 10.

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson

Churchill

I am much obliged to you my dear Friend, for your advice respecting M<sup>r</sup>. De Courcy, which I know was given with the fullest conviction of it's expediency, tho' I am not quite determined on following it.—I cannot easily resolve on anything so serious as Marriage, especially as I am not at present in want of money, & might perhaps till the old Gentleman's death, be very little benefited by the match. It is true that I am vain enough to believe it within my reach.—I have made him sensible of my power, & can now enjoy the pleasure of triumphing over a Mind prepared to dislike me, & prejudiced against all my past actions. His sister too, is I hope convinced how little the ungenerous representations of any one to the disadvantage of another will avail, when opposed to the immediate influence of Intellect & Manner.—I see plainly that she is uneasy at my progress in the good opinion of her Brother, & conclude that nothing will be wanting on her part to counteract me;—but having once made him doubt the justice of her opinion of me, I think I may defy her.—

It has been delightful to me to watch his advances towards intimacy, especially to observe his altered manner in consequence of my repressing by the calm dignity of my deportment, his insolent approach to direct familiarity.—My conduct has been equally guarded from the first, & I never behaved less like a Coquette in the whole course of my Life,

tho' perhaps my desire of dominion was never more decided. I have subdued him entirely by sentiment & serious conversation, & made him I may venture to say at least half in Love with me, without the semblance of the most common-place flirtation. M<sup>rs</sup>. Vernon's consciousness of deserving every sort of revenge that it can be in my power to inflict, for her ill-offices, could alone enable her to perceive that I am actuated by any design in behaviour so gentle & unpretending.—Let her think & act as she chuses however; I have never yet found that the advice of a Sister could prevent a young Man's being in love if he chose it.—We are advancing now towards some kind of confidence, & in short are likely to be engaged in a kind of platonic friendship.<sup>1</sup>—On my side, you may be sure of it's never being more, for if I were not already as much attached to another person as I can be to any one, I should make a point of not bestowing my affection on a Man who had dared to think so meanly of me.—

Reginald has a good figure, & is not unworthy the praise you have heard given him, but is still greatly inferior to our friend at Langford.—He is less polished, less insinuating than Manwaring, & is comparatively deficient in the power of saying those delightful things which put one in good humour with oneself & all the world. He is quite agreeable enough however, to afford me amusement, and to make many of those hours pass very pleasantly which would be otherwise spent in endeavouring to overcome my sister in law's reserve, & listening to her Husband's insipid talk.—

Your account of Sir James is most satisfactory, & I mean to give Miss Frederica a hint of my intentions very soon.—Yours  
&c

S. Vernon.



## LETTER 11.

Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

I really grow quite uneasy my dearest Mother about Reginald, from witnessing the very rapid increase of Lady Susan's influence. They are now on terms of the most particular friendship, frequently engaged in long conversations together, & she has contrived by the most artful coquetry to subdue his Judgement to her own purposes.—It is impossible to see the intimacy between them, so very soon established, without some alarm, tho' I can hardly suppose that Lady Susan's veils extend to marriage.—I wish you could get Reginald home again, under any plausible pretence. He is not at all disposed to leave us, & I have given him as many hints of my Father's precarious state of health, as common decency will allow me to do in my own house.—Her power over him must now be boundless, as she has entirely effaced all his former ill-opinion, and persuaded him not merely to forget, but to justify her conduct.—Mr Smith's account of her proceedings at Langford, where he accused her of having made Mr Manwaring & a young Man engaged to Miss Manwaring distractedly in love with her, which Reginald firmly believed when he came to Churchill, is now he is persuaded only a scandalous invention. He has told me so in a warmth of manner which spoke his regret at having ever believed the contrary himself.—

How sincerely do I grieve that she ever entered this house!—I always looked forward to her coming with unnesiness—but very far was it, from originating in anxiety for Reginald.—I expected a most disagreeable companion to myself, but could not imagine that my Brother would be in the smallest danger of being captivated by a Woman, with whose principles he was so well acquainted, & whose

Character he so heartily despised. If you can get him away, it will be a good thing.

Yrs affectly,

Cath Vernon.

## LETTER 12.

Sir Reginald De Courcy to his Son

Parklands

I know that young Men in general do not admit of any enquiry, even from their nearest relations, into affairs of the heart; but I hope my dear Reginald that you will be superior to such as allow nothing for a Father's anxiety, & think themselves privileged to refuse him their confidence & slight his advice.—You must be sensible that as an only son & the representative of an ancient Family, your conduct in Life is most interesting to your connections.<sup>1</sup>—In the very important concern of Marriage especially, there is everything at stake; your own happiness, that of your Parents, & the credit of your name.—I do not suppose that you would deliberately form an absolute engagement<sup>2</sup> of that nature without acquainting your Mother & myself, or at least without being convinced that we should approve your choice; but I cannot help fearing that you may be drawn in by the Lady who has lately attached you, to a Marriage, which the whole of your Family, far & near, must highly reprobate.

Lady Susan's age is itself a material objection, but her want of character is one so much more serious, that the difference of even twelve years becomes in comparison of small account.—Were you not blinded by a sort of fascination, it would be ridiculous in me to repeat the instances of great misconduct on her side, so very generally known.—Her neglect of her husband, her encouragement of other Men, her extravagance & dissipation were so gross & notorious, that no one could



be ignorant of them at the time, nor can now have forgotten them.—To our Family, she has always been represented in softened colours by the benevolence of Mr Charles Vernon; & yet inspire of his generous endeavours to excuse her, we know that she did, from the most selfish motives, take all possible pains to prevent his marrying Catherine.—

My Years & increasing Infirmities make me very desirous my dear Reginald, of seeing you settled in the world.—To the Fortune of your wife, the goodness of my own, will make me indifferent; but her family & character must be equally unexceptionable. When your choice is so fixed as that no objection can be made to either, I can promise you a ready & cheerful consent; but it is my Duty to oppose a Match, which deep Art only could render probable, & must in the end make wretched.

It is possible that her behaviour may arise only from Vanity, or a wish of gaining the admiration of a Man whom she must imagine to be particularly prejudiced against her; but it is more likely that she should aim at something farther.—She is poor, & may naturally seek an alliance which must be advantageous to herself.—You know your own rights, and that it is out of my power to prevent your inheriting the family Estate.<sup>3</sup> My Ability of distressing you during my Life,<sup>4</sup> would be a species of revenge to which I should hardly stoop under any circumstances.—I honestly tell you my Sentiments & Intentions. I do not wish to work on your Fears, but on your Sense & Affection.—It would destroy every comfort of my Life, to know that you were married to Lady Susan Vernon. It would be the death of that honest Pride with which I have hitherto considered my son, I should blush to see him, to hear of him, to think of him.—

line 22: 'is' inserted above line after 'that it'.

I may perhaps do no good, but that of relieving my own mind, by this Letter; but I felt it my Duty to tell you that your partiality for Lady Susan is no secret to your friends, & to warn you against her.—I should be glad to hear your reasons for disbelieving Mr Smith's intelligence;<sup>5</sup>—you had no doubt of it's authenticity a month ago.—

If you can give me your assurance of having no design beyond enjoying the conversation of a clever woman for a short period, & of yielding admiration only to her Beauty & Abilities without being blinded by them to her faults, you will restore me to happiness; but if you cannot do this, explain to me at least what has occasioned so great an alteration in your opinion of her.

I am &c

Reg<sup>d</sup> De Courcy.

#### LETTER 13.

Lady De Courcy to Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon—

Parklands

My dear Catherine,

Unluckily I was confined to my room when your last letter came, by a cold which affected my eyes so much as to prevent my reading it myself, so I could not refuse your Father when he offered to read it to me, by which means he became acquainted to my great vexation with all your fears about your Brother. I had intended to write to Reginald myself, as soon as my eyes would let me; to point out as well as I could the danger of an intimate acquaintance with so artful a woman as Lady Susan, to a young Man of his age & high expectations. I meant moreover to have reminded him of our being quite alone now, & very much in need of him to keep up our spirits these long winter evenings. Whether it would have done any good, can never be settled now, but I am excessively vexed

that Sir Reginald should know anything of a matter which we foresaw would make him so uneasy.—He caught all your fears the moment he had read your Letter, & I am sure has not had the business out of his head since;—he wrote by the same post to Reginald, a long letter full of it all, & particularly asking an explanation of what he may have heard from Lady Susan to contradict the late<sup>1</sup> shocking reports. His answer came this morning, which I shall enclose to you, as I think you will like to see it; I wish it was more satisfactory, but it seems written with such a determination to think well of Lady Susan, that his assurances as to Marriage &c, do not set my heart at ease.—I say all I can however to satisfy your Father, & he is certainly less uneasy since Reginald's letter. How provoking it is my dear Catherine, that this unwelcome Guest of yours, should not only prevent our meeting this Christmas, but be the occasion of so much vexation & trouble.—Kiss the dear Children for me.—Your affec: Mother

C. De Courcy.—

## LETTER 14.

Mr De Courcy to Sir Reginald—

Churchill

My dear Sir

I have this moment received your Letter, which has given me more astonishment than I ever felt before. I am to thank my Sister I suppose, for having represented me in such a light as to injure me in your opinion, & give you all this alarm.—I know not why she should chuse to make herself & her family uneasy by apprehending an Event, which no one but herself I can affirm, would ever have thought possible. To impute such a design to Lady Susan would be taking from her every claim to that excellent understanding which her bitterest Enemies have never denied her, & equally low must

sink my pretensions to common sense, if I am suspected of matrimonial veils in my behaviour to her.—Our difference of age must be an insuperable objection, & I entreat you my dear Sir to quiet your mind, & no longer harbour a suspicion which cannot be more injurious to your own peace, than to our Understandings.

I can have no veiw in remaining with Lady Susan than to enjoy for a short time (as you have yourself expressed it) the conversation of a Woman of high mental powers. If Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon would allow something to my affection for herself & her husband in the length of my visit, she would do more justice to us all;—but my Sister is unhappily prejudiced beyond the hope of conviction against Lady Susan.—From an attachment to her husband which in itself does honour to both, she cannot forgive those endeavours at preventing their union, which have been attributed to selfishness in Lady Susan. But in this case, as well as in many others, the World has most grossly injured that Lady, by supposing the worst, where the motives of her conduct have been doubtful.—

Lady Susan had heard something so materially to the disadvantage of my Sister, as to persuade her that the happiness of Mr Vernon, to whom she was always much attached, would be absolutely destroyed by the Marriage. And this circumstance while it explains the true motive of Lady Susan's conduct, & removes all the blame which has been so lavished on her, may also convince us how little the general report of any one ought to be credited, since no character however upright, can escape the malevolence of slander. If my sister in the security of retirement, with as little opportunity as inclination to do Evil, could not avoid Censure, we must not rashly condemn those who living in the World & surrounded with temptation, should be accused of Errors which they are known to have the power of committing.—

I blame myself severely for having so easily believed the scandalous tales invented by Charles Smith to the prejudice of Lady Susan, as I am now convinced how greatly they have traduced her. As to Mr<sup>s</sup> Manwaring's jealousy, it was totally his own invention; & his account of her attaching Miss Manwaring's Lover was scarcely better founded. Sir James Martin had been drawn-in by that young Lady to pay her some attention, and as he is a Man of fortune, it was easy to see that her views extended to Marriage.—It is well-known that Miss Manwaring is absolutely on the catch for a husband, & no one therefore can pity her, for losing by the superior attractions of another woman, the chance of being able to make a worthy Man completely miserable.—Lady Susan was far from intending such a conquest, & on finding how warmly Miss Manwaring resented her Lover's defection, determined, in spite of Mr and Mr<sup>s</sup> Manwaring's most earnest entreaties, to leave the family.—I have reason to imagine that she did receive serious Proposals from Sir James, but her removing from Langford immediately on the discovery of his attachment, must acquit her on that article, with every Mind of common candour.<sup>1</sup>—You will, I am sure my dear Sir, feel the truth of this reasoning, & will hereby learn to do justice to the character of a very injured woman.—

I know that Lady Susan in coming to Churchill was governed only by the most honourable & amiable intentions.—Her prudence & economy<sup>2</sup> are exemplary, her regard for Mr Vernon equal even to his deserts, & her wish of obtaining my sister's good opinion merits a better return than it has received.—As a Mother she is unexceptionable. Her solid affection for her Child is shewn by placing her in hands, where her Education will be properly attended to; but because she has not the blind & weak partiality of most Mothers, she is accused of wanting Maternal Tenderness.—Every person

of Sense however will know how to value & commend her well directed affection, & will join me in wishing that Fred-erica Vernon may prove more worthy than she has yet done, of her Mother's tender cares.

I have now my dear Sir, written my real sentiments of Lady Susan; you will know from this Letter, how highly I admire her Abilities, & esteem her Character; but if you are not equally convinced by my full & solemn assurance that your fears have been most idly created, you will deeply mortify & distress me.—I am &c

R De Courcy. —

LETTER 15.

Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Mother

I return you Reginald's letter, & rejoice with all my heart that my Father is made easy by it. Tell him so, with my congratulations;—but between ourselves, I must own it has only convinced me of my Brother's having no present intention of marrying Lady Susan—not that he is in no danger of doing so three months hence.—He gives a very plausible account of her behaviour at Langford, I wish it may be true, but his intelligence must come from herself, & I am less disposed to believe it, than to lament the degree of intimacy subsisting between them, implied by the discussion of such a subject.

I am sorry to have incurred his displeasure, but can expect nothing better while he is so very eager in Lady Susan's justification.—He is very severe against me indeed, & yet I hope I have not been hasty in my judgement of her.—Poor Woman! tho' I have reasons enough for my dislike, I can not help pitying her at present as she is in real distress, &

with too much cause.—She had this morning a letter from the Lady with whom she has placed her daughter, to request that Miss Vernon might be immediately removed, as she had been detected in an attempt to run away. Why, or whither she intended to go, does not appear; but as her situation seems to have been unexceptionable, it is a sad thing & of course highly afflicting to Lady Susan.—

Frederica must be as much as sixteen, & ought to know better, but from what her Mother insinuates I am afraid she is a perverse girl. She has been sadly neglected however, & her Mother ought to remember it.—

Mr. Vernon set off for Town as soon as she had determined what should be done. He is if possible to prevail on Miss Summers to let Frederica continue with her, & if he cannot succeed, to bring her to Churchill for the present, till some other situation can be found for her.—Her Ladyship is comforting herself meanwhile by strolling along the Shrubbery<sup>1</sup> with Reginald, calling forth all his tender feelings I suppose on this distressing occasion. She has been talking a great deal about it to me, she talks vastly well, I am afraid of being ungenerous or I should say she talks too well to feel so very deeply. But I will not look for Faults. She may be Reginald's Wife—Heaven forbid it!—but why should I be quicker sighted than any body else?—Mr. Vernon declares that he never saw deeper distress than hers, on the receipt of the Letter—& is his Judgement inferior to mine?—

She was very unwilling that Frederica should be allowed to come to Churchill, & justly enough, as it seems a sort of reward to Behaviour deserving very differently. But it was impossible to take her any where else, & she is not to remain here long.—

"It will be absolutely necessary, said she, as you my dear sister must be sensible, to treat my daughter with some

severity while she is here;—a most painful necessity, but I will endeavour to submit to it.—I am afraid I have been often too indulgent, but my poor Frederica's temper could never bear opposition well. You must support & encourage me—You must urge the necessity of reproof, if you see me too lenient."

All this sounds very reasonably.—Reginald is so incensed against the poor silly Girl!—Surely it is not to Lady Susan's credit that he should be so bitter against her daughter; his idea of her must be drawn from the Mother's description.—

Well, whatever may be his fate, we have the comfort of knowing that we have done our utmost to save him. We must commit the event to an Higher Power.—Yours Ever &c  
Cath Vernon.

## LETTER 16.

Lady Susan to Mr. Johnson

Churchill

Never my dearest Alicia, was I so provoked in my life as by a Letter this morning from Miss Summers. That horrid girl of mine has been trying to run away.—I had not a notion of her being such a little Devil before;—she seemed to have all the Vernon Milkiness;<sup>1</sup> but on receiving the letter in which I declared my intentions about Sir James, she actually attempted to elope;<sup>2</sup> at least, I cannot otherwise account for her doing it.—She meant I suppose to go to the Clarks in Staffordshire, for she has no other acquaintance. But she shall be punished, she shall have him. I have sent Charles to Town to make matters up if he can, for I do not by any means want her here. If Miss Summers will not keep her, you must find me out another school, unless we can get her married immediately.—Miss S. writes word that she could not get the young Lady to assign any cause for her extraordinary

conduct, which confirms me in my own private explanation of it.—

Frederica is too shy I think, & too much in awe of me, to tell tales; but if the mildness of her Uncle should get anything from her, I am not afraid. I trust I shall be able to make my story as good as her's.—If I am vain of any thing, it is of my eloquence. Consideration & Esteem as surely follow command of Language, as Admiration waits on Beauty. And here I have opportunity enough for the exercise of my Talent, as the chief of my time is spent in Conversation. Reginald is never easy unless we are by ourselves, & when the weather is tolerable we pace the shrubbery for hours together.—I like him on the whole very well, he is clever & has a good deal to say, but he is sometimes impertinent<sup>3</sup> & troublesome.—There is a sort of ridiculous delicacy about him which requires the fullest explanation of whatever he may have heard to my disadvantage, & is never satisfied till he thinks he has ascertained the beginning & end of everything.—

This is one sort of Love—but I confess it does not particularly recommend itself to me.—I infinitely prefer the tender & liberal spirit of Manwaring, which impressed with the deepest conviction of my merit, is satisfied that whatever I do must be right; & look with a degree of Contempt on the inquisitive & doubting Fancies of that Heart which seems always debating on the reasonableness of its Emotions. Manwaring is indeed beyond compare superior to Reginald—superior in every thing but the power of being with me.—Poor fellow! he is quite distracted by Jealousy, which I am not sorry for, as I know no better support of Love.—He has been teizing<sup>4</sup> me to allow of his coming into this country, & lodging somewhere near me incog<sup>5</sup>—but I forbid every thing

line 30: 'been' inserted above line.

of the kind.—Those women are inexcusable who forget what is due to themselves & the opinion of the World.—

S. Vernon—

LETTER 17.

Mrs. Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Mother

Mr. Vernon returned on Thursday night, bringing his niece with him. Lady Susan had received a line from him by that day's post informing her that Miss Summers had absolutely refused to allow of Miss Vernon's continuance in her Academy.<sup>1</sup> We were therefore prepared for her arrival, & expected them impatiently the whole evening.—They came while we were at Tea,<sup>2</sup> & I never saw any creature look so frightened in my life as Frederica when she entered the room.—

Lady Susan who had been shedding tears before & shewing great agitation at the idea of the meeting, received her with perfect self-command, & without betraying the least tenderness of spirit.—She hardly spoke to her, & on Frederica's bursting into tears as soon [as] we were seated, took her out of the room & did not return for some time; when she did, her eyes looked very red, and she was as much agitated as before.—We saw no more of her daughter.—

Poor Reginald was beyond measure concerned to see his fair friend in such distress, & watched her with so much tender solicitude that I, who occasionally caught her observing his countenance with exultation, was quite out of patience.—This pathetic<sup>3</sup> representation lasted the whole evening, & so

line 23: 'as' inserted above line before 'much'.

ostentatious & artful a display has entirely convinced me that she did in fact feel nothing.—

I am more angry with her than ever since I have seen her daughter.—The poor girl looks so unhappy that my heart aches for her.—Lady Susan is surely too severe, because Frederica does not seem to have the sort of temper to make severity necessary.—She looks perfectly timid, dejected & penitent.—

She is very pretty, tho' not so handsome as her Mother, nor at all like her. Her complexion is delicate, but neither so fair, nor so blooming as Lady Susan's<sup>4</sup>—& she has quite the Vernon cast of countenance, the oval face & mild dark eyes, & there is peculiar sweetness in her look when she speaks either to her Uncle or me, for as we behave kindly to her, we have of course engaged her gratitude.—Her Mother has insinuated that her temper is untractable, but I never saw a face less indicative of any evil disposition than her's; & from what I now see of the behaviour of each to the other, the invariable severity of Lady Susan, & the silent dejection of Frederica, I am led to believe as heretofore that the former has no real Love for her daughter & has never done her justice, or treated her affectionately.

I have not yet been able to have any conversation with my niece; she is shy, & I think I can see that some pains are taken to prevent her being much with me.—Nothing satisfactory transpires as to her reason for running away.—Her kind hearted Uncle you may be sure, was too fearful of distressing her, to ask many questions as they travelled.—I wish it had been possible for me to fetch her instead of him;—I think I should have discovered the truth in the course of a Thirty miles Journey.<sup>5</sup>—

The small Pianoforte<sup>6</sup> has been removed within these few days at Lady Susan's request, into her Dressing room, &

Frederica spends great part of the day there;—practising it is called, but I seldom hear any noise when I pass that way.—What she does with herself there I do not know, there are plenty of books in the room, but it is not every girl who has been running wild the first fifteen years of her life, that can or will read.—Poor Creature! the prospect from her window is not very instructive, for that room overlooks the Lawn you know with the shrubbery on one side, where she may see her Mother walking for an hour together, in earnest conversation with Reginald.—A girl of Frederica's age must be childish indeed, if such things do not strike her.—Is it not inexcusable to give such an example to a daughter?—Yet Reginald still thinks Lady Susan the best of Mothers—still condemns Frederica as a worthless girl!—He is convinced that her attempt to run away, proceeded from no justifiable cause, & had no provocation. I am sure I cannot say that it had, but while Miss Summers declares that Miss Vernon shewed no sign of Obstinacy or Perverseness during her whole stay in Wigmores St: till she was detected in this scheme, I cannot so readily credit what Lady Susan has made him and wants to make me believe, that it was merely an impatience of restraint, and a desire of escaping from the tuition of Masters which brought on the plan of an elopement.—Oh! Reginald, how is your judgement enslaved!—He scarcely dares even allow her to be handsome, & when I speak of her beauty, replies only that her eyes have no Brillancy.<sup>7</sup>

Sometimes he is sure that she is deficient in Understanding, & at others that her temper only is in fault. In short when a person is always to deceive, it is impossible to be consistent. Lady Susan finds it necessary for her own justification that Frederica should be to blame, & probably has sometimes judged it expedient to accuse her of ill-nature & sometimes

to lament her want of sense. Reginald is only repeating after her Ladyship.—

I am &c

Cath Vernon

LETTER 18.

From the same to the same.—

Churchill

My dear Madam

I am very glad to find that my description of Frederica Vernon has interested you, for I do believe her truly deserving of our regard, & when I have communicated a notion that has recently struck me, your kind impression in her favour will I am sure be heightened. I cannot help fancying that she is growing partial to my brother, I so very often see her eyes fixed on his face with a remarkable expression of pensive admiration!—He is certainly very handsome—& yet more—there is an openness in his manner that must be highly prepossessing, & I am sure she feels it so.—Thoughtful & pensive in general her countenance always brightens with a smile when Reginald says anything amusing; & let the subject be ever so serious that he may be conversing on, I am much mistaken if a syllable of his uttering, escape her.—

I want to make him sensible of all this, for we know the power of gratitude on such a heart as his; & could Frederica's artless affection detach him from her Mother, we might bless the day which brought her to Churchill. I think my dear Madam, you would not disapprove of her as a Daughter. She is extremely young to be sure, has had a wretched Education and a dreadful example of Levity in her Mother; but yet I can pronounce her disposition to be excellent, & her natural abilities very good.—

Tho' totally without accomplishment, she is by no means so ignorant as one might expect to find her, being fond of books & spending the cheif of her time in reading. Her Mother leaves her more to herself now than she did, & I have her with me as much as possible, & have taken great pains to overcome her timidity. We are very good friends, & tho' she never opens her lips before her Mother, she talks enough when alone with me, to make it clear that if properly treated by Lady Susan she would always appear to much greater advantage. There cannot be a more gentle, affectionate heart, or more obliging manners, when acting without restraint. Her little Cousins are all very fond of her.—Y<sup>rs</sup>. affec.<sup>ly</sup>

Cath Vernon

LETTER 19.

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup> Johnson

Churchill

You will be eager I know to hear something farther of Frederica, & perhaps may think me negligent for not writing before.—She arrived with her Uncle last Thursday fortnight, when of course I lost no time in demanding the reason of her behaviour, & soon found myself to have been perfectly right in attributing it to my own letter.—The purport of it frightened her so thoroughly that with a mixture of true girlish perverseness & folly, without considering that she could not escape from my authority by running away from Wigmore Street, she resolved on getting out of the house, & proceeding directly by the stage<sup>1</sup> to her friends the Clarkes, & had really got as far as the length of two streets in her journey, when she was fortunately miss'd, pursued, and overtaken.—

Such was the first distinguished exploit of Miss Frederica Susanna Vernon, & if we consider that it was achieved



at the tender age of sixteen we shall have room for the most flattering prognostics of her future renown.—I am excessively provoked however at the parade of propriety which prevented Miss Summers from keeping the girl; & it seems so extraordinary a peice of nicety, considering what are my daughter's family connections, that I can only suppose the Lady to be governed by the fear of never getting her money.—Be that as it may however, Frederica is returned on my hands, & having now nothing else to employ her, is busy in pursuing the plan of Romance begun at Langford.—She is actually falling in love with Reginald De Courcy.—To disobey her Mother by refusing an unexceptionable offer is not enough; her affections must likewise be given without her Mother's approbation.—I never saw a girl of her age, bid fairer to be the sport of Mankind. Her feelings are tolerably lively, & she is so charmingly artless in their display, as to afford the most reasonable hope of her being ridiculed & despised by every Man who sees her.—

Artlessness will never do in Love matters, & that girl is born a simpleton who has it either by nature or affectation.—I am not yet certain that Reginald sees what she is about; nor is it of much consequence;—she is now an object of indifference to him, she would be one of contempt were he to understand her Emotions.—Her beauty is much admired by the Vernons, but it has no effect on him. She is in high favour with her Aunt altogether—because she is so little like myself of course. She is exactly the companion for Mrs. Vernon, who dearly loves to be first, & to have all the sense and all the wit of the Conversation to herself;—Frederica will never eclipse her.—When she first came, I was at some pains to prevent her seeing much of her Aunt, but I have since relaxed, as I believe I may

line 28: 'the' inserted above line after 'wit of.'

depend on her observing the rules I have laid down for their discourse.—

But do not imagine that with all this Lenity, I have for a moment given up my plan of her marriage;—No, I am unalterably fixed on that point, tho' I have not yet quite resolved on the manner of bringing it about.—I should not chuse to have the business brought forward here, & canvassed by the wise heads of Mr. and Mrs. Vernon; & I cannot just now afford to go to Town.—Miss Frederica therefore must wait a little.—

Yours Ever

S. Vernon.—

LETTER 20.

Mrs. Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

We have a very unexpected Guest with us at present, my dear Mother.—He arrived yesterday.—I heard a carriage at the door as I was sitting with my Children while they dined, & supposing I should be wanted left the Nursery soon afterwards & was half way down stairs, when Frederica as pale as ashes came running up, & rushed by me into her own room.—I instantly followed, & asked her what was the matter.—“Oh! cried she, he is come, Sir James is come—& what am I to do?”—This was no explanation; I begged her to tell me what she meant. At that moment we were interrupted by a knock at the door;—it was Reginald, who came by Lady Susan's direction to call Frederica down.—“It is Mr. De Courcy, said she, colouring violently, Mama has sent for me, & I must go.”—

We all three went down together, & I saw my Brother examining the terrified face of Frederica with surprise.—In the breakfast room we found Lady Susan & a young Man of



genteel appearance, whom she introduced to me by the name of Sir James Martin, the very person, as you may remember, whom it was said she had been at pains to detach from Miss Manwaring.—But the conquest it seems was not designed for herself, or she has since transferred it to her daughter, for Sir James is now desperately in love with Frederica, & with full encouragement from Mama.—The poor girl however I am sure dislikes him; & tho' his person and address are very well, he appears both to Mr. Vernon & me a very weak young Man.—

Frederica looked so shy, so confused, when we entered the room, that I felt for her exceedingly. Lady Susan behaved with great attention to her Visitor, & yet I thought I could perceive that she had no particular pleasure in seeing him.—Sir James talked a good deal, & made many civil excuses to me for the liberty he had taken in coming to Churchill, mixing more frequent laughter with his discourse than the subject required;—said many things over & over again, & told Lady Susan three times that he had seen Mr. Johnson a few Evenings before.—He now & then addressed Frederica, but more frequently her Mother.—The poor girl sat all this time without opening her lips;—her eyes cast down, & her colour varying every instant, while Reginald observed all that passed, in perfect silence.—

At length Lady Susan, weary I believe of her situation, proposed walking, & we left the two Gentlemen together to put on our Pelisses.<sup>1</sup>—

As we went upstairs Lady Susan begged permission to attend me for a few moments in my Dressing room, as she was anxious to speak with me in private.—I led her thither accordingly, & as soon as the door was closed she said, "I was never more surprised in my life than by Sir James's arrival, & the suddenness of it requires some apology to You my dear

Sister, tho' to me as a Mother, it is highly flattering.—He is so warmly attached to my daughter that he could exist no longer without seeing her.—Sir James is a young Man of an amiable<sup>2</sup> disposition, & excellent character;—a little too much of the Rattle<sup>3</sup> perhaps, but a year or two will rectify that, & he is in other respects so very eligible a March for Frederica that I have always observed his attachment with the greatest pleasure, & am persuaded that you & my Brother will give the alliance your hearty approbation.—I have never before mentioned the likelihood of its taking place to any one, because I thought that while Frederica continued at school, it had better not be known to exist;—but now, as I am convinced that Frederica is too old ever to submit to school confinement, & have therefore begun to consider her union with Sir James as not very distant, I had intended within a few days to acquaint yourself & Mr. Vernon with the whole business.—I am sure my dear Sister, you will excuse my remaining silent on it so long, & agree with me that such circumstances, while they continue from any cause in suspense, cannot be too cautiously concealed.—When you have the happiness of bestowing your sweet little Catherine some years hence on a Man, who in connection & character is alike unexceptionable, you will know what I feel now;—tho' Thank Heaven! you cannot have all my reasons for rejoicing in such an Event.—Catherine will be amply provided for, & not like my Frederica indebted to a fortunate Establishment<sup>4</sup> for the comforts of Life."<sup>5</sup>—

She concluded by demanding my congratulations.—I gave them somewhat awkwardly I believe;—for in fact, the sudden disclosure of so important a matter took from me the power of speaking with any clearness.—She thanked me however most affectionately for my kind concern in the welfare of herself & her daughter, & then said,

"I am not apt to deal in professions, my dear Mr's Vernon, & I never had the convenient talent of affecting sensations foreign to my heart; & therefore I trust you will believe me when I declare that much as I had heard in your praise before I knew you, I had no idea that I should ever love you as I now do;—and I must farther say that your friendship towards me is more particularly gratifying, because I have reason to believe that some attempts were made to prejudice you against me.—I only wish that They—whoever they are—to whom I am indebted for such kind intentions, could see the terms on which we now are together, & understand the real affection we feel for each other!—But I will not detain you any longer.—God bless you, for your goodness to me & my girl, & continue to you all your present happiness."

What can one say of such a woman, my dear Mother?—such earnestness, such solemnity of expression!—And yet I cannot help suspecting the truth of everything she said.—

As for Reginald, I believe he does not know what to make of the matter.—When Sir James first came, he appeared all astonishment & perplexity. The folly of the young Man, & the confusion of Frederica entirely engrossed him; & tho' a little private discourse with Lady Susan, has since had it's effect, he is still hurt I am sure at her allowing of such a Man's attentions to her daughter.—

Sir James invited himself with great composure to remain here a few days;—hoped we would not think it odd, was aware of it's being very impertinent, but he took the liberty of a relation,<sup>5</sup> & concluded by wishing with a laugh, that he might be really one soon.—Even Lady Susan seemed a little disconcerted by this forwardness;—in her heart I am persuaded, she sincerely wishes him gone.—

But something must be done for this poor Girl, if her feelings are such as both her Uncle & I believe them to be.

She must not be sacrificed to Policy or Ambition, she must not be even left to suffer from the dread of it.—The Girl, whose heart can distinguish<sup>6</sup> Reginald De Courcy, deserves, however he may slight her, a better fate than to be Sir James Martin's wife.—As soon as I can get her alone, I will discover the real Truth, but she seems to wish to avoid me.—I hope this does not proceed from any thing wrong, & that I shall not find out I have thought too well of her.—Her behaviour before Sir James certainly speaks the greatest consciousness & Embarrassment; but I see nothing in it more like Encouragement.—

Adeiu my dear Madam,  
Y<sup>rs</sup> &c Cath Vernon.—

## LETTER 21.

Miss Vernon to M<sup>r</sup> De Courcy—

Sir,

I hope you will excuse this liberty, I am forced upon it by the greatest distress, or I should be ashamed to trouble you.—I am very miserable about Sir James Martin, & have no other way in the world of helping myself but by writing to you, for I am forbidden ever speaking to my Uncle or Aunt on the subject; & this being the case, I am afraid my applying to you will appear no better than equivocation, & as if I attended only to the letter & not the spirit of Mama's commands, but if you do not take my part, & persuade her to break it off, I shall be half-distracted, for I can not bear him.—No human Being but you could have any chance of prevailing with her.—If you will therefore have the unspeakable great kindness<sup>1</sup> of taking my part with her, & persuading her to send Sir James away, I shall be more obliged to you than it

line 26: 'bear him' inserted above line.

is possible for me to express.—I always disliked him from the first, it is not a sudden fancy I assure you Sir, I always thought him silly & impertinent & disagreeable, & now he is grown worse than ever.—I would rather work for my bread than marry him.<sup>2</sup>—I do not know how to apologise enough for this Letter, I know it is taking so great a liberty, I am aware how dreadfully angry it will make Mama, but I must run the risk.—I am Sir, Your most Hum<sup>ble</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>.

F. S. V. —

LETTER 22.

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson

Churchill

This is insufferable!—My dearest friend, I was never so enraged before, & must relieve myself by writing to you, who I know will enter into all my feelings.—Who should come on Tuesday but Sir James Martin?<sup>3</sup>—Guess my astonishment & vexation—for as you well know, I never wished him to be seen at Churchill. What a pity that you should not have known his intentions!—Not content with coming, he actually invited himself to remain here a few days. I could have poisoned him;—I made the best of it however, & told my story with great success to M<sup>rs</sup>. Vernon who, whatever might be her real sentiments, said nothing in opposition to mine[.] I made a point also of Frederica's behaving civilly to Sir James, & gave her to understand that I was absolutely determined on her marrying him.—She said something of her misery, but that was all.—I have for some time been more particularly resolved on the March, from seeing the rapid increase of her affection for Reginald, & from not feeling perfectly secure that a knowledge of that affection might not in the end awaken a return.—Contemptible as a regard founded only on compassion, must make them both, in my

eyes, I felt by no means assured that such might not be the consequence.—It is true that Reginald had not in any degree grown cool towards me;—but yet he had lately mentioned Frederica spontaneously & unnecessarily, & once had said something in praise of her person.—

He was all astonishment at the appearance of my visitor; & at first observed Sir James with an attention which I was pleased to see not unmixed with jealousy;—but unluckily it was impossible for me really to torment him, as Sir James tho' extremely gallant to me, very soon made the whole party understand that his heart was devoted to my daughter.—

I had no great difficulty in convincing De Courcy when we were alone, that I was perfectly justified, all things considered, in desiring the match; & the whole business seemed most comfortably arranged.—They could none of them help perceiving that Sir James was no Solomon,<sup>1</sup> but I had positively forbidden Frederica's complaining to Charles Vernon or his wife, & they had therefore no pretence for Interference, tho' my impertinent Sister I believe wanted only opportunity for doing so.—

Everything however was going on calmly & quietly; & tho' I counted the hours of Sir James's stay, my mind was entirely satisfied with the posture of affairs.—Guess then what I must feel at the sudden disturbance of all my schemes, & that too from a quarter, whence I had least reason to apprehend it.—Reginald came this morning into my Dressing room, with a very unusual solemnity of countenance, & after some preface informed me in so many words, that he wished to reason with me on the Impropriety & Unkindness of allowing Sir James Martin to address my Daughter, contrary to her inclination.—I was all amazement.—When I found that he was not to be laughed out of his design, I calmly required an

explanation, & begged to know by what he was impelled & by whom commissioned to reprimand me!.]

He then told me, mixing in his speech a few insolent compliments & ill timed expressions of Tenderness to which I listened with perfect indifference, that my daughter had acquainted him with some circumstances concerning herself, Sir James, & me, which gave him great uneasiness.—

In short, I found that she had in the first place actually written to him, to request his interference, & that on receiving her Letter he had conversed with her on the subject of it, in order to understand the particulars & assure himself of her real wishes!—

I have not a doubt but that the girl took this opportunity of making down right Love to him; I am convinced of it, from the manner in which he spoke of her. Much good, may such Love do him!—I shall ever despise the Man who can be gratified by the Passion, which he never wished to inspire, nor solicited the avowal of.—I shall always detest them both.—He can have no true regard for me, or he would not have listened to her.—And she, with her little rebellious heart & indelicate feelings to throw herself into the protection of a young Man with whom she had scarcely ever exchanged two words before. I am equally confounded at her Impudence and his Credulity.—How dared he believe what she told him in my disfavour!—Ought he not to have felt assured that I must have unanswerable Motives for all that I had done!—Where was his reliance on my Sense or Goodness then; where the resentment which true Love would have dictated against the person defaming me, that person too, a Chit, a Child, without Talent or Education, whom he had been always taught to despise?—

line 3: 'me,' inserted above line.

I was calm for some time, but the greatest degree of Forbearance may be overcome; & I hope I was afterwards sufficiently keen.<sup>2</sup>—He endeavoured, long endeavoured to soften my resentment, but that woman is a fool indeed who while insulted by accusation, can be worked on by compliments.—At length he left me as deeply provoked as myself, & he shewed his anger more. —I was quite cool, but he gave way to the most violent indignation.—I may therefore expect it will the sooner subside; & perhaps his may be vanished for ever, while mine will be found still fresh & implacable.

He is now shut up in his apartment, whither I heard him go, on leaving mine.—How unpleasant, one would think, must his reflections be!—But some people's feelings are incomprehensible.—I have not yet tranquillized myself enough to see Frederica. She shall not soon forget the occurrences of this day.—She shall find that she has poured forth her tender Tale of Love in vain, & exposed herself forever to the contempt of the whole world, & the severest Resentment of her injured Mother.—Yrs: affect:ly

S. Vernon

LETTER 23.

Mrs Vernon to Lady De Courcy

Churchill

Let me congratulate you, my dearest Mother. The affair which has given us so much anxiety is drawing to a happy conclusion. Our prospect is most delightful;—and since matters have now taken so favourable a turn, I am quite sorry that I ever imparted my apprehensions to you; for the pleasure of learning that the Danger is over, is perhaps dearly purchased by all that you have previously suffered.—

I am so much agitated by Delight that I can scarcely hold a pen, but am determined to send you a few lines by James, that

you may have some explanation of what must so greatly astonish you, as that Reginald should be returning to Parklands.—

I was sitting about half an hour ago with Sir James in the Breakfast parlour, when my Brother called me out of the room.—I instantly saw that something was the matter;—his complexion was raised, & he spoke with great emotion.—You know his eager manner, my dear Madam, when his mind is interested.—

“Catherine, said he, I am going home today. I am sorry to leave you, but I must go.—It is a great while since I have seen my Father & Mother.—I am going to send James forward with my Hunters immediately, if you have any Letter therefore he can take it.<sup>1</sup>—I shall not be at home myself till Wednesday or Thursday, as I shall go through London, where I have business.—But before I leave you, he continued, speaking in a lower voice & with still greater energy, I must warn you of one thing.—Do not let Frederica Vernon be made unhappy by that Martin.—He wants to marry her—her Mother promotes the Match—but she cannot endure the idea of it.—Be assured that I speak from the fullest conviction of the Truth of what I say.—I know that Frederica is made wretched by Sir James’ continuing here.—She is a sweet girl, & deserves a better fate.—Send him away immediately. He is only a fool—but what her Mother can mean, Heaven only knows!—Good bye, he added shaking my hand with earnestness—I do not know when you will see me again. But remember what I tell you of Frederica;—you must make it your business to see justice done her. —She is an amiable girl, and has a very superior Mind to what we have ever given her credit for.—”

line 29: ‘Mind’ inserted above line.

He then left me & ran upstairs.—I would not try to stop him, for I knew what his feelings must be; the nature of mine as I listened to him, I need not attempt to describe.—For a minute or two I remained in the same spot, overpowered by wonder—of a most agreeable sort indeed; yet it required some consideration to be tranquilly happy.—

In about ten minutes after my return to the parlour, Lady Susan entered the room.—I concluded of course that she & Reginald had been quarrelling, & looked with anxious curiosity for a confirmation of my belief in her face.—Mistress of Deceit however she appeared perfectly unconcerned, & after chatting on indifferent subjects for a short time, said to me,

“I find from Wilson that we are going to lose Mr. De Courcy.—Is it true that he leaves Churchill this morning?”—I replied that it was.—

“He told us nothing of all this last night, said she laughing, or even this morning at Breakfast. But perhaps he did not know it himself.—Young Men are often hasty in their resolutions—& not more sudden in forming, than unsteady in keeping them.—I should not be surprised if he were to change his mind at last, & not go.”—

She soon afterwards left the room.—I trust however my dear Mother, that we have no reason to fear an alteration of his present plan; things have gone too far.—They must have quarrelled, & about Frederica too.—Her calmness astonishes me.—What delight will be yours in seeing him again, in seeing him still worthy your Esteem, still capable of forming your Happiness!

When I next write, I shall be able I hope to tell you that Sir James is gone, Lady Susan vanquished, & Frederica at peace.—We have much to do, but it shall be done.—I am all impatience to know how this astonishing

change was effected.—I finish as I began, with the warmest congratulations.—Y<sup>rs</sup> Ever,

Cath Vernon.

LETTER 24.

From the same to the same.

Churchill

Little did I imagine my dear Mother, when I sent off my last letter, that the delightful perturbation of spirits I was then in, would undergo so speedy, so melancholy a reverse!—I never can sufficiently regret that I wrote to you at all.—Yet who could have foreseen what has happened? My dear Mother, every hope which but two hours ago made me so happy, is vanished. The quarrel between Lady Susan & Reginald is made up, & we are all as we were before. One point only is gained; Sir James Martin is dismissed.—What are we now to look forward to?—I am indeed disappointed. Reginald was all but gone; his horse was ordered, & almost brought to the door!—Who would not have felt safe?—

For half an hour I was in momentary expectation of his departure.—After I had sent off my Letter to you, I went to Mr. Vernon & sat with him in his room, talking over the whole matter.—I then determined to look for Frederica, whom I had not seen since breakfast.—I met her on the stairs & saw that she was crying.

"My dear Aunt, said she, he is going, Mr. De Courcy is going, & it is all my fault. I am afraid you will be angry, but indeed I had no idea it would end so."—

"My Love, replied I, do not think it necessary to apologize to me on that account.—I shall feel myself under an obligation to any one who is the means of sending my brother home;—because, (recollecting myself) I know my Father

wants very much to see him. But what is it that you have done to occasion all this?"—

She blushed deeply as she answered, "I was so unhappy about Sir James that I could not help—I have done something very wrong I know—but you have not an idea of the misery I have been in, & Mama had ordered me never to speak to you or my Uncle about it,—and"—

"You therefore spoke to my Brother, to engage his interference";—said I, wishing to save her the explanation.—

"No—but I wrote to him.—I did indeed.—I got up this morning before it was light—I was two hours about it—& when my Letter was done, I thought [t] I never should have courage to give it.—After breakfast however, as I was going to my own room I met him in the passage, & then as I knew that every thing must depend on that moment, I forced myself to give it.—He was so good as to take it immediately;—I dared not look at him—& ran away directly.—I was in such a fright that I could hardly breathe.—My dear Aunt, you do not know how miserable I have been."

"Frederica, said I, you ought to have told me all your distresses.—You would have found in me a friend always ready to assist you.—Do you think that your Uncle & I should not have espoused your cause as warmly as my Brother?"—

"Indeed I did not doubt your goodness, said she colouring again, but I thought that Mr. De Courcy could do anything with my Mother;—but I was mistaken;—they have had a dreadful quarrel about it, & he is going.—Mama will never forgive me, & I shall be worse off than ever."—

"No, you shall not, replied I.—In such a point as this, your Mother's prohibition ought not to have prevented your speaking to me on the subject. She has no right to make you unhappy, & she shall not do it.—Your applying however to

Reginald can be productive only of Good to all parties. I believe it is best as it is.—Depend upon it that you shall not be made unhappy any longer.”

At that moment, how great was my astonishment at seeing Reginald come out of Lady Susan’s Dressing room. My heart misgave me instantly. His confusion on seeing me was very evident.—Frederica immediately disappeared.

“Are you going?”—said I. You will find Mr. Vernon in his own room.”—

“No Catherine, replied he.—I am not going.—Will you let me speak to you a moment?”

We went into my room. “I find, continued he, his confusion increasing as he spoke, that I have been acting with my usual foolish Impetuosity.—I have entirely misunderstood Lady Susan, & was on the point of leaving the house under a false impression of her conduct.—There has been some very great mistake—we have been all mistaken I fancy.—Frederica does not know her Mother—Lady Susan means nothing but her Good—but Frederica will not make a friend of her.—Lady Susan therefore does not always know what will make her daughter happy.—Besides I could have no right to interfere—Miss Vernon was mistaken in applying to me.—In short Catherine, every thing has gone wrong—but it is now all happily settled.—Lady Susan I believe wishes to speak to you about it, if you are at leisure.”—

“Certainly,” replied I, deeply sighing at the recital of so lame a story.—I made no remarks however, for words would have been vain. Reginald was glad to get away, & I went to Lady Susan; curious indeed to hear her account of it.—

line 1: ‘to’ deleted after ‘only’; ‘of inserted above line. // line 11: ‘in your own room?’—‘deleted; ‘?’ inserted after ‘moment’. // line 12: ‘thither directly’ deleted; ‘into my room.’ inserted above line.

“Did not I tell you, said she with a smile, that your Brother would not leave us after all?”

“You did indeed, replied I very gravely, but I flattered myself that you would be mistaken.”

“I should not have hazarded such an opinion, returned she, if it had not at that moment occurred [to] me, that his resolution of going might be occasioned by a Conversation in which we had been this morning engaged, & which had ended very much to his Dissatisfaction from our not rightly understanding each other’s meaning.—This idea struck me at the moment, & I instantly determined that an accidental dispute in which I might probably be as much to blame as himself, should not deprive you of your Brother.—If you remember, I left the room almost immediately.—I was resolved to lose no time in clearing up these mistakes as far as I could.—The case was this.—Frederica had set herself violently against marrying Sir James”—

—“And can your Ladyship wonder that she should? cried I with some warmth.—Frederica has an excellent Understanding, & Sir James has none.”

“I am at least very far from regretting it, my dear Sister, said she; on the contrary, I am grateful for so favourable a sign of my Daughter’s sense. Sir James is certainly under par<sup>1</sup>—(his boyish manners make him appear the worse)—& had Frederica possessed the penetration, the abilities, which I could have wished in my daughter, or had I even known her to possess so much as she does, I should not have been anxious for the match.”

“It is odd that you alone should be ignorant of your Daughter’s sense.”

“Frederica never does justice to herself;—her manners are shy & childish.—She is besides afraid of me; she scarcely loves me.—During her poor Father’s life she was a spoilt



child; the severity which it has since been necessary for me to shew, has entirely alienated her affection;—neither has she any of that Brilliancy of Intellect, that Genius,<sup>2</sup> or vigour of Mind which will force itself forward.”

“Say rather that she has been unfortunate in her Education.”

“Heaven knows my dearest Mr<sup>s</sup> Vernon, how fully I am aware of that; but I would wish to forget every circumstance that might throw blame on the memory of one, whose name is sacred with me.”

Here she pretended to cry;—I was out of patience with her.—“But what, said I, was your Ladyship going to tell me about your disagreement with my Brother?”—

“It originated in an action of my Daughter’s, which equally marks her want of Judgement, & the unfortunate Dread of me I have been mentioning.—She wrote to Mr. De Courcy.”—

“I know she did.—You had forbidden her speaking to Mr. Vernon or to me on the cause of her distress:—what could she do therefore but apply to my Brother?”

“Good God!—she exclaimed, what an opinion must you have of me!—Can you possibly suppose that I was aware of her unhappiness? that it was my object to make my own child miserable, & that I had forbidden her speaking to you on the subject, from a fear of your interrupting the Diabolical scheme?—Do you think me destitute of every honest, every natural feeling?—Am I capable of consigning her to everlasting Misery, whose welfare it is my first Earthly Duty to promote?”—

“The idea is horrible.—What then was your intention when you insisted on her silence?”—

line 8: ‘to’ repeated as the last word on fo. 101 and the first word on fo. 102.

“Of what use my dear Sister, could be any application to you, however the affair might stand? Why should I subject you to entreaties, which I refused to attend to myself?—Neither for your sake, for hers, nor for my own, could such a thing be desirable.—Where my own resolution was taken, I could not wish for the interference, however friendly, of another person.—I was mistaken, it is true, but I believed myself to be right.”—

“But what was this mistake, to which your Ladyship so often alludes? From whence arose so astonishing a misapprehension of your Daughter’s feelings?—Did not you know that she disliked Sir James?”—

“I knew that he was not absolutely the Man whom she would have chosen.—But I was persuaded that her objections to him did not arise from any perception of his Deficiency.—You must not question me however my dear Sister, too minutely on this point—continued she, taking me affectionately by the hand.—I honestly own that there is something to conceal.—Frederica makes me very unhappy.—Her applying to Mr. De Courcy hurt me particularly.”

“What is it that you mean to infer said I, by this appearance of mystery?—If you think your daughter at all attached to Reginald, her objecting to Sir James could not less deserve to be attended to, than if the cause of her objecting had been a consciousness of his folly.—And why should your Ladyship at any rate quarrel with my brother for an interference which you must know, it was not in his nature to refuse, when urged in such a manner?”

“His disposition you know is warm,<sup>3</sup> & he came to expostulate with me, his compassion all alive for this ill-used Girl, this Heroine in distress!—We misunderstood each other. He believed me more to blame than I really was; I considered his interference as less excusable than I now find it. I have a real



regard for him, & was beyond expression mortified to find it as I thought so ill bestowed. We were both warm, & of course both to blame.—His resolution of leaving Churchill is consistent with his general eagerness;—when I understood his intention however, & at the same time began to think that we had perhaps been equally mistaken in each other's meaning, I resolved to have an explanation before it were too late.—For any Member of your Family I must always feel a degree of affection, & I own it would have sensibly<sup>4</sup> hurt me, if my acquaintance with Mr. De Courcy had ended so gloomily. I have now only to say farther, that as I am convinced of Frederica's having a reasonable dislike to Sir James, I shall instantly inform him that he must give up all hope of her.—I reproach myself for having ever, tho' so innocently, made her unhappy on that score.—She shall have all the retribution<sup>5</sup> in my power to make;—if she value her own happiness as much as I do, if she judge wisely & command herself as she ought, she may now be easy. —Excuse me, my dearest Sister, for thus trespassing on your time, but I owed it to my own Character; & after this explanation I trust I am in no danger of sinking in your opinion."

I could have said "Not much indeed";—but I left her almost in silence.—It was the greatest stretch of Forbearance I could practise. I could not have stopped myself, had I begun.—Her assurance, her Deceit—but I will not allow myself to dwell on them;—they will strike you sufficiently. My heart sickens within me.—

As soon as I was tolerably composed, I returned to the Parlour. Sir James's carriage was at the door, & he, merry as usual, soon afterwards took his leave.—How easily does her Ladyship encourage, or dismiss a Lover!—

line 9: 'hurt' inserted above line. // line 18: 'at peace' deleted; 'easy' inserted above line.

In spite of this release, Frederica still looks unhappy, still fearful perhaps of her Mother's anger, & tho' dreading my Brother's departure jealous, it may be, of his staying.—I see how closely she observes him & Lady Susan.—Poor Girl, I have now no hope for her. There is not a chance of her affection being returned.—He thinks very differently of her, from what he used to do, he does her some justice, but his reconciliation with her Mother precludes every dearer hope.—

Prepare my dear Madam, for the worst.—The probability of their marrying is surely heightened. He is more securely hers than ever.—When that wretched Event takes place, Frederica must belong wholly to us.—

I am thankful that my last Letter will precede this by so little, as every moment that you can be saved from feeling a Joy which leads only to disappointment is of consequence.—

Y<sup>rs</sup> Ever, Cath Vernon.

#### LETTER 25.

Lady Susan to Mr<sup>s</sup> Johnson

Churchill

I call on you dear Alicia, for congratulations. I am again myself;—gay & triumphant.—When I wrote to you the other day, I was in truth in high irritation, & with ample cause.—Nay, I know not whether I ought to be quite tranquil now, for I have had more trouble in restoring peace than I ever intended to submit to.—This Reginald has a proud spirit of his own!—a spirit too, resulting from a fancied sense of superior Integrity which is peculiarly insolent.—I shall not easily forgive him I assure you. He was actually on the point of leaving Churchill!—I had scarcely concluded my last, when Wilson brought me word of it.—I found therefore that something must be done, for I did not chuse to have my character at the mercy of a Man whose passions were so violent &

resentful.—It would have been trifling with my reputation, to allow of his departing with such an impression in my disfavour;—in this light, condescension<sup>1</sup> was necessary.—

I sent Wilson to say that I desired to speak with him before he went.—He came immediately. The angry emotions which had marked every feature when we last parted, were partially subdued. He seemed astonished at the summons, & looked as if half wishing & half fearing to be softened by what I might say.—

If my Countenance expressed what I aimed at, it was composed & dignified—& yet with a degree of pensiveness which might convince him that I was not quite happy.—

“I beg your pardon Sir, for the liberty I have taken in sending to you, said I; but as I have just learnt your intention of leaving this place to day, I feel it my duty to entreat that you will not on my account shorten your visit here, even an hour.—I am perfectly aware that after what has passed between us, it would ill suit the feelings of either to remain longer in the same house.—

So very great, so total a change from the intimacy of Friendship, must render any future intercourse the severest punishment;—& your resolution of quitting Churchill is undoubtedly in unison with our situation & with those lively feelings which I know you to possess.—But at the same time, it is not for me to suffer such a sacrifice, as it must be, to leave Relations to whom you are so much attached & are so dear. My remaining here cannot give that pleasure to Mr. & Mrs. Vernon which your society must;—& my visit has already perhaps been too long. My removal therefore, which must at any rate take place soon, may with

line 1. ‘To’ deleted; ‘It would’ inserted above line. // line 18: ‘of either’ inserted above line.

perfect convenience be hastened;—& I make it my particular request that I may not in any way be instrumental in separating a family so affectionately attached to each other.—Where I go, is of no consequence to anyone; of very little to myself; but you are of importance to all your connection[s.].”

Here I concluded, & I hope you will be satisfied with my speech.—It’s effect on Reginald justifies some portion of anxiety, for it was no less favourable than instantaneous.—Oh! how delightful it was, to watch the variations of his Countenance while I spoke, to see the struggle between returning Tenderness & the remains of Displeasure.—There is something agreeable in feelings so easily worked on. Not that I envy him their possession, nor would for the world have such myself, but they are very convenient when one wishes to influence the passions of another. And yet this Reginald, whom a very few words from me softened at once into the utmost submission, & rendered more tractable, more attached, more devoted than ever, would have left me in the first angry swelling of his proud heart, without deigning to seek an explanation!—

Humbled as he now is, I cannot forgive him such an instance of Pride; & am doubtful whether I ought not to punish him, by dismissing him at once after this our reconciliation, or by marrying & teizing him for ever.—But these measures are each too violent to be adopted without some deliberation. At present my Thoughts are fluctuating between various schemes.—I have many things to compass.—I must punish Fredericka, & pretty severely too, for her application to Reginald;—I must punish him for receiving it so favourably, & for the rest of his conduct. I must torment my Sister-in-law for the insolent triumph of her Look & Manner since Sir James has been dismissed—for

in reconciling Reginald to me, I was not able to save that ill-fated young Man;—& I must make myself amends for the humiliations to which I have stooped within these few days.—To effect all this I have various plans.—I have also an idea of being soon in Town, & whatever may be my determination as to the rest, I shall probably put that project in execution—for London will be always the fairest field of action, however my veils may be directed, & at any rate, I shall there be rewarded by your society & a little Dissipation for a ten weeks penance at Churchill.—

I believe I owe it to my own Character, to complete the match between my daughter & Sir James, after having so long intended it.—Let me know your opinion on this point.—Flexibility of Mind, a Disposition easily biassed by others, is an attribute which you know I am not very desirous of obtaining;—nor has Frederica any claim to the indulgence of her whims, at the expence of her Mother's inclination.—Her idle Love for Reginald too;—it is surely my duty to discourage such romantic nonsense.—All things considered therefore, it seems incumbent on me to take her to Town, & marry her immediately to Sir James.

When my own will is effected, contrary to his, I shall have some credit in being on good terms with Reginald, which at present in fact I have not, for tho' he is still in my power, I have given up the very article by which our Quarrel was produced, & at best, the honour of victory is doubtful.—

Send me your opinion on all these matters, my dear Alicia, & let me know whether you can get Lodgings to suit me within a short distance of you.—Y<sup>r</sup> most attached

S. Vernon.

line 14: 'Weakness' deleted; 'Flexibility' inserted above line.

## LETTER 26.

Mrs. Johnson to Lady Susan.

Edward St.—

I am gratified by your reference, & this is my advice; that you come to Town yourself without loss of time, but that you leave Frederica behind. It would surely be much more to the purpose to get yourself well established by marrying M<sup>r</sup>. De Courcy, than to irritate him & the rest of his family, by making her marry Sir James.—You should think more of yourself, & less of your Daughter.—She is not of a disposition to do you credit in the World, & seems precisely in her proper place, at Churchill with the Vernons;—but You are fitted for Society, & it is shameful to have you exiled from it.—Leave Frederica therefore to punish herself for the plague she has given you, by indulging that romantic tender-heartedness which will always ensure her misery enough; & come yourself to Town, as soon as you can.—

I have another reason for urging this.—Manwaring came to Town last week, & has contrived, inspite of M<sup>r</sup>. Johnson, to make opportunities of seeing me.—He is absolutely miserable about you, & jealous to such a degree of De Courcy, that it would be highly unadvisable for them to meet at present;<sup>1</sup> & yet if you do not allow him to see you here, I cannot answer for his not committing some great imprudence—such as going to Churchill for instance, which would be dreadful.—Besides, if you take my advice, & resolve to marry De Courcy, it will be indispensably necessary for you to get Manwaring out of the way, & you only can have influence enough to send him back to his wife.—

I have still another motive for your coming. M<sup>r</sup>. Johnson leaves London next Tuesday. He is going for his health to Bath, where if the waters are favourable to his constitution & my wishes, he will be laid up with the Gout many weeks.<sup>2</sup>—

During his absence we shall be able to chuse our own society, & have true enjoyment.—I would ask you to Edward St<sup>d</sup> but that he once forced from me a kind of promise never to invite you to my house. Nothing but my being in the utmost distress for Money, could have extorted it from me.—I can get you however a very nice Drawing room-apartment in Upper Seymour St<sup>d</sup>, & we may be always together, there or here, for I consider my promise to Mr. Johnson as comprehending only (at least in his absence) your not sleeping in the House.—

Poor Manwaring gives me such histories of his wife's jealousy!—Silly woman, to expect constancy from so charming a Man!—But she was always silly, intolerably so, in marrying him at all. She, the Heiress of a large Fortune, he without a shilling!—One Title I know she might have had, besides Baronets.<sup>4</sup>—Her folly in forming the connection was so great, that tho' Mr. Johnson was her Guardian & I do not in general share his feelings, I never can forgive her.—

Adeu. Yours, Alicia.—

## LETTER 27.

M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

This Letter my dear Mother, will be brought you by Reginald. His long visit is about to be concluded at last, but I fear the separation takes place too late to do us any good.—She is going to Town, to see her particular friend, M<sup>rs</sup> Johnson. It was at first her intention that Frederica should accompany her for the benefit of Masters,<sup>1</sup> but we over-ruled her there. Frederica was wretched in the idea of going, & I could not bear to have her at the mercy of her Mother. Not all the Masters in London could compensate for the ruin of her comfort. I should have feared too for her health, & for every thing in short but her Principles; there I believe she is not to

be injured, even by her Mother, or all her Mother's friends;—but with those friends (a very bad set I doubt not) she must have mixed, or have been left in total solitude, & I can hardly tell which would have been worse for her.—If she is with her Mother moreover, she must alas! in all probability, be with Reginald—and that would be the greatest evil of all.—

Here, we shall in time be at peace.—Our regular employments, our Books & conversation, with Exercise, the Children, & every domestic pleasure in my power to procure her, will, I trust, gradually overcome this youthful attachment. I should not have a doubt of it, were she slighted for any other woman in the world, than her own Mother.—

How long Lady Susan will be in Town, or whether she returns here again, I know not.—I could not be cordial in my invitation; but if she chuses to come, no want of cordiality on my part will keep her away.—

I could not help asking Reginald if he intended being in Town this winter,<sup>2</sup> as soon as I found that her Ladyship's steps would be bent thither; & tho' he professed himself quite undetermined, there was a something in his Look & voice as he spoke, which contradicted his words.—I have done with Lamentation.—I look upon the Event as so far decided, that I resign myself to it in despair. If he leaves you soon for London, every thing will be concluded.—Yours affec<sup>tly</sup>

Cath Vernon.

## LETTER 28.

M<sup>rs</sup> Johnson to Lady Susan

Edward St.—

My dearest Friend,

I write in the greatest distress; the most unfortunate event has just taken place. Mr. Johnson has hit on the most effectual manner of plaguing us all.—He had heard I imagine by

some means or other, that you were soon to be in London, & immediately contrived to have such an attack of the Gout, as must at least delay his journey to Bath, if not wholly prevent it.—I am persuaded the Gout is brought on, or kept off at pleasure;—it was the same, when I wanted to join the Hamiltens to the Lakes;<sup>1</sup> & three years ago when I had a fancy for Bath, nothing could induce him to have a gouty symptom.

I have received yours, & have engaged the Lodgings in consequence.—I am pleased to find that my Letter had so much effect on you, & that De Courcy is certainly your own.—Let me hear from you as soon as you arrive, & in particular tell me what you mean to do with Manwaring.—It is impossible to say when I shall be able to see you. My confinement must be great. It is such an abominable trick, to be ill here, instead of at Bath, that I can scarcely command myself at all.—At Bath, his old Aunts would have nursed him, but here it all falls upon me—& he bears pain with such patience that I have not the common excuse for losing my temper.

Y<sup>rs</sup>: Ever, Alicia.

LETTER 29.

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup>: Johnson

Upper Seymour St:

My dear Alicia

There needed not this last fit of the Gout to make me detest M<sup>r</sup>: Johnson; but now the extent of my aversion is not to be estimated.—To have you confined, a Nurse, in his apartment!—My dear Alicia, of what a mistake were you guilty in marrying a Man of his age!—just old enough to be formal, ungovernable & to have the Gout—too old to be agreeable, & too young to die.

line 17: 'pain' inserted above line.

I arrived last night about five, & had scarcely swallowed my dinner when Manwaring made his appearance.—I will not dissemble what real pleasure his sight afforded me, nor how strongly I felt the contrast between his person & manners, & those of Reginald, to the infinite disadvantage of the latter.—For an hour or two, I was even stagger'd in my resolution of marrying him—& tho' this was too idle & nonsensical an idea to remain long on my mind, I do not feel very eager for the conclusion of my marriage, or look forward with much impatience to the time when Reginald according to our agreement is to be in Town.—I shall probably put off his arrival, under some pretence or other. He must not come till Manwaring is gone.

I am still doubtful at times, as to Marriage.—If the old Man would die, I might not hesitate; but a state of dependance on the caprice of Sir Reginald, will not suit the freedom of my spirit;—and if I resolve to wait for that event, I shall have excuse enough at present, in having been scarcely ten months a Widow.

I have not given Manwaring any hint of my intention—or allowed him to consider my acquaintance with Reginald as more than the commonest flirtation;—& he is tolerably appeased.—Adeieu till we meet.—I am enchanted with my Lodgings. Y<sup>rs</sup>: Ever,

S. Vernon.—

LETTER 30.

Lady Susan to M<sup>r</sup>: De Courcy.<sup>1</sup>—

Upper Seymour St:

I have received your Letter; & tho' I do not attempt to conceal that I am gratified by your impatience for the hour of meeting, I yet feel myself under the necessity of delaying that hour beyond the time originally fixed.—Do not think

me unkind for such an exercise of my power, or accuse me of Instability, without first hearing my reasons.—In the course of my journey from Churchill, I had ample leisure for reflection on the present state of our affairs, & every review has served to convince me that they require a delicacy & cautiousness of conduct, to which we have hitherto been too little attentive.—We have been hurried on by our feelings to a degree of Precipitance which ill accords with the claims of our Friends, or the opinion of the world.—We have been unguarded in forming this hasty Engagement; but we must not complete the imprudence by ratifying it, while there is so much reason to fear the Connection would be opposed by those Friends on whom you depend.

It is not for us to blame any expectation on your Father's side of your marrying to advantage; where possessions are so extensive as those of your Family, the wish of increasing them, if not strictly reasonable, is too common to excite surprise or resentment.—He has a right to require a woman of fortune in his daughter in law, & I am sometimes quarreling with myself for suffering you to form a connection so imprudent.—But the influence of reason is often acknowledged too late by those who feel like me.—

I have now been but a few months a widow, & however little indebted to my Husband's memory for any happiness derived from him during an Union of some years, I cannot forget that the indelicacy of so early a second marriage, must subject me to the censure of the World, & incur what would be still more insupportable, the displeasure of Mr. Vernon.—I might perhaps harden myself in time against the injustice of general reproach; but the loss of his valued Esteem, I am as you well know, ill fitted to endure;—and when to this,

line 4: 'posture' deleted; 'state' inserted above line.

may be added the consciousness of having injured you with your Family, how am I to support myself.—With feelings so poignant as mine, the conviction of having divided the son from his Parents, would make me, even with you, the most miserable of Beings.—

It will surely therefore be advisable to delay our Union, to delay it till appearances are more promising, till affairs have taken a more favourable turn.—To assist us in such a resolution, I feel that absence will be necessary. We must not meet.—Cruel as this sentence may appear, the necessity of pronouncing it, which can alone reconcile it to myself, will be evident to you when you have considered our situation in the light in which I have found myself imperiously<sup>2</sup> obliged to place it.—You may be, you must be well assured that nothing but the strongest conviction of Duty, could induce me to wound my own feelings by urging a lengthened separation; & of Insensibility to yours, you will hardly suspect me.—Again therefore I say that we ought not, we must not yet meet.—By a removal for some Months from each other, we shall tranquillize the sisterly fears of Mr. Vernon, who, accustomed herself to the enjoyment of riches, considers Fortune as necessary every where, and whose sensibilities are not of a nature to comprehend ours.—

Let me hear from you soon, very soon. Tell me that you submit to my Arguments, & do not reproach me for using such.—I cannot bear reproaches. My spirits are not so high as to need being repressed.—I must endeavour to seek amusement abroad,<sup>3</sup> & fortunately many of my Friends are in Town—among them, the Manwaring's.—You know how sincerely I regard both Husband & Wife.—I am ever, Faithfully Yours

S. Vernon—

line 22: 'feelings' deleted; 'sensibilities' inserted above line.

## LETTER 31.

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson

Upper Seymour St.

My dear Friend,

That tormenting creature Reginald is here. My Letter which was intended to keep him longer in the Country, has hastened him to Town. Much as I wish him away however, I cannot help being pleased with such a proof of attachment. He is devoted to me, heart & soul.—He will carry this note himself, which is to serve as an Introduction to you, with whom he longs to be acquainted. Allow him to spend the Evening with you, that I may be in no danger of his returning here.—I have told him that I am not quite well, & must be alone—& should he call again there might be confusion, for it is impossible to be sure of servants.—Keep him therefore I entreat you in Edward St.—You will not find him a heavy companion, & I allow you to flirt with him as much as you like. At the same time do not forget my real interest;—say all that you can to convince him that I shall be quite wretched if he remain here;—you know my reasons—Propriety & so forth.—I would urge them more myself, but that I am impatient to be rid of him, as Manwaring comes within half an hour.

Adieu. S V.—

## LETTER 32.

M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson to Lady Susan—

Edward St.

My dear Creature,

I am in agonies, & know not what to do, nor what you can do.—Mr De Courcy arrived, just when he should not. M<sup>rs</sup>. Manwaring had that instant entered the House, & forced herself into her Guardian's presence, tho' I did not know a syllable of it till afterwards, for I was out when both she &

Reginald came, or I would have sent him away at all events; but she was shut up with M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson, while he waited in the Drawing room for me.—

She arrived yesterday in pursuit of her Husband;—but perhaps you know this already from himself.—She came to this house to entreat my Husband's interference, & before I could be aware of it, everything that you could wish to be concealed, was known to him; & unluckily she had wormed out of Manwaring's servant that he had visited you every day since your being in Town, & had just watched him to your door herself!—What could I do?—Facts are such horrid things!—All is by this time known to De Courcy, who is now alone with M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson.—Do not accuse me;—indeed, it was impossible to prevent it.—M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson has for some time suspected De Courcy of intending to marry you, & would speak with him alone, as soon as he knew him to be in the House.—

That detestable M<sup>rs</sup>. Manwaring, who for your comfort, has fretted herself thinner & uglier than ever, is still here, & they have been all closeted together. What can be done?—If Manwaring is now with you, he had better be gone.—At any rate I hope he will plague his wife more than ever. —With anxious wishes, Y<sup>rs</sup>. faithfully

Alicia.

## LETTER 33.

Lady Susan to M<sup>rs</sup>. Johnson.

Upper Seymour St.

This Eclaircissement<sup>1</sup> is rather provoking.—How unlucky that you should have been from home!—I thought myself sure of you at 7.<sup>2</sup>—I am undismayed however. Do not torment yourself with fears on my account.—Depend upon it, I can make my own story good with Reginald. Manwaring is just gone; he brought me the news of his wife's arrival. Silly

Woman! what does she expect by such manouvres?<sup>3</sup>—yet, I wish she had straid quietly at Langford.—

Reginald will be a little enraged at first, but by Tomorrow's Dinner, every thing will be well again.—Adeiu. S. V.

## LETTER 34.

Mr De Courcy to Lady Susan.

Hotel

I write only to bid you Farewell.—The spell is removed. I see you as you are.—Since we parted yesterday, I have received from indisputable authority, such an history of you, as must bring the most mortifying conviction of the Imposition I have been under, & the absolute necessity of an immediate & eternal separation from you.—You cannot doubt to what I allude;—Langford—Langford—that word will be sufficient.—I received my information in Mr Johnson's house, from Mr<sup>s</sup> Manwaring herself.—

You know how I have loved you, you can intimately judge of my present feelings; but I am not so weak as to find indulgence in describing them to a woman who will glory in having excited their anguish, but whose affection they have never been able to gain.

R De Courcy.

## LETTER 35.

Lady Susan to Mr De Courcy.

Upper Seymour St<sup>e</sup>

I will not attempt to describe my astonishment on reading the note, this moment received from you. I am bewildered in my endeavours to form some rational conjecture of what Mr<sup>s</sup> Manwaring can have told you, to occasion so extraordinary a change in your sentiments.—Have I not explained everything to you with respect to myself which could bear a doubtful

meaning, & which the illnature of the world had interpreted to my Discredit?—What can you now have heard to stagger your Esteem for me?—Have I ever had a concealment from you?—Reginald, you agitate me beyond expression.—I cannot suppose that the old story of Mr<sup>s</sup> Manwaring's jealousy can be revived again, or at least, be listened to again.—Come to me immediately, & explain what is at present absolutely incomprehensible.—Believe me, the single word of Langford is not of such potent intelligence, as to supersede the necessity of more.—If we are to part, it will at least be handsome to take your personal Leave.—But I have little heart to jest, in truth, I am serious enough—for to be sunk, tho' but an hour, in your opinion, is an humiliation to which I know not how to submit. I shall count every moment till your arrival. S. V.

## LETTER 36.

Mr De Courcy to Lady Susan

Hotel

Why would you write to me?—Why do you require particulars?—But since it must be so, I am obliged to declare that all the accounts of your misconduct during the life & since the death of Mr Vernon which had reached me in common with the World in general, & gained my entire belief before I saw you, but which you by the exertion of your perverted Abilities had made me resolve to disallow, have been unanswerably proved to me.—Nay, more, [I] am assured that a Connection, of which I had never before entertained a thought, has for some time existed, & still continues to exist between you and the Man, whose family you robbed of it's Peace, in return for the hospitality with which you were received into it!—That you have corresponded with him ever since your leaving Langford—not with his wife—but with



him—& that he now visits you every day.—Can you, dare you deny it?—And all this at the time when I was an encouraged, an accepted Lover!—From what have I not escaped!—I have only to be grateful.—Far from me be all Complaint, & every sigh of regret. My own Folly had endangered me[,] my Preservation I owe to the kindness, the Integrity of another.—But the unfortunate Mr<sup>s</sup> Manwaring, whose agonies while she related the past, seem'd to threaten her reason—how is she to be consoled?

After such a discovery as this, you will scarcely affect farther wonder at my meaning in bidding you Adeiu.—My Understanding is at length restored, & teaches me no less to abhor the Artifices which had subdued me, than to despise myself for the weakness, on which their strength was founded.—

R De Courcy.—

## LETTER 37.

Lady Susan to Mr De Courcy

Upper Seymour St

I am satisfied—& will trouble you no more when these few Lines are dismissed.<sup>1</sup>—The Engagement which you were eager to form a fortnight ago, is no longer compatible with your veils, & I rejoice to find that the prudent advice of your Parents has not been given in vain.—Your restoration to Peace will, I doubt not, speedily follow this act of filial Obedience, & I flatter myself with the hope of surviving my share in this disappointment.

S V.

## LETTER 38.

Mrs Johnson to Lady Susan

Edward St

I am greiv'd, tho' I cannot be astonished at your rupture with Mr De Courcy—he has just informed Mr Johnson of

it by letter. He leaves London he says to day.—Be assured that I partake in all your feelings, & do not be angry if I say that our intercourse even by letter must soon be given up.—It makes me miserable—but Mr Johnson vows that if I persist in the connection, he will settle in the country for the rest of his life—& you know it is impossible to submit to such an extremity<sup>1</sup> while any other alternative remains.—

You have heard of course that the Manwarings are to part;<sup>2</sup> I am afraid Mr<sup>s</sup> M. will come home to us again. But she is still so fond of her Husband & frets so much about him that perhaps she may not live long.—

Miss Manwaring is just come to Town to be with her Aunt, & they say, that she declares she will have Sir James Martin before she leaves London again.—If I were you, I would certainly get him myself—I had almost forgot to give you my opinion of De Courcy, I am really delighted with him, he is full as handsome I think as Manwaring, & with such an open, good humoured Countenance that one cannot help loving him at first sight.—Mr Johnson & he are the greatest friends in the World. Adeiu, my dearest Susan.—I wish matters did not go so perversely. That unlucky visit to Langford!—But I dare say you did all for the best, & there is no defying Destiny.<sup>3</sup>—

Yr sincerely attached

Alicia.

## LETTER 39.

Lady Susan to Mr<sup>s</sup> Johnson

Upper Seymour St

My dear Alicia

I yield to the necessity which parts us. Under such circumstances you could not act otherwise. Our friendship cannot be impaired by it; & in happier times, when your situation

is as independant as mine, it will unite us again in the same Intimacy as ever.—For this, I shall impatiently wait; & meanwhile can safely assure you that I never was more at ease, or better satisfied with myself & every thing about me, than at the present hour.—Your Husband I abhor—Reginald I despise—& I am secure of never seeing either again. Have I not reason to rejoice?—Manwaring is more devoted to me than ever; & were he at liberty, I doubt if I could resist even Matrimony offered by him. This Event, if his wife live with you, it may be in your power to hasten. The violence of her feelings, which must wear her out, may be easily kept in irritation.—I rely on your friendship for this.—I am now satisfied that I never could have brought myself to marry Reginald; & am equally determined that Frederica never shall Tomorrow I shall fetch her from Churchill, & let Maria Manwaring tremble for the consequence. Frederica shall be Sir James's wife before she quits my house. She may whimper & the Vernons may storm;—I regard them not. I am tired of submitting my will to the Caprices of others—of resigning my own Judgement in deference to those, to whom I owe no Duty, & for whom I feel no respect.—I have given up too much—have been too easily worked on; but Frederica shall now find the difference.—Adeu, dearest of Friends. May the next Gouty Attack be more favourable—& may you always regard me as unalterably Yours

S. Vernon.—

## LETTER 40.

Lady De Courcy to M<sup>rs</sup>. Vernon

Parklands

My dear Catherine

I have charming news for you, & if I had not sent off my Letter this morning, you might have been spared the vexation

of knowing of Reginald's being gone to Town, for he is returned, Reginald is returned, not to ask our consent to his marrying Lady Susan, but to tell us that they are parted forever!—He has been only an hour in the House, & I have not been able to learn particulars, for he is so very low, that I have not the heart to ask questions; but I hope we shall soon know all.—This is the most joyful hour he has ever given us, since the day of his birth. Nothing is wanting but to have you here, & it is our particular wish & entreaty that you would come to us as soon as you can. You have owed us a visit many long weeks.—I hope nothing will make it inconvenient to M<sup>rs</sup>. Vernon, & pray bring all my Grand Children, & your dear Neice is included of course; I long to see her.—It has been a sad heavy winter hitherto, without Reginald, & seeing nobody from Churchill; I never found the season so dreary before, but this happy meeting will make us young again.—Frederica runs much in my thoughts, & when Reginald has recovered his usual good spirits, (as I trust he soon will) we will try to rob him of his heart once more, & I am full of hopes of seeing their hands joined at no great distance.

Y<sup>r</sup> affec: Mother

C. De Courcy.

## LETTER 41.

M<sup>rs</sup>. Vernon to Lady De Courcy.

Churchill

My dear Madam

Your Letter has surprised me beyond measure. Can it be true that they are really separated—& for ever?—I should be overjoyed if I dared depend on it, but after all that I have seen, how can one be secure?—And Reginald really with you!—My surprise is the greater, because on Wednesday, the very day of his coming to Parklands, we had a most

unexpected & unwelcome visit from Lady Susan, looking all cheerfulness & good humour, & seeming more as if she were to marry him when she got back to Town, than as if parted from him for ever.—She straid nearly two hours, was as affectionate & agreeable as ever, & not a syllable, not a hint was dropped of any Disagreement or Coolness between them. I asked her whether she had seen my Brother since his arrival in Town—not as you may suppose with any doubt of the fact—but merely to see how she looked.—She immediately answered without any embarrassment that he had been kind enough to call on her on Monday, but she believed he had already returned home—which I was very far from crediting.—

Your kind invitation is accepted by us with pleasure, & on Thursday next, we & our little ones will be with you.—Pray Heaven! Reginald may not be in Town again by that time!—

I wish we could bring dear Frederica too, but I am sorry to add that her Mother's errand hither was to fetch her away, & miserable as it made the poor Girl, it was impossible to detain her. I was thoroughly unwilling to let her go, & so was her Uncle; & all that could be urged, we did urge. But Lady Susan declared that as she was now about to fix herself in Town for several months she could not be easy if her Daughter were not with her, for Masters, &c.—Her Manner, to be sure, was very kind & proper—& Mr. Vernon believes that Frederica will now be treated with affection. I wish I could think so too!—

The poor girl's heart was almost broke at taking leave of us. I charged her to write to me very often, & to remember that if she were in any distress, we should be always her friends.—I took care to see her alone, that I might say all this, & I hope made her a little more comfortable.—But I shall not be easy till I can go to Town & judge of her situation myself.—

I wish there were a better prospect than now appears, of the March, which the conclusion of your Letter declares your expectation of.—At present it is not very likely.—

Y<sup>rs</sup> &c

Cath Vernon.

#### CONCLUSION

This Correspondence, by a meeting between some of the Parties & a separation between the others, could not, to the great detriment of the Post office Revenue,<sup>1</sup> be continued longer.—Very little assistance to the State<sup>2</sup> could be derived from the Epistolary Intercourse of Mr<sup>s</sup>. Vernon & her Neice, for the former soon perceived by the stile of Frederica's Letters, that they were written under her Mother's inspection, & therefore deferring all particular enquiry till she could make it personally in Town, ceased writing minutely or often.—

Having learnt enough in the meanwhile from her open-hearted Brother, of what had passed between him & Lady Susan to sink the latter lower than ever in her opinion, she was proportionably more anxious to get Frederica removed from such a Mother, & placed under her own care; & tho' with little hope of success, was resolved to leave nothing unattempted that might offer a chance of obtaining her sister in law's consent to it.—Her anxiety on the subject made her press for an early visit to London; & Mr. Vernon who, as it must have already appeared, lived only to do whatever he was desired, soon found some accomodating Business to call him thither.—With a heart full of the Matter, Mr<sup>s</sup>. Vernon waited on Lady Susan, shortly after her arrival in Town; & was met with such an easy & cheerful affection as made her almost turn from her with horror.—No remembrance of Reginald, no consciousness of Guilt, gave one look of embarrassment.—She was in excellent spirits, & seemed eager to shew at once,

by every possible attention to her Brother & Sister, her sense of their kindness, & her pleasure in their society.—

Frederica was no more altered than Lady Susan;—the same restrained Manners, the same timid Look in the presence of her Mother as heretofore, assured her Aunt of her Situation's being uncomfortable, & confirmed her in the plan of altering it.—No unkindness however on the part of Lady Susan appeared. Persecution on the subject of Sir James was entirely at an end—his name merely mentioned to say that he was not in London; and in all her conversation she was solicitous only for the welfare & improvement of her Daughter, acknowledging in terms of grateful delight that Frederica was now growing every day more & more what a Parent could desire.—

M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon surprised & incredulous, knew not what to suspect, & without any change in her own views, only feared greater difficulty in accomplishing them. The first hope of any thing better was derived from Lady Susan's asking her whether she thought Frederica looked quite as well as she had done at Churchill, as she must confess herself to have sometimes an anxious doubt of London's perfectly agreeing with her.—

M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon encouraging the doubt, directly proposed her Neice's returning with them into the country. Lady Susan was unable to express her sense of such kindness; yet knew not from a variety of reasons how to part with her Daughter; & as, tho' her own plans were not yet wholly fixed, she trusted it would ere long be in her power to take Frederica into the country herself, concluded by declining entirely to profit by such unexampled attention.—M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon however persevered in the offer of it; & tho' Lady Susan continued to resist, her resistance in the course of a few days seemed somewhat less formidable.

The lucky alarm of an Influenza,<sup>3</sup> decided what might not have been decided quite so soon.—Lady Susan's maternal fears were then too much awakened for her to think of any thing but Frederica's removal from the risk of infection. Above all Disorders in the World, she most dreaded the Influenza for her daughter's constitution. Frederica returned to Churchill with her Uncle & Aunt, & three weeks afterwards Lady Susan announced her being married to Sir James Martin.—

M<sup>rs</sup> Vernon was then convinced of what she had only suspected before, that she might have spared herself all the trouble of urging a removal, which Lady Susan had doubtless resolved on from the first.—Frederica's visit was nominally for six weeks;—but her Mother, tho' inviting her to return in one or two affectionate Letters, was very ready to oblige the whole Party by consenting to a prolongation of her stay, & in the course of two months ceased to write of her absence, & in the course of two more, to write to her at all.

Frederica was therefore fixed in the family of her Uncle & Aunt, till such time as Reginald De Courcy could be talked, flattered & fessed<sup>4</sup> into an affection for her—which, allowing leisure for the conquest of his attachment to her Mother, for his abjuring all future attachments & detesting the Sex, might be reasonably looked for in the course of a Twelvemonth. Three Months might have done it in general, but Reginald's feelings were no less lasting than lively.<sup>5</sup>—

Whether Lady Susan was, or was not happy in her second Choice—I do not see how it can ever be ascertained—for who would take her assurance of it, on either side of the question?—The World must judge from Probability.—She had nothing against her, but her Husband & her Conscience.

Sir James may seem to have drawn an harder Lot than mere Folly merited.—I leave him therefore to all the Pity that any body can give him. For myself, I confess that I can pity only Miss Manwaring, who coming to Town & putting herself to an expence in Cloathes, which impoverished her for two years, on purpose to secure him, was defrauded of her due by a Woman ten years older than herself.

Finis.

## The Watsons<sup>1</sup>

THE first winter assembly<sup>2</sup> in the town of D. in Surry<sup>3</sup> was to be held on Tuesday October the 13th,<sup>4</sup> and it was generally expected to be a very good one; a long list of country families<sup>5</sup> was confidently run over as sure of attending, and sanguine hopes were entertained that the Osbornes themselves would be there.—The Edwards's invitation to the Watsons followed of course. The Edwardses were people of fortune who lived in the town and kept their coach,<sup>6</sup> the Watsons inhabited a village about three miles distant, were poor and had no close carriage;<sup>7</sup> and ever since there had been balls in the place, the former were accustomed to invite the latter to dress, dine and sleep at their house, on every monthly return throughout the winter.<sup>8</sup>—On the present occasion, as only two of Mr. Watson's children were at home, and one was always necessary as companion to himself, for he was sickly and had lost his wife, one only could profit by the kindness of their friends; Miss Emma Watson, who was very recently returned to her family from the care of an aunt who had brought her up,<sup>9</sup> was to make her first public appearance in the neighbourhood;—and her eldest sister, whose delight in a ball was not lessened by a ten years enjoyment, had some merit in cheerfully undertaking to drive her and all her finery in the old chair<sup>10</sup> to D. on the important morning.—

As they splashed along the dirty lane Miss Watson thus instructed and cautioned her inexperienced sister.—

"I dare say it will be a very good ball, and among so many officers, you will hardly want partners. You will find Mrs. Edwards's maid very willing to help you, and I would advise you to ask Mary Edwards's opinion if you are at all at a loss for she has a very good taste.—If Mr. Edwards does not lose his money at cards,<sup>11</sup> you will stay as late as you can wish for; if he does, he will hurry you home perhaps—but you are sure of some comfortable soup.<sup>12</sup>—I hope you will be in good looks—. I should not be surprised if you were to be thought one of the prettiest girls in the room, there is a great deal in novelty. Perhaps Tom Musgrave may take notice of you—but I would advise you by all means not to give him any encouragement. He generally pays attention to every new girl, but he is a great flirt and never means anything serious."

"I think I have heard you speak of him before," said Emma.

"Who is he?"

"A young man of very good fortune, quite independent,<sup>13</sup> and remarkably agreeable, an universal favourite wherever he goes. Most of the girls hereabouts are in love with him, or have been. I believe I am the only one among them that have escaped with a whole heart, and yet I was the first he paid attention to, when he came into this country<sup>14</sup> six years ago; and very great attention indeed did he pay me. Some people say that he has never seemed to like any girl so well since, though he is always behaving in a particular way to<sup>15</sup> one or another."

"And how came *your* heart to be the only cold one?" said Emma smiling.

"There was a reason for that—" replied Miss Watson, changing colour—"I have not been very well used Emma among them, I hope you will have better luck."

"Dear sister, I beg your pardon, if I have unthinkingly given you pain."

"When first we knew Tom Musgrave," continued Miss Watson without seeming to hear her, "I was very much attached to a young man of the name of Purvis, a particular friend of Robert's, who used to be with us a great deal. Every body thought it would have been a match."

A sigh accompanied these words, which Emma respected in silence—; but her sister, after a short pause, went on—

"You will naturally ask why it did not take place, and why he is married to another woman, while I am still single.—But you must ask him—not me—you must ask Penelope.—Yes Emma, Penelope was at the bottom of it all.—She thinks everything fair for a husband; I trusted her, she set him against me, with a view of gaining him herself, and it ended in his discontinuing his visits and soon after marrying somebody else.—Penelope makes light of her conduct, but I think such treachery very bad. It has been the ruin of my happiness. I shall never love any man as I loved Purvis. I do not think Tom Musgrave should be named with him in the same day."

"You quite shock me by what you say of Penelope—" said Emma. "Could a sister do such a thing?—Rivalry, treachery between sisters!—I shall be afraid of being acquainted with her—but I hope it was not so. Appearances were against her"—

"You do not know Penelope.—There is nothing she would not do to get married—she would as good as tell you so herself.—Do not trust her with any secrets of your own, take warning by me, do not trust her; she has her good qualities, but she has no faith, no honour, no scruples, if she can promote her own advantage.—I wish with all my heart she was well married. I declare I had rather have her well-married than myself."

"Than yourself!—Yes I can suppose so. A heart, wounded like yours, can have little inclination for matrimony."



"Not much indeed—but you know we must marry.<sup>16</sup>—I could do very well single for my own part—A little company, and a pleasant ball now and then, would be enough for me, if one could be young for ever, but my father cannot provide for us,<sup>17</sup> and it is very bad to grow old and be poor and laughed at.<sup>18</sup>—I have lost Purvis, it is true, but very few people marry their first loves.<sup>19</sup> I should not refuse a man because he was not Purvis.—Not that I can ever quite forgive Penelope.—" Emma shook her head in acquiescence.—

"Penelope however has had her troubles—" continued Miss Watson.—"She was sadly disappointed in Tom Musgrave, who afterwards transferred his attentions from me to her, and whom she was very fond of;—but he never means anything serious, and when he had trifled with her long enough, he began to slight her for Margaret, and poor Penelope was very wretched.—And since then, she has been trying to make some match at Chichester;<sup>20</sup> she won't tell us with whom, but I believe it is a rich old Dr. Harding, uncle to the friend she goes to see;—and she has taken a vast deal of trouble about him and given up a great deal of time to no purpose as yet.—When she went away the other day, she said it should be the last time.—I suppose you did not know what her particular business was at Chichester—nor guess at the object that could take her away from Stanton<sup>21</sup> just as you were coming home after so many years absence."—

"No indeed, I had not the smallest suspicion of it. I considered her engagement to Mrs. Shaw just at that time as very unfortunate for me. I had hoped to find all my sisters at home; to be able to make an immediate friend of each."—

"I suspect the Doctor to have had an attack of the asthma,—and that she was hurried away on that account—the Shaws are quite on her side.—At least I believe so—but she tells me nothing. She professes to keep her own counsel;

she says, and truly enough, that 'Too many cooks spoil the broth.'—"

"I am sorry for her anxieties," said Emma,—"but I do not like her plans or her opinions. I shall be afraid of her.—She must have too masculine and bold a temper.—To be so bent on marriage—to pursue a man merely for the sake of situation—is a sort of thing that shocks me; I cannot understand it. Poverty is a great evil, but to a woman of education and feeling it ought not, it cannot be the greatest.—I would rather be teacher at a school<sup>22</sup> (and I can think of nothing worse) than marry a man I did not like.—"

"I would rather do anything than be teacher at a school—" said her sister. "I have been at school,<sup>23</sup> Emma, and know what a life they lead; *you* never have.—I should not like marrying a disagreeable man any more than yourself,—but I do not think there *are* many very disagreeable men;—I think I could like any good-humoured man with a comfortable income.—I suppose my aunt brought you up to be rather refined."<sup>24</sup>

"Indeed I do not know.—My conduct must tell you how I have been brought up. I am no judge of it myself. I cannot compare my aunt's method with any other person's, because I know no other."—

"But I can see in a great many things that you are very refined. I have observed it ever since you came home, and I am afraid it will not be for your happiness. Penelope will laugh at you very much."

"*That* will not be for my happiness I am sure.—If my opinions are wrong, I must correct them—if they are above my situation, I must endeavour to conceal them.—But I doubt whether ridicule—Has Penelope much wit?"—

"Yes—she has great spirits, and never cares what she says."—

"Margaret is more gentle I imagine?"—

"Yes—especially in company, she is all gentleness and mildness when anybody is by.—But she is a little fretful and perverse among ourselves.—Poor creature!—she is possessed with the notion of Tom Musgrave's being more seriously in love with her, than he ever was with any body else, and is always expecting him to come to the point. This is the second time within this twelvemonth that she has gone to spend a month with Robert and Jane on purpose to egg him on, by her absence—but I am sure she is mistaken, and that he will no more follow her to Croydon<sup>25</sup> now than he did last March.—He will never marry unless he can marry somebody very great; Miss Osborne perhaps, or something in that style.—"

"Your account of this Tom Musgrave, Elizabeth, gives me very little inclination for his acquaintance."

"You are afraid of him, I do not wonder at you."—

"No indeed—I dislike and despise him."—

"Dislike and despise Tom Musgrave! No, *that* you never can. I defy you not to be delighted with him if he takes notice of you.—I hope he will dance with you—and I dare say he will, unless the Osbornes come with a large party,<sup>26</sup> and then he will not speak to any body else.—"

"He seems to have most engaging manners!"—said Emma.—"Well, we shall see how irresistible Mr. Tom Musgrave and I find each other.—I suppose I shall know him as soon as I enter the ball-room;—he *must* carry some of his charms in his face."—

"You will not find him in the ball-room I can tell you. You will go early that Mrs. Edwards may get a good place by the fire, and he never comes till late; and if the Osbornes are coming, he will wait in the passage, and come in with them.—I should like to look in upon you, Emma. If it was

but a good day with my father, I would wrap myself up, and James should drive me over, as soon as I had made tea for him, and I should be with you by the time the dancing began."

"What! would you come late at night in this chair?"—

"To be sure I would.—There, I said you were very refined;—and *that's* an instance of it.—"

Emma for a moment made no answer—at last she said—"I wish, Elizabeth, you had not made a point of my going to this ball, I wish you were going instead of me. Your pleasure would be greater than mine. I am a stranger here, and know nobody but the Edwardses—my enjoyment therefore must be very doubtful. Yours among all your acquaintance would be certain.—It is not too late to change. Very little apology could be requisite to the Edwardses, who must be more glad of your company than of mine, and I should most readily return to my father; and should not be at all afraid to drive this quiet old creature home. Your clothes I would undertake to find means of sending to you."—

"My dearest Emma," cried Elizabeth warmly—"do you think I would do such a thing?—Not for the universe—but I shall never forget your good nature in proposing it. You must have a sweet temper indeed!—I never met with any thing like it!—And would you really give up the ball, that I might be able to go to it!—Believe me Emma, I am not so selfish as that comes to. No, though I am nine years older than you are, I would not be the means of keeping you from being seen.—You are very pretty, and it would be very hard that you should not have as fair a chance as we have all had, to make your fortune.—No Emma, whoever stays at home this winter, it shan't be you. I am sure I should never have forgiven the person who kept me from a ball at nineteen."

Emma expressed her gratitude, and for a few minutes they jogged on in silence.—Elizabeth first spoke.—

"You will take notice who Mary Edwards dances with."—"I will remember her partners if I can—but you know they will be all strangers to me."

"Only observe whether she dances with Captain Hunter, more than once;<sup>27</sup> I have my fears in that quarter. Not that her father or mother like officers,<sup>28</sup> but if she does, you know, it is all over with poor Sam.—And I have promised to write him word who she dances with."

"Is Sam attached to Miss Edwards?"—

"Did not you know *that*?"—

"How should I know it?—How should I know in Shropshire, what is passing of that nature in Surry?<sup>29</sup>—It is not likely that circumstances of such delicacy should make any part of the scanty communication which passed between you and me for the last fourteen years."

"I wonder I never mentioned it when I wrote. Since you have been at home, I have been so busy with my poor father and our great wash<sup>30</sup> that I have had no leisure to tell you anything—but indeed I concluded you knew it all.—He has been very much in love with her these two years, and it is a great disappointment to him that he cannot always get away to our balls—but Mr. Curtis won't often spare him, and just now it is a sickly time at Guilford—"<sup>31</sup>

"Do you suppose Miss Edwards inclined to like him—?"

"I am afraid not: you know she is an only child, and will have at least ten thousand pounds."—<sup>32</sup>

"But still she may like our brother."

"Oh! no—. The Edwardses look much higher. Her father and mother would never consent to it. Sam is only a surgeon<sup>33</sup> you know.—Sometimes I think she does like him. But Mary

Edwards is rather prim and reserved; I do not always know what she would be at."—

"Unless Sam feels on sure grounds with the lady herself, it seems a pity to me that he should be encouraged to think of her at all."—

"A young man must think of somebody," said Elizabeth—"and why should not he be as lucky as Robert, who has got a good wife and six thousand pounds?"

"We must not all expect to be individually lucky," replied Emma. "The luck of one member of a family is luck to all."—

"Mine is all to come I am sure—" said Elizabeth, giving another sigh to the remembrance of Purvis.—"I have been unlucky enough, and I cannot say much for you, as my aunt married again so foolishly.—Well—you will have a good ball I dare say. The next turning will bring us to the turnpike.<sup>34</sup> You may see the church tower over the hedge, and the White Hart is close by it.<sup>35</sup>—I shall long to know what you think of Tom Musgrave."

Such were the last audible sounds of Miss Watson's voice, before they passed through the turnpike gate and entered on the pitching<sup>36</sup> of the town—the jumbling and noise of which made farther conversation most thoroughly undesirable.—The old mare trotted heavily on, wanting no direction of the reins to take the right turning, and making only one blunder, in proposing to stop at the milliners,<sup>37</sup> before she drew up towards Mr. Edwards's door.—Mr. Edwards lived in the best house in the street, and the best in the place, if Mr. Tomlinson the banker might be indulged in calling his newly erected house at the end of the town, with a shrubbery and sweep,<sup>38</sup> in the country.—Mr. Edwards's house was higher than most of its neighbours, with windows on each side the door, the windows guarded by posts and chain, the door approached by a flight of stone steps.<sup>39</sup>—

"Here we are—" said Elizabeth, as the carriage ceased moving—"safely arrived;—and by the market clock,<sup>40</sup> we have been only five and thirty minutes coming—which I think is doing pretty well, though it would be nothing for Penelope.—Is not it a nice town?—The Edwardses have a noble house, you see, and they live quite in style. The door will be opened by a man in livery with a powdered head,<sup>41</sup> I can tell you."

Emma had seen the Edwardses only one morning at Stanton, they were therefore all but strangers to her, and though her spirits were by no means insensible to the expected joys of the evening, she felt a little uncomfortable in the thought of all that was to precede them. Her conversation with Elizabeth too, giving her some very unpleasant feelings with respect to her own family, had made her more open to disagreeable impressions from any other cause, and increased her sense of the awkwardness of rushing into intimacy on so slight an acquaintance.—

There was nothing in the manners of Mrs. or Miss Edwards to give immediate change to these ideas;—the mother, though a very friendly woman, had a reserved air, and a great deal of formal civility;—and the daughter, a genteel looking girl of twenty two, with her hair in papers,<sup>42</sup> seemed very naturally to have caught something of the style of the mother who had brought her up.—Emma was soon left to know what they could be, by Elizabeth's being obliged to hurry away—and some very, very languid remarks on the probable brilliancy of the ball, were all that broke at intervals a silence of half an hour before they were joined by the master of the house.—Mr. Edwards had a much easier and more communicative air than the ladies of the family, he was fresh from the street, and he came ready to tell whatever might interest.—After a cordial reception of Emma, he turned to

his daughter with "Well Mary, I bring you good news.—The Osbornes will certainly be at the ball to night.—Horses for two carriages are ordered from the White Hart,<sup>43</sup> to be at Osborne Castle by nine."—

"I am glad of it—" observed Mrs. Edwards, "because their coming gives a credit to our assemblies. The Osbornes being known to have been at the first ball, will dispose a great many people to attend the second.—It is more than they deserve, for in fact they add nothing to the pleasure of the evening, they come so late, and go so early;—but great people have always their charm."—

Mr. Edwards proceeded to relate every other little article of news which his morning's lounge<sup>44</sup> had supplied him with, and they chatted with greater briskness, till Mrs. Edwards's moment for dressing arrived, and the young ladies were carefully recommended to lose no time.—Emma was shewn to a very comfortable apartment, and as soon as Mrs. Edwards's civilities could leave her to herself, the happy occupation, the first bliss of a ball began.—

The girls, dressing in some measure together, grew unavoidably better acquainted; Emma found in Miss Edwards the shew of good sense, a modest unpretending mind, and a great wish of obliging—and when they returned to the parlour where Mrs. Edwards was sitting respectably attired in one of the two satin<sup>45</sup> gowns which went through the winter, and a new cap<sup>46</sup> from the milliners, they entered it with much easier feelings and more natural smiles than they had taken away.—

Their dress was now to be examined; Mrs. Edwards acknowledged herself too old-fashioned to approve of every modern extravagance however sanctioned—and though complacently viewing her daughter's good looks, would give but a qualified admiration; and Mr. Edwards, not less satisfied

with Mary, paid some compliments of good humoured gallantry to Emma at her expence.—The discussion led to more intimate remarks, and Miss Edwards gently asked Emma if she were not often reckoned very like her youngest brother.—Emma thought she could perceive a faint blush accompany the question, and there seemed something still more suspicious in the manner in which Mr. Edwards took up the subject.

“—You are paying Miss Emma no great compliment I think Mary,” said he hastily—. “Mr. Sam Watson is a very good sort of young man, and I dare say a very clever surgeon, but his complexion has been rather too much exposed to all weathers, to make a likeness to him very flattering.”<sup>47</sup>

Mary apologized in some confusion. “She had not thought a strong likeness at all incompatible with very different degrees of beauty.—There might be resemblance in countenance; and the complexion, and even the features be very unlike.”—

“I know nothing of my brother’s beauty,” said Emma, “for I have not seen him since he was seven years old—but my father reckons us alike.”

“Mr. Watson!—” cried Mr. Edwards. “Well, you astonish me.—There is not the least likeness in the world; your brother’s eyes are grey, yours are brown, he has a long face, and a wide mouth.—My dear, do *you* perceive the least resemblance?”—

“Not the least.—Miss Emma Watson puts me very much in mind of her eldest sister, and sometimes I see a look of Miss Penelope—and once or twice there has been a glance of Mr. Robert—but I cannot perceive any likeness to Mr. Samuel.”

“I see the likeness between her and Miss Watson,”<sup>48</sup> replied Mr. Edwards, “very strongly—but I am not sensible of the

others.—I do not much think she is like any of the family *but* Miss Watson; but I am very sure there is no resemblance between her and Sam.”—

This matter was settled, and they went to dinner.—

“Your father, Miss Emma, is one of my oldest friends—” said Mr. Edwards, as he helped her to wine, when they were drawn round the fire to enjoy their desert.<sup>49</sup>—“We must drink to his better health.—It is a great concern to me I assure you that he should be such an invalid.—I know nobody who likes a game of cards in a social way, better than he does;—and very few people that play a fairer rubber.”<sup>50</sup>—It is a thousand pities that he should be so deprived of the pleasure. For now we have a quiet little whist club that meets three times a week at the White Hart,<sup>51</sup> and, if he could but have his health, how much he would enjoy it.”

“I dare say he would Sir—and I wish with all my heart he were equal to it.”

“Your club would be better fitted for an invalid,” said Mrs. Edwards, “if you did not keep it up so late.”—

This was an old grievance.—

“So late, my dear, what are you talking of?” cried the husband with sturdy pleasantry.—“We are always at home before midnight. They would laugh at Osborne Castle to hear you call *that* late; they are but just rising from dinner at midnight.”<sup>52</sup>—

“That is nothing to the purpose—” retorted the lady calmly. “The Osbornes are to be no rule for us. You had better meet every night, and break up two hours sooner.”

So far, the subject was very often carried;—but Mr. and Mrs. Edwards were so wise as never to pass that point; and Mr. Edwards now turned to something else.—He had lived long enough in the idleness of a town to become a little of

a gossip, and having some curiosity to know more of the circumstances of his young guest than had yet reached him, he began with,

"I think, Miss Emma, I remember your aunt very well about thirty years ago; I am pretty sure I danced with her in the old rooms at Bath,<sup>53</sup> the year before I married—. She was a very fine woman then—but like other people I suppose she is grown somewhat older since that time.—I hope she is likely to be happy in her second choice."

"I hope so, I believe so, Sir—" said Emma in some agitation.—

"Mr. Turner had not been dead a great while I think?"

"About two years Sir."

"I forget what her name is now?"—

"O'Brien."

"Irish!<sup>54</sup> Ah! I remember—and she is gone to settle in Ireland.—I do not wonder that you should not wish to go with her into *that* country Miss Emma—;<sup>55</sup> but it must be a great deprivation to her, poor lady!—After bringing you up like a child of her own."

"I was not so ungrateful Sir," said Emma warmly, "as to wish to be any where but with her.—It did not suit them, it did not suit Captain O'Brien that I should be of the party;—"

"Captain!—" repeated Mrs. Edwards. "The gentleman is in the army then?"

"Yes Ma'am."

"Aye—there is nothing like your officers for captivating the ladies, young or old.—There is no resisting a cockade<sup>56</sup> my dear."

"I hope there is,"—said Mrs. Edwards gravely, with a quick glance at her daughter;—and Emma had just recovered from her own perturbation in time to see a blush on Miss Edwards's cheek, and in remembering what Elizabeth had said of

Captain Hunter, to wonder and waver between his influence and her brother's.—

"Elderly ladies should be careful how they make a second choice,"<sup>57</sup> observed Mr. Edwards.—

"Carefulness—discretion—should not be confined to elderly ladies, or to a second choice," added his wife. "It is quite as necessary to young ladies in their first."

"Rather more so, my dear—" replied he, "because young ladies are likely to feel the effects of it longer. When an old lady plays the fool, it is not in the course of nature that she should suffer from it many years." Emma drew her hand across her eyes—and Mrs. Edwards, on perceiving it, changed the subject to one of less anxiety to all.—

With nothing to do but to expect the hour of setting off, the afternoon was long to the two young ladies; and though Miss Edwards was rather discomposed at the very early hour which her mother always fixed for going, that early hour itself was watched for with some eagerness.—The entrance of the tea things<sup>58</sup> at seven o'clock was some relief—and luckily Mr. and Mrs. Edwards always drank a dish extraordinary,<sup>59</sup> and are an additional muffin<sup>60</sup> when they were going to sit up late, which lengthened the ceremony almost to the wished for moment. At a little before eight, the Tomlinsons' carriage was heard to go by, which was the constant signal for Mrs. Edwards to order hers to the door; and in a very few minutes, the party were transported from the quiet warmth of a snug parlour, to the bustle, noise and draughts of air of the broad entrance—passage of an inn.—

Mrs. Edwards, carefully guarding her own dress, while she attended with yet greater solicitude to the proper security of her young charges' shoulders and throats, led the way up the wide staircase, while no sound of a ball but the first scrape of one violin blessed the ears of her followers, and Miss

Edwards, on hazarding the anxious enquiry of whether there were many people come yet, was told by the waiter, as she knew she should, that "Mr. Tomlinson's family were in the room."

In passing along a short gallery to the assembly-room, brilliant lights before them, they were accosted<sup>61</sup> by a young man in a morning dress and boots, who was standing in the doorway of a bed chamber, apparently on purpose to see them go by.—

"Ah! Mrs. Edwards—how do you do?—How do you do Miss Edwards?—" he cried, with an easy air.—"You are determined to be in good time I see, as usual.—The candles are but this moment lit—"

"I like to get a good seat by the fire you know, Mr. Musgrave," replied Mrs. Edwards.

"I am this moment going to dress," said he—"I am waiting for my stupid fellow.—We shall have a famous ball. The Osbornes are certainly coming; you may depend upon *that* for I was with Lord Osborne this morning.—"

The party passed on—Mrs. Edwards's satin gown swept along the clean floor of the ball-room, to the fireplace at the upper end, where one party only were formally seated, while three or four officers were lounging together, passing in and out from the adjoining card-room.—A very stiff meeting between these near neighbours ensued—and as soon as they were all duly placed again, Emma, in the low whisper which became the solemn scene, said to Miss Edwards, "The gentleman we passed in the passage was Mr. Musgrave, then.—He is reckoned remarkably agreeable I understand.—"

Miss Edwards answered hesitatingly—"Yes—he is very much liked by many people.—But *we* are not very intimate."—

"He is rich, is not he?"—

"He has about eight or nine hundred pounds a year<sup>63</sup> I believe.—He came into possession of it when he was very young; and my father and mother think it has given him rather an unsettled turn.—He is no favourite with them."—

The cold and empty appearance of the room and the demure air of the small cluster of females at one end of it began soon to give way; the inspiring sound of other carriages was heard, and continual accessions of portly chaperons,<sup>64</sup> and strings of smartly-dressed girls were received, with now and then a fresh gentleman straggler, who if not enough in love to station himself near any fair creature seemed glad to escape into the card-room.—Among the increasing numbers of military men, one now made his way to Miss Edwards, with an air of empressément,<sup>65</sup> which decidedly said to her companion "I am Captain Hunter"—and Emma, who could not but watch her at such a moment, saw her looking rather distressed, but by no means displeased, and heard an engagement formed for the two first dances,<sup>66</sup> which made her think her brother Sam's a hopeless case.—

Emma in the mean while was not unobserved, or unadmired herself.—A new face, and a very pretty one, could not be slighted—her name was whispered from one party to another, and no sooner had the signal been given, by the orchestra's striking up a favourite air, which seemed to call the young men to their duty, and people the centre of the room, than she found herself engaged to dance with a brother officer, introduced by Captain Hunter.<sup>67</sup>—Emma Watson was not more than of the middle height—well made and plump, with an air of healthy vigour.—Her skin was very brown, but clear, smooth and glowing—<sup>68</sup> which with a lively eye, a sweet smile, and an open countenance, gave beauty to attract, and expression to make that beauty improve on acquaintance.—Having no reason to be dissatisfied with her partner, the



evening began very pleasantly to her; and her feelings perfectly coincided with the re-iterated observation of others, that it was an excellent ball.—

The two first dances were not quite over, when the returning sound of carriages after a long interruption called general notice, and “the Osbornes are coming, the Osbornes are coming”<sup>69</sup>—was repeated round the room.—After some minutes of extraordinary bustle without, and watchful curiosity within, the important party, preceded by the attentive master of the inn to open a door which was never shut, made their appearance. They consisted of Lady Osborne, her son Lord Osborne,<sup>70</sup> her daughter Miss Osborne; Miss Carr, her daughter’s friend, Mr. Howard, formerly tutor to Lord Osborne, now clergyman of the parish in which the castle stood,<sup>71</sup> Mrs. Blake, a widow-sister who lived with him, her son, a fine boy of ten years old, and Mr. Tom Musgrave; who, probably imprisoned within his own room, had been listening in bitter impatience to the sound of the music, for the last half hour. In their progress up the room, they paused almost immediately behind Emma, to receive the compliments of some acquaintance, and she heard Lady Osborne observe that they had made a point of coming early for the gratification of Mrs. Blake’s little boy, who was uncommonly fond of dancing.—Emma looked at them all as they passed—but chiefly and with most interest on Tom Musgrave, who was certainly a genteel, good looking young man.—Of the females, Lady Osborne had by much the finest person;—though nearly fifty, she was very handsome, and had all the dignity of rank.—

Lord Osborne was a very fine young man; but there was an air of coldness, of carelessness, even of awkwardness about him, which seemed to speak him out of his element in a ball room. He came in fact only because it was judged expedient

for him to please the Borough<sup>72</sup>—he was not fond of women’s company, and he never danced.—Mr. Howard was an agreeable-looking man, a little more than thirty.—

At the conclusion of the two dances, Emma found herself, she knew not how, seated amongst the Osborne set; and she was immediately struck with the fine countenance and animated gestures of the little boy, as he was standing before his mother, wondering when they should begin.—

“You will not be surprised at Charles’s impatience,” said Mrs. Blake, a lively pleasant-looking little woman of five or six and thirty, to a lady who was standing near her, “when you know what a partner he is to have. Miss Osborne has been so very kind as to promise to dance the two first dances with him.”—

“Oh! yes—we have been engaged this week,” cried the boy, “and we are to dance down every couple.”—<sup>73</sup>

On the other side of Emma, Miss Osborne, Miss Carr, and a party of young men were standing engaged in very lively consultation—and soon afterwards she saw the smartest officer of the set walking off to the orchestra to order the dance,<sup>74</sup> while Miss Osborne, passing before her, to her little expecting partner hastily said—“Charles, I beg your pardon for not keeping my engagement,<sup>75</sup> but I am going to dance these two dances with Colonel Beresford.<sup>76</sup> I know you will excuse me, and I will certainly dance with you after tea.”<sup>77</sup> And without staying for an answer, she turned again to Miss Carr, and in another minute was led by Colonel Beresford to begin the set.<sup>78</sup>

If the poor little boy’s face had in its happiness been interesting<sup>79</sup> to Emma, it was infinitely more so under this sudden reverse;—he stood the picture of disappointment, with crimsoned cheeks, quivering lips, and eyes bent on the floor. His mother, stifling her own mortification, tried

to soothe his, with the prospect of Miss Osborne's second promise; but though he contrived to utter with an effort of boyish bravery "Oh! I do not mind it"—it was very evident by the unceasing agitation of his features that he minded it as much as ever.—

Emma did not think, or reflect;—she felt and acted.—<sup>80</sup>

"I shall be very happy to dance with you Sir, if you like it," said she, holding out her hand with the most unaffected good humour.—

The boy in one moment restored to all his first delight looked joyfully at his mother; and stepping forward with an honest and simple "Thank you Ma'am" was instantly ready to attend his new acquaintance.—The thankfulness of Mrs. Blake was more diffuse;—with a look, most expressive of unexpected pleasure and lively gratitude, she turned to her neighbour with repeated and fervent acknowledgements of so great and condescending<sup>81</sup> a kindness to her boy.—Emma with perfect truth could assure her that she could not be giving greater pleasure than she felt herself—and Charles being provided with his gloves and charged to keep them on,<sup>82</sup> they joined the set which was now rapidly forming, with nearly equal complacency.—<sup>83</sup>

It was a partnership which could not be noticed without surprise. It gained her a broad stare from Miss Osborne and Miss Carr as they passed her in the dance. "Upon my word Charles you are in luck, (said the former as she turned him<sup>84</sup>) you have got a better partner than me"—to which the happy Charles answered "Yes."—Tom Musgrave, who was dancing with Miss Carr, gave her many inquisitive glances; and after a time Lord Osborne himself came and under pretence of talking to Charles,<sup>85</sup> stood to look at his partner.—Though rather distressed by such observation, Emma could not repent what she had done, so happy had it made both the boy and his

mother; the latter of whom was continually making opportunities of addressing her with the warmest civility.—

Her little partner she found, though bent chiefly on dancing, was not unwilling to speak, when her questions or remarks gave him anything to say; and she learnt, by a sort of inevitable enquiry, that "he had two brothers and a sister, that they and their mama all lived with his uncle at Wickstead,<sup>86</sup> that his uncle taught him Latin,<sup>87</sup> that he was very fond of riding, and had a horse of his own given him by Lord Osborne; and that he had been out once already with Lord Osborne's hounds."—<sup>88</sup>

At the end of these dances Emma found they were to drink tea;—Miss Edwards gave her a caution to be at hand, in a manner which convinced her of Mrs. Edwards's holding it very important to have them both close to her when she moved into the tea room; and Emma was accordingly on the alert to gain her proper station. It was always the pleasure of the company to have a little bustle and crowd when they thus adjourned for refreshment.—The tea room was a small room within the card room, and in passing through the latter, where the passage was straitened<sup>89</sup> by tables, Mrs. Edwards and her party were for a few moments hemmed in. It happened close by Lady Osborne's casino table;<sup>90</sup> Mr. Howard who belonged to it spoke to his nephew; and Emma on perceiving herself the object of attention both to Lady Osborne and him, had just turned away her eyes in time, to avoid seeming to hear her young companion delightedly whisper aloud—"Oh! Uncle, do look at my partner. She is so pretty!"

As they were immediately in motion again however, Charles was hurried off without being able to receive his uncle's suffrage.<sup>91</sup>—On entering the tea room, in which two long tables were prepared, Lord Osborne was to be seen quite

alone at the end of one, as if retreating as far as he could from the ball, to enjoy his own thoughts, and gape<sup>92</sup> without restraint.—Charles instantly pointed him out to Emma—

“There’s Lord Osborne—let you and I go and sit by him.”—

“No, no,” said Emma laughing, “you must sit with my friends.”<sup>93</sup>

Charles was now free enough to hazard a few questions in his turn. “What o’clock was it?”—

“Eleven.”—

“Eleven!—And I am not at all sleepy. Mama said I should be asleep before ten.—Do you think Miss Osborne will keep her word with me, when tea is over?”

“Oh! yes.—I suppose so”—though she felt that she had no better reason to give than that Miss Osborne had *not* kept it before.—

“When shall you come to Osborne Castle?”—

“Never, probably.—I am not acquainted with the family.”

“But you may come to Wickstead and see Mama, and she can take you to the Castle.—There is a monstrous curious stuffed fox there, and a badger—any body would think they were alive. It is a pity you should not see them.”—

On rising from tea, there was again a scramble for the pleasure of being first out of the room, which happened to be increased by one or two of the card parties having just broken up and the players being disposed to move exactly the different way. Among these was Mr. Howard—his sister leaning on his arm—and no sooner were they within reach of Emma, than Mrs. Blake, calling her notice by a friendly touch, said

“Your goodness to Charles, my dear Miss Watson, brings all his family upon you. Give me leave to introduce my brother—Mr. Howard.”

Emma curtsied, the gentleman bowed—made a hasty request for the honour of her hand in the two next dances, to which as hasty an affirmative was given, and they were immediately impelled in opposite directions.—Emma was very well pleased with the circumstance;—there was a quietly-cheerful, gentlemanlike air in Mr. Howard which suited her—and in a few minutes afterwards, the value of her engagement increased when as she was sitting in the card room somewhat screened by a door, she heard Lord Osborne, who was lounging on a vacant table near her, call Tom Musgrave towards him and say,

“Why do not you dance with that beautiful Emma Watson?—I want you to dance with her—and I will come and stand by you.”—

“I was determining on it this very moment my Lord, I’ll be introduced and dance with her directly.”—

“Aye do—and if you find she does not want much talking to, you may introduce me by and bye.”—

“Very well my Lord.—If she is like her sisters, she will only want to be listened to.—I will go this moment. I shall find her in the tea room. That stiff old Mrs. Edwards has never done tea.”—

Away he went—Lord Osborne after him—and Emma lost no time in hurrying from her corner, exactly the other way, forgetting in her haste that she left Mrs. Edwards behind.—

“We had quite lost you”—said Mrs. Edwards—who followed her with Mary, in less than five minutes.—“If you prefer this room to the other, there is no reason why you should not be here, but we had better all be together.”

Emma was saved the trouble of apologizing, by their being joined at the moment by Tom Musgrave, who, requesting Mrs. Edwards aloud to do him the honour of presenting him to Miss Emma Watson, left that good lady without any

choice in the business, but that of testifying by the coldness of her manner that she did it unwillingly. The honour of dancing with her, was solicited without loss of time—and Emma, however she might like to be thought a beautiful girl by lord or commoner,<sup>94</sup> was so little disposed to favour Tom Musgrave himself, that she had considerable satisfaction in avowing her prior engagement.—He was evidently surprised and discomposed.—The stile of her last partner had probably led him to believe her not overpowered with applications.—

"My little friend Charles Blake," he cried, "must not expect to engross you the whole evening. We can never suffer this—it is against the rules of the assembly<sup>95</sup>—and I am sure it will never be patronised<sup>96</sup> by our good friend here Mrs. Edwards; she is by much too nice<sup>97</sup> a judge of decorum to give her license to such a dangerous particularity."<sup>98</sup>

"I am not going to dance with Master Blake Sir."

The gentleman, a little disconcerted, could only hope he might be more fortunate another time—and seeming unwilling to leave her—though his friend Lord Osborne was waiting in the doorway for the result, as Emma with some amusement perceived—he began to make civil enquiries after her family.—

"How comes it, that we have not the pleasure of seeing your sisters here this evening?—Our assemblies have been used to be so well treated by them, that we do not know how to take this neglect."<sup>99</sup>

"My eldest sister is the only one at home—and she could not leave my father—"

"Miss Watson the only one at home!—You astonish me!—It seems but the day before yesterday that I saw them all three in this town. But I am afraid I have been a very sad<sup>99</sup> neighbour of late. I hear dreadful complaints of my negligence wherever I go,—and I confess it is a shameful length of time

since I was at Stanton.—But I shall *now* endeavour to make myself amends for the past."<sup>100</sup>

Emma's calm curtesy in reply must have struck him as very unlike the encouraging warmth he had been used to receive from her sisters, and gave him probably the novel sensation of doubting his own influence, and of wishing for more attention than she bestowed.—

The dancing now recommenced; Miss Carr being impatient to *call*,<sup>100</sup> everybody was required to stand up—and Tom Musgrave's curiosity was appeased, on seeing Mr. Howard come forward and claim Emma's hand—"That will do as well for *me*"—was Lord Osborne's remark, when his friend carried him the news—and he was continually at Howard's elbow during the two dances.—The frequency of his appearance there, was the only unpleasant part of her engagement, the only objection she could make to Mr. Howard.—In himself, she thought him as agreeable as he looked; though chatting on the commonest topics he had a sensible, unaffected way of expressing himself, which made them all worth hearing; and she only regretted that he had not been able to make his pupil's manners as unexceptionable as his own.—The two dances seemed very short, and she had her partner's authority for considering them so.—At their conclusion the Osbornes and their train were all on the move.

"We are off at last," said his Lordship to Tom—"How much longer do *you* stay in this heavenly place?—till sunrise?"—

"No, faith! my Lord, I have had quite enough of it I assure you—I shall not shew myself here again when I have had the honour of attending Lady Osborne to her carriage. I shall retreat in as much secrecy as possible to the most remote corner of the house, where I shall order a barrel of oysters,<sup>101</sup> and be famously snug."

"Let us see you soon at the Castle; and bring me word how she looks by daylight."

Emma and Mrs. Blake parted as old acquaintance, and Charles shook her by the hand and wished her "good bye" at least a dozen times. From Miss Osborne and Miss Carr she received something like a jerking curtsy as they passed her;<sup>102</sup> even Lady Osborne gave her a look of complacency—and his Lordship actually came back after the others were out of the room, to "beg her pardon", and look in the window seat behind her for the gloves which were visibly compressed in his hand.—

As Tom Musgrave was seen no more, we may suppose his plan to have succeeded, and imagine him mortifying with his barrel of oysters, in dreary solitude—or gladly assisting the landlady in her bar to make fresh negus<sup>103</sup> for the happy dancers above.

Emma could not help missing the party, by whom she had been, though in some respects unpleasantly, distinguished, and the two dances which followed and concluded the ball were rather flat, in comparison with the others.—Mr. Edwards having played with good luck, they were some of the last in the room—

"Here we are, back again I declare—" said Emma sorrowfully, as she walked into the dining room, where the table was prepared, and the neat upper maid<sup>104</sup> was lighting the candles—"My dear Miss Edwards—how soon it is at an end!—I wish it could all come over again!—"

A great deal of kind pleasure was expressed in her having enjoyed the evening so much—and Mr. Edwards was as warm as herself, in praise of the fullness, brilliancy and spirit of the meeting; though as he had been fixed the whole time at the same table in the same room, with only one change of chairs,

it might have seemed a matter scarcely perceived.—But he had won four rubbers out of five, and everything went well. His daughter felt the advantage of this gratified state of mind, in the course of the remarks and retrospections which now ensued, over the welcome soup.—

"How came you not to dance with either of the Mr. Tomlinsons, Mary?" said her mother.

"I was always engaged when they asked me."

"I thought you were to have stood up with Mr. James, the two last dances; Mrs. Tomlinson told me he was gone to ask you—and I had heard you say two minutes before that you were *not* engaged.—"

"Yes—but—there was a mistake—I had misunderstood—I did not know I was engaged—I thought it had been for the two dances after, if we staid so long—but Captain Hunter assured me it was for those very two.—"

"So, you ended with Captain Hunter Mary, did you?" said her father. "And who did you begin with?"

"Captain Hunter" was repeated, in a very humble tone.—

"Hum!—That is being constant however. But who else did you dance with?"

"Mr. Norton, and Mr. Styles."

"And who are they?"

"Mr. Norton is a cousin of Captain Hunter's."—

"And who is Mr. Styles?"

"One of his particular friends."—

"All in the same regiment," added Mrs. Edwards.—"Mary was surrounded by red coats<sup>105</sup> the whole evening. I should have been better pleased to see her dancing with some of our old neighbours I confess.—"

"Yes, yes, we must not neglect our old neighbours.—. But if these soldiers are quicker than other people in a ball room, what are young ladies to do?"

"I think there is no occasion for their engaging themselves so many dances beforehand, Mr. Edwards."—

"No—perhaps not—but I remember my dear when you and I did the same."—

Mrs. Edwards said no more, and Mary breathed again.—A great deal of good-humoured, pleasantry followed—and Emma went to bed in charming spirits, her head full of Osbornes, Blakes and Howards.—

The next morning brought a great many visitors. It was the way of the place always to call on Mrs. Edwards on the morning after a ball, and this neighbourly inclination was increased in the present instance by a general spirit of curiosity on Emma's account, as everybody wanted to look again at the girl who had been admired the night before by Lord Osborne.—

Many were the eyes, and various the degrees of approbation with which she was examined. Some saw no fault, and some no beauty.—With some her brown skin was the annihilation of every grace, and others could never be persuaded that she were half so handsome as Elizabeth Watson had been ten years ago.—

The morning passed quietly away in discussing the merits of the ball with all this succession of company—and Emma was at once astonished by finding it two o'clock, and considering that she had heard nothing of her father's chair. After this discovery she had walked twice to the window to examine the street, and was on the point of asking leave to ring the bell and make enquiries, when the light sound of a carriage driving up to the door set her heart at ease. She stepped again to the window—but instead of the convenient though very un-smart family equipage perceived a neat curricule.<sup>106</sup>—Mr. Musgrave was shortly afterwards announced;—and Mrs. Edwards put on her very stiffest look at the sound.—Not at

all dismayed however by her chilling air, he paid his compliments to each of the ladies with no unbecoming ease, and continuing to address Emma, presented her a note, which he had "the honour of bringing from her sister; but to which he must observe that a verbal postscript from himself would be requisite."—

The note, which Emma was beginning to read rather *before* Mrs. Edwards had entreated her to use no ceremony, contained a few lines from Elizabeth importing that their father in consequence of being unusually well had taken the sudden resolution of attending the visitation<sup>107</sup> that day, and that as his road lay quite wide from R.<sup>108</sup> it was impossible for her to come home till the following morning, unless the Edwardses would send her, which was hardly to be expected, or she could meet with any chance conveyance, or did not mind walking so far.—She had scarcely run her eye through the whole, before she found herself obliged to listen to Tom Musgrave's farther account.

"I received that note from the fair hands of Miss Watson only ten minutes ago," said he—"I met her in the village of Stanton, whither my good stars prompted me to turn my horses' heads—she was at that moment in quest of a person to employ on the errand, and I was fortunate enough to convince her that she could not find a more willing or speedy messenger than myself.—Remember, I say nothing of my disinterestedness.—My reward is to be the indulgence of conveying you to Stanton in my curricule.—Though they are not written down, I bring your sister's orders for the same.—"

Emma felt distressed; she did not like the proposal—she did not wish to be on terms of intimacy with the proposer—and yet fearful of encroaching on the Edwardses, as well as wishing to go home herself, she was at a loss how entirely

to decline what he offered.—<sup>109</sup> Mrs. Edwards continued silent, either not understanding the case, or waiting to see how the young lady's inclination lay. Emma thanked him—but professed herself very unwilling to give him so much trouble. "The trouble was of course, honour, pleasure, delight. What had he or his horses to do?"—Still she hesitated. "She believed she must beg leave to decline his assistance—She was rather afraid of the sort of carriage—. The distance was not beyond a walk—"—

Mrs. Edwards was silent no longer. She enquired into the particulars—and then said, "We shall be extremely happy, Miss Emma, if you can give us the pleasure of your company till tomorrow—but if you can not conveniently do so, our carriage is quite at your service, and Mary will be pleased with the opportunity of seeing your sister."—

This was precisely what Emma had longed for, and she accepted the offer most thankfully; acknowledging that as Elizabeth was entirely alone, it was her wish to return home to dinner.<sup>110</sup>—The plan was warmly opposed by their visitor.

"I cannot suffer it indeed. I must not be deprived of the happiness of escorting you. I assure you there is not a possibility of fear with my horses. You might guide them yourself. *Your sisters* all know how quiet they are; they have none of them the smallest scruple in trusting themselves with me, even on a race-course.—Believe me—" added he lowering his voice—"You are quite safe, the danger is only *mine*."—Emma was not more disposed to oblige him for all this.—"And as to Mrs. Edwards's carriage being used the day after a ball, it is a thing quite out of rule I assure you—never heard of before—the old coachman will look as black as his horses—. Won't he Miss Edwards?"—No notice was taken. The ladies were silently firm, and the gentleman found himself obliged to submit.—

"What a famous ball we had last night!"—he cried, after a short pause. "How long did you keep it up, after the Osbornes and I went away?"—

"We had two dances more."—

"It is making it too much of a fatigue I think, to stay so late.—I suppose your set was not a very full one."—

"Yes, quite as full as ever, except the Osbornes. There seemed no vacancy anywhere—and everybody danced with uncommon spirit to the very last."—Emma said this—though against her conscience.—

"Indeed! perhaps I might have looked in upon you again, if I had been aware of as much;—for I am rather fond of dancing than not.—Miss Osborne is a charming girl, is not she?"

"I do not think her handsome," replied Emma, to whom all this was chiefly addressed.

"Perhaps she is not critically,<sup>111</sup> handsome, but her manners are delightful. And Fanny Carr is a most interesting little creature. You can imagine nothing more *naïve* or *piquante*, and what do you think of *Lord Osborne*, Miss Watson?"

"That he would be handsome, even though he were *not* a Lord—and perhaps—better bred; more desirous of pleasing, and shewing himself pleased in a right place.—"

"Upon my word, you are severe upon my friend!—I assure you Lord Osborne is a very good fellow."—

"I do not dispute his virtues—but I do not like his careless air."—

"If it were not a breach of confidence," replied Tom with an important look, "perhaps I might be able to win a more favourable opinion of poor Osborne.—"

Emma gave him no encouragement, and he was obliged to keep his friend's secret.—He was also obliged to put an end to his visit—for Mrs. Edwards having ordered her carriage,



there was no time to be lost on Emma's side in preparing for it.—Miss Edwards accompanied her home, but as it was dinner hour at Stanton, straid with them only a few minutes.—

"Now my dear Emma," said Miss Watson, as soon as they were alone, "you must talk to me all the rest of the day, without stopping, or I shall not be satisfied. But first of all Nanny shall bring in the dinner. Poor thing!—You will not dine as you did yesterday, for we have nothing but some fried beef.—How nice Mary Edwards looks in her new pelisse!"<sup>112</sup>—And now tell me how you like them all, and what I am to say to Sam. I have begun my letter, Jack Stokes is to call for it tomorrow, for his uncle is going within a mile of Guilford the next day.—"<sup>113</sup>

Nanny brought in the dinner.—

"We will wait upon ourselves," continued Elizabeth, "and then we shall lose no time.—And so, you would not come home with Tom Musgrave?"—

"No. You had said so much against him that I could not wish either for the obligation, or the intimacy which the use of his carriage must have created.—I should not even have liked the appearance of it."—

"You did very right, though I wonder at your forbearance, and I do not think I could have done it myself.—He seemed so eager to fetch you, that I could not say no, though it rather went against me to be throwing you together, so well as I knew his tricks;—but I did long to see you, and it was a clever way of getting you home; besides—it won't do to be too nice.—Nobody could have thought of the Edwardses letting you have their coach,—after the horses being out so late.—But what am I to say to Sam?"—

"If you are guided by me, you will not encourage him to think of Miss Edwards.—The father is decidedly against him, the mother shews him no favour, and I doubt his

having any interest with Mary. She danced twice with Captain Hunter, and I think shews him in general as much encouragement as is consistent with her disposition, and the circumstances she is placed in.—She once mentioned Sam, and certainly with a little confusion—but that was perhaps merely owing to the consciousness of his liking her, which may very probably have come to her knowledge."—

"Oh! dear! yes—she has heard enough of that from us all. Poor Sam!—He is out of luck as well as other people.—For the life of me, Emma, I cannot help feeling for those that are crossed in love.—Well—now begin, and give me an account of every thing as it happened."—

Emma obeyed her—and Elizabeth listened with very little interruption till she heard of Mr. Howard as a partner.—

"Dance with Mr. Howard—Good heavens! You don't say so!—Why—he is quite one of the great and grand ones.—Did not you find him very high?"<sup>114</sup>

"His manners are of a kind to give *me* much more ease and confidence than Tom Musgrave's."

"Well—go on. I should have been frightened out of my wits, to have had anything to do with the Osbornes' set."—Emma concluded her narration.—"And so, you really did not dance with Tom Musgrave at all?—But you must have liked him, you must have been struck with him altogether."—

"I do *not* like him, Elizabeth.—I allow his person and air to be good—and that his manners to a certain point—his address"<sup>115</sup> rather—is pleasing.—But I see nothing else to admire in him.—On the contrary, he seems very vain, very conceited, absurdly anxious for distinction, and absolutely contemptible in some of the measures he takes for becoming so.—There is a ridiculousness about him that entertains me—but his company gives me no other agreeable emotion."

"My dearest Emma!—You are like nobody else in the world.—It is well Margaret is not by.—You do not offend *me*, though I hardly know how to believe you. But Margaret would never forgive such words."

"I wish Margaret could have heard him profess his ignorance of her being out of the country,"<sup>116</sup> he declared it seemed only two days since he had seen her.—"

"Aye—that is just like him. And yet this is the man, she *will* fancy so desperately in love with her.—He is no favourite of mine, as you well know, Emma;—but you must think him agreeable. Can you lay your hand on your heart, and say you do not?"—

"Indeed I can. Both hands; and spread to their widest extent.—"

"I should like to know the man you *do* think agreeable."

"His name is Howard."

"Howard! Dear me. I cannot think of *him*, but as playing cards with Lady Osborne, and looking proud.—I must own however that it is a relief to me, to find you can speak as you do, of Tom Musgrave; my heart did misgive me that you would like him too well. You talked so stoutly beforehand, that I was sadly afraid your brag would be punished.—I only hope it will last;—and that he will not come on to pay you much attention; it is a hard thing for a woman to stand against the flattering ways of a man, when he is bent upon pleasing her.—"

As their quietly-social little meal concluded, Miss Watson could not help observing how comfortably it had passed.

"It is so delightful to me," said she, "to have things going on in peace and good humour. Nobody can tell how much I hate quarrelling. Now, though we have had nothing but fried beef, how good it has all seemed.—I wish everybody were as easily satisfied as you—but poor Margaret is very snappish,

and Penelope owns she had rather have quarrelling going on, than nothing at all."—

Mr. Watson returned in the evening, not the worse for the exertion of the day, and consequently pleased with what he had done, and glad to talk of it, over his own fireside.—Emma had not foreseen any interest to herself in the occurrences of a visitation—but when she heard Mr. Howard spoken of as the preacher, and as having given them an excellent sermon, she could not help listening with a quicker ear.—

"I do not know when I have heard a discourse more to my mind—" continued Mr. Watson—"or one better delivered.—He reads extremely well, with great propriety and in a very impressive manner; and at the same time without any theatrical grimace or violence.—I own, I do not like much action in the pulpit—I do not like the studied air and artificial inflexions of voice, which your very popular and most admired preachers generally have.—A simple delivery is much better calculated to inspire devotion, and shews a much better taste."<sup>117</sup>—Mr. Howard read like a scholar and a gentleman."

"And what had you for dinner Sir?" said his eldest daughter.—

He related the dishes and told what he had ate himself.<sup>118</sup> "Upon the whole," he added, "I have had a very comfortable day; my old friends were quite surprised to see me amongst them—and I must say that everybody paid me great attention, and seemed to feel for me as an invalid.—They would make me sit near the fire, and as the partridges were pretty high,<sup>119</sup> Dr. Richards would have them sent away to the other end of the table, that they might not offend Mr. Watson—which I thought very kind of him.—But what pleased me as much as anything was Mr. Howard's attention.—There is a pretty steep flight of steps up to the room we dine in—which do not

quite agree with my gouty foot<sup>120</sup>—and Mr. Howard walked by me from the bottom to the top, and would make me take his arm.—It struck me as very becoming in so young a man, but I am sure I had no claim to expect it; for I never saw him before in my life.—By the bye, he enquired after one of my daughters, but I do not know which. I suppose you know among yourselves.”—

On the third day after the ball, as Nanny, at five minutes before three, was beginning to bustle into the parlour with the tray and the knife-case,<sup>121</sup> she was suddenly called to the front door, by the sound of as smart a rap as the end of a riding-whip could give—and though charged by Miss Watson to let nobody in, returned in half a minute, with a look of awkward dismay, to hold the parlour door open for Lord Osborne and Tom Musgrave.—The surprise of the young ladies may be imagined. No visitors would have been welcome at such a moment; but such visitors as these—such a one as Lord Osborne at least, a nobleman and a stranger, was really distressing.—He looked a little embarrassed himself—as, on being introduced by his easy, voluble friend, he muttered something of doing himself the honour of waiting on Mr. Watson.<sup>122</sup>—

Though Emma could not but take the compliment of the visit to herself, she was very far from enjoying it. She felt all the inconsistency of such an acquaintance with the very humble stile in which they were obliged to live; and having in her aunt's family been used to many of the elegancies of life, was fully sensible of all that must be open to the ridicule of richer people in her present home.—Of the pain of such feelings, Elizabeth knew very little;—her simpler mind, or juster reason, saved her from such mortification—and though shrinking under a general sense of inferiority, she felt no particular

shame.—Mr. Watson, as the gentlemen had already heard from Nanny, was not well enough to be down stairs.—With much concern they took their seats—Lord Osborne near Emma, and the convenient Mr. Musgrave in high spirits at his own importance, on the other side of the fireplace with Elizabeth.—*He* was at no loss for words;—but when Lord Osborne had hoped that Emma had not caught cold at the ball, he had nothing more to say for some time, and could only gratify his eye by occasional glances at his fair neighbour.—Emma was not inclined to give herself much trouble for his entertainment—and after hard labour of mind, he produced the remark of its being a very fine day, and followed it up with the question of, “Have you been walking this morning?”

“No, my Lord. We thought it too dirty.”

“You should wear half-boots.”<sup>123</sup>—

After another pause, “Nothing sets off a neat ankle more than a half-boot; nankin galoshes with black<sup>124</sup> looks very well.—Do not you like half-boots?”

“Yes—but unless they are so stout as to injure their beauty, they are not fit for country walking.”

“Ladies should ride in dirty weather.—Do you ride?”

“No my Lord.”

“I wonder every lady does not.—A woman never looks better than on horseback.—”

“But every woman may not have the inclination, or the means.”<sup>125</sup>

“If they knew how much it became them, they would all have the inclination—and I fancy Miss Watson—when once they had the inclination, the means would soon follow.”—

“Your Lordship thinks we always have our own way.—*That* is a point on which ladies and gentlemen have long disagreed.—But without pretending to decide it, I may say that there are some circumstances which even *women* cannot

control.—Female economy will do a great deal my Lord, but it cannot turn a small income into a large one.”<sup>126</sup>

Lord Osborne was silenced. Her manner had been neither sententious nor sarcastic, but there was a something in its mild seriousness, as well as in the words themselves, which made his Lordship think;—and when he addressed her again, it was with a degree of considerate propriety, totally unlike the half-awkward, half-fearless stile of his former remarks.—It was a new thing with him to wish to please a woman, it was the first time that he had ever felt what was due to a woman, in Emma's situation.—But as he wanted neither sense nor a good disposition, he did not feel it without effect.—

“You have not been long in this country I understand,” said he in the tone of a gentleman. “I hope you are pleased with it.”—

He was rewarded by a gracious answer, and a more liberal full view of her face than she had yet bestowed. Unused to exert himself, and happy in contemplating her, he then sat in silence for some minutes longer, while Tom Musgrave was chattering to Elizabeth, till they were interrupted by Nanny's approach, who half opening the door and putting in her head, said, “Please Ma'am, master wants to know why he be'nt to have his dinner.”—

The gentlemen, who had hitherto disregarded every symptom, however positive, of the nearness of that meal, now jumped up with apologies, while Elizabeth called briskly after Nanny “to tell Betty to take up the fowls.”—

“I am sorry it happens so—” she added, turning good humouredly towards Musgrave—“but you know what early hours we keep.”—

Tom had nothing to say for himself, he knew it very well, and such honest simplicity, such shameless truth rather bewildered him.—Lord Osborne's parting compliments took

some time, his inclination for speech seeming to increase with the shortness of the term for indulgence.—He recommended exercise in defiance of dirt—spoke again in praise of half-boots—begged that his sister might be allowed to send Emma the name of her shoemaker—and concluded with saying,

“My hounds will be hunting this country next week—I believe they will throw off at Stanton Wood on Wednesday—at nine o'clock.”<sup>127</sup>—I mention this, in hopes of your being drawn out to see what's going on.—If the morning's tolerable, pray do us the honour of giving us your good wishes in person.”<sup>128</sup>

The sisters looked on each other with astonishment, when their visitors had withdrawn.

“Here's an unaccountable honour!” cried Elizabeth at last. “Who would have thought of Lord Osborne's coming to Stanton.—He is very handsome;—but Tom Musgrave looks, all to nothing, the smartest and most fashionable man of the two. I am glad he did not say anything to me; I would not have had to talk to such a great man for the world. Tom was very agreeable, was not he?—But did you hear him ask where Miss Penelope and Miss Margaret were, when he first came in?—It put me out of patience.—I am glad Nanny had not laid the cloth however, it would have looked so awkward;—just the tray did not signify.”—

To say that Emma was not flattered by Lord Osborne's visit, would be to assert a very unlikely thing, and describe a very odd young lady; but the gratification was by no means unalloyed; his coming was a sort of notice which might please her vanity, but did not suit her pride, and she would rather have known that he wished the visit without presuming to make it, than have seen him at Stanton.<sup>129</sup>—Among other unsatisfactory feelings it once occurred to her to wonder why

eighteenth century. JA never used the phrase herself, but she did refer to London and Brighton as 'haunts of Dissipation in Lesley Castle' ('Juv', Volume the Second, Letter the Fourth).

- 37 **Walter Scott** . . . **I fear I must:** Walter Scott's long poems on historical, often Scottish, subjects, including *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805) and *The Lady of the Lake* (1810), had been a publishing sensation. His first novel, *Waverley, or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, was published in July 1814 and four editions were called for before the end of the year. Mrs Austen wrote to Anna that *Waverley* 'has afforded me more entertainment than any Modern production (Aunt Janes excepted) of the novel kind that I have read for a great while' (25 December 1814, reproduced in Le Faye, 'Anna Lefroy and her Austen Family Letters', *Princeton University Library Chronicle*, 62.3, spring 2001 issue (2003)). Scott published his early novels anonymously, and his authorship was not acknowledged for some time, but JA evidently had no doubts about it.

- 38 **Mrs West's** . . . **not:** Jane West (1758–1852) was a popular writer of moral and historical tales. *Alicia de Lacy: An Historical Romance* was published in June 1814.

- 39 **Miss Edgeworth's:** Maria Edgeworth (1767–1849) was one of the most highly respected novelists of the early nineteenth century. *Patronage*, her most ambitious novel, was published in January 1814, and two further editions were issued before the end of the year. Contemporary readers saw Edgeworth and JA as comparable: commenting on *MP* the Earl of Dudley wrote that JA 'has not so much fine humour as . . . Miss Edgeworth, but she is more skilful in contriving a story, she has a great deal more feeling, and she never plagues you with any chemistry, mechanics, or political economy, which are all excellent things in their way, but vile, cold-hearted trash in a novel' (Earl of Dudley to Mrs Helen Stewart, 11 August 1814; S. H. Romilly, *Letters to 'Tey'*, *from the first Earl of Dudley* (London: Longman, 1905), p. 250).
- 40 **30 November 1814:** for dating see Le Faye, *Notes and Queries*, 232.4 (December 1987), pp. 478–81.

- 41 **London** . . . **Hendon:** JA was staying with her brother Henry at 23 Hans Place. Anna and her new husband Ben Lefroy were living temporarily in Hendon in North London.

- 42 **other people** . . . **rapidly:** meaning herself, as she continued to work on *E* – though according to Cassandra's later record *E* had a relatively short period of composition, from 21 January 1814 to 29 March 1815. On 16 December 1816 JA wrote of 'the little bit (two inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush, as produces little effect after much labour' (*L*, p. 323).

- 43 **3 before the 3 at Chawton:** 'the 3 at Chawton' must be those booklets mentioned in the 10–18 August letter, when JA comments on reading the second book just sent 'or rather the 5<sup>th</sup>'; it seems that JA had mistaken how many books she had seen before then.

- 44 **history** . . . **story:** the original letter ends mid-sentence, since a further page is missing. The concluding part of the sentence was given by Fanny Caroline in her 'Family History', either copying from an original now lost or creating a plausible end to the sentence with a note, 'The rest of the letter destroyed'.

#### Plan of a Novel, according to hints from various quarters

The original autograph manuscript is held at the Morgan Library, New York. A single sheet of paper is folded over to make four writing pages, each 233 mm × 187 mm, and the text ends about three-quarters of the way down the fourth page. This may not be the first draft of the 'Plan' but neither is it a fair copy in the way that 'Lady Susan' is, since there is evidence of authorial revision. The paper is watermarked 1813. Date of composition is not known; it is very likely to have been during or shortly after the exchange of correspondence November–December 1815 and March–April 1816 between JA and James Stanier Clarke, since this provided a major impetus for the 'Plan' (see Introduction, pp. ciii–civ, and explanatory notes below), though nothing in the 'Plan' directly refers to the March–April exchange of letters. After Cassandra Austen's death in 1845 the manuscript evidently came into the possession of Charles Austen's family since it was eventually sold on by his descendants in the 1920s (it is mentioned by Chapman in *TL8*, 14 January 1926 as one of a number of JA-related items 'recently dispersed'); around 1870 it was made

available to James Edward Austen Leigh, who published it, in a slightly abbreviated and adapted form, in the second edition of the *Memoir* (1871).

### Those named in the margin of the 'Plan'

JA includes as part of the 'Plan' fifteen marginal notes naming eight individuals and 'Many Critics', representing the sources of the 'hints from various quarters'; Austen Leigh refers to them as her 'advisers' (*Memoir* (1871), p. 119). In fact it is likely that some of the names bear a complex relationship to the relevant phrase or expression. JA's numbered links have been replaced by letters to avoid confusion with the explanatory notes.

**Mr. Gifford:** presumably William Gifford (1756–1826), chief reader for and associate of John Murray, who had become Austen's publisher for *E* (1815); Gifford read and admired *PGP*, and recommended *E*'s publication. There is no record of a meeting or correspondence between JA and Gifford, but given her interest in the practicalities of publishing her novels it is quite possible that they were in contact while *E* was going through the press in the autumn of 1815, or afterwards.

**Fanny Knight:** (1793–1882), the eldest daughter of JA's brother Edward, whose family had taken the name of Knight in 1812. JA advised Fanny on romantic dilemmas in 1814 and again in 1817. In late 1815, the time of the first letters in the James Stanier Clarke correspondence, Fanny was, like JA, staying with Henry Austen in London, and she was a guest for three weeks at the cottage at Chawton during May 1816.

**Mary Cooke:** (1781–post-1822), daughter of JA's godfather Rev. Samuel Cooke (1741–1820), whose wife Cassandra was first cousin to JA's mother. JA stayed with the Cookes at their home in Great Bookham, near Leatherhead in Surrey, in the summer of 1814 while she was writing *E* (*FR*, p. 213). See 'Opinions of *Mansfield Park*'.

**Mr. Clarke:** James Stanier Clarke (1766–1834), domestic chaplain and librarian to the Prince of Wales; he met JA in November 1815 when he showed her round the Prince's library at Carlton House, and was negotiator, on the Prince's behalf, for JA to dedicate *E* to him; his correspondence with JA, in which he

suggested new topics for her writing, continued till April 1816. Caroline Austen later wrote that 'My aunt, soon after her visit to him, returned home, where the little adventure was talked of for a while with some interest, & afforded some amusement' (*My Aunt Jane Austen*, pp. 176–7). See Introduction, pp. ciii–civ.

**Mr. Sherer:** Rev. Joseph Sherer (1770–1824), vicar of Godmersham, the parish within which the Knights' main residence was located, from 1811 to 1824. JA wrote from Godmersham on 23–24 September 1813, after returning a visit from Mrs Sherer, that 'I like Mr S. very much' (*L*, p. 226); later that autumn, however, the Sherers moved to another of his parishes. Mr. Sherer was 'Displeased with my pictures of Clergymen' in *E* (see 'Opinions of *Emma*'), possibly the source of the reference to him in 'Plan'.

**Mrs. Pearse of Chilton-Lodge:** Anne (daughter of John Phillimore, a City of London merchant), wife of John Pearse (1760–1836), Director and then Governor of the Bank of England during the period 1790–1828. In 1800 Pearse had had Chilton Lodge built, in the village of Chilton Foliat, just a few miles from Kinbury, where the Austens' friends the Fowles and the Cravens (see 'Mrs Craven below') lived.

**Mrs Craven:** Catherine (née Hughes), the second wife of Rev. John Craven (James Austen's uncle-in-law), a longstanding friend of the Austens, her name appearing frequently in the *Letters* from 1801 onwards. The Cravens lived at Chilton Foliat, and JA would probably have met them during her Kinbury visits. See 'Opinions of *Emma*'.

**Mr. H. Sanford:** Henry Sanford, friend and business associate of Henry Austen in London. In November 1814 JA wrote to Fanny Knight that 'Mr Sanford is to join us at dinner, which will be a comfort, and in the even<sup>g</sup> . . . he shall tell me comical things & I will laugh at them, which will be a pleasure to both' (30 November 1814, *L*, p. 287). See 'Opinions of *Mansfield Park*' and 'Opinions of *Emma*'.

<sup>1</sup> **Plan of a Novel:** Eaton Stannard Barrett's burlesque novel *The Heroine: Adventures of a Fair Romance Reader* was a great success on first publication in 1813, and further editions were published in 1814 and 1815. Barrett made changes on each occasion, and the