

LETTERS

Written TO and FOR
PARTICULAR FRIENDS,
On the most
IMPORTANT OCCASIONS.

Directing not only the Requisite
STYLE *and* FORMS

To be Observed in WRITING

Familiar Letters;

But How to

THINK and ACT *Justly and Prudently,*

IN THE

COMMON CONCERNS

OF

HUMAN LIFE.

CONTAINING

One Hundred and Seventy-three LETTERS;

None of which were ever before Published.


L O N D O N :

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P R E F A C E.

 THE following Letters are publish'd at the Solicitation of particular Friends, who are of Opinion, that they will answer several good Ends, as they may not only direct the *Forms* requisite to be observed on the most important Occasions; but, what is more to the Purpose, by the Rules and Instructions contained in them, contribute to *mend the Heart*, and *improve the Understanding*.

NATURE, PROPRIETY OF CHARACTER, PLAIN SENSE, and GENERAL USE, have been the chief Objects of the Author's Attention in the penning of these Letters; and as he every-where aimed to write to the *Judgment*, rather than to the *Imagination*, he would chuse, that they should generally be found more *useful* than

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

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

He has endeavour'd then, in general, throughout the great Variety of his Subjects, to inculcate the Principles of *Virtue* and *Benevolence* ; to describe *properly* ; and recommend *strongly*, the SOCIAL and RELATIVE DUTIES ; and to place them in such *practical* Lights, that the Letters may serve for Rules to THINK and ACT by, as well as Forms to WRITE after.

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

He

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

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

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

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back upon, when the *doubtful Courtship* is changed into the *matrimonial Certainty*.

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

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

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

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Familiar LETTERS

On the most

IMPORTANT OCCASIONS

IN

COMMON LIFE.

LETTER I.

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

Dear Sir,



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

B

blame

blame me, as your own wrong Choice of a Counsellor.

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

But this Opinion of *Will*, should you think it just, will be no Obstacle to his succeeding in the World in some creditable easy Business. Tho' I think him unequal to the Part you seem inclinable to allot him; yet he is no Fool: And Experience teaches us, that, in some sorts of Business, ample Advantage, may be made by very moderate Talents, with much Reputation. These are principally such Employments as merely consist in Buying with Prudence, and in Selling at a Market-profit

profit: Hence we see several Wholesale Dealers gain large Fortunes with Ease and Credit, and without any other Secret than the plain Practice of Buying at the best Hand, paying for their Goods punctually, and vending them always *for what they are.* In Dealings of this Kind, the Fatigues are few, and clear well-kept Books are sufficient to shew, at any time, a Man's Loss or Gain; for which, generally speaking, less than One Forenoon in a Week is sufficient: And yet, by a constant Attention, in this easy manner, as *good* a Character, and, very often, *more* Money is to be gained than in Professions that require an extraordinary Genius, a perpetual Attention, and a close and intense Study; which very seldom succeeds neither: For see you not of Hundreds of Lawyers, how very few of them make a Figure, or get genteel Bread? And how many, for want of Courage to appear at the Bar (who yet have good Parts and Knowledge in the Laws) are forced to confine themselves to Chamber-practice, in which it is a long time before they grow noted enough to make a tolerable Livelihood.

As to what you hint, of placing him in the Physick Tribe; I like this no better than the other. Consider only this one Thing, how long it is before he will be capable of entering into Business, or Reputation, as a Physician, if he ever does it at all: For who chuses to trust his Health to a raw and unexperienced young Man? The Law requires a sprightly Impudence, if I may so say, the Physick Line a solemn one, in the Person who would make a Figure in either. And do you think, tho' *Will* is grave enough of Conscience, that he ever can come up to that important Department, that unblushing Parade, which is the very Essence of an *English* Physician? So he may, in either of the Pro-
B 2 fessions,

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

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

This.

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

Your very humble Servant.

L E T T E R II.

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

Dear Nephew,

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

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

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

Consider, I exhort you, in time, to what these Courses may lead you. Consider the Affliction you will give to all your Friends, by your Continuance in them. Lay together the Substance of the Conversation that passes in a whole Evening, with your frothy Companions, after you are come
from

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

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

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

Let me intreat you then, my dear Kinsman, for your Family's sake, for your own sake, before it be too late, to reflect as you ought upon the Course you are enter'd into. By applying yourself to Books, instead of such vain Company, you will be qualified in time for the best of Company, and to be respected by all Ranks of Men. This will keep you out of unnecessary Expences, will employ all your leisure Time, will exclude a world of Temptations, and open and inlarge your Notions of Men and Things, and, finally, set you above that wretched Company which now you seem so much delighted with. And one Thing let me recommend to you, That you keep a List of the young Men of your Standing within the Compass of your Knowledge, and for the next Seven Years observe what Fate will attend them: See, if those who follow *not* the Course you are so lately enter'd into, will not appear in a very different Light from those who *do*; and from the Industry and Prosperity of the one, and the
Decay

Decay or Failure of the other, (if their vain Ways do not blast them before, or as soon as they begin the World) you'll find abundant Reason every Day to justify the Truth of the Observations I have thrown together. As nothing but my Affection for you could possibly influence me to these Expostulations, I hope for a proper Effect from them, if you would be thought well of by, or expect any Favour from,

Your loving Uncle.

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

LETTER III.

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

Dear Billy,

I AM very sorry to hear of the Difference between your Master and you. I was always afraid you would expect the same Indulgences you had met with at home; and as you know, that in many Instances, I have endeavoured to make any seeming Hardship as easy to you as I could, if this causes you to be harder to be satisfied, it would be a great Trouble to me. Your Uncle tells me, I am afraid with too much Truth, that the Indulgences you have received from me, have made your present Station more disagreeable than it would otherwise have been. What I have always done for you was intended for your Good, and nothing could so deeply afflict me as to see my Tenderness

have a contrary Effect : Therefore, dear Child, to my constant Care for your Welfare, do not add the Sorrow of seeing it the Cause of your behaving worse than if it had not been bestow'd upon you ; for as, before we put you to your Master, we had an extraordinary Character of him, from all his Neighbours, and those who dealt with him ; and as Mr. *Joseph*, who is now out of his Time, gives him the best of Characters, and declares your Mistress to be a Woman of great Prudence and good Conduct ; I know not how to think they would use you ill in any respect. But consider, my Dear, you must not, in any Woman beside myself, expect to find a fond, and perhaps partial Mother ; for, the little Failings which I could not see in you, will appear very plain to other Persons. My Love for you would make me wish you always with me ; but as that is what your future Welfare will no way permit ; and as you must certainly be a Gainer by the Situation you are now in, let a Desire to promote *my* Happiness, as well as *your own*, make every seeming Difficulty light ; which, I hope, will appear much lighter for being what I intreat you to dispense with ; who am,

Your ever loving Mother.

I have desir'd your Uncle to interpose in this Matter, and he writes to you on this Occasion ; and has promised to see Justice done you, in case your Complaints be reasonable.

L E T T E R IV.

An Uncle's Letter to the Youth, on the same Occasion.

Cousin William,

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

Your Loving Kinsman.

L E T T E R V.

An Apprentice to an Uncle, about a Fraud committed by his Fellow-Apprentice to their Master.

Dear Uncle,

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

Your dutiful, tho' unfortunate Nephew.

L E T T E R VI.

The Uncle's Answer.

Dear Nephew,

YOUR Letter, which I just now received, gives me great Uneasiness: And as any Delay in the Discovery may be attended with Consequences which will probably be dangerous to yourself, and disagreeable to all who belong to you; I charge

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

Your Loving Uncle.

LETTER VII.

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

Dear Robin,

AS you are now entering into the World, and will probably have considerable Dealings in your Business, the frequent Occasions you will have for Advice from others, will make you desirous

firous of singling out among your most intimate Acquaintance, one or two, whom you would view in the Light of Friends.

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

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

Let your Endeavour therefore be, at all Adventures, to consort yourself with Men of Sobriety, good Sense and Virtue; for the Proverb is an unerring one, that says, *A Man is known by the Company he keeps*. If such Men you can single out, while you improve by their Conversation, you will benefit by their Advice; and be sure remember one thing, that tho' you must be frank and unreserved in delivering your Sentiments, when Occasions offer, yet that you be much readier to *hear* than *speak*; for to this Purpose it has been significantly observed, that Nature has given a Man *two* Ears,
and

and but *one* Tongue. Lay in therefore by Observation, and a modest Silence, such a Store of Ideas, that you may at their Time of Life, make no worse Figure than they do ; and endeavour to benefit yourself rather by other Peoples Ills than your own. How must those young Men expose themselves to the Contempt and Ridicule of their Seniors, who having seen little or nothing of the World, are continually shutting out by *open Mouths* and *closed Ears*, all Possibility of Instruction, and making vain the principal End of Conversation, which is Improvement. A silent young Man makes generally a wise old one, and never fails of being respected by the best and most prudent Men. When therefore you come among Strangers, hear every one speak before you deliver your own Sentiments ; by this means you will judge of the Merit and Capacities of your Company, and avoid exposing yourself, as I have known many do, by shooting out hasty and inconsiderate Bolts, which they would have been glad to recal, when perhaps a silent Genius in Company has burst out upon them with such Observations, as have struck Conscioufness and Shame in the forward Speaker, if he has not been quite insensible of inward Reproach.

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

Your affectionate Father.

L E T-

L E T T E R VIII.

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

Dear William,

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

The Art of rendering yourself agreeable in Conversation is worth your serious Study: 'Tis an Advantage few can boast, tho' sought after by all; and nothing is so constant an Enemy to Success in those who would excel in this Art, as the harbouring an Opinion of their own Proficiency, before they have attained to any tolerable Degree of Knowledge in what they imagine themselves possessed of. Conversation, where it is rightly managed, must be so conducted, as to let each Member of the Company have a Share in the *Pleasure* and *Applause* it affords: If you are Six in Number, after you have told a Story, or made any Remark which gives a general Satisfaction; you must consider it the Right of another to call *your* Attention in his Turn; and, unless particularly requested, it betrays a great Weakness to *follow yourself*. No doubt but you love to be admired: And have not
others

others the same Passion? You believe your Wit more brilliant than theirs? Are you sure that they are not of the same Opinion as to their own? If a Man speaks little, you must not from thence conclude him willing to give up every Claim to conversible Merit: Perhaps he cannot sing: But to be sure he is as desirous of having his *peculiar Humour*, or his *dry Joke* applauded, as you are to be intricated another Song. If he is no Mathematician, perhaps he is versed in religious Disputation; if he despises Plays, he may admire History; tho' he understands not Geography, he may yet know how to describe the Humours of Mankind: And tho' he pretends not to Politicks, he may have a Turn for some more useful Science. When these are considered, if his Modesty is great, you cannot oblige him more than by throwing an Opportunity in his way to display his Capacity on the Subject he believes himself most able to handle with Advantage: For, in order to support a thorough good Humour, a Man must be pleased with *himself* as well as with *others*. When this is properly taken Care of, Conversation seldom fails to prove entertaining: And to the Neglect of this, are owing many of the *yawning* Hours spent in Companies composed of Men not incapable of behaving agreeably.

The Manner of telling a Story, is also worth your Notice: You have known the Pleasure of hearing a long one well told: Mr. Trotter has an admirable Talent in this way: But then you must observe, that half the Pleasure he gives, arises from his happily avoiding any of the silly Digressions, which are the great Cause of a Story's seeming tedious: You never hear him mingle his Relation with, *I remember very well it was the same Day that 'Squire Trumbul's Son came of Age.---I bought*
my

my bay Nag the very Day before, at such a Fair, being a Friday that Year ;----or, I can scarce think of it without Laughing ;---But, however, as I was saying :---And a hundred more such Dead-weights to Attention. Nor does he ever praise a Story before he relates it ; a fatal Rock to many a good Relation : For when any Story wants a preparatory Recommendation, it ought not to be told ; and even when the Relation is possible, the Generality of Auditors are apt to persuade themselves,

The Mountain labours, and a Mouse is born.

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

Your affectionate Father.

LETTER IX.

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

Dear Brother,

I AM more concerned for your Welfare than you imagine. You are younger than myself: My Duty, in some Degree, requires my Care for your Good, and particularly in a Point that may be

be so material to your whole Life, as is that of Love.

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

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

I am

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

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

Dear Brother,

Your most affectionate, &c.

LETTER X.

An elder to an extravagant younger Brother.

Dear JOHN,

YOU may be certain that your Misfortunes are to me a most melancholy Subject: You are my only Brother: I own it: And your Misfortunes

fortunes affect me next to my own : But there is this Difference in what I feel for you, and for myself : I am sure, every Misfortune I have met with, has been occasioned by unavoidable Accidents. This Consideration has supported me under the many Afflictions I have myself endured : But for those I have shared with you, I cannot boast the same Alleviation. While our Father lived, he was your constant and unwearied Support, even after your Patrimony was squander'd away. While your Mother remained, she was every Week assisting your Necessities, but what might more properly be called your Levity and Extravagance. She is now, by the Divine Will, taken from us both ; her Jointure, as well as the Estate my Father independently left, has devolved upon me. Of this both Nature and Providence require I should make the best Use : And to serve you, I readily confess, is my greatest Care. But, my dear Brother, how is this to be done ? The generous and bountiful Assistance of our Parents, procured you no substantial Good. What then am I to do to screen you from Want and Misery ? — That you are not already happy, is not owing to the Backwardness of your Friends to serve you ; but, allow me to speak plainly, to your own Indiscretion. Your own Fortune maintained you not for three Years : Were I able to give you as much more, what Reason have you given me to suppose you will be a better Oeconomist than you have been ? My whole Estate, let me tell you, Brother, at your Rate of Expence, would scarcely maintain you for Seven Years : And, think you as you will, I must believe it my Duty to leave enough to support my Off-spring, with prudent Conduct, to the End of Time. If I send you, as you desire, Fifty Guineas, What good will that